



Tools

January 2017

Rubric for evaluating reading/language arts instructional materials for kindergarten to grade 5

Barbara R. Foorman
Kevin G. Smith
Marcia L. Kosanovich
Florida State University

Overview

This rubric is a tool for evaluating reading/language arts instructional materials for grades K–5. Based on rigorous research, the rubric can be used by state-, district-, and school-level practitioners and by university faculty who review instructional materials. The rubric is organized by content area for grades K–2 and for grades 3–5. Each content area (for example, writing) includes a list of criteria for evidence-based practice that the instructional materials are expected to include. Each criterion is aligned to recommendations from six What Works Clearinghouse practice guides, and a 1–5 scale is used to rate how well the criteria were met. Guidance for when and how to use the rubric—including facilitator responsibilities, professional learning for reviewers, and ways to use the ratings—is also provided.

U.S. Department of Education

John B. King, Jr., *Secretary*

Institute of Education Sciences

Ruth Neild, *Deputy Director for Policy and Research*

Delegated Duties of the Director

National Center for Education Evaluation and Regional Assistance

Audrey Pendleton, *Acting Commissioner*

Elizabeth Eisner, *Acting Associate Commissioner*

Amy Johnson, *Action Editor*

Sandra Garcia, *Project Officer*

REL 2017–219

The National Center for Education Evaluation and Regional Assistance (NCEE) conducts unbiased large-scale evaluations of education programs and practices supported by federal funds; provides research-based technical assistance to educators and policymakers; and supports the synthesis and the widespread dissemination of the results of research and evaluation throughout the United States.

January 2017

This report was prepared for the Institute of Education Sciences (IES) under Contract ED-IES-12-C-0011 by Regional Educational Laboratory Southeast administered by the Florida Center for Reading Research, Florida State University. The content of the publication does not necessarily reflect the views or policies of IES or the U.S. Department of Education, nor does mention of trade names, commercial products, or organizations imply endorsement by the U.S. Government.

This REL report is in the public domain. While permission to reprint this publication is not necessary, it should be cited as:

Foorman, B. R., Smith, K. G., & Kosanovich, M. L. (2017). *Rubric for evaluating reading/language arts instructional materials for kindergarten to grade 5* (REL 2017–219). Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Evaluation and Regional Assistance, Regional Educational Laboratory Southeast. Retrieved from <http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/edlabs>.

This report is available on the Regional Educational Laboratory website at <http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/edlabs>.

Contents

Introduction	1
Need for rigorous review of instructional materials	1
When to use the rubric	1
Knowledge and experience required to use the rubric	2
Facilitating use of the rubric	3
Selecting a facilitator and review team	3
Providing professional learning for the reviewers	4
Developing a checklist of materials to be reviewed	4
Research support for the development of the rubric	5
Using the rubric	5
Content areas	5
Overall rating	6
Discussion of results with education leaders	6
Rubric: Grades K-2 content	8
Rubric: Grades K-2 overall rating	13
Rubric: Grades 3-5 content	14
Rubric: Grades 3-5 overall rating	18
Appendix A. Calculating inter-rater reliability	A-1
References	Ref-1
Figure	
1 Elements of design for reading/language arts instructional materials	2
Table	
1 Examples of ratings and comments in the rubric	7

Introduction

The implementation of effective instructional materials, such as a core reading program, by a qualified teacher is an important part of improving students' reading achievement. But selecting those instructional materials can be time-consuming. Regional Educational Laboratory (REL) Southeast created this rubric for evaluating reading/language arts instructional materials for kindergarten to grade 5 to help educators assess how consistent instructional materials (including core reading programs and reading intervention programs) are with the scientific research on reading instruction. This document suggests procedures for using the rubric to review instructional materials and inform decisions at the state, district, or school level about reading/language arts instructional materials for grades K–5. Members of the Improving Literacy Research Alliance from the Florida Department of Education requested the rubric to assist in their instructional materials review process. Educators in other states may also find the rubric to be beneficial.

Need for rigorous review of instructional materials

Teaching is an interaction of a teacher's instructional strategies, classroom instructional materials, and students. Recently, the importance of instructional materials has been overlooked (Chingos & Whitehurst, 2012), and the pedagogical connection between lesson objectives and instructional materials is rarely coherent (Foorman, Francis, Davidson, Harm, & Griffin, 2004).

Most publishers have revised reading/language arts curriculum materials to support implementation of contemporary state standards. Materials in grades K–2 focus on support for teaching foundational reading skills in order to develop competent readers and build students' capacity to comprehend a range of text types across many disciplines. The focus for grades 3–12 materials shifts from developing reading skills to applying those skills to understand complex texts. In the upper elementary grades, instructional materials include equal exposure to literary and expository text, an emphasis on developing academic vocabulary, and attention to fostering students' ability to analyze and comprehend increasingly complex text.

The U.S. Department of Education's What Works Clearinghouse provides rigorous reviews of research studies of reading interventions (for example, James-Burdumy et al., 2012). However, there are few empirical evaluations of core reading programs—materials to be used with all students (Chingos & Whitehurst, 2012; see the section on research support for the development of the rubric for more information about the What Works Clearinghouse). Educators thus need to be able to determine which reading/language arts instructional materials are aligned with research. This rubric helps address this need.

When to use the rubric

The rubric can be used in many ways. First, a state or district can use it to develop a list of approved materials for purchase by districts and schools that are adopting new materials. Second, it can be used when a district or school plans to purchase new instructional materials to determine whether the new reading materials are aligned with research. Third, a district or school can use the rubric to review currently implemented instructional materials to determine how well they align with reading research. For that purpose, gaps in current instructional materials are identified so that materials may be modified or combined or plans may be made to purchase new or additional materials. Finally, the rubric

Educators need to be able to determine which reading/language arts instructional materials are aligned with research. This rubric helps address this need

can be used when instructional materials are developed (for example, at the district level) to ensure that they align with reading research.

Under any of these circumstances, a state, district, or school can modify the rubric. For example, if a state or district has additional or different standards, they can be added to or modified in the rubric. The rubric is based on empirically derived research and can be used with any contemporary state standards for grades K–5.

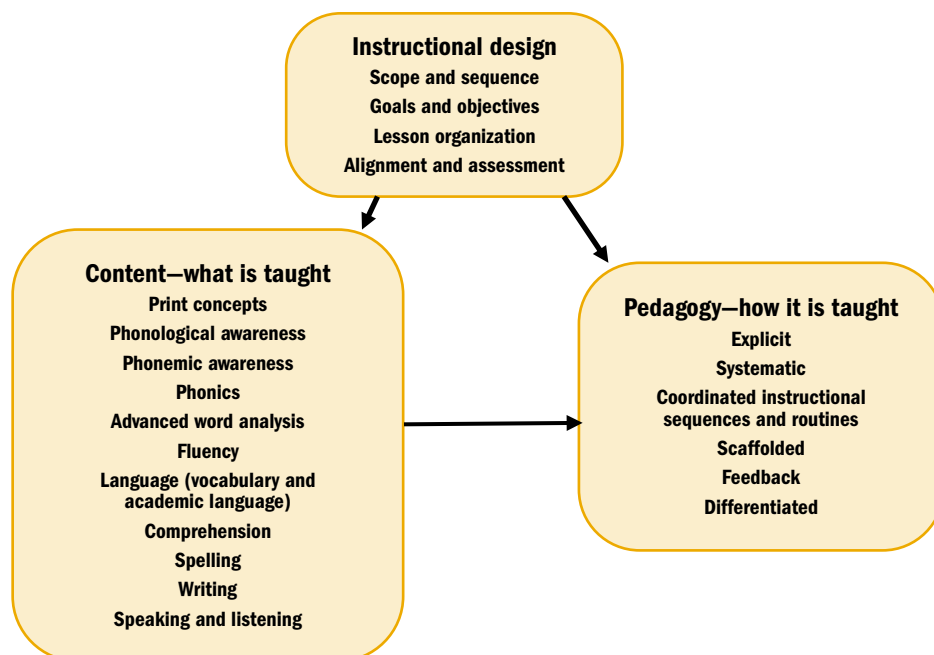
Knowledge and experience required to use the rubric

A team of reviewers use a rating scale on a rubric to conduct reviews of the instructional materials. Because the value of the ratings depends on the judgments of the review team that uses it, members of the review team need to have knowledge of instructional design, reading/language arts content, and pedagogy. Educators at the state, district, and school levels who have expertise in grades K–5 reading/language arts content and experience as classroom teachers—and thus are users of instructional materials—can use the rubric, as can university faculty with expertise in instructional design, content, and pedagogy who are working in partnership with school districts.

For elements of instructional design, understanding how a curriculum is created is important. That is, it is imperative that the review team understand how to identify a systematic scope and sequence, how goals and objectives are related, what the elements of an organized lesson are, and how to align materials and embed formative assessments. The content is what is taught during reading/language arts instruction (such as phonics, spelling, comprehension, and writing). Pedagogy is how the content is taught (such as explicitly using routines or differentiated instruction). Differentiated instruction materials include activities that address both intervention for students with special learning needs and

It is imperative that the review team understand how to identify a systematic scope and sequence, how goals and objectives are related, what the elements of an organized lesson are, and how to align materials and embed formative assessments

Figure 1. Elements of design for reading/language arts instructional materials



Source: Authors' construction.

extension/enrichment for students ready for further work. Salient features of instructional design, reading/language arts content, and pedagogy are shown in figure 1.

Facilitating use of the rubric

There are several considerations to facilitate use of the rubric, including selecting a facilitator and review team, providing professional learning for the reviewers, and developing a checklist of materials to be reviewed.

Selecting a facilitator and review team

The instructional materials review process works best when the administrator in charge of the process selects a dedicated facilitator to lead the effort and review the rubric in detail before the review process begins. The facilitator may be an educator at the state, district, or school level who is knowledgeable in instructional design, content, and pedagogical research as well as in instructional materials review policies, procedures, and implementation. The facilitator should also collect relevant sample materials and possible published sources of evidence before convening a meeting with the review team. The facilitator should be a careful listener who can lead and structure discussions around decisionmaking processes for members of the review team. Examples of facilitators and their purpose for using the rubric include a curriculum director at a state department of education coordinating adoption of a new curriculum, a district's chief academic officer organizing a team to review instructional materials under consideration for purchase, and a school leader facilitating the review of currently implemented instructional materials as part of a needs assessment.

The instructional materials review process works best when the administrator in charge of the process selects a dedicated facilitator to lead the effort and review the rubric in detail before the review process begins

The facilitator has several responsibilities during the review process:

- Recruiting and convening the review team (3–10 educators, depending on the quantity of materials to be reviewed).
- Ensuring that reviewers have enough time for reviews.
- Developing and implementing professional learning for the reviewers.
- Determining initial inter-rater reliability.
- Assigning instructional materials to reviewers.
- Developing and providing checklists of requirements for publishers.
- Considering pros and cons of reviewing hard copy versus digital instructional materials.
- Facilitating consensus meetings.

The review team can be configured in various ways, depending on the purpose. For example, states could call on an expert review team from a research university for a state-level review, districts could draw on their reading/language arts instructional experts for a district-level review, and schools could enlist reading coaches, veteran teachers, and district-level support to use the rubric. Each review team needs to have knowledge of instructional design, reading/language arts content, and pedagogy, and be free of bias. For example, facilitators would want to exclude from the review team anyone with known financial conflicts. Facilitators might consider using a conflict-of-interest disclosure form to reveal perceptions of bias, which could be discussed and mitigated.

It can take more than 40 hours to review one set of instructional materials, so the facilitator should ensure that the review team has the time necessary to thoroughly review the assigned

instructional materials. It is beneficial for individual reviewers to be assigned to review instructional materials for which they have the most knowledge and experience (that is, K–2 or 3–5).

Providing professional learning for the reviewers

In addition to recruiting reading/language arts educators who have the knowledge, experience, and objectivity needed to conduct the reviews, the facilitator provides standardized professional learning to orient the reviewers to the rubric. Face-to-face professional learning is ideal; however, a virtual meeting can also be successful.

The content of the professional learning developed by the facilitator includes:

- An overview of the rubric.
- How to conduct a review.
- Whom to contact with questions.
- Guidance on the number of hours it will take to review instructional materials and to develop a schedule of interim and final deadlines to complete the reviews (this will depend on the quantity of materials being reviewed).
- A practice opportunity to review a sample set of instructional materials.

In addition to recruiting reading/language arts educators who have the knowledge, experience, and objectivity needed to conduct the reviews, the facilitator provides standardized professional learning to orient the reviewers to the rubric

The practice opportunity for reviewers to use the rubric before the actual review process begins serves two purposes. First, it provides a chance for reviewers to discuss the experience, obtain answers to questions, and feel confident using the rubric. Second, it is an opportunity to establish the initial reliability and calibration of reviewers to increase consistency.

Before the review begins, the facilitator should assign each set of instructional materials to two different reviewers to determine inter-rater reliability. There are two instances in which the facilitator will need to help determine consensus after individual reviews are completed. First, if inter-rater reliability is low, a third reviewer will need to review the set of instructional materials with low inter-rater reliability in order to resolve discrepancies (see the appendix for how to calculate inter-rater reliability). Second, if a reviewer cannot decide what rating to give an item, the facilitator will convene a consensus meeting and guide a conversation among reviewers using appropriate small group discussion procedures, such as active listening and shared discussion.

Developing a checklist of materials to be reviewed

The facilitator may develop a checklist of required items that the publisher of the instructional materials under consideration needs to submit in order for a comprehensive review to occur. This checklist is provided to both the publisher and the review team. Items for the checklist may include:

- An overview (for example, a presentation) of the program, sample materials, and video of demonstration lessons.
- A detailed scope and sequence, including an alignment to adopted state standards and to research.
- A mapping of the location of content in the materials to criteria on the rubric.
- A list of the titles of books and documentation of their range and complexity.

Instructional materials can be reviewed in hard copy or electronically; there are benefits and challenges to each approach. For example, with digital materials, it may be difficult to

look across grades to see the continuum of instruction for particular skills when going back and forth between different electronic documents. But publishers can also prepare digital materials that are easy to manipulate and navigate.

If materials are to be reviewed electronically, the facilitator should verify that the review team has access to the necessary hardware and software. For example, computers must support downloads of large files and the simultaneous running of multiple programs and display of multiple browser windows.

Research support for the development of the rubric

The rubric is based on what rigorous research indicates is the most effective way to teach reading/language arts. The What Works Clearinghouse identifies research studies that provide credible evidence of the effectiveness of a given practice, program, or policy (collectively referred to as “interventions”) and disseminates summary information and reports on its website (<http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc>). The content of this rubric is based on six What Works Clearinghouse practice guides that pertain to content areas within reading/language arts:

- *Assisting Students Struggling with Reading: Response to Intervention (RtI) and Multi-Tier Intervention in the Primary Grades* (Gersten et al., 2008). Abbreviated as RTI.
- *Foundational Skills to Support Reading for Understanding in Kindergarten through 3rd Grade* (Foorman et al., 2016). Abbreviated as FR.
- *Improving Adolescent Literacy: Effective Classroom and Intervention Practices: A Practice Guide* (Kamil et al., 2008). Abbreviated as Adol.
- *Improving Reading Comprehension in Kindergarten through 3rd Grade: A Practice Guide* (Shanahan et al., 2010). Abbreviated as RC.
- *Teaching Academic Content and Literacy to English Learners in Elementary and Middle School* (Baker et al., 2014). Abbreviated as EL.
- *Teaching Elementary School Students to Be Effective Writers: A Practice Guide* (Graham et al., 2012). Abbreviated as Writing.

The rubric is based on what rigorous research indicates is the most effective way to teach reading/language arts; this rubric is based on six What Works Clearinghouse practice guides that pertain to content areas within reading/language arts

Abbreviations used in the rubric that are related to recommendations and action steps:

- Rec. refers to the recommendation in the practice guide.
- # refers to the specific action step for a recommendation. If no # is indicated, then all action steps for a recommendation apply.

Abbreviations used in the rubric that are related to spelling patterns:

- CV is consonant vowel.
- CVC is consonant vowel consonant.
- CVCC is consonant vowel consonant consonant.
- CCVC is consonant consonant vowel consonant.
- CVe is consonant vowel final e.

Using the rubric

The rubric has separate sections for grades K–2 and grades 3–5, each with a subsection on content area and overall rating.

Content areas

The content areas for grades K–2 are foundational reading skills (print concepts, phonological awareness, phonemic awareness, phonics, and fluency); reading comprehension for literary and informational texts; writing development and skills; speaking and listening development and skills; and language development and skills (academic language skills and vocabulary). The content areas for grades 3–5 are foundational reading skills (advanced word analysis such as affixes, Greek and Latin roots, and syllable patterns); reading comprehension for literary and informational texts and text complexity; writing development and skills; speaking and listening development and skills; and language development and skills.

Each content area includes a list of criteria for evidence-based instructional practice. Each reviewer records findings based on the extent to which the criteria were met using a 1–5 rating scale:

- 1 indicates the criterion was not met.
- 2 indicates the criterion was partially met.
- 3 indicates the criterion was adequately met.
- 4 indicates the criterion was substantially met.
- 5 indicates the criterion was completely met.

It can be helpful for a reviewer first to determine whether the criterion was met and then determine how well it was met (3—adequately met, 4—substantially met, or 5—completely met), or not met (1—not met or 2—partially met). After each criterion, there is space for reviewer comments (such as specific examples to support ratings, strengths, or concerns).

Overall rating

The overall rating subsection is where a reviewer records an overall holistic rating after considering the entire set of instructional materials. For example, if a 3 is recorded across all the items, a 3 would be expected in the overall rating section. Examples of ratings and comments aligned to items from the rubric are provided in table 1. If it is possible for the review team to meet and discuss the ratings, it would be most beneficial for the discussion to focus on the overall ratings, with the review team going back to the content sections to discuss support for ratings. Alternatively, patterns of strengths and weaknesses at the item level for component skills within content areas can be noted (for example, one set of instructional materials may be strong in foundational skills and weak in reading comprehension skills, whereas the opposite may be true in another set).

Discussion of results with education leaders

Once the rubric is completed, the facilitator may share and discuss the results with state, district, or school leaders requesting the instructional materials review.

The rubric has separate sections for grades K–2 and grades 3–5, each with a subsection on content area and overall rating; each content area includes a list of criteria for evidence-based instructional practice

Table 1. Examples of ratings and comments in the rubric

Item from rubric	Rating	Example comment
Grades K–2		
1D. Phonemic awareness instruction follows a developmental progression—for example, phoneme isolation (first, final, and medial sounds), blending, segmentation, and phoneme deletion; use with tiles then with letters [FR practice guide, Rec. 2, #1].	1 (not met)	Phonemic awareness was noted on the scope and sequence; however, phonemic awareness activities were not evident within the lessons of the instructional materials.
1E. Graphemes (letters) are gradually integrated into phonemic awareness instruction as students become more skilled [FR practice guide, Rec. 2, #1].	5 (completely met)	There is a gradual and consistent link between phonemic awareness and phonics activities throughout the entire set of materials.
1J. Materials support instruction that teaches students how to decode multisyllabic words by looking for pronounceable word parts within them (for example, compound words and syllables) [FR practice guide, Rec. 3, #3].	1 (not met)	Materials did not include specific instruction on how to decode multisyllabic words.
Grades 3–5		
2E. Specific texts are included in materials for teaching various text structures (for example, sequence, comparison, contrast, and cause/effect) to support comprehension and careful reading of narrative and informational text [Adol practice guide, Rec. 2, #1].	4 (substantially met)	There are a considerable number of texts to support comprehension. There are graphic organizers in the back of the teacher editions intended to incorporate this item. However, there is no label on the graphic organizer to indicate the lessons to which they correspond. The addition of where the graphic organizers could be used would be helpful to the teacher for navigation purposes.
2L. Materials support instruction that teaches students to understand and analyze various points of view for narrative text (for example, author, narrator, and characters) and informational text (for example, what the author wants to explain and multiple accounts of the same event) with increasing complexity [Adol practice guide, Rec. 3].	2 (partially met)	This is marginally included in the mini lessons of the whole group component. Different genres and the author’s purpose are discussed; however, points of view lessons/activities were sparse.
3A. Materials include extensive practice with short, focused research projects that allow students to have multiple experiences with the research process throughout the year and facilitate development of the ability to conduct research independently [EL practice guide, Rec. 3; Writing practice guide, Rec. 2a and 2b].	2 (partially met)	There is some evidence of this, mostly found in the ancillary materials (science/social studies connections and the activities recommended for centers). However, those materials are not an expected part of daily or even consistent lessons.

Source: Authors’ construction.

Rubric: Grades K–2 content

Directions for reviewers using this rubric

Record your findings based on the extent to which the criteria were met using the 1–5 rating scale.

1	2	3	4	5
The criterion was not met.	The criterion was partially met.	The criterion was adequately met.	The criterion was substantially met.	The criterion was completely met.

1. Foundational reading skills

1.1. Materials include guidance to provide small group, differentiated instruction to students struggling with reading development [RTI practice guide].	1	2	3	4	5
----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	---	---	---	---	---

Support your rating:

Print concepts

1.2. Materials facilitate understanding that sentences can be broken into words and compound words can be broken into separate words [FR practice guide, Rec. 2, #1].	1	2	3	4	5
-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	---	---	---	---	---

Support your rating:

Phonological awareness

1.3. Instruction follows a progression to develop phonological awareness (for example, syllables, rhyming, alliteration, onset, and rime) [FR practice guide, Rec. 2, #1].	1	2	3	4	5
----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	---	---	---	---	---

Support your rating:

Phonemic awareness

1.4. Phonemic awareness instruction follows a developmental progression—for example, phoneme isolation (first, final, and medial sounds), blending, segmentation, and phoneme deletion; use with tiles then with letters [FR practice guide, Rec. 2, #1].	1	2	3	4	5
-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	---	---	---	---	---

Support your rating:

1.5. Graphemes (letters) are gradually integrated into phonemic awareness instruction as students become more skilled [FR practice guide, Rec. 2, #1].	1	2	3	4	5
--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	---	---	---	---	---

Support your rating:

Phonics

1.6. Materials present letter–sound correspondences in an explicit and sequential fashion (for example, potentially confusing letters like <i>b</i> and <i>d</i> are not introduced together, and a few short vowels are introduced early) [FR practice guide, Rec. 2, #2].	1	2	3	4	5
-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	---	---	---	---	---

Support your rating:

1.7. Materials support instruction that teaches students how to blend letters to write/spell and decode words [FR practice guide, Rec. 3, #1].	1	2	3	4	5
------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	---	---	---	---	---

Support your rating:

1.8. Materials support instruction that teaches students how to write/ spell and decode common sound-spelling patterns of English in an explicit, sequential fashion (for example, CV, CVC words containing digraphs, and vowel teams) [FR practice guide, Rec. 3, #2].	1	2	3	4	5
-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	---	---	---	---	---

Support your rating:

1.9. Materials support instruction that progresses from simple to more complex sound–spelling patterns and word analysis skills (for example, CVC words before CVCC, CCVC, and CVC words and single syllable words before multisyllabic words) [FR practice guide, Rec. 3, #3].	1	2	3	4	5
---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	---	---	---	---	---

Support your rating:

1.10. Materials support instruction that teaches students how to decode multisyllabic words by looking for pronounceable word parts within them (for example, compound words and syllables) [FR practice guide, Rec. 3, #3].	1	2	3	4	5
------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	---	---	---	---	---

Support your rating:

1.11. Materials provide instruction in simple prefixes and suffixes [FR practice guide, Rec. 3, #3].	1	2	3	4	5
------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	---	---	---	---	---

Support your rating:

1.12. Materials provide sufficient amount of practice in decoding words in isolation and in decodable text to allow practice of phonic skills [FR practice guide, Rec. 3, #4].	1	2	3	4	5
--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	---	---	---	---	---

Support your rating:

1.13. Materials include instruction to teach students to read both regular and irregular high frequency words [FR practice guide, Rec. 3, #5].	1	2	3	4	5
------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	---	---	---	---	---

Support your rating:

1.14. Materials introduce students to non-decodable words essential to the meaning of a passage as whole words [FR practice guide, Rec. 3, #6].	1	2	3	4	5
-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	---	---	---	---	---

Support your rating:

Fluency

1.15. Materials provide teachers opportunities to model fluent reading and to scaffold and give feedback as students read orally in order to foster accurate and efficient word identification [FR practice guide, Rec. 4, #1].	1	2	3	4	5
---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	---	---	---	---	---

Support your rating:

2. Reading comprehension for literary and informational texts

2.1. Texts for each grade band align with complexity requirements and instructional goals [FR practice guide, Rec. 4, #1; RC practice guide, Rec. 4].	1	2	3	4	5
-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	---	---	---	---	---

Support your rating:

2.2. Materials provide texts that support frequent review of previously taught concepts and words, extended practice, and independent application of phonics skills [FR practice guide, Rec. 4].	1	2	3	4	5
--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	---	---	---	---	---

Support your rating:

2.3. Materials include a sufficient number of texts that allow students to read a variety of texts daily with and without feedback to support accuracy, fluency, and comprehension [RC practice guide, Rec. 2].	1	2	3	4	5
-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	---	---	---	---	---

Support your rating:

2.4. Materials include texts for students to learn and practice self-monitoring as they read and to self-correct reading errors when they occur [FR practice guide, Rec. 4, #2; RC practice guide, Rec. 1].	1	2	3	4	5
-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	---	---	---	---	---

Support your rating:

2.5. Texts are provided for read-alouds that are above the instructional level in complexity and guidance. These texts are used to conduct multiple read-alouds for the purpose of building vocabulary and reading comprehension with text-specific questions [RC practice guide, Rec. 3 and 4].	1	2	3	4	5
--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	---	---	---	---	---

Support your rating:

2.6. Materials provide a balance of texts and instructional time for literary and informational texts [RC practice guide, Rec. 4].	1	2	3	4	5
------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	---	---	---	---	---

Support your rating:

2.7. Once students are able to read independently, materials provide additional text for regular independent reading that appeals to students' interests to develop both knowledge and love of reading [RC practice guide, Rec. 5].	1	2	3	4	5
-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	---	---	---	---	---

Support your rating:

2.8. Texts provide opportunities for students to build knowledge through reading of specific informational and narrative text [RC practice guide, Rec. 3].	1	2	3	4	5
------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	---	---	---	---	---

Support your rating:

2.9. Materials cultivate students' abilities to ask and answer questions based on the text [RC practice guide, Rec. 3].	1	2	3	4	5
-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	---	---	---	---	---

Support your rating:

2.10. Materials use scaffolding and stimulating questions to engage students in high-quality discussions [RC practice guide, Rec. 3].	1	2	3	4	5
---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	---	---	---	---	---

Support your rating:

3. Writing development and skills

3.1. Materials include opportunities to practice writing words introduced in reading instruction and use them to write in response to what students have read. [EL practice guide, Rec. 1].

1 2 3 4 5

Support your rating:

3.2. Materials are designed with activities for students to write about what they read in both literary and informational text (for example, summaries, reactions, analysis or interpretation of text, notes, and ask/answer questions) [EL practice guide, Rec. 3; Writing practice guide, Rec. 2b].

1 2 3 4 5

Support your rating:

3.3. Materials include opportunities and prompts for students to write opinions, information/explanations, or narratives in response to texts read [EL practice guide, Rec. 3; Writing practice guide, Rec. 2b].

1 2 3 4 5

Support your rating:

4. Speaking and listening development and skills

4.1. Materials include opportunities to continue to build oral language and listening skills as students develop the ability to read independently (for example, exposure to fiction and informational text read aloud, discussions to compare/contrast, and analyze and synthesize information in response to text read aloud) [FR practice guide, Rec. 1; EL practice guide, Rec. 2].

1 2 3 4 5

Support your rating:

5. Language development and skills

5.1. Materials include activities to engage students in conversations that support comprehension of inferential and narrative language and word knowledge using narrative and informational text [FR practice guide, Rec. 1, #1 and 2].

1 2 3 4 5

Support your rating:

5.2. Materials provide the opportunity to explicitly teach words or grammatical rules that support content that students are reading or learning [FR practice guide, Rec. 1, #3].

1 2 3 4 5

Support your rating:

5.3. Materials provide the opportunity to teach vocabulary by making connections between a new word and other known words, by relating the word to their own experiences, by differentiating between correct and incorrect uses of the word, and by generating and answering questions that include the word [FR practice guide, Rec. 1, #3].

1 2 3 4 5

Support your rating:

5.4. Materials include activities for students to acquire and use grade-appropriate general academic and domain-specific words and phrases, including those that signal precise actions, emotions, or states of being (for example, quizzed, whined, and stammered) and that are basic to a particular topic (for example, wildlife, conservation, and endangered when discussing animal preservation) [EL practice guide, Rec. 1].	1	2	3	4	5
-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	---	---	---	---	---

Support your rating:

5.5. Materials include instruction for students to determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple meaning words and phrases based on grade-appropriate reading and content, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies [EL practice guide, Rec. 1].	1	2	3	4	5
-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	---	---	---	---	---

Support your rating:

5.6. Materials include instruction for students to understand word relationships and nuances in word meanings (shades of meaning) [EL practice guide, Rec. 1].	1	2	3	4	5
----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	---	---	---	---	---

Support your rating:

Rubric: Grades K–2 overall rating

Directions for reviewers using this rubric

Record your findings based on the extent to which the criteria were met using the 1–5 rating scale.

1	2	3	4	5
The criterion was not met.	The criterion was partially met.	The criterion was adequately met.	The criterion was substantially met.	The criterion was completely met.

Title:

Publisher:

1. The content is aligned with foundational reading skills for the grade.	1	2	3	4	5
---------------------------------------------------------------------------	---	---	---	---	---

Support your rating:

2. The content is aligned with reading comprehension for literary and informational texts for the grade.	1	2	3	4	5
----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	---	---	---	---	---

Support your rating:

3. The content is aligned with writing development and skills for the grade.	1	2	3	4	5
------------------------------------------------------------------------------	---	---	---	---	---

Support your rating:

4. The content is aligned with speaking and listening development and skills for the grade.	1	2	3	4	5
---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	---	---	---	---	---

Support your rating:

5. The content is aligned with language development and skills for the grade.	1	2	3	4	5
-------------------------------------------------------------------------------	---	---	---	---	---

Support your rating:

Total:

Rubric: Grades 3–5 content

Directions for reviewers using this rubric

Record your findings based on the extent to which the criteria were met using the 1–5 rating scale.

1	2	3	4	5
The criterion was not met.	The criterion was partially met.	The criterion was adequately met.	The criterion was substantially met.	The criterion was completely met.

1. Foundational reading skills

1.1. Materials support development of advanced word analysis skills (for example, suffixes, prefixes, Greek and Latin roots, and syllabication patterns) [EL practice guide, Rec. 1].	1	2	3	4	5
---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	---	---	---	---	---

Support your rating:

1.2. Materials include guidance to provide small group, differentiated instruction to students struggling with reading development [RTI practice guide, Recs. 2 and 3; EL practice guide, Rec. 4].	1	2	3	4	5
----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	---	---	---	---	---

Support your rating:

2. Reading comprehension for literary and informational texts and text complexity

2.1. The text and text complexity are appropriate for the reading level of students [Adol practice guide, Rec. 2].	1	2	3	4	5
--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	---	---	---	---	---

Support your rating:

2.2. Materials provide students extensive opportunities to encounter and comprehend grade-level text [Adol practice guide, Rec. 2].	1	2	3	4	5
-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	---	---	---	---	---

Support your rating:

2.3. Materials incorporate texts that require a careful and purposeful reading and re-reading [Adol practice guide, Rec. 3, #1].	1	2	3	4	5
----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	---	---	---	---	---

Support your rating:

2.4. Additional materials markedly increase the opportunity for regular independent reading of texts that appeal to students' interests to develop both knowledge and love of reading [Adol practice guide, Rec. 4].	1	2	3	4	5
----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	---	---	---	---	---

Support your rating:

2.5. Specific texts are included in materials for teaching various text structures (for example, sequence, comparison, contrast, and cause/effect) to support comprehension and careful reading of narrative and informational text [Adol practice guide, Rec. 2, #1].	1	2	3	4	5
------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	---	---	---	---	---

Support your rating:

2.6. Materials contain questions and tasks that require students to use text-based evidence (including making inferences) [Adol practice guide, Rec. 2 and 3].	1	2	3	4	5
----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	---	---	---	---	---

Support your rating:

2.7. Material cultivates student engagement in reading text carefully [Adol practice guide, Rec. 4].	1	2	3	4	5
------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	---	---	---	---	---

Support your rating:

2.8. Texts provide opportunity for students to build knowledge through reading and extended discussion [Adol practice guide, Rec. 3].	1	2	3	4	5
---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	---	---	---	---	---

Support your rating:

2.9. Materials include questions and tasks that require students to analyze information and evidence focused on the meaning of texts [Adol practice guide, Rec. 3].	1	2	3	4	5
---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	---	---	---	---	---

Support your rating:

2.10. Materials support instruction that teaches students to identify and describe or explain ideas for narrative text (for example, main idea and theme) and informational text (for example, connections between ideas and concepts) in a progressively more complex manner [EL practice guide, Rec. 2; Adol practice guide, Rec. 2 and 3].	1	2	3	4	5
-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	---	---	---	---	---

Support your rating:

2.11. Materials support instruction that teaches students to use the features of text to gain meaning from narrative text (for example, how chapters and scenes are used in types of literature) and informational text (for example, use of illustrations and graphs, and structural elements) with increasing complexity [Adol practice guide, Rec. 5].	1	2	3	4	5
-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	---	---	---	---	---

Support your rating:

2.12. Materials support instruction that teaches students to understand and analyze various points of view for narrative text (for example, author, narrator, and characters) and informational text (for example, what the author wants to explain and multiple accounts of the same event) with increasing complexity [Adol practice guide, Rec. 3].	1	2	3	4	5
--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	---	---	---	---	---

Support your rating:

2.13. Materials support instruction that teaches students to compare and contrast or analyze information within and across narrative text (for example, compare and contrast two versions of the same story and compare and contrast stories in the same genre) and informational text (for example, identify similarities and differences between two texts on the same topic and integrate information from several texts on the same topic to write about the subject) with increasing complexity [Adol practice guide, Rec. 2].	1	2	3	4	5
-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	---	---	---	---	---

Support your rating:

3. Writing development and skills

3.1. Materials include extensive practice with short, focused research projects that allow students to have multiple experiences with the research process throughout the year and facilitate development of the ability to conduct research independently [EL practice guide, Rec. 3; Writing practice guide, Rec. 2a and 2b].

1 2 3 4 5

Support your rating:

3.2. Materials include activities that require students to analyze and synthesize text sources and present the analysis using well-defended claims and clear information [EL practice guide, Rec. 3; Writing practice guide, Rec. 2b].

1 2 3 4 5

Support your rating:

3.3. Materials provide instruction in different text structures (for example, sequence, comparison, contrast, and cause/effect) and place a focus on argument and informative writing based on texts with these structures [EL practice guide, Rec. 3; Writing practice guide, Rec. 2b].

1 2 3 4 5

Support your rating:

3.4. Materials include activities that provide opportunities to write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of discipline-specific tasks, purposes, and audiences [EL practice guide, Rec. 3; Writing practice guide, Rec. 1 and 2b].

1 2 3 4 5

Support your rating:

4. Speaking and listening development and skills

4.1. Materials include opportunities to continue to build oral language and listening skills as students determine main ideas and supporting details, paraphrase, and summarize texts read [EL practice guide, Rec. 2].

1 2 3 4 5

Support your rating:

4.2. Materials use multimedia and technology to support and engage students in understanding and verbally expressing details and themes in a text [EL practice guide, Rec. 2].

1 2 3 4 5

Support your rating:

5. Language development and skills

5.1. Materials teach academic vocabulary prevalent in complex texts in the context of listening and reading activities [EL practice guide, Rec. 1].

1 2 3 4 5

Support your rating:

5.2. Materials include activities for students to acquire and use grade-appropriate general academic and domain-specific words and phrases, including those that signal precise actions, emotions, or states of being (for example, quizzed, whined, and stammered) and that are basic to a particular topic (for example, wildlife, conservation, and endangered when discussing animal preservation) [EL practice guide, Rec. 1].

1 2 3 4 5

Support your rating:

5.3. Materials include instruction for students to determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple meaning words and phrases based on grade-appropriate reading and content, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies [EL practice guide, Rec. 1].

1 2 3 4 5

Support your rating:

5.4. Materials include instruction for students to understand figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings [EL practice guide, Rec. 1].

1 2 3 4 5

Support your rating:

Rubric: Grades 3–5 overall rating

Directions for reviewers using this rubric

Record your findings based on the extent to which the criteria were met using the 1–5 rating scale.

1	2	3	4	5
The criterion was not met.	The criterion was partially met.	The criterion was adequately met.	The criterion was substantially met.	The criterion was completely met.

Title:

Publisher:

1. The content is aligned with foundational reading skills for the grade.	1	2	3	4	5
---------------------------------------------------------------------------	---	---	---	---	---

Support your rating:

2. The content is aligned with reading comprehension for literary and informational texts and text complexity for the grade.	1	2	3	4	5
------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	---	---	---	---	---

Support your rating:

3. The content is aligned with writing development and skills for the grade.	1	2	3	4	5
------------------------------------------------------------------------------	---	---	---	---	---

Support your rating:

4. The content is aligned with speaking and listening development and skills for the grade.	1	2	3	4	5
---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	---	---	---	---	---

Support your rating:

5. The content is aligned with language development and skills for the grade.	1	2	3	4	5
-------------------------------------------------------------------------------	---	---	---	---	---

Support your rating:

Total:

Appendix A. Calculating inter-rater reliability

Before the review process begins, it is important that each set of instructional materials be assigned to two different reviewers in order to determine the degree to which they give consistent estimates (that is, in order to determine inter-rater reliability). Should the reviewers disagree, a third reviewer serves as the tiebreaker. It is recommended that Krippendorff's alpha (Kalpha; Krippendorff, 2004) be used to calculate inter-rater reliability for the rubric. Kalpha's advantages include its ability to measure reliability for judgments made at any level of measurement, with any number of reviewers, and with or without missing data. Additionally, Kalpha takes into account the possibility that agreement among reviewers may occur by chance. Values of Kalpha range from -1.00 to 1.00 , where -1.00 indicates perfect disagreement below chance (that is, disagreement occurred systematically) and 1 indicates perfect agreement among reviewers. Krippendorff (2004) suggests that reviewers reach a Kalpha greater than or equal to $.80$ to be considered reliable.

References

- Baker, S., Geva, E., Kieffer, M. J., Lesaux, N., Linan-Thompson, S., Morris, J., et al. (2014). *Teaching academic content and literacy to English learners in elementary and middle school* (NCEE No. 2014–4012). Washington, DC: National Center for Education Evaluation and Regional Assistance (NCEE), Institute of Education Sciences, U.S. Department of Education. <http://eric.ed.gov/?id=ED544783>
- Chingos, M., & Whitehurst, G. J. (2012). *Choosing blindly: Instructional materials, teacher effectiveness, and the Common Core*. Washington, DC: Brown Center on Education Policy at Brookings. <http://eric.ed.gov/?id=ED530985>
- Foorman, B., Coyne, M., Denton, C. A., Dimino, J., Hayes, L., Lewis, W., et al. (2016). *Foundational skills to support reading for understanding in kindergarten through 3rd grade* (NCEE No. 2016–4008). Washington, DC: National Center for Education Evaluation and Regional Assistance (NCEE), Institute of Education Sciences, U.S. Department of Education. <http://eric.ed.gov/?id=ED566956>
- Foorman, B. R., Francis, D. J., Davidson, K., Harm, M., & Griffin, J. (2004). Variability in text features in six grade 1 basal reading programs. *Scientific Studies in Reading*, 8(2), 167–197. <http://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ683132>
- Gersten, R., Compton, D., Connor, C. M., Dimino, J., Santoro, L., Linan-Thompson, S., et al. (2008). *Assisting students struggling with reading: Response to Intervention (RtI) and multi-tier intervention in the primary grades* (NCEE No. 2009–4045). Washington, DC: National Center for Education Evaluation and Regional Assistance (NCEE), Institute of Education Sciences, U.S. Department of Education. <http://eric.ed.gov/?id=ED504264>
- Graham, S., Bollinger, A., Booth Olson, C., D'Aoust, C., MacArthur, C., McCutchen, D., et al. (2012). *Teaching elementary school students to be effective writers: A practice guide* (NCEE No. 2012–4058). Washington, DC: National Center for Education Evaluation and Regional Assistance (NCEE), Institute of Education Sciences, U.S. Department of Education. <http://eric.ed.gov/?id=ED533112>
- James-Burdumy, S., Deke, J., Gersten, R., Lugo-Gil, J., Newman-Gonchar, R., Dimino, J., et al. (2012). Effectiveness of four supplemental reading comprehension interventions. *Journal of Research on Educational Effectiveness*, 5(4), 345–383. <http://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ982236>
- Kamil, M. L., Borman, G. D., Dole, J., Kral, C. C., Salinger, T., & Torgesen, J. (2008). *Improving adolescent literacy: Effective classroom and intervention practices: A practice guide* (NCEE No. 2008–4027). Washington, DC: National Center for Education Evaluation and Regional Assistance (NCEE), Institute of Education Sciences, U.S. Department of Education. <http://eric.ed.gov/?id=ED502398>
- Krippendorff, K. (2004). *Content analysis: An introduction to Its methodology* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Shanahan, T., Callison, K., Carriere, C., Duke, N. K., Pearson, P. D., Schatschneider, C., et al. (2010). *Improving reading comprehension in kindergarten through 3rd grade: A practice guide* (NCEE No. 2010-4038). Washington, DC: National Center for Education Evaluation and Regional Assistance (NCEE), Institute of Education Sciences, U.S. Department of Education. <http://eric.ed.gov/?id=ED512029>

The Regional Educational Laboratory Program produces 7 types of reports



Making Connections

Studies of correlational relationships



Making an Impact

Studies of cause and effect



What's Happening

Descriptions of policies, programs, implementation status, or data trends



What's Known

Summaries of previous research



Stated Briefly

Summaries of research findings for specific audiences



Applied Research Methods

Research methods for educational settings



Tools

Help for planning, gathering, analyzing, or reporting data or research