Maryland
STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

The Maryland K-12 ELA/Literacy High-Quality Instructional Materials Rubric is designed to evaluate core ELA/literacy instructional materials for inclusive, rigorous, and high-quality instructional methods, strategies, content and resources. It supports the identification of evidence of alignment to Maryland's ELA/Literacy High-Quality Instructional Materials (HQIM) Identification Framework.

This rubric was developed in partnership with Student Achievement Partners (SAP) and is grounded in SAP's Essential x Equitable (e²) Instructional Practice Framework. To learn more about the research and scholarship that underpins this work, please refer to MSDE's ELA High-Quality Instructional Materials Selection Framework.

STRUCTURE

- **Criteria**: These criteria, directly from Maryland's ELA/Literacy HQIM Identification Framework, ground what to look for within the review process.

- **Indicators of Evidence**: Additional guidance for identifying key aspects of each criterion within instructional materials.

- **Evidence and Rating:** Space to capture evidence for each criterion and select a rating to reflect the overall quality of evidence.

  - Strong Evidence indicates that the material fully meets the criterion with minimal or no gaps.

  - Some Evidence indicates that the materials partially meet the criterion but have meaningful gaps.

  - Minimal Evidence indicates that the materials have minimal evidence of the criterion.

  - No Evidence indicates that the materials do not show presence of the criterion.

Additional support is provided for each criterion through the ELA/Literacy HQIM Companion Guide. This complementary resource supports a more granular examination of the criteria and offers concrete examples to illustrate how Key Criteria manifest in instructional materials. The companion guide includes key definitions, guidance on how to gather evidence, additional sample evidence, grade-level specifics (🚩 noted in the rubric when particularly relevant), red flags, and considerations for multilingual learners and students with diverse learning needs.

ORGANIZATION

Each review tool in this suite follows the same overarching organization, connected to Maryland's ELA/Literacy HQIM Identification Framework. Review materials for HQIM in Maryland are organized into four categories. Categories are divided into domains, which are further broken down into individual criteria.

Woven through all categories are 5 approaches to design that reflect the priorities Maryland has for instructional materials to truly be high quality. The priorities reflected in a criterion are communicated with these icons.

Icon	Maryland Priority
	Building Background Knowledge
	Affirming Cultural Identities
	Supporting Multilingual Learners
	Teaching Every Student
	Meeting Teacher Needs

For further information on scoring and the instructional materials review process, visit the Maryland HQIM website.

Grade-Level and Standards Aligned

Instructional Materials must receive an overall rating of "Strong" in the category of Grade-Level and Standards Aligned to be rated along the remaining three categories.

Note: These criteria reflect a prioritized set of criteria from the Grade-Level and Standards Aligned category of the ELA/Literacy HQIM Identification Framework. The additional criteria found in the framework may be useful for further evaluation of instructional materials.

DOMAIN 1: INTEGRATED LITERACY

Criteria	Indicators of Evidence	Evidence and Rating
Reading, Writing, Speaking, and Listening: Instructional materials demonstrate the interrelated components of literacy by highlighting the relationships among reading, writing, speaking, and listening throughout instruction. These materials include instructional design that centers around students discussing and writing about what they read, as well as using their developing foundational skills to read and write.	• Texts and reading passages are accompanied by prompts, questions, or tasks that require students to respond to text through written expressions or discussions. • Writing instruction is grounded in the texts and topics that students are reading to grow knowledge. • Foundational skills instruction is connected to meaning-making and building knowledge of language and content, wherever possible. 🔖 *See Companion Guide for Grade-Level Specifics*	

DOMAIN 2: FOUNDATIONAL SKILLS ACROSS GRADE LEVELS

Criteria	Indicators of Evidence	Evidence and Rating
Systematic and Explicit Instruction: Instructional materials focus on the interrelated but discrete foundational skills of language: print concepts, phonological (including phonemic) awareness, phonics and word recognition, and fluency. More advanced foundational skills study continues to attend to fluency with grade-level texts as well as morphology, syllables, and etymology.	• Clearly defined set of skills that is appropriate to the grade level (i.e., a systematic scope and sequence of foundational skills in the early grades and targeted skills in later grades to support students' continued development). • Explicit, research-based instruction designed in ways that are clear, authentic, specific to the language of instruction, and in service of meaning-making. • Connections between languages (cross-linguistic connections) to support students' understanding and transfer of applicable knowledge between languages (e.g., sound, syllable, word level). 🔖 *See Companion Guide for Grade-Level Specifics*	
Fluency: Instructional materials focus in particular on fluency. Materials contain research-based systematic and supportive instruction and practice for students to read grade-appropriate texts with a focus on accuracy, automaticity, and prosody including repeated reading and processes to make meaning from reading.	• Lesson plans provide explicit teaching strategies for improving fluency (e.g., phrasing, expression, pacing). • Tasks and activities engage students in varied reading practices with grade-appropriate texts (e.g., repeated reading, modeled fluent reading, partner reading, readers theater). • Instructional strategies and activities emphasize both accuracy and automaticity (e.g., word chunking, targeted sound-spelling or morphology instruction/practice). 🔖 *See Companion Guide for Grade-Level Specifics*	

DOMAIN 3: TEXT AND RESOURCE SELECTION

Criteria	Indicators of Evidence	Evidence and Rating
Grade-Level Texts: Instructional materials ensure that all students have extensive access and pathways to actively engage with authentic grade-level texts. These core texts for instruction are appropriately complex for the grade (based on quantitative and qualitative features) to build students' ability to read closely.[1] This includes texts for reading aloud in the early grades and use of full-length works across all grades.	• Grade-level texts, aligned with college- and career-ready expectations (i.e., quantitative and qualitative complexity), are a focal point of instruction for all students. • Texts and reading passages include rich language and descriptive imagery to support vocabulary development and comprehension of complex topics and content. • Texts include full-length works (e.g., reading full novels). Units and lessons offer opportunities for students' sustained engagement over time with texts that expose them to different styles of writing and modes of expression. 🔖 *See Companion Guide for Grade-Level Specifics*	

DOMAIN 4: QUESTIONS AND TASKS

Criteria	Indicators of Evidence	Evidence and Rating
Text Based and Standards Aligned: Instructional materials include text-specific questions, discussion prompts, and tasks to support students' access to complex texts, language, and ideas (including for texts in home languages or translated texts).	• Attending to each text's particular qualitative complexities (i.e., meaning/purpose, structure, language, knowledge demands). • Spurring the analytical thinking required by college- and career-ready standards at each grade level (i.e., attention to key ideas, details, craft, structure). • Addressing the audience, purpose, and genre of the text and prompt, as well as key language uses and language expectations.	

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[1] Council of Chief State School Officers & National Governors Association. (2013). Supplemental information for Appendix A of the Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts and Literacy: New research on text complexity. https://achievethecore.org/page/1193/supplemental-information-for-appendix-a-of-the-common-core-state- standards -for-english-language-arts-and-literacy-new-research-on-text-complexity

DOMAIN 5: VOLUME, QUALITY, AND RANGE OF WRITING

Criteria	Indicators of Evidence	Evidence and Rating
Explicit Instruction: Instructional materials include attending to the discrete skills of writing across genres in ways that make the thinking, planning, and writing more visible.	• Explicit instruction on paragraph and text structure within context (e.g., via structure-focused mnemonic devices, graphic organizers). • Use of relevant tools needed for access to effective construction and composition of writing. • Sentence-level instruction in context (including grammar/usage). • Attention to the writing process, discipline- and genre-specific skills, and language development alongside development of writing skills.[2] • Addressing language-specific linguistic structures, including key language uses, language expectations, and organizational structure for the text genre and prompt. 🔖 *See Companion Guide for Grade-Level Specifics*	

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[2] English Learners Success Forum, ELA Guidelines

DOMAIN 6: SPEAKING, LISTENING, AND ORAL LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT

Criteria	Indicators of Evidence	Evidence and Rating
Integrated Oral Language Development: Instructional materials regularly integrate oral language, writing, reading, and discussion about grade-level texts, topics, and skills.[3]	• Attention to meaning and oral language development within foundational skills instruction. • Writing activities that engage students in discussion and oral rehearsals as part of the writing process.[4] • Opportunities for listening comprehension through collaborative conversation about grade-level texts and topics. • Use of expressive language (i.e., speaking, writing) with increasingly complex language and syntax, demonstrating growing proficiency in the language of instruction. 🔖 *See Companion Guide for Grade-Level Specifics*	

DECISION POINT

Instructional Materials must have **Strong** evidence overall in the Grade Level and Standards Aligned category to be rated against the remaining categories. This category identifies the foundational prerequisites that must be met for the review process to continue.

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[3] English Learners Success Forum, ELA Guidelines
[4] English Learners Success Forum, ELA Guidelines

Designed to Affirm Students

DOMAIN 1: CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE-SUSTAINING INSTRUCTION

Criteria	Indicators of Evidence	Evidence and Rating
Affirm and Center Students: Instructional materials affirm, engage, and center past and current knowledge of Black/African, Indigenous, Brown, and non-Western literary expressions and highlight multilingualism. Instructional materials are designed to encourage students to anchor learning in their individual experiences, backgrounds, and cultural knowledge to support and further literacy work.	• Regular opportunities for students to share who they are and what they know, bringing their unique funds of knowledge to their literacy experiences.[5] • Reflection and conversation within the context of the text or topic under study that affirm students' identities and experiences. • Tasks that support students to express (orally, in writing, in media, and other formats) how texts and topics under study do or do not affect their understanding of the world. • Tasks that require students to integrate what they have read and/or learned from others with their own knowledge and synthesize ideas across texts.	
Literacy as a Tool for Civic Engagement: Instructional materials consistently include texts and tasks that prompt students to apply and develop their civic engagement skills and examine social context and current events, using literacy to question the world and the current status quo.	• Opportunities for students to read, write, speak, and listen to think critically about the content/perspective of the text or resources. • Attention to historical and social contexts in texts. • Opportunities for critically examining texts for influence, bias, and diversity of perspectives and for considering whose voice is elevated and whose is absent.	

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[5] Moll, L. C., Amanti, C., Neff, D., & González, N. (1992). Funds of knowledge for teaching: Using a qualitative approach to connect homes and classrooms. *Theory Into Practice, 31*(2), 132–141.

Criteria	Indicators of Evidence	Evidence and Rating
Real-World Connections: Instructional materials consistently connect with students' lives, their future goals, their communities, and the world and nurture ways for students to engage in their own communities and beyond.	• Use of literacy texts and tasks to connect to current events. • Collaborative tasks and/or projects involve real-world problem-solving through meaningful interactions with peers and the local community. • Connections between developing literacy skills and knowledge and students' academic and personal goals.	

DOMAIN 2: LANGUAGE AFFIRMING INSTRUCTION

Criteria	Indicators of Evidence	Evidence and Rating
Multilingualism in Literacy: Instructional materials are deliberately designed to honor and build upon students' language(s) as an asset, encouraging students to use their linguistic repertoire to communicate with one another via reading, writing, speaking, and listening while engaging in literacy.	• Promoting sustained oral and written communication, including explicit encouragement to use a range of language practices and registers and to use their full language repertoire through translanguaging so all students express themselves in a language they are comfortable with while working to learn literacy content and meet language objectives in the target language.[6] • Building vocabulary and understanding of new concepts in English and home language(s), including use of social and academic vocabulary. • Making cross-linguistic connections, including identifying and comparing similarities and differences between home language(s) and English (e.g., cognates) or registers and registers of instruction.	

[6] García, O., Johnson, S. I., & Seltzer, K. (2017). *The translanguaging classroom: Leveraging student bilingualism for learning.* Caslon. For more, see Translanguaging Strategies, English Learner Success Forum.

