

The goal of English language arts is for students to read, understand, and express understanding of complex texts independently. To accomplish this goal, programs must build students’ knowledge and skill in language, comprehension, conversations, and writing integrated around a volume of complex texts and tasks.¹ In grades K-5, programs must also build students’ foundational skills to be able to read and write about a range of texts² independently. Thus, a strong ELA classroom is structured with the below components.



Title: **[Title]**

Grade: **[Grade]**

Publisher: **[Publisher]**

Copyright: **[Copyright]**

Overall Rating: **[Choose one: Tier 1, Exemplifies quality; Tier 2, Approaching quality; Tier 3, Not representing quality]**

Tier 1, Tier 2, Tier 3 Elements of this review:

| STRONG | WEAK |
|---|-------------|
| 1. Quality of Texts (Non-Negotiable) | |
| 2. Text-Dependent Questions (Non-Negotiable) | |
| 3. Coherence of Tasks (Non-Negotiable) | |
| 4. Foundational Skills (Non-Negotiable) | |
| 5. Range and Volume of Texts | |
| 6. Writing to Sources, Speaking and Listening, and Language | |
| 7. Assessments | |
| 8. Scaffolding and Support | |

¹ A volume of texts is a collection of texts written about similar topics, themes, or ideas.

² A range of texts are texts written at different reading levels.



To evaluate instructional materials for alignment with the [standards](#) and determine tiered rating, begin with **Section I: Non-Negotiable Criteria**.

- Review the **required**³ Indicators of Superior Quality for each **Non-Negotiable** Criterion.
- If there is a “Yes” for all **required** Indicators of Superior Quality, materials receive a “Yes” for that **Non-Negotiable** Criterion.
- If there is a “No” for any of the **required** Indicators of Superior Quality, materials receive a “No” for that **Non-Negotiable** Criterion.
- Materials must meet **Non-Negotiable** Criterion 1 for the review to continue to **Non-Negotiable** Criteria 2 and 3. For grades K-5, materials must meet all of the **Non-Negotiable** Criteria 1-3 in order for the review to continue to Section II⁴ and all of the **Non-Negotiable** Criteria 1-4 to continue to Section III. For grades 6-12, materials must meet **Non-Negotiable** Criteria 1-3 for the review to continue to Section III.
- If materials receive a “No” for any **Non-Negotiable** Criterion, a rating of Tier 3 is assigned, and the review does not continue.

If all Non-negotiable Criteria are met, then continue to **Section III: Additional Criteria of Superior Quality**.

- Review the **required** Indicators of Superior Quality for each Criterion.
- If there is a “Yes” for all **required** Indicators of Superior Quality, then the materials receive a “Yes” for the Additional Criteria.
- If there is a “No” for any **required** Indicator of Superior Quality, then the materials receive a “No” for the Additional Criteria.

Tier 1 ratings receive a “Yes” for all Non-Negotiable Criteria and a “Yes” for each of the Additional Criteria of Superior Quality.

Tier 2 ratings receive a “Yes” for all Non-Negotiable Criteria, but at least one “No” for the Additional Criteria of Superior Quality.

Tier 3 ratings receive a “No” for at least one of the Non-Negotiable Criteria.

³ **Required Indicators of Superior Quality** are labeled “Required” and shaded yellow. Remaining indicators that are shaded white are included to provide additional information to aid in material selection and do not affect tiered rating.

⁴ For grades K-5: Materials must meet Non-Negotiable Criterion 1 for the review to continue to Non-Negotiable Criteria 2-3. Materials must meet all of the Non-Negotiable Criteria 1-3 in order for the review to continue to Section II.

