

EQuIP Review Feedback



Lesson/Unit Name: Building Evidence-Based Arguments-Energy Crossroads

Content Area: English language arts

Grade Level: 6

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><u><i>A unit or longer lesson should:</i></u></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>Targets a set of grade-level CCSS ELA/Literacy standards. Ultimately the unit targets RI.10 and W.1 as it centers on reading a range of complex text on the topic of energy production and consumption and developing a well-supported argumentative essay. There are elements of the unit that extend beyond the expectations of W.6.1, for example Activity 5 of Part 3 asks students to evaluate an opposing claim (W.7-8.1). Page 4 of the Unit plan describes the alignment to the CCSS for ELA/Literacy. Other targeted and supporting standards are listed in the unit plan on page 4 along with a description of how the unit addresses the skills within each: RI.1, RI.2, RI.3, RI.4, R.5, RI.6, R.7RI.8, W.1, W.2, W.4, W.5, W.9, and SL.1.</p> <p>Includes a clear and explicit purpose for instruction. The close reading of robust text sets strategically selected to build a deep understanding of a societal issue as a context for various perspectives, positions and arguments, specifically the issue of energy consumption and production.</p> <p>Selects text(s) that measure within the grade-level text complexity band and are of sufficient quality and scope for the stated purpose. The range of complexity is revealed in the "Textual Notes" component of the unit plan. Where applicable, quantitative complexity level is provided and most measure within the grade-band identified in the supplement to CCSS Appendix A. Texts are strategically selected to provide background information, political cartoons, seminal arguments, and contemporary arguments. Background information represents multiple perspectives, positions, and arguments on the topic.</p> <p>Integrate reading, writing, speaking and listening so that students apply and synthesize advancing literacy skills. Parts 1 - 3 focus deeply on reading while parts 4 and 5 provide the opportunity to synthesize that reading through writing. Most activities provide opportunity to discuss in reading teams, and the unit includes a strong culminating, collaborative, and question-based approach to strengthening writing.</p>
<p>Rating: 3 – Meets most to all of the criteria in the dimension</p>	

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 	<p>- Reading Text Closely:</p> <p>Within the unit plan, the developer provides sample text-dependent questions to drive close reading and discussion. The unit provides</p>
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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 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.

A unit or longer lesson should:

- ✓ **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.

opportunities for students to revisit texts for unique purposes to develop deep meaning. For example in Activity 5 of Part 2, students reread text 4.1 to determine how the author's relationship to the issue impacts his or her perspective. Handouts include "Guiding Questions" which support reading text closely.

- Text-Based Evidence:

This is a strength of the unit. In all activities, students are provided opportunities to draw evidence from text in support of rich evidence-based discussion and writing. Some examples include Page 5 of the Unit Plan, "students develop text-dependent questions and use them to deepen their analysis." Part 5 of page five describes how students develop and strengthen writing through a question-based process. Students engage in text-based discussions. Another example is on page 10, students discuss text-based questions as they read in teams searching and recording relevant details.

- Writing from Sources:

Students routinely write from sources throughout the unit. For example on page 10, students annotate and make notes while they read. Students write in graphic organizers, short essays, and in preparation for the culminating argumentative essay.

- Academic Vocabulary:

The unit plan includes the rationale for how the unit teaches vocabulary targeting a few specific words related to argumentation such as "claims" and "perspective." Students have multiple opportunities to deepen their understanding of these words and incorporate them in their writing. Activity 2 of Part 2 is a strong example of practice with new vocabulary in context by having students develop their own example of each element within the "Delineating Arguments" tool.

- Increasing Text Complexity:

Text sets 1 and 2 include multi-media text and text that measures in the lower half of the grade-band complexity range (e.g., 1070L) while texts in set 3 and 4 are more complex. Text set 3 includes political cartoons that require significant background knowledge (built through text sets 1 and 2) and genre-specific complexity while text set 4 includes pieces that are quantitatively in the upper half of the grade-band range (e.g., 1200L).

- Building Disciplinary Knowledge:

Part 1 and 2 builds knowledge of an issue that will be communicated in the culminating writing piece while Parts 3 - 4 build student's knowledge of the craft of argumentative writing.

Page 5 of the unit plan describes how the students build knowledge of content, questioning, and writing skills throughout the unit, culminating in an argumentative writing product. Page 6 describes how this unit can be used flexibly to build knowledge with the understanding that students need to begin the work with skills in place for reading closely and gathering textual detail to make evidence-based claims. The study is built around a high-level essential question: "How do strategic thinkers discuss and understand challenging issues or problems?" This essential question provides focus for all of the activities that culminate in an argumentative

	<p>essay on the topic of energy consumption and production, more narrowly hydraulic fracturing or fracking.</p> <p>- Balance of Texts:</p> <p>The unit includes a variety of informational texts appropriate to the study of energy consumption and production (arguments, videos, political cartoons, informational articles). The unit does not include literary text, though the unit plan describes how the balance suggested on CCSS p. 5 is accomplished across multiple units.</p> <p>- Balance of Writing:</p> <p>Parts 1 - 4 include multiple opportunities for on-demand informational and argumentative writing such as activity 1's culminating assessment (short claim-based summaries of first text set to focus on what the text says), short essays as culminating activity of Part 2, multiple graphic organizers (Forming EBC Tool, Delineating Arguments Tool, etc.). Part 5 engages students in process writing as students develop the culminating argumentative essay.</p>
<p>Rating: 3 – Meets most to all of the criteria in the dimension</p>	

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. <input type="checkbox"/> Focuses on challenging sections of text(s) and engages students in a productive struggle through discussion questions and other supports that build toward independence. <input 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. ✓ Provides extensions and/or more advanced text for students who read well above the grade level text band. <p><u><i>A unit or longer lesson should:</i></u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ 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>). ✓ Gradually remove supports, requiring students to demonstrate their independent capacities (<i>may be more applicable across the year or several units</i>). 	<p>- Cultivates student interest and engagement in reading, writing, and speaking about texts:</p> <p>The topic of energy consumption and production constantly impacts students' everyday lives. The specific topic of fracking has been in the news for several years and the positive and negative impacts of the practice have political, economic, and social ramifications, which make it a rich topic for research, discussion and writing from multiple perspectives. On page 9 of the unit plan, students view the movie trailer of "Promised Land," which was released in 2012, a contemporary look at the political, environmental, and economical impact that drilling for natural gas can have on a community.</p> <p>- Addresses instructional expectations and is easy to understand and use:</p> <p>Page 3 of the Unit Plan document provides the organizing structure of the unit with a description of the scope and sequence of instruction. The unit is divided into parts with an overview of the part followed by more detailed information about each learning activity within it. The alignment to the standards is provided at the point of use for the user's convenience and to provide consistent alignment as the unit progresses. Detailed Instructional notes are provided to explicitly define concepts and provide a well-developed sequence of instruction and further clarified in tools, checklists, and handouts.</p> <p>- Provides all students with multiple opportunities to engage with text of appropriate complexity for the grade level; includes appropriate scaffolding so that students directly experience the complexity of the text:</p> <p>Students read the same complex texts. Page 10 describes students reading independently and annotating the text. Then students work in reading teams as they continue to read and discuss the text using text-based questions to guide them to deeper understanding. Furthermore, students</p>
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Provide for authentic learning, application of literacy skills, student-directed inquiry, analysis, evaluation and/or reflection. ✓ Integrate targeted instruction in such areas as grammar and conventions, writing strategies, discussion rules and all aspects of foundational reading for grades 3-5. ☐ 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>). ✓ Use technology and media to deepen learning and draw attention to evidence and texts as appropriate. 	<p>revisit texts in preparation for writing their culminating argumentative essay.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 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>While specific challenging sections are not highlighted or excerpted for instruction, text dependent questions draw students to specific passages or sections within the texts to build deeper meaning.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 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. <p>The unit plan includes "note on text sets" which provides alternative approaches to the text to accommodate a variety of readers. However, specific scaffolds to support students who are ELL, have disabilities, or read below grade level are not specifically noted. The developer might consider adding differentiation suggestions or multiple forms of tools and handouts.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Provides extensions and/or more advanced text for students who read well above the grade level text band: <p>Activity 6 of Part 2 provides opportunity for students to delineate additional arguments. Instructional notes indicate that students may embark on further research using "Researching to Deepen Understanding."</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Include a progression of learning where concepts and skills advance and deepen over time: <p>The progression of learning is described in the unit outline on page 5 of the unit plan. Students progress from understanding the nature of an issue to analyzing and evaluating arguments while developing a position to then organizing an evidence based argument and finally developing and strengthening writing.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Gradually remove supports: <p>Within each part students work toward independently demonstrating understanding and within the overall unit there is gradual release of responsibility. In part 1 and 2 students focus on understanding text deeply and have supports such as reading teams, modeling, and practice writing explanatory claims. These supports are gradually removed such that students independently reread text sets and develop their culminating writing essay with guided support.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Provide for authentic learning, application of literacy skills, student-directed inquiry, analysis, evaluation, and/or reflection: <p>There are some examples of student-directed inquiry and analysis and/or reflection. One example appears in part 1 as students develop their own text-dependent questions. Another example is within the collaborative question-based process to improve writing which includes a central learning principle of independence.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Integrate targeted instruction in such areas as grammar and conventions, writing strategies, discussion rules:
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	<p>Writing strategies are the focus of parts 4 and 5 of the unit. There are multiple activities and tools that support improved writing craft such as the "Transitional Words" handout. The Collaborative Question-based process includes checklists to support effective discussion.</p> <p>- Indicate how students are accountable for independent reading:</p> <p>This unit does not include activities or resources for independent reading beyond "Researching to Deepen Understanding."</p> <p>- Use technology and media to deepen learning and draw attention to evidence and texts as appropriate:</p> <p>Videos are important components of text sets and contribute to building knowledge on the issue of energy consumption and production.</p>
<p>Rating: 3 – Meets most to all of the criteria in the dimension</p>	

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><u><i>A unit or longer lesson should:</i></u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Use varied modes of assessment, including a range of pre-, formative, summative and self-assessment measures. 	<p>- Elicits direct, observable evidence:</p> <p>Students produce a culminating argumentative essay which teachers evaluate using the Evidence-Based Writing Rubric. The scoring guidelines tightly align to the targeted standard (W.6.1) and to activities within the unit.</p> <p>- Assesses student proficiency using methods that are unbiased and accessible to all students:</p> <p>The unit overview strongly suggests that students maintain a portfolio of all handouts and short essays. Each part includes assessment opportunities that provide the teacher with multiple ongoing and varied evidence of student understanding.</p> <p>- Aligned rubric and assessment guidelines:</p> <p>The unit provides multiple rubrics including EBC Criteria Checklist, Text-centered discussion checklist, and Evidence-based writing rubric. The developer might consider providing exemplar student responses to text dependent questions and sample annotated culminating argumentative essays.</p> <p>- Use varied modes of assessment:</p> <p>As mentioned previously, the unit includes multiple and varied formative assessment opportunities. While the KWL chart captures some evidence on students' background knowledge, the unit does not include a pre-assessment.</p>
<p>Rating: 3 – Meets most to all of the criteria in the dimension</p>	

Summary Comments

<p>Overall Strengths:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Clear explanation of rational and instructional details make the unit easy to implement and surface the shifts of the Common Core such that practices are transferable.

- The unit prepares students for writing that includes reading, oral processing, and other activities designed to build knowledge of energy production and consumption which is communicated in the final writing piece.
- Acquisition of literacy skills and content knowledge are well integrated through a strong instructional progression.

Overall Areas for Growth:

- The developer might consider providing differentiated suggestions within reading activities to support English Language Learners, students with disabilities, or students reading below the grade band.
- Adding sample student work or exemplars of handouts, text-dependent questions, and essays would ensure high quality implementation of the unit.

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.