Criteria	Indicators of Evidence	Evidence and Rating
Language Objectives & English Language Development (ELD) Coherence: Instructional materials provide explicit alignment between language and content objectives to identify language goals that are embedded with content-based meaning. This includes language objectives for both expressive (writing and speaking) and receptive (listening and reading) communication that are aligned to text and task. Core instructional materials should also consistently and meaningfully align language objectives, language standards (e.g., WIDA), and ELD curriculum and instruction. This includes aligning the content of core lessons and units with ELD standards and indicating specific literacy skills that teachers should amplify through ELD instruction.	• Language objectives are specific to the text and topic under study and include the target language skill (speaking, listening, reading, and writing), the communicative purpose, and the content. • Language objectives develop language intentionally over the course of a unit (moving from simpler to more complex language, moving towards increasingly precise and complex use of language, culminating in an opportunity to demonstrate language). • ELD instruction leverages a topic, language goals, and language-based supports that are directly applicable to core instruction (e.g., building knowledge within the same topic of study, additional vocabulary or syntax instruction from grade-level anchor texts, additional supportive discussion time before core instruction writing tasks).	

Criteria	Indicators of Evidence	Evidence and Rating
Text Selection to Support Language Development: Instructional materials use texts that have all of the following elements: a. authentic language; b. rich vocabulary and syntax; c. content that is written in home languages, when possible, and is high quality (e.g., not poor-quality translations); and d. formats that support meaning-making and language development (e.g., text engineering)	• Texts, topics, and resources include varied use of language, dialogues, expressions, and idioms while supporting cultural references and context for real-world communication. • Instructional materials, texts, and resources provide additional explanations, context, formatting or support for language development (e.g., annotations, relevant illustrations or visuals, insets, text chunking, text cognates or vocabulary supports in home languages). • Texts and resources include high-quality translations that accurately capture the meaning, tone, and nuances of the original content to support students' comprehension and learning in English.	

Instructional Design

DOMAIN 1: BUILDING KNOWLEDGE

Criteria	Indicators of Evidence	Evidence and Rating
Knowledge-Building Focus: Instructional materials center on building knowledge about self, others, and the world through regular interaction with knowledge-rich texts and literacy experiences. Units include topically connected, interdisciplinary content (e.g., include art, history, math, science, and social studies). Literacy skills and strategies are primarily taught and used in service of building knowledge through reading, writing, speaking, and listening.	• Units have a clear knowledge-building focus that is present through integrated reading, writing, listening, and speaking instruction. It's easy to say: "We are learning about [topic]." • Balance of literary and informational texts is <u>grade-appropriate</u>. • Materials clearly articulate and highlight for students both the lesson-level knowledge focus (e.g., content objectives, teacher notes about knowledge gained, displaying goals) and how that knowledge builds over time (e.g., essential questions addressing the big ideas and content knowledge of the unit). • Unit topics represent a range of interdisciplinary content within and across grade levels (e.g., social studies, science, art) in order to build disciplinary knowledge. • Collections of texts, multimedia, and/or art resources (e.g., videos, visual art, music, etc.) at a variety of complexity levels are sequenced around knowledge-building topics/themes that align with a unit's focus. • Frequent opportunities to integrate knowledge across multiple texts through discussion, writing, projects/research, or culminating assessments/activities (e.g., lesson opener that asks students to recall what they have already learned; anchor charts or student note catchers to track knowledge over time; prompts or routines that ask students to discuss and draw upon their growing knowledge bases). • Tasks that scaffold students' understandings to build to a culminating task that demonstrates the knowledge gained throughout a unit. 🔖 *See Companion Guide for Grade-Level Specifics*	

