

ELA/Literacy Grade-Level Instructional Materials Evaluation Tool

Quality Review



Textbooks and their digital counterparts are not only vital classroom tools but also a major expense, and it is worth taking time to find the best quality materials for students and teachers. While there is no perfect set of materials or textbooks, this Grade-Level Instructional Materials Evaluation Tool-Quality Review (GIMET-QR) is designed for use by professionals as a framework for evaluating the quality of instructional materials and choosing materials that are best suited to provide a coherent learning experience for students.

The district should begin its textbook adoption process by screening an entire publisher series with the Instructional Materials Evaluation Toolkit ([IMET](#)), developed by Student Achievement Partners, to see which ones are worthy of deeper consideration. The IMET, built on the [Publishers' Criteria](#) for ELA/Literacy and Mathematics, has two major non-negotiable sections and seven alignment sections. The GIMET-QR mirrors that structure, providing key criteria for each individual grade. But rather than providing an exhaustive list of grade-level standards, GIMET-QR focuses on the most distinctive, key features of the standards by grade, allowing for more in-depth analysis of the quality of the content and the instructional design of the materials—the rigor called for in the [Common Core State Standards \(CCSS\)-English Language Arts and Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects](#).

This document contains Guiding Statements along with references to the CCSS. In response to each Guiding Statement, reviewers are asked to cite specific supporting evidence from the materials themselves, rather than relying on the table of contents or the topic headings. Evidence should include scaffolding to support ALL students including [English language learners](#), students with identified disabilities, and struggling readers with the expectation that they learn and achieve the grade-level standards. This supporting evidence can then be used to rate whether and to what degree the criteria have been met. In some cases, reviewers will want to click on the reference links to obtain more detailed information from the Reading, Writing, Speaking and Listening, and Language strands of the CCSS, as well as the CCSS Appendices.

The review process culminates with a summary in which reviewers cite strengths and weaknesses of the product, thus providing explicit details for the overall assessment. The summary may also indicate any areas that district curriculum leaders may need to augment or supplement prior to making a recommendation for purchase.

Please note: [Acrobat Reader](#) or Adobe Acrobat is required to complete this form electronically and save any data entered by users.

NON-NEGOTIABLE 1: TEXT COMPLEXITY

*Even though the materials under review have already met the quantitative and qualitative measures of the **IMET** for grade-band analysis, the guiding statements provided in this section will examine text complexity in order to differentiate quality and richness among the texts your district is considering for adoption. To address the grade eight standards, the submitted materials need to create the conditions for rich and robust discussion and writing for **ALL** students (struggling readers, students with identified academic disabilities, **English language learners**, students who are performing at grade level, and advanced students).*

GUIDING STATEMENTS	SPECIFIC EVIDENCE FROM THE TEXT/MATERIALS	EVIDENCE RATING
<p>Literature and Informational Text</p> <p>NN1a. 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.)</p>		<p>4) extensive 3) sufficient 2) some 1) weak Rating Pending</p>
<p>NN1b. The materials consistently include a mix of short and full selections that contain rich and challenging content, ideas, and academic language worthy of <u>close</u> reading. (See exemplars in CCSS, Appendix B.)</p>		<p>4) extensive 3) sufficient 2) some 1) weak Rating Pending</p>

<p>NN1c. The materials consistently provide opportunities to read both literary and informational texts at the high end of the grades six through eight text complexity band.</p>		<p>4) extensive 3) sufficient 2) some 1) weak Rating Pending</p>
<p>NN1d. Materials provide strategies for grade-level vocabulary acquisition.</p>		<p>4) extensive 3) sufficient 2) some 1) weak Rating Pending</p>

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

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

NON-NEGOTIABLE 2: QUESTIONS AND TASKS

At least 80% of all questions in the submission are high-quality text-dependent and text-specific questions. The overwhelming majority of these questions reference specific text and draw student attention to the text they are reading. This requirement is already met if the district used the *IMET* screen. Text-dependent questions that address the grade eight standards will be described in greater depth in Alignment Criterion II.

ALIGNMENT CRITERION I: RANGE AND QUALITY OF TEXTS

Materials must reflect a wide range of text types and genres, as required by the standards. In grade eight, and across all other grade levels, there should be ample texts on topics that can support sustained study. Knowledge and vocabulary 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
<p>Literature and Informational Text</p> <p>1a. The range of materials, both print and digital, allows teachers and students to explore content that coherently and systematically builds knowledge and grade-level vocabulary across subjects, themes, and topics. (See CCSS Appendix B for examples of grade-level knowledge demands.) Text sets also address a wide variety of student interests, and are likely to foster independent reading.</p>		<p>4) extensive 3) sufficient 2) some 1) weak Rating Pending</p>
<p>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.</p>		<p>4) extensive 3) sufficient 2) some 1) weak Rating Pending</p>

GUIDING STATEMENTS	SPECIFIC EVIDENCE FROM THE TEXT/MATERIALS	EVIDENCE RATING
<p>1c. Materials include a rich and diverse sampling of literary texts including, but not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stories, drama, and poetry • Modern literature that invites comparisons to themes, characters, and events from traditional sources 		<p>4) extensive 3) sufficient 2) some 1) weak Rating Pending</p>
<p>1d. The range of informational texts include selections that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contain texts by two or more authors writing on the same topic • Offer varied claims, arguments, and accounts of a given topic or event • Present well-developed ideas, events, and themes • Provide or direct students or teachers to audio, video, or multimedia versions of a given selection 		<p>4) extensive 3) sufficient 2) some 1) weak Rating Pending</p>
<p>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.</p>		<p>4) extensive 3) sufficient 2) some 1) weak Rating Pending</p>
<p>OVERALL RATING: 4) extensive evidence 3) sufficient evidence 2) some evidence 1) weak evidence</p>		
<p>SUMMARY STATEMENT (Explain why the materials received this overall rating):</p>		

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 (*IMET*) and domain-specific words and phrases. Texts for grade eight students must include text-dependent questions that require the use of higher order thinking skills. There should be a range of questions that require students to attend to the author’s language as his/her vehicle for conveying meaning, as well as to support specific inferences with explicit details from the text. Most questions should require that the student refer to the text in several places in order to devise an answer—rather than asking only literal, “right there” types of questions—and should also require the student to begin comparing texts, authors, and opinions (*CCSS*).

GUIDING STATEMENTS	SPECIFIC EVIDENCE FROM THE TEXT/MATERIALS	EVIDENCE RATING
<p>Literature and Informational Text</p> <p>2a. <i>Key Ideas and Details</i>. Questions and tasks require students to explicitly attend to the text, including, but not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Citing the textual evidence that most strongly supports an analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text • Determining a central idea or theme and analyzing its development over the course of a text, including its relationship to characters, setting, plot, or supporting ideas • Objectively summarizing a text • Analyzing how a text makes connections among and distinctions between individuals, ideas, or events • Analyzing how dialogue or events serve to propel the action, reveal aspects of a character, or provoke a decision 		<p>4) extensive 3) sufficient 2) some 1) weak Rating Pending</p>

GUIDING STATEMENTS	SPECIFIC EVIDENCE FROM THE TEXT/MATERIALS	EVIDENCE RATING
<p>2b. <i>Craft and Structure</i>. Questions and tasks require students to explicitly attend to the text, including, but not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Determining the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative, connotative, and technical meanings, and analyzing the impact of word choices on meaning and tone • Analyzing an author’s use of analogies and allusions to other texts • Comparing and contrasting text structures and analyzing how structure contributes to meaning and style • Analyzing paragraph structure and its impact on refining a key concept • Analyzing how characters’ and readers’ points of view create effects such as suspense or humor • Determining an author’s point of view and analyzing how the author responds to conflicting viewpoints 		<p>4) extensive 3) sufficient 2) some 1) weak Rating Pending</p>

GUIDING STATEMENTS	SPECIFIC EVIDENCE FROM THE TEXT/MATERIALS	EVIDENCE RATING
<p>2c. <i>Integration of Knowledge and Ideas</i>. Questions and tasks require students to explicitly attend to the text, including, but not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluating the advantages and disadvantages of using different mediums to present a particular topic or idea • Analyzing the extent to which a filmed or live production of a story or drama stays faithful to or departs from the text or script, evaluating the choices made by the director or actors • Assessing the reasoning behind an argument or specific claims made in a text • Analyzing conflicting text accounts of the same topic • Analyzing how modern works draw on aspects of historical works such as myths, traditional stories, or religious works such as the Bible 		<p>4) extensive 3) sufficient 2) some 1) weak Rating Pending</p>
<p>OVERALL RATING: 4) extensive evidence 3) sufficient evidence 2) some evidence 1) weak evidence</p>		
<p>SUMMARY STATEMENT (Explain why the materials received this overall rating):</p>		

ALIGNMENT CRITERION III. WRITING TO SOURCES AND RESEARCH

The writing standards for each grade level highlight distinctive expectations about student writing. For details on grade-level writing expectations and writing exemplars for grade eight, 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
<p>3a. Writing assignments are explicitly connected to what students are reading, and routinely include writing over shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) and extended time frames (for research, reflection, and revision) for a range of discipline-specific tasks, purposes, and audiences.</p>		<p>4) extensive 3) sufficient 2) some 1) weak Rating Pending</p>
<p>3b. Text-dependent questions generally create the foundation for students to address culminating writing tasks, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Writing arguments to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence • Writing informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas, concepts, and information through the selection, organization, and analysis of relevant content • Writing narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, relevant descriptive details, and well-structured sequences of events 		<p>4) extensive 3) sufficient 2) some 1) weak Rating Pending</p>

GUIDING STATEMENTS	SPECIFIC EVIDENCE FROM THE TEXT/MATERIALS	EVIDENCE RATING
<p>3c. Reading materials can serve as models to explore writer’s craft, demonstrate use of domain-specific words and phrases, and support student production of grade-level argument, informational, and narrative writing.</p>		<p>4) extensive 3) sufficient 2) some 1) weak Rating Pending</p>
<p>3d. Materials include explicit support to teachers, either in the teacher’s edition or classroom materials, for writing instruction linked to the grade eight writing standards, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Producing clear and coherent writing in which the development and organization are appropriate to the task, purpose, and audience • Developing and strengthening writing by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach, focusing on how well purpose and audience have been addressed • Using technology to produce and publish writing and present the relationships between information and ideas efficiently, as well as to interact and collaborate with others <p>Materials should also guide the teaching of specific components of grade eight writing standards 1-3 (See CCSS).</p>		<p>4) extensive 3) sufficient 2) some 1) weak Rating Pending</p>

GUIDING STATEMENTS	SPECIFIC EVIDENCE FROM THE TEXT/MATERIALS	EVIDENCE RATING
<p>3e. Materials provide opportunities and resources for students to conduct short research projects to answer a question, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drawing on several sources and generating additional related, focused questions that allow for multiple avenues of further investigation • Gathering relevant information from multiple print and digital sources, using search terms effectively and assessing the credibility and accuracy of each source • Quoting or paraphrasing the data and conclusions of others while avoiding plagiarism • Following a standard format for citation • Drawing evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, or research 		<p>4) extensive 3) sufficient 2) some 1) weak Rating Pending</p>
<p>OVERALL RATING: 4) extensive evidence 3) sufficient evidence 2) some evidence 1) weak evidence</p>		
<p>SUMMARY STATEMENT (Explain why the materials received this overall rating):</p>		

ALIGNMENT CRITERION IV: FOUNDATIONAL SKILLS

Even at the upper grades students must be able to recognize and pronounce words fluently in order to focus on the major goal of reading, which is comprehension. Extended foundational skills instruction continues at the secondary school level and includes word analysis skills, the study of linguistic frames, syntax, structures of text, levels of meaning, and academic vocabulary for students who are not reading at grade level. Foundational skills that address the grade eight standards will be described in greater depth in Alignment Criterion VII—Scaffolds and Supports.

ALIGNMENT CRITERION V: LANGUAGE

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

GUIDING STATEMENTS	SPECIFIC EVIDENCE FROM THE TEXT/MATERIALS	EVIDENCE RATING
<p>Conventions of Standard English</p> <p>5a. There is evidence that grade-level grammar and conventions are addressed using an integrated and contextualized approach in daily instruction. Materials and tasks in grade eight are designed to help build student understanding and use of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Verbals, including gerunds, participles, or infinitives, in general and in terms of their impact on specific sentences• Verbs in active and passive voice• Verbs in the indicative, imperative, interrogative, conditional, and subjunctive moods• Correct shifts in verb voice and mood• Punctuation such as the comma, ellipsis, or dash to indicate a pause or break• The ellipsis to indicate an omission• Correct spelling		<p>4) extensive 3) sufficient 2) some 1) weak Rating Pending</p>

GUIDING STATEMENTS	SPECIFIC EVIDENCE FROM THE TEXT/MATERIALS	EVIDENCE RATING
<p>Knowledge of Language</p> <p>5b. Text supports instruction on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Using verb voice and mood to achieve particular effects 		<p>4) extensive 3) sufficient 2) some 1) weak Rating Pending</p>
<p>Vocabulary Acquisition and Use</p> <p>5c. The materials provide context, support, and strategies for teaching vocabulary acquisition skills, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Using context clues to unlock the meaning of words or phrases Using Greek or Latin affixes and roots as clues to the meaning of words Interpreting figures of speech in context Distinguishing among the connotations of words with similar denotations Consulting general and specialized reference materials to determine pronunciation or verify the meaning of words 		<p>4) extensive 3) sufficient 2) some 1) weak Rating Pending</p>
<p>5d. The materials provide embedded opportunities for students to encounter and develop an understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings.</p>		<p>4) extensive 3) sufficient 2) some 1) weak Rating Pending</p>
<p>OVERALL RATING: 4) extensive evidence 3) sufficient evidence 2) some evidence 1) weak evidence</p>		
<p>SUMMARY STATEMENT (Explain why the materials received this overall rating):</p>		

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 college- and career-readiness, as outlined in the standards (see [IMET](#)). If grade eight students are able to listen objectively to others, evaluate what they are learning, refine their opinions based on their reflections, and voice their own confusion/misunderstandings, their learning becomes deeper and more meaningful. They are exposed, at this level, to varied opinions, and must learn how to determine the validity of evidence provided by others as well as to provide evidence for their own choices and opinions (CCSS).

GUIDING STATEMENTS	SPECIFIC EVIDENCE FROM THE TEXT/MATERIALS	EVIDENCE RATING
<p>6a. <i>Comprehension and Collaboration.</i> Materials provide a language framework for student participation in academic conversations, including the ability to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare for a collaborative discussion where text is cited to support ideas, explicitly drawing on that preparation by referring to evidence on the topic • Follow rules for collegial discussions and decision-making, tracking progress toward specific goals and deadlines and defining individual roles • Demonstrate understanding of multiple perspectives • Interpret information presented in diverse media and explain how certain ideas clarify a topic • Evaluate the validity and soundness of a speaker’s claim • Pose questions that connect the ideas of several speakers • Use accurate, grade-appropriate conversational, general academic, and domain-specific words and phrases 		<p>4) extensive 3) sufficient 2) some 1) weak Rating Pending</p>

GUIDING STATEMENTS	SPECIFIC EVIDENCE FROM THE TEXT/MATERIALS	EVIDENCE RATING
<p>6b. <i>Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas</i>. Materials provide a language framework for student planning of effective presentations, focusing on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How to present claims and findings, emphasizing salient points in a focused, coherent manner using pertinent descriptions, facts, and details • How to use multimedia components and visual displays • How to adapt speech to a variety of contexts and tasks 		<p>4) extensive 3) sufficient 2) some 1) weak Rating Pending</p>
<p>OVERALL RATING: 4) extensive evidence 3) sufficient evidence 2) some evidence 1) weak evidence</p>		
<p>SUMMARY STATEMENT (Explain why the materials received this overall rating):</p>		

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.¹ In order to meet the reading, speaking, and writing needs of **all** grade eight students, the materials must include supports for students to comprehend at the high end of the grades six through eight text complexity band. Supports and scaffolds should draw students back to the text and provide strategies for vocabulary acquisition. All scaffolding and support requires ongoing formal and informal assessments that provide multiple opportunities for students to demonstrate their proficiency and inform instruction.*

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

GUIDING STATEMENTS	SPECIFIC EVIDENCE FROM THE TEXT/MATERIALS	EVIDENCE RATING
<p>7a. The texts promote differentiated instruction and instructional conversations about text to support student learning of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Academic language • Linguistic frames • Repeated grammatical structures and language 		<p>4) extensive 3) sufficient 2) some 1) weak Rating Pending</p>
<p>7b. The materials include student supports such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Multiple digital and media versions of texts • Illustrations • Graphs and charts • Maps and photographs • Visual cues/notes that draw attention to words in the text that signal sequence or offer clues to meaning (i.e., where, when, and how key events occur) 		<p>4) extensive 3) sufficient 2) some 1) weak Rating Pending</p>

¹ For additional considerations for ELLs, see *A Framework for Raising Expectations and Instructional Rigor for English Language Learners*

GUIDING STATEMENTS	SPECIFIC EVIDENCE FROM THE TEXT/MATERIALS	EVIDENCE RATING
<p>7c. The materials are designed to support teacher instruction by use of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explicit instructional directions accompanied by materials that are clearly aligned to stated goals and objectives that build student ability to read and comprehend grade-level text • Strategies to gradually increase difficulty as students' comprehension skills strengthen • Strategies to support student acquisition of knowledge supporting specific common core standards • Clear and detailed teacher directions and guidance for introducing new concepts and skills • Clear guidance for documenting student progress toward meeting grade-level standards 		<p>4) extensive 3) sufficient 2) some 1) weak Rating Pending</p>
<p>7d. The materials provide support for student learning through varying modalities (i.e., there are provisions for print, digital, and other multimedia sources for information attainment).</p>		<p>4) extensive 3) sufficient 2) some 1) weak Rating Pending</p>

GUIDING STATEMENTS	SPECIFIC EVIDENCE FROM THE TEXT/MATERIALS	EVIDENCE RATING
<p>7e. The materials include assessments along with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 • 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 		<p>4) extensive 3) sufficient 2) some 1) weak Rating Pending</p>
<p>OVERALL RATING: 4) extensive evidence 3) sufficient evidence 2) some evidence 1) weak evidence</p>		
<p>SUMMARY STATEMENT (Explain why the materials received this overall rating):</p>		

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

DECISION RECORDING SHEET

Completed by: _____

Date: _____

Based on the substantial evidence collected and the analysis you have done as you reviewed these materials, complete the following form. Please add comments about what influenced your decision in each of the areas listed below.

RUBRIC SECTION	QUALITATIVE SUMMARY OF EVIDENCE	RATING
Non-Negotiable 1: Text Complexity		4) extensive 3) sufficient 2) some 1) weak
Non-Negotiable 2: Questions and Tasks		meets does not meet
Alignment Criterion I: Range and Quality of Texts		4) extensive 3) sufficient 2) some 1) weak
Alignment Criterion II: Questions and Tasks Support Student Learning		4) extensive 3) sufficient 2) some 1) weak
Alignment Criterion III: Writing to Sources and Research		4) extensive 3) sufficient 2) some 1) weak

RUBRIC SECTION	QUALITATIVE SUMMARY OF EVIDENCE	RATING
Alignment Criterion IV: Foundational Skills		4) extensive 3) sufficient 2) some 1) weak
Alignment Criterion V: Language		4) extensive 3) sufficient 2) some 1) weak
Alignment Criterion VI: Speaking and Listening		4) extensive 3) sufficient 2) some 1) weak
Alignment Criterion VII: Scaffolding and Supports		4) extensive 3) sufficient 2) some 1) weak
OVERALL RATING: 4) extensive evidence 3) sufficient evidence 2) some evidence 1) weak evidence		
GENERAL COMMENTS:		

ADOPTION COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION FORM

Based on the substantial evidence collected, please rank all the grade eight materials you reviewed in the order in which you would recommend them for adoption. The program or materials with your highest recommendation should be listed as number one below. Please provide any comments you deem pertinent. Include answers to the following questions based on the evidence cited in your materials review:

- **What are the top three strengths of this text?**
- **What areas need improvement?**
- **What additional supports would be needed to implement the textbook series or digital materials?**

RECOMMENDED	
PROGRAM NAME/EDITION:	COMMENTS:
1	
2	
3	

continued >

NOT RECOMMENDED

	PROGRAM NAME/EDITION:	COMMENTS:
1		
2		
3		

Completed by: _____

Date: _____