Tri-State Quality Review Rubric & Rating Process
ELA/Literacy Lessons/Units

Achieve
American Diploma Project Network

Tri-State Quality Review Rubric

The Tri-State Collaborative (comprised of educational leaders from Massachusetts, New York, and Rhode Island and facilitated by Achieve) has developed criterion-based rubrics and review processes to evaluate the quality of lessons and units intended to address the Common Core State Standards for Mathematics and ELA/Literacy.

The following presentation is designed to introduce the Quality Review Rubric for ELA/Literacy.

Quality Review Rubric & Process
Purposes

The Quality Review Rubric and Process are designed to serve a variety of purposes:

1) **Provide clear, descriptive standards for CCSS lessons/units and thus guide educators who are engaged in teaching to the Common Core.**

2) **Identify exemplary lessons/units that serve as models of CCSS instruction.**

3) **Guide collegial review and jurying processes.**

4) **Provide meaningful, constructive feedback to developers of lessons/units.**

Criteria that define the rubric are organized as a **checklist** describing quality in **four dimensions**.

I. Alignment to the Rigors of the CCSS	II. Key Areas of Focus in the CCSS	III. Instructional Supports	IV. Assessment
The lesson/unit aligns with the letter and spirit of the CCSS:	*The lesson/unit addresses key areas of focus in the CCSS:*	*The lesson/unit is responsive to varied student learning needs:*	*The lesson/unit regularly assesses whether students are mastering standards-based content:*

❏ Focuses teaching and learning on a targeted set of grade-level CCS ELA/Literacy standards.**
 ❏ Makes close reading of text(s) a central focus of instruction and includes sequences of text-dependent questions that cause students to read closely, examine textual evidence, and discern deep meaning.**
 ❏ Includes a clear and explicit purpose for instruction and selects text(s) that are of sufficient quality and scope for the stated purpose.**
 ❏ Focuses on quality text selections that measure within the grade-level text complexity band.** (i.e., present vocabulary, syntax, text structures, levels of meaning/purpose, and other qualitative characteristics that are similar to CCSS grade-level exemplars [Appendices A and B])
 In addition, for units:
 ❏ Integrates reading, writing, speaking and listening so that students apply and synthesize advancing literacy skills.
 ❏ (Grades 3-5) Builds students' content knowledge and their understanding of the reading and writing norms in history/social studies, the arts, science or technical subjects. (Note: Grades 6-12 rubric for literacy in history/social studies and science is under development.)
	❏ **Text-Based Evidence:** Facilitates rich and rigorous evidence-based discussions and writing through specific, thought-provoking questions about common texts (including, when applicable, illustrations, charts, diagrams, audio/video, and media).**
	 ❏ **Writing from Sources:** Routinely expects that students draw evidence from texts to inform, explain, or make an argument in various written forms (notes, summaries, short responses, or formal essays).**
	 ❏ **Academic Vocabulary:** Focuses on building students' academic vocabulary throughout instruction.**
	 In addition, for units:
	 ❏ **Increasing Text Complexity:** Focuses students on the close reading of a progression of complex texts drawn from the grade-level band. Provides text-centered learning that is sequenced, scaffolded, and supported to advance students toward independent reading of complex texts at the CCR level.**
	 ❏ **Balance of Texts:** Includes a balance of informational and literary texts as stipulated in the CCSS [p.5] and indicated by instructional time.**
	 ❏ **Building Disciplinary Knowledge:** Provides opportunities for students to build knowledge about a topic or subject through analysis of strategically sequenced, discipline-specific texts.
	 ❏ **Balance of Writing:** Includes a balance of on-demand and process writing (e.g. multiple drafts and revisions over time) and short, focused research projects.
		❏ Cultivates student interest and engagement in reading, writing, and speaking about texts.**
		 ❏ Provides *all* students with multiple opportunities to engage with text of appropriate complexity for the grade level; includes appropriate scaffolding so that students directly experience the complexity of the text.**
		 ❏ Focuses on sections of text(s) presenting the greatest challenge through discussion questions and other supports that promote deep thinking.
		 ❏ Integrates appropriate supports for students who are ELL, students with disabilities, and students reading well below the grade level text band.
		 ❏ Provides extensions and/or more advanced text for students reading well above the grade level text band.
		 In addition, for units:
		 ❏ Includes a progression of learning where concepts and/or skills advance and deepen over time.**
		 ❏ Gradually removes supports, requiring students to demonstrate their independent capacities.
		 ❏ Provides for authentic learning, application of literacy skills, student-directed inquiry, analysis, evaluation, and/or reflection.
		 ❏ Integrates targeted instruction in such areas as grammar and conventions, writing strategies, fluency, and all aspects of foundational reading for grades 3-5.
		 ❏ Includes regular independent reading based on student choice and interest to build stamina, confidence, and motivation.
		 ❏ Uses technology and media to deepen learning and draw attention to evidence and texts as appropriate.
			❏ Elicits direct, observable evidence of the degree to which a student can independently demonstrate the major targeted grade level CCSS standards with appropriately complex text(s).**
			   ❏ Assesses student proficiency using methods that are unbiased and accessible to all students.**
			   ❏ Includes aligned rubrics and/or assessment guidelines that provide sufficient guidance for interpreting performance.**
			 In addition, for units:
			   ❏ Uses varied modes of assessment, including a range of pre, formative, summative, and self-assessment measures

Rating: 3 2 1 0	**Rating: 3 2 1 0**	**Rating: 3 2 1 0**	**Rating: 3 2 1 0**

The most critical criteria are considered to be **"must have's" for a quality CCSS lesson/unit.

The Rating Process

Rating Scale for Each Dimension:

3: Meets all "must have" criteria (**) and most of the other criteria in the dimension.

2: Meets many of the "must have" criteria and many of the other criteria in the dimension.

1: Meets some of the criteria in the dimension.

0: Does not meet the criteria in the dimension.

1. Understand the Rubric
The Rating Process

The Overall Rating Scale:

E: Exemplar Lesson/Unit - meets all the "must have" criteria (**) and most of the other criteria in all four dimensions (mainly 3's).

E/I: Exemplar *if* Improved - needs some improvement in one or more dimensions (mainly 3's and 2's).

R: Needs Revision - is a "work in progress" and requires significant revision in one or more dimensions (mainly 2's and 1's).

N: Not Recommended - does not meet the criteria in the dimensions (mainly 1's and 0's).

1. Understand the Rubric
Criteria Describe an Exemplary CCSS Lesson/Unit

- The descriptive criteria listed in each dimension of the rubric represent a high standard of quality – describing characteristics that one would find in an exemplary CCSS lesson/unit.

- Critical criteria have been designated with a double asterisk (**) as essential or "must have" characteristics of CCSS quality. To be judged exemplary, a lesson/unit must at least meet all of these "must have" criteria.

- A criterion is checked when a reviewer believes that the lesson or unit contains clear, substantial evidence of the criterion's descriptor – that it exemplifies the qualities suggested by the criterion.

- Many "in progress" lessons/units, while representing good instruction, may not be deemed to currently meet the standard implied by a particular criterion, and thus may not be fully aligned with the Common Core.

- The pattern of checks in a column should thus indicate both the strengths of the lesson/unit and areas for possible improvement.

Quality Review Rubric Criteria
I. Alignment to the Rigors of the CCSS

"Must have" criteria

The lesson/unit aligns with the letter and spirit of the CCSS:

☐ **Focuses teaching and learning on a targeted set of grade-level CCS ELA/Literacy standards.****

☐ **Makes close reading of text(s) a central focus of instruction and includes sequences of text-dependent questions that cause students to read closely, examine textual evidence, and discern deep meaning.****

☐ **Includes a clear and explicit purpose for instruction and selects text(s) that are of sufficient quality and scope for the stated purpose.****

☐ **Focuses on quality text selections that measure within the grade-level text complexity band.**** (i.e., present vocabulary, syntax, text structures, levels of meaning/purpose, and other qualitative characteristics that are similar to CCSS grade-level exemplars [Appendices A and B])

In addition, for units:

☐ Integrates reading, writing, speaking and listening so that students apply and synthesize advancing literacy skills.

☐ (Grades 3-5) Builds students' content knowledge and their understanding of the reading and writing norms in history/social studies, the arts, science or technical subjects. (Note: Grades 6-12 rubric for literacy in history/social studies and science is under development.)

Quality Review Rubric Criteria
II. Key Areas of Focus in the CCSS

The lesson/unit addresses key areas of focus in the CCSS:

** "Must have" criteria

- ❑ **Text-Based Evidence: Facilitates rich and rigorous evidence-based discussions and writing through specific, thought-provoking questions about common texts** (including, when applicable, illustrations, charts, diagrams, audio/video, and media).******

- ❑ **Writing from Sources: Routinely expects that students draw evidence from texts to inform, explain, or make an argument in various written forms** (notes, summaries, short responses, or formal essays).******

- ❑ **Academic Vocabulary: Focuses on building students' academic vocabulary throughout instruction.****

In addition, for units:

- ❑ **Increasing Text Complexity: Focuses students on the close reading of a progression of complex texts drawn from the grade-level band. Provides text-centered learning that is sequenced, scaffolded, and supported to advance students toward independent reading of complex texts at the CCR level.****

- ❑ **Balance of Texts: Includes a balance of informational and literary texts as stipulated in the CCSS [p.5] and indicated by instructional time.****

- ❑ Building Disciplinary Knowledge: Provides opportunities for students to build knowledge about a topic or subject through analysis of strategically sequenced, discipline-specific texts.

- ❑ Balance of Writing: Includes a balance of on-demand and process writing (e.g. multiple drafts and revisions over time) and short, focused research projects.

Quality Review Rubric Criteria
III. Instructional Supports

The lesson/unit is responsive to varied student learning needs: ** **"Must have" criteria**

- ❑ **Cultivates student interest and engagement in reading, writing, and speaking about texts.****
- ❑ **Provides *all* students with multiple opportunities to engage with text of appropriate complexity for the grade level; includes appropriate scaffolding so that students directly experience the complexity of the text.****
- ❑ Focuses on sections of text(s) presenting the greatest challenge through discussion questions and other supports that promote deep thinking.
- ❑ Integrates appropriate supports for students who are ELL, students with disabilities, and students reading well below the grade level text band.
- ❑ Provides extensions and/or more advanced text for students reading well above the grade level text band.

In addition, for units:

- ❑ **Includes a progression of learning where concepts and/or skills advance and deepen over time.****
- ❑ Gradually removes supports, requiring students to demonstrate their independent capacities.
- ❑ Provides for authentic learning, application of literacy skills, student-directed inquiry, analysis, evaluation, and/or reflection.
- ❑ Integrates targeted instruction in such areas as grammar and conventions, writing strategies, fluency, and all aspects of foundational reading for grades 3-5.
- ❑ Includes regular independent reading based on student choice and interest to build stamina, confidence, and motivation.
- ❑ Uses technology and media to deepen learning and draw attention to evidence and texts as appropriate.

Quality Review Rubric Criteria
IV. Assessment

** "Must have" criteria

The lesson/unit regularly assesses whether students are mastering standards-based content:

- ☐ **Elicits direct, observable evidence of the degree to which a student can independently demonstrate the major targeted grade level CCSS standards with appropriately complex text(s).****

- ☐ **Assesses student proficiency using methods that are unbiased and accessible to all students.****

- ☐ **Includes aligned rubrics and/or assessment guidelines that provide sufficient guidance for interpreting performance.****

In addition, for units:

- ☐ Uses varied modes of assessment, including a range of pre, formative, summative, and self-assessment measures.

Step 2. Use the Rubric & Criteria to Evaluate a Lesson/Unit
I. Alignment to the Rigors of the CCSS

1. **Record** the grade and title of the lesson/unit at the top of the Quality Review Rubric.

2. **Scan** the lesson/unit packet to see what it contains and how it is organized. **Skim** key materials in the packet, particularly those related to the alignment of its instruction and assessment.

3. **Identify the grade-level CCSS** that the lesson/unit targets and compare its focus and expectations to those of the targeted CCSS

4. **Do a close reading of text** that serves as the centerpiece for the lesson/unit, analyzing its complexity and its relationship to instruction.

5. **Analyze** the lesson/unit for evidence of *Alignment to the Rigors of the CCSS* (Dimension I). **Check** the criteria in Column I for which there is clear and substantial evidence of meeting the descriptors.

   - Closely examine the evidence presented within a lesson/unit packet through the "lens" of each criterion in each of the four dimensions.
   - If clear and substantial evidence is found, check the criterion; if not, include comments to explain why the lesson/unit does not yet meet the criterion's standard.

6. **Examine the pattern of checks** in the column. Determine which of the descriptors on the 3-2-1-0 rating scale (found below the rubric, on the left) best characterizes the current *Alignment* of the lesson/unit.

   - If all applicable "must have" criteria have been met, as well as other criteria deemed important, the lesson/unit is considered "exemplary" and receives a "3" rating.

   - If all "must have" criteria are not met, determine where the lesson/unit currently sits along the rating scale for the dimension.

     3: Meets all "must have" criteria (**) and most of the other criteria in the dimension.

     2: Meets many of the "must have" criteria and many of the other criteria in the dimension.

     1: Meets some of the criteria in the dimension.

     0: Does not meet the criteria in the dimension.

7. **Circle the rating** at the bottom of the column.

8. Use the criteria to **make observations and recommendations** about this lesson/unit.

Step 3: Repeat the Process

II. Key Areas of Focus in the CSSS

- Analyze the evidence
- Check the criteria that are met
- Use the Criteria to determine a 3-2-1-0 rating

III. Instructional Supports

- Analyze the evidence
- Check the criteria that are met
- Use the Criteria to determine a 3-2-1-0 rating

IV. Assessment

- Analyze the evidence
- Check the criteria that are met
- Use the Criteria to determine a 3-2-1-0 rating

The four dimensional ratings for a particular lesson or unit can tell a lot about its current status as an exemplar of CCSS instruction.

> **For example:** A lesson rated 3-3-2-1 might be seen as well Aligned with the CCSS and its Areas of Focus, but need some additional thinking about Instructional Supports and some significant revision in its approach to Assessment.

When a single rating of a lesson is beneficial:

1. **Review the patterns of the checked criteria and the ratings for each of the four dimensions.**

2. **Make a summary judgment about the overall quality of the lesson/unit, using the Overall Rating Scale:**

   E: Exemplar Lesson/Unit - meets all the "must have" criteria (**) and most of the other criteria in all four dimensions (mainly 3's).

   E/I: Exemplar *if* Improved - needs some improvement in one or more dimensions (mainly 3's and 2's).

   R: Needs Revision - is a "work in progress" and requires significant revision in one or more dimensions (mainly 2's and 1's).

   N: Not Recommended - does not meet the criteria in the dimensions (mainly 1's and 0's).

3. **Record the Overall Rating on the top right of the Rubric.**

Step 5. Provide Constructive Feedback

The overall and dimensional ratings for a lesson/unit are supplemented by constructive, criterion-based feedback:

I. Alignment to the Rigors of the CCSS	II. Key Areas of Focus in the CCSS	III. Instructional Supports	IV. Assessment
Observations and Comments:	Observations and Comments:	Observations and Comments:	Observations and Comments:
Recommendations for Improvement:	Recommendations for Improvement:	Recommendations for Improvement:	Recommendations for Improvement:
SUMMARY COMMENTS:			

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