Criteria	Indicators of Evidence	Evidence and Rating
Inclusive Content: Instructional materials use texts and resources that affirm expansive and diverse perspectives and identities, including content from a variety of community, cultural, and language backgrounds within and across school years.	Texts and resources at each grade level with all of the following elements: • Elevation of multiple perspectives; • Opportunities to compare and contrast narratives and counternarratives; • Inspiration for reflection, motivation, and civic engagement in response to ideas and content presented; and • Engagement of students in learning about the joy, resilience, determination, ingenuity, and leadership of all groups and communities, including historically marginalized communities. 🔖 *See Companion Guide for Grade-Level Specifics*	
Systematic Organization: Instructional materials are built around knowledge-focused units that are topically connected and sequenced systematically, within and across grades, to connect to and build upon students' expanding knowledge bases.	• Explicit connections to knowledge built in previous units and grade levels (e.g., teacher notes about related areas of study in the curriculum at the beginning of a unit). • Content over time builds on previous understandings to deepen students' knowledge coherently (e.g., studying the plants in Kindergarten > ecosystems in Grade 3 > climate change in Grade 4).	

DOMAIN 2: STUDENT AGENCY

Criteria	Indicators of Evidence	Evidence and Rating
Metacognitive Processes: Instructional materials apply a research-based approach to develop students' metacognition by directly teaching and supporting students to monitor understanding during reading and self-regulate during writing.	• Setting goals, self-monitoring growth, and reflecting on the impact of students' choices and ongoing development as readers, writers, and communicators. • Providing explicit practices to develop students' metalinguistic awareness around language use and choices.[7] • Modeling and developing strategies that support students in making their thinking visible through speaking or writing as they develop their understanding. • Supporting students with diverse learning needs in developing metacognitive strategies.	
Choice: Instructional materials prompt teachers to provide students ample time to explore literacy concepts and content, during which students are given regular opportunities to choose how to spend time, whom to spend it with, and what materials are used (texts, topics, and tasks).	• Options for choosing methods for expressing students' understanding that best reflect their strengths as learners and their understanding of the content. • Self-selection of texts or resources (e.g., selections that represent their interests, identities, abilities). • Tasks that invite students to identify and pursue their own questions. • Regular student feedback about literacy experiences and instruction. 🔖 *See Companion Guide for Grade-Level Specifics*	

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[7] English Learners Success Forum, ELA Guidelines

Criteria	Indicators of Evidence	Evidence and Rating
Collaborative Learning: Instructional materials engage all students in collaborative learning through a variety of research-based routines, structures, and tasks that allow for whole-group, small-group, and independent thinking. Materials explicitly plan for students to demonstrate their curiosity and share their tentative thinking, ask questions, and adjust their understanding by building on one another's ideas through speaking, listening, reading, and writing.	• Daily opportunities for student collaboration that include a variety of structures and involve speaking, listening, reading, and writing (e.g., frequent partner conversations, extended group-learning activities, independent stop and jot before whole-group discussion, lead or take on different roles in collaborative groups). • Extended and supportive opportunities for discourse about grade-level texts and tasks that include clear discussion structures, prompts, student roles, and supports for engaging (e.g., slides, protocols, anchor charts, student-facing materials). • Opportunities for students to revisit their thinking over the course of a lesson and a unit after interacting with peers (e.g., returning to anchor charts, key questions, or student work). • Guidance, tools, and/or prompts for students in supporting one another through challenging academic tasks and asking for help as needed (e.g., sample teacher prompts and modeling, sample student prompts, intentional opportunities for pausing to share challenges and potential strategies).	

DOMAIN 3: PROGRESS MONITORING AND SUPPORTING STUDENTS

Criteria	Indicators of Evidence	Evidence and Rating
Supports and Scaffolds:[8] Instructional materials are designed to support a variety of student strengths and diverse learning needs in ways that are based on research and do not interfere with their ability to engage with grade-level content.	• Text- and/or content-specific guidance on identifying and addressing potential individual student needs so that supports, scaffolds, and extensions can be effectively differentiated, including adjustments to content, process, or product • Resources that provide reteaching of skills and concepts for students not yet proficient in grade-level foundational reading, writing, and language skills. • Supports and scaffolds that are designed to shift responsibility to students over time. 🔖 *See Companion Guide for Grade-Level Specifics*	
Simultaneous Literacy and Language Development: Instructional materials include intentional language learning opportunities alongside appropriate, research-based supports for multilingual learners and students with diverse learning needs to develop literacy and language simultaneously.	• Explicit instruction in writing, text structure, syntax (sentence structure), and cohesive devices (words that connect ideas in a text such as although, however). • Embedded high-leverage language development supports that are aligned with the content and literacy goals (e.g., identifying cognates, sentence frames). • Teacher guidance for strategic grouping to support the development of language.	

[8] Thoughtfully designed questions and tasks that provide access to grade-level, culturally responsive-sustaining, and language-affirming experiences for students are one form of support for students and are addressed in other sections of this framework.

Criteria	Indicators of Evidence	Evidence and Rating
Progress Monitoring: Instructional materials embed resources and frequent opportunities to monitor learning and respond to students' progress in grade-level literacy skills, application of those skills, development of language, and growth of knowledge using their existing language resources.[9] Materials demonstrate how to diagnose critical student needs and draw clear connections to integrating supports and prioritizing instruction.	• Embedded and consistent formative assessment practices for content, literacy, and language learning. • Varied and multiple means of demonstrating integrated content, literacy, and language learning (e.g., podcast, mock interview, blogpost). • Regular monitoring of grade-level reading proficiency. • Regular monitoring of oral language development as well as specific, discrete language skills that are assessed within the content and literacy tasks. • Regular monitoring of writing over time (e.g., writing portfolios), including opportunities to demonstrate progress in the home language(s) and target language. 🔖 *See Companion Guide for Grade-Level Specifics*	
Meaningful Feedback: Instructional materials provide frequent opportunities for feedback to advance content understanding, literacy skills, language development, and metalinguistic awareness, as proven effective by research and as appropriate to the type of literacy instruction.	• Peer and teacher cycles of feedback, including communicating progress with affirming evidence of literacy progress. • Normalization of mistake-making and affirmation of effort and growth. • Guidance for explicit, timely, informative, and accessible formative feedback to address partial understandings and alternative thinking about tasks, texts, and topics in ways that allow learners to monitor their own progress effectively and to use that information to guide their own effort and practice. • Guidance on how and when to collect data, as well as how to respond to specific student strengths and needs.	

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[9] English Learners Success Forum, ELA Guidelines

Educator Support

DOMAIN 1: EDUCATOR KNOWLEDGE

Criteria	Indicators of Evidence	Evidence and Rating
Examine Self: Instructional materials support teachers in examining their own identities, biases, and belief systems to help them understand how these factors might influence instructional choices and the lens through which they interpret student thinking. These materials may include reflection prompts, examples of educator thinking, or embedded professional learning.	• Guidance at the beginning of each grade/unit that invites teachers to identify and reflect on the way their identities, experiences, and knowledge impact how they view students and their thinking/work (e.g., prompts or reflection activities, sample educator thinking). • Prompts to address identify and interrupt biases (e.g., research summaries, prompts, sample educator thinking about the inherent capabilities of multilingual learners or students with diverse learning needs).	
Students' Linguistic and Cultural Assets: Instructional materials support educators to see and leverage students' linguistic and cultural assets, approaching these assets with a disposition of curiosity and appreciation. These materials include prompts for educators to learn about and integrate the knowledge, strengths, and resources of students, families, and the community — especially those who have been historically marginalized.	• Guidance, materials, reflection prompts, and/or resources for teachers to use related to their own understanding of student assets (e.g., student surveys, activities to identify student linguistic and cultural assets). • Guidance, materials, reflection prompts, and/or resources for teachers to use related to their own understanding of the assets of their learning community (e.g., family letters, family surveys, suggestions for family or community partnerships related to the topic of study). • Particular attention to the ways that educators can attend to the assets of students, families, and communities who have been historically marginalized (e.g., centering multilingual students as thought leaders through instruction, prompts to consider inclusion of families of color).	

Criteria	Indicators of Evidence	Evidence and Rating
Supporting Language Development for All Learners: Instructional materials build educators' understanding of research-based practices to support language development for all learners, especially for multilingual learners and students with diverse learning needs.	• Building of knowledge about how language works and how students' language develops, including oracy and language development standards. • Use of home language, translanguaging, and development of cross-linguistic connections to deepen understanding of the linguistic features across languages and registers. • Simultaneous development of language, content, and literacy skills, including deepening understanding of instructional strategies that support this goal (e.g., embedding supports for vocabulary and nonlinguistic visual language supports). • Examples of sample student responses within the context of lesson content and task with a range of language proficiency levels.	
Supporting Literacy Development: Instructional materials deepen educators' literacy knowledge for teaching through building educators' understanding of research-based practices to support literacy development.	• Development of word recognition and language comprehension and the metacognitive processes that support the development of these skills. • Progression of writing skill development (i.e., handwriting and spelling to support sentence-, paragraph-, and text-level composition).	

Criteria	Indicators of Evidence	Evidence and Rating
Text and Topic Knowledge: Instructional materials support educators to engage students with rich texts and topics. These materials include all of the following elements: a. text analysis for anchor texts, including quantitative and qualitative complexity; b. considerations for engaging a diverse group of students in anchor text/unit content in inclusive ways (e.g., guidance, explanatory content, teacher notes), including navigating critical conversations to humanize the interactions within literacy work and c. explanations, examples of concepts, and/or additional resources to support teachers in building their own knowledge of the content and topics under study.	Text-specific anchor text analysis that includes: • Quantitative complexity (e.g., Lexile) and grade-level band placement. • Qualitative complexity with brief, text-specific explanation (e.g., complex structure due to frequent use of flashbacks) that prepares educators for instruction. • Rationale for grade-level and unit placement. • Student considerations (e.g., relevant potential background knowledge, life experiences; potentially sensitive or text-based content with suggestions for how to address). • Curated list of educator-facing resources to build content knowledge in advance of a unit (e.g., links to articles, videos, or websites).	

DOMAIN 2: USABILITY

Criteria	Indicators of Evidence	Evidence and Rating
Design and Functionality: Instructional materials are designed to support ease of student and teacher use.	• Scalability and accessibility and the ability to disseminate the curriculum in a way that ensures equitable student, teacher, and community access. • Visually appealing design with an organized and logical format. • Appropriate pacing. • Clear and concise educator-facing guidance that enables educators to prepare lessons in a timely manner. • A variety of ways to engage with the content, including leveraging current technology and tools.	
Adaptability for Context: Instructional materials contain materials and/or meaningful suggestions for how to adapt for district, school, and/or classroom context. These materials may include varied selections for topics under study; flexibility to modify tasks to connect to local resources, organizations, or issues; or varied pacing suggestions based on number of school days or minutes of instruction.	• Materials include clear guidance or adapted lesson materials for varied contexts (e.g., options for a 90- or 120-minute instructional block; must do/may do instructional components; extensions). • Materials offer a selection of units or arcs of learning that schools and/or teachers could select from (e.g., selecting from two sample units on sustainability—food sustainability and urban renewable energy; a range of research project materials on the same topic). • Invitations within each grade level to attend to local context though task or topic (e.g., suggestions for planning a field trip to a city food center during a unit on farms).	

Criteria	Indicators of Evidence	Evidence and Rating
Program Coherence: Core instructional materials work in concert with (or have the potential to work in concert with) additional supplemental ELA/literacy materials (e.g., interventional materials). These materials include aligned and research-based content and instructional approaches across materials.	• Included supplementary or intervention materials address students' strengths and needs in ways that systematically leverage and build their foundational skills, fluency with grade-level texts, language and literacy skills, and knowledge of the world through structured literacy practices. • Assessment materials in core instruction provide clear guidance and connections to supplementary materials. • Materials provide key language uses and expectations for each unit and lesson so that instruction in English Language Development and use of supplemental materials can align with the language objectives that are the focus of core instruction.	