| CRITERIA | INDICATORS OF SUPERIOR QUALITY | MEETS METRICS (YES/NO) | JUSTIFICATION/COMMENTS WITH EXAMPLES |
|---|--|------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| <p>SECTION I. K-12 NON-NEGOTIABLE CRITERIA OF SUPERIOR QUALITY</p> <p>Materials must meet Non-Negotiable Criterion 1 for the review to continue to Non-Negotiable Criteria 2 and 3. For grades K-5, materials must meet all of the Non-Negotiable Criteria 1-3 in order for the review to continue to Section II and all of the Non-Negotiable Criteria 1-4 in order for the review to continue to Section III. For grades 6-12, materials must meet all of the Non-Negotiable Criteria 1-3 in order for the review to continue to Section III.</p> | | | |
| <p>Non-Negotiable</p> <p>1. QUALITY OF TEXTS:</p> <p>Texts are of sufficient scope and quality to provide text-centered and integrated learning that is sequenced and scaffolded to (1) advance students toward independent reading of grade-level texts and (2) build content knowledge (e.g., ELA, social studies, science, and the arts). The quality of texts is high—they support multiple readings for various purposes and exhibit exceptional craft and thought and/or provide useful information. Materials present a progression of complex texts as stated by Reading Standard 10.</p> <p><i>(Note: In K and 1, Reading Standard 10 refers to read-aloud material. Complexity standards for student-read texts are applicable for grades 2+.)</i></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No</p> | <p>Required</p> <p>1a) Materials provide texts that are appropriately complex for the identified grade level according to the requirements outlined in the standards.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A text analysis that includes complexity information is provided. Measures for determining complexity include quantitative and qualitative analysis, as well as reader and task considerations. Poetry and drama are analyzed only using qualitative measures. • In grades K-2, extensive read-aloud texts allow sufficient opportunity for engagement with texts more complex than students could read themselves. | | |
| | <p>Required</p> <p>1b) At least 90% of provided texts, including read-alouds in K-2, are of publishable quality and offer rich opportunities for students to meet the grade-level ELA standards; the texts are well-crafted, representing the quality of content, language, and writing that is produced by experts in various disciplines.</p> | | |
| | <p>Required</p> <p>1c) Materials provide a coherent sequence or collection of connected texts that consistently build vocabulary knowledge and knowledge about themes with connected topics and ideas through tasks in reading, writing, listening, speaking, and language across a unit of study.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In grades K-2, the inclusion of read-aloud texts in addition to what students can read themselves ensures that all students can build knowledge about the world through engagement with rich, complex texts. Texts must form a coherent sequence or | | |

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| | collection of connected texts that build vocabulary knowledge and knowledge about themes with connected topics and ideas through tasks in reading, writing, listening, speaking, and language across a unit of study. | | |
| | Required 1d) Within a sequence or collection, quality texts of grade-level complexity are selected for multiple, careful readings throughout the unit of study. These texts are revisited as needed to support knowledge building. | | |
| Non-Negotiable (only reviewed if Criterion 1 is met) 2. TEXT-DEPENDENT QUESTIONS: Text-dependent and text-specific questions and tasks reflect the requirements of Reading Standard 1 by requiring use of textual evidence in support of meeting other grade-specific standards. <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No | Required 2a) A large majority of questions in the materials are text dependent and text specific supporting students in building knowledge; student ideas are expressed through both written and spoken responses. | | |
| | Required 2b) Questions and tasks include the language of the standards and require students to engage in thinking at the depth and complexity required by the grade-level standards to advance and deepen student learning over time. (Note: not every standard must be addressed with every text.) | | |
| | Required 3a) Coherent sequences of questions and tasks focus students on understanding the text and its illustrations (as applicable), making connections among the texts in the collection, and expressing their understanding of the topics, themes, and ideas presented in the texts. | | |
| Non-Negotiable (only reviewed if Criterion 1 is met) 3. COHERENCE OF TASKS: Materials contain meaningful, connected tasks that build student knowledge and provide opportunities for students to read, understand, and express understanding of complex texts through speaking and listening, and writing. Tasks integrate | Required 3b) Questions and tasks are designed so that students build, apply, and integrate knowledge and skills in reading, writing, speaking, listening, and language through quality, grade-level complex texts. | | |

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| <p>reading, writing, speaking and listening, and include components of vocabulary, syntax, and fluency, as needed, so that students can gain meaning from text.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No</p> | <p>Required 3c) Questions and tasks support students in examining the language (vocabulary, sentences, and structure) critical to the meaning of texts measured by Criteria 1 and 2.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Questions and tasks also focus on advancing depth of word knowledge through emphasizing word meaning and relationships among words (e.g., concept- and thematically related words, word families, etc.) rather than isolated vocabulary practice, and engaging students with multiple repetitions of words in varied contexts (e.g., reading different texts, completing tasks, engaging in speaking/listening). | | |
| Section II. K-5 Non-Negotiable Foundational Skills Indicators (Grades K-5 only) | | | |
| <p>Non-Negotiable* 4. FOUNDATIONAL SKILLS: Materials provide instruction and diagnostic support in concepts of print, phonological awareness, phonics, vocabulary, development, syntax, and fluency in a logical and transparent progression. These foundational skills are necessary and central components of an effective, comprehensive reading program designed to develop proficient readers with the capacity to comprehend texts across a range of types and disciplines.</p> <p>*As applicable (e.g., when the scope of the materials is comprehensive and considered a full program)</p> | <p>Required *Indicator for grades K-5 only 4a) Materials provide and follow a logical sequence of appropriate foundational skills instruction indicated by the standards (based on the Vertical Progression of Foundational Skills) while providing abundant opportunities for every student to become proficient in each of the foundational skills.</p> | | |
| | <p>Required *Indicator for grades K-1 only 4b) Materials provide explicit grade-appropriate instruction and practice for the concepts of print (e.g., following words left to right, top to bottom, page by page; words are followed by spaces; and features of a sentence).</p> | | |
| | <p>Required *Indicator for grades K-1 only 4c) Materials provide systematic and explicit phonological awareness instruction (e.g., recognizing rhyming words; clapping syllables; blending onset-rime; and blending, segmenting, deleting, and substituting phonemes).</p> | | |
| | <p>Required *Indicator for grades K-5 only 4d) Materials provide systematic and explicit phonics instruction. Instruction progresses from simple to more complex sound–spelling patterns and word analysis skills that</p> | | |

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|--|---|------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No | <p>includes repeated modeling and opportunities for students to hear, say, write, and read sound and spelling patterns (e.g. sounds, words, sentences, reading within text). Materials do not require or encourage three-cueing⁵, MSV⁶ cues, or visual memory for word recognition.</p> | | |
| | <p>Required *Indicator for grades K-5 only 4e) Resources and/or texts provide ample practice of foundational reading skills using texts (e.g. decodable readers) and allow for systematic, explicit, and frequent practice of reading foundational skills, including phonics patterns and word analysis skills in decoding words. Materials do not require or encourage three-cueing⁷, MSV⁸ cues, or visual memory for word recognition.</p> <p>Materials provide opportunities for students to self-monitor to confirm or self-correct word errors directing students to reread purposefully to acquire accurate meaning. Opportunities for self-monitoring and self-correction are not based on three-cueing, MSV cues, or visual memory.</p> <p>This should include monitoring that will allow students to receive regular feedback.</p> | | |
| | <p>Required *Indicator for grades K-5 only 4f) Opportunities are frequently built into the materials that allow for students to achieve reading fluency in oral and silent reading, that is, to read a wide variety of grade-appropriate prose, poetry, and/or informational texts with accuracy, rate appropriate to the text, and expression.</p> | | |

⁵ **Three cueing:** students gaining meaning from print through Semantic, Syntactic or Grapho-phonics cues.

⁶ **MSV:** Meaning, Structure, and Visual cues

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|----------|--|------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| | <p>Materials do not require or encourage three-cueing⁹, MSV¹⁰ cues, or visual memory for word recognition.</p> <p>Materials provide opportunities for students to self-monitor to confirm or self-correct word errors directing students to reread purposefully to acquire accurate meaning.</p> <p>This should include monitoring that will allow students to receive regular feedback on their oral reading fluency in the specific areas of appropriate rate, expressiveness, and accuracy.</p> | | |
| | <p>Required *Indicator for grades K-5 only</p> <p>4g) Materials provide instruction and practice in word study.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In grades K-2, materials provide instruction and practice in word study including pronunciation, roots, prefixes, suffixes and spelling/sound patterns, as well as decoding of grade-level words, by using sound-symbol knowledge and knowledge of syllabication and regular practice in encoding (spelling) the sound symbol relationships of English. (<i>Note: Instruction and practice with roots, prefixes, and suffixes is applicable for grade 1 and higher.</i>) • In grades 3-5, materials provide instruction and practice in word study including systematic examination of grade-level morphology, decoding of multisyllabic words by using syllabication, and automaticity with grade-level regular and irregular spelling patterns. | | |
| | <p>Required *Indicator for grades K-2 only</p> <p>4h) Materials provide opportunities for teachers to assess students' mastery of foundational skills and respond to the needs of individual students based on ongoing assessments</p> | | |

⁹ **Three cueing:** students gaining meaning from print through Semantic, Syntactic or Grapho-phonetic cues.

¹⁰ **MSV:** Meaning, Structure, and Visual cues

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| | <p>offered at regular intervals. Monitoring includes attention to invented spelling as appropriate for its diagnostic value. Assessment opportunities within materials do not require or encourage three-cueing¹¹, MSV¹² cues, or visual memory for word recognition.</p> | | |
| | <p>Required *Indicator for grades K-5 only 4i) Foundational Skills materials are varied, abundant, and easily implemented so that teachers can spend time, attention and practice with students who need foundational skills supports.</p> | | |
| Section III. Additional Criteria of Superior Quality | | | |
| <p>5. RANGE AND VOLUME OF TEXTS: Materials reflect the distribution of text types and genres suggested by the standards (e.g., RL.K.9, RL.1.5, RI.1.9, RL.2.4, RI.2.3, RL.3.2, RL.3.5, RI.4.3, RL.5.7, RI.7.7, RL.8.9, RI.9-10.9, and RL.10/RI.10 across grade levels.)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No</p> | <p>Required 5a) Materials seek a balance in instructional time between literature and informational texts. (Reviewers will consider the balance within units of study as well as across the entire grade level using the ratio between literature/informational texts to help determine the appropriate balance.)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The majority of informational texts have an informational text structure. • In grades 3-12, narrative structure (e.g. speeches, biographies, essays) of informational text are also included. | | |
| | <p>Required 5b) Materials include print and/or non-print texts in a variety of formats (e.g. a range of film, art, music, charts, etc.) and lengths (e.g. short stories, poetry, and novels).</p> | | |
| | <p>5c) Additional materials provide direction and practice for regular, accountable independent reading of texts that appeal to students' interests to build reading stamina, confidence, motivation, and enjoyment and develop knowledge of classroom concepts or topics.</p> | | |

¹¹ **Three cueing:** students gaining meaning from print through Semantic, Syntactic or Grapho-phonc cues.

¹² **MSV:** Meaning, Structure, and Visual cues

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|---|---|------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| <p>6. WRITING TO SOURCES, SPEAKING AND LISTENING, AND LANGUAGE: The majority of tasks are text-dependent or text-specific, reflect the writing genres named in the standards, require communication skills for college and career readiness, and help students meet the language standards for the grade.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No</p> | <p>Required 6a) Materials include a variety of opportunities for students to listen, speak, and write about their understanding of texts measured by Criteria 1 and 2; those opportunities are prominent, varied in length and time demands (e.g., informal peer conversations, note taking, summary writing, discussing and writing short-answer responses, whole-class formal discussions, shared writing, formal essays in different genres, on-demand and process writing, etc.), and require students to engage effectively, as determined by the grade-level standards.¹³</p> | | |
| | <p>Required *Indicator for grades 3-12 only 6b) The majority of oral and written tasks require students to demonstrate the knowledge they built through the analysis and synthesis of texts, and present well defended claims and clear information, using grade-level language and conventions and drawing on textual evidence to support valid inferences from text.</p> | | |
| | <p>Required 6c) Materials include multiple writing tasks aligned to the three modes of writing (opinion/argumentative, informative, narrative) as outlined by the standards at each grade level.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As students progress through the grades, narrative prompts decrease in number and increase in being based on text(s). • In grades 3-12, tasks may include blended modes (e.g., analytical writing). | | |
| | <p>Required 6d) Materials address the grammar and language conventions specified by the language standards at each grade level and build on those standards from previous grade levels through application and practice of those skills in the context of reading and writing about unit texts.</p> | | |

¹³ Technology and digital media may be used, when appropriate, to support the standards addressed in this indicator.

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|--|--|------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> For example, materials create opportunities for students to analyze the syntax of a quality text to determine the text’s meaning and model their own sentence construction as a way to develop more complex sentence structure and usage. | | |
| <p>7. ASSESSMENTS: Materials offer assessment opportunities that genuinely measure progress and elicit direct, observable evidence of the degree to which students can independently demonstrate the assessed grade-specific standards with appropriately complex text(s).</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No</p> | <p>Required 7a) Materials use varied modes of assessment, including a range of pre-, formative, summative and self-assessment measures.</p> | | |
| | <p>Required 7b) Materials assess student understanding of the topics, themes, and/or ideas presented in the unit texts. Questions and tasks are developed so that students demonstrate the knowledge and skill built over the course of the unit.</p> | | |
| | <p>Required 7c) Aligned rubrics or assessment guidelines (such as scoring guides or student work exemplars) are included and provide sufficient guidance for interpreting student performance.</p> | | |
| | <p>Required 7d) Measurement of progress via assessments include gradual release of supporting scaffolds for students to measure their independent abilities.</p> | | |
| | <p>7e) Materials assess student proficiency using methods that are unbiased and accessible to all students.</p> | | |
| <p>8. SCAFFOLDING AND SUPPORT: Materials provide all students, including those who read below grade level, with extensive opportunities and support to encounter and comprehend grade-level complex text as required by the standards.</p> | <p>Required 8a) As needed, pre-reading activities and suggested approaches to teacher scaffolding are focused and engage students with understanding the text itself (i.e., providing background knowledge, supporting vocabulary acquisition). Pre-reading activities should be no more than 10% of time devoted to any reading instruction.</p> | | |
| | <p>Required 8b) Materials do not confuse or substitute mastery of skills or strategies for full comprehension of text; reading</p> | | |

