

EQuIP Review Feedback



Lesson/Unit Name: Development of the Adolescent Brain

Content Area: English language arts

Grade Level: 7

Overall Rating:

E

Exemplar

Dimension I – Alignment to the Depth of the CCSS

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

- ✓ 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).

A unit or longer lesson should:

- ✓ 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.

Reviewers in full agreement of strong evidence:

Targets grade level CCSS ELA/Literacy standards:

The unit explicitly teaches and is skillfully aligned with 7th grade CCSS ELA standards for reading informational text (RI 7.1, 7.2, 7.5, 7.6), speaking and listening (SL 7.2), and language (L 7.6). Aligned with the long term and supporting targets. Each lesson clearly stated these targets and connected learning activities that aligned.

Includes a clear and explicit purpose for instruction:

The unit and the lessons were very clear on the purpose of the instruction (clearly stