

EQuIP Review Feedback



Lesson/Unit Name: Be Aware! Be Prepared!

Content Area: English language arts

Grade Level: 4

Overall Rating:

E

Exemplar

Dimension I – Alignment to the Depth of the CCSS

<p><i>The lesson/unit aligns with the letter and spirit of the CCSS:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Targets a set of grade-level CCSS ELA/Literacy standards. ✓ Includes a clear and explicit purpose for instruction. ✓ Selects text(s) that measure within the grade-level text complexity band and are of sufficient quality and scope for the stated purpose (e.g., presents vocabulary, syntax, text structures, levels of meaning/purpose, and other qualitative characteristics similar to CCSS grade-level exemplars in Appendices A & B). <p><i>A unit or longer lesson should:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Integrate reading, writing, speaking and listening so that students apply and synthesize advancing literacy skills. ✓ (Grades 3-5) Build students' content knowledge and their understanding of reading and writing in social studies, the arts, science or technical subjects through the coherent selection of texts. 	<p>Set of CCSS: The unit addresses CCSS ELA/Literacy standards. The targeted standards (RI.1, 3, 4, 7, 9; W.2, 7, 8; SL.1, 2, 5, 6; and L.4) are referenced in the unit overview and within the unit as addressed in the instructional sequence. W.9 is not listed as a standard. However, there is evidence within the unit of instruction around the standard. Listing the standard in the overview and at the appropriate points within the unit would be appropriate.</p> <p>Clear and Explicit Purpose: The unit will focus on teaching students how to conduct an inquiry, or research project, using informational text and synthesize their notes into usable information to present to others. At the end of the unit, students should have the skills of researching information on a topic, taking notes, and writing about what they have learned using their notes, and orally presenting their information to others.</p> <p>Texts: Texts are appropriate. The texts selected are appropriate and include a variety of text types (digital, print, maps, charts). The range of materials included within the Student Guide are stated as being from 740L - 870L (grades 4 - 5 Text Complexity Range is 740L - 1010L). The stated purpose of the texts within the Student Guide is to support students' increasing independence with application of CCSS Literacy standards.</p> <p>Integrate: The unit integrates reading, writing, speaking and listening and guides students to synthesize advancing literacy skills.</p> <p>Builds Content Knowledge: Through the study of informational texts, students develop content knowledge to learn to read and write in a manner appropriate for the discipline of science.</p>
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Rating: 3 – Meets most to all of the criteria in the dimension

Dimension II – Key Shifts the CCSS

<p><i>The lesson/unit addresses key shifts in the CCSS:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Reading Text Closely: Makes reading text(s) closely, examining textual evidence, and discerning deep meaning a central focus of instruction. ✓ Text-Based Evidence: Facilitates rich and rigorous evidence-based discussions and writing about common texts through a sequence of specific, thought-provoking, and text-dependent questions (including, when 	<p>Read Text Closely: Students closely read several texts around the topic. A variety of note-taking guides and graphic organizers are provided to aid students' reading of the texts.</p> <p>Text Based Evidence: The materials provide guiding questions and prompts for student-asked questions about the text. Using a format of who, what, when, why, where, and how to discuss and take notes about the texts allows students to practice gaining understanding from text.</p>
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ applicable, questions about illustrations, charts, diagrams, audio/video, and media). ✓ Writing from Sources: Routinely expects that students draw evidence from texts to produce clear and coherent writing that informs, explains, or makes an argument in various written forms (e.g., notes, summaries, short responses, or formal essays). ✓ Academic Vocabulary: Focuses on building students' academic vocabulary in context throughout instruction. <p><u>A unit or longer lesson should:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Increasing Text Complexity: Focus students on reading a progression of complex texts drawn from the grade-level band. Provide text-centered learning that is sequenced, scaffolded and supported to advance students toward independent reading of complex texts at the CCR level. ✓ Building Disciplinary Knowledge: Provide opportunities for students to build knowledge about a topic or subject through analysis of a coherent selection of strategically sequenced, discipline-specific texts. ☐ Balance of Texts: Within a collection of grade-level units a balance of informational and literary texts is included according to guidelines in the CCSS (p. 5). ✓ Balance of Writing: Include a balance of on-demand and process writing (e.g., multiple drafts and revisions over time) and short, focused research projects, incorporating digital texts where appropriate. 	<p>Writing from Sources: Students prepare written summaries throughout the unit and create Public Service Announcements for a cumulative task of presenting a Safety Fair.</p> <p>Academic Vocabulary: The unit addresses words that are both able to be determined through context (underlined) and not able to be defined through context (bold faced). The opening comments are clear in explaining the rationale and process for vocabulary study. It would be helpful to include more guidance within the lessons. Also, on pg. 14 of the Teacher Workbook under the bulleted point for Vocabulary, changing "Model how you would define these, using their context" would more closely align with the language of the standard by changing "define" to "determine the meaning..."</p> <p>Increasing Text Complexity: Although the Lexile of the texts listed in the overview and included in the Student Workbook are basically stable, considering the qualitative and student/task considerations for the texts, the gradual release of students' responsibility in gaining information from the texts does align with the Key Shifts of the CCSS. Furthermore there are digital texts beyond those listed in the overview that are utilized throughout the unit.</p> <p>Disciplinary Knowledge: Utilizing a collection of texts, the developer provides a unit designed to build students' knowledge about several examples of natural disasters.</p> <p>Balance of Texts: Although there is a variety of informational texts utilized within the unit, this unit does not address the criterion of Balance of Texts by including literary texts. However, literary text is not appropriate to the purpose of the unit.</p> <p>Balance of Writing: The final project requires process writing, but the steps of the writing process are never explicitly called out as part of the tasks. The unit does an excellent job of creating small research projects that require students to synthesize information from a variety of print, digital texts and media.</p>
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Rating: 3 – Meets most to all of the criteria in the dimension

Dimension III – Instructional Supports

<p><i>The lesson/unit is responsive to varied student learning needs:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Cultivates student interest and engagement in reading, writing and speaking about texts. ☐ Addresses instructional expectations and is easy to understand and use. ✓ Provides <i>all</i> 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 challenging sections of text(s) and engages students in a productive struggle through discussion questions and other supports that build toward independence. 	<p>Interest and Engagement: Although the unit progresses in a predicable manner, each task introduces novel ways to interact with materials and build on literacy skills. For instance, the Wildfires introduces the discussion through a chip activity.</p> <p>Instructional Expectations - Easy to Use/Understand: Although it is apparent that much thought and time has been used in creating a complete document for teachers' use, there are features that make the unit difficult to use. Explicit cues beginning teachers would need are not embedded in the instructional sequence but only initially in the overview. Check the links within the document. Several links within the unit are broken. The unit is difficult to use particularly as it relates to toggling between the teacher and student book. Certain resources are referred but where those resources are found in either the student book or the ancillary resources is not clear. For example, Teacher book p. 10 references p. 94 but does not indicate that is in the Student book. Instructional notes paragraph 1 p. 10 is bit confusing. Further, on p. 10, Under "Process" is the</p>
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Integrates appropriate supports in reading, writing, listening and speaking for students who are ELL, have disabilities, or read well below the grade level text band. <input type="checkbox"/> Provides extensions and/or more advanced text for students who read well above the grade level text band. <p><u>A unit or longer lesson should:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Include a progression of learning where concepts and skills advance and deepen over time (<i>may be more applicable across the year or several units</i>). <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Gradually remove supports, requiring students to demonstrate their independent capacities (<i>may be more applicable across the year or several units</i>). <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Provide for authentic learning, application of literacy skills, student-directed inquiry, analysis, evaluation and/or reflection. <input type="checkbox"/> Integrate targeted instruction in such areas as grammar and conventions, writing strategies, discussion rules and all aspects of foundational reading for grades 3-5. <input type="checkbox"/> Indicate how students are accountable for independent reading based on student choice and interest to build stamina, confidence and motivation (<i>may be more applicable across the year or several units</i>). <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Use technology and media to deepen learning and draw attention to evidence and texts as appropriate. 	<p>graph referenced, "Refer to the graph..." the "class matrix" from page 9? In a unit so involved and complete, language needs to be consistent and cross-referenced. Page 10 now begins to shorten student notebook to SN. It would be helpful for the abbreviation to be done parenthetically the first time to facilitate understanding by the audience reading this document for the first time.</p> <p>There are some typographical errors in Teacher notebook- consider editing again before publishing.</p> <p>All Students Directly Experience Complexity of the Text: The use of the Symbaloo site opens access to learners who struggle with reading and even for those with sight impairments. The explanations of the images supports their learning.</p> <p>Focuses on Challenging Sections of the Text: Page 15 under Respond, "On re-reading text, draw students' attention to a particularly dense section and model how you would find the evidence...."</p> <p>Appropriate Supports: The unit provides links to digital media. These links provide both a richness to the unit and strong supports to ELL and students with disabilities. When scaffolding is removed (hurricanes) suggestions for support are given. Note: ELD standards are listed in the overview but not explicitly addressed within the unit.</p> <p>Extensions: The developers of the unit might consider providing alternate texts for strong readers who may be able to bring additional information. There are extensions indicated in the unit, but there is not evidence those extensions are intended to target advanced students.</p> <p>Progression of Learning: According to the developer, texts grow progressively more difficult (p. 53) in complexity and students gain deeper understanding of hazards and disasters that may occur across the United States and their own community.</p> <p>Gradually Removes Supports: The developer is intentional and explicit in providing guidance for removing supports.</p> <p>Authentic Learning: Students study several potential disasters with the purpose of selecting one for deeper study. The Public Service Announcement that students create is an authentic product.</p> <p>Targeted Instruction: The developers require significant writing some of which is for public display. The developers should consider adding explicit instruction on grammar and conventions as well as more clearly articulating the writing process steps that would help students have strong final presentation.</p> <p>Independent Reading: The developers might provide all students opportunities to read independently about the topics and indicate how students are accountable for their independent reading.</p> <p>Technology and Media: The unit utilizes a safe site (Symbaloo) with bookmarked links to whole group and small group resources. There are additional links to resources embedded within the unit. In reference to technology, ensure all links work.</p>
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Rating: 2 – Meets many of the criteria in the dimension

Dimension IV – Assessment

<p><i>The lesson/unit regularly assesses whether students are mastering standards-based content and skills:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ 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 or assessment guidelines that provide sufficient guidance for interpreting student performance. <p><i>A unit or longer lesson should:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ Use varied modes of assessment, including a range of pre-, formative, summative and self-assessment measures.	<p>Direct Observable Evidence: The unit provides ample opportunities for formative feedback throughout the sections on various disasters--both feedback on student learning and on making meaning from the texts. However, the developers might consider adding a feedback loop as students are preparing their final posters and presentations. These feedback loops could easily be embedded into the more articulated writing process steps suggested earlier.</p> <p>Unbiased and Accessible: The unit provides unbiased and accessible methods to assess student proficiency with the targeted CCSS.</p> <p>Rubric/Assessment Guides: The unit includes a Presentation Rubric and a Poster Rubric. However, there is not guidance on providing instruction around how to meet some criterion on the presentation rubric. There seems to be no opportunity to learn or practice some of the elements included in the rubric. The developers should consider articulating where students learn the qualities of good oral presentations.</p> <p>Varied Modes of Assessment: There are varied opportunities for assessment. Assessment is evident both informal and formal, and teacher, peer, and self-assessment.</p>
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Rating: 3 – Meets most to all of the criteria in the dimension

Summary Comments

The unit brings together a wide variety of resources and has students engage with a variety of texts in each task. Working with text, video, charts, graphs, maps, etc. will foster the development of higher order thinking skills.

In general, many research-based instructional practices are presented in the initial material but are not reiterated in the tasks. While this will work well for experienced teachers, it may be more problematic for new teachers. This may be a particular issue as the final projects are developed as noted above. While it may be natural for experienced teachers to build in scaffolding and the steps of the writing process, it may be that inexperienced teachers simply assign rather than teach the brochure and presentation at the safety fair.

Rating Scales

Rating Scale for Dimensions I, II, III, IV:

3: Meets most to all of the criteria in the dimension

2: Meets many of the criteria in the dimension

1: Meets some of the criteria in the dimension

0: Does not meet the criteria in the dimension

Overall Rating for the Lesson/Unit:

E: Exemplar – Aligned and meets most to all of the criteria in dimensions II, III, IV (**total 11 – 12**)

E/I: Exemplar if Improved – Aligned and needs some improvement in one or more dimensions (**total 8 – 10**)

R: Revision Needed – Aligned partially and needs significant revision in one or more dimensions (**total 3 – 7**)

N: Not Ready to Review – Not aligned and does not meet criteria (**total 0 – 2**)

Rating Descriptors

Descriptors for Dimensions I, II, III, IV:

3: **Exemplifies CCSS Quality** - meets the standard described by criteria in the dimension, as explained in criterion-based observations.

2: **Approaching CCSS Quality** - meets many criteria but will benefit from revision in others, as suggested in criterion-based observations.

1: **Developing toward CCSS Quality** - needs significant revision, as suggested in criterion-based observations.

0: **Not representing CCSS Quality** - does not address the criteria in the dimension.

Descriptor for Overall Ratings:

E: Exemplifies CCSS Quality – Aligned and exemplifies the quality standard and exemplifies most of the criteria across Dimensions II, III, IV of the rubric.

E/I: Approaching CCSS Quality – Aligned and exemplifies the quality standard in some dimensions but will benefit from some revision in others.

R: Developing toward CCSS Quality – Aligned partially and approaches the quality standard in some dimensions and needs significant revision in others.

N: Not representing CCSS Quality – Not aligned and does not address criteria.