| CRITERIA | INDICATORS OF SUPERIOR QUALITY | MEETS METRICS (YES/NO) | JUSTIFICATION/COMMENTS WITH EXAMPLES |
|--|--|------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No | <p>strategies support comprehension of specific texts and focus on building knowledge and insight. Texts do not serve as platforms to practice discrete strategies.</p> | | |
| | <p>Required 8c) Materials include guidance and support that regularly directs teachers to return to focused parts of the text to guide students through rereading and discussion about the ideas, events, and information found there.</p> | | |
| | <p>Required 8d) Materials provide additional supports for expressing understanding through formal discussion and writing development (e.g., sentence frames, paragraph frames, modeled writing, student exemplars etc.).</p> | | |
| | <p>Required 8e) Materials are easy to use and well organized for students and teachers. Teacher editions are concise and easy to manage with clear connections between teacher resources. The reading selections are centrally located within the materials and the center of focus.</p> | | |
| | <p>Required 8f) Materials provide support for diverse learners, including English Learners and students with disabilities. Appropriate suggestions and materials are provided for supporting varying student needs at the unit and lesson level using an accelerating learning approach¹⁴. The language in which questions and problems are posed is not an obstacle to understanding the content, and if it is, additional supports are included (e.g., alternative teacher approaches, pacing and instructional delivery options, strategies or suggestions for supporting access to text and/or content, suggestions for</p> | | |

¹⁴ **Accelerating Learning** is the prioritization of equitable access to **high-quality, grade level instruction for ALL students** as the center of the design and implementation of educational supports and services. Accelerating learning is both a mindset and an approach to teaching and learning, not a service, place or time. This approach leverages **acceleration**, a cyclical instructional process that connects unfinished learning in the context of new grade-level learning utilizing high-quality materials to provide timely, individualized supports throughout a variety of flexible instructional settings and groupings.

| CRITERIA | INDICATORS OF SUPERIOR QUALITY | MEETS METRICS (YES/NO) | JUSTIFICATION/COMMENTS WITH EXAMPLES |
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| | modifications, suggestions for vocabulary acquisition, extension activities, etc.). Materials include teacher guidance to help support special populations and provide opportunities for these students to meet the expectations of the standards and enable regular progress monitoring. | | |
| | 8g) The content can be reasonably completed within a regular school year and the pacing of content allows for maximum student understanding. Materials provide guidance about the amount of time a task might reasonably take. | | |
| FINAL EVALUATION | | | |
| <i>Tier 1 ratings</i> receive a “Yes” for all Non-Negotiable Criteria and a “Yes” for each of the Additional Criteria of Superior Quality. | | | |
| <i>Tier 2 ratings</i> receive a “Yes” for all Non-Negotiable Criteria, but at least one “No” for the Additional Criteria of Superior Quality. | | | |
| <i>Tier 3 ratings</i> receive a “No” for at least one of the Non-Negotiable Criteria. | | | |
| Compile the results for Sections I-III to make a final decision for the material under review. | | | |
| Section | Criteria | Yes/No | Final Justification/Comments |
| I. K-12 Non-Negotiable Criteria of Superior Quality ¹⁵ | 1. Quality of Texts | | |
| | 2. Text-Dependent Questions | | |
| | 3. Coherence of Tasks | | |
| II. K-5 Non-Negotiable Foundational Skills Criteria (grades K-5 only) ¹⁶ | 4. Foundational Skills | | |
| III. Additional Criteria of Superior Quality ¹⁷ | 5. Range and Volume of Texts | | |
| | 6. Writing to Sources, Speaking and Listening, and Language | | |
| | 7. Assessments | | |

¹⁵ Must score a “Yes” for all Non-Negotiable Criteria to receive a Tier 1 or Tier 2 rating.

¹⁶ Must score a “Yes” for all Non-Negotiable Criteria to receive a Tier 1 or Tier 2 rating.

¹⁷ Must score a “Yes” for all Additional Criteria of Superior Quality to receive a Tier 1 rating.

| CRITERIA | INDICATORS OF SUPERIOR QUALITY | MEETS METRICS (YES/NO) | JUSTIFICATION/COMMENTS WITH EXAMPLES |
|---|--------------------------------|---------------------------|---|
| | 8. Scaffolding and Support | | |
| FINAL DECISION FOR THIS MATERIAL: [Choose one: Tier 1, Exemplifies quality; Tier 2, Approaching quality; Tier 3, Not representing quality] | | | |

*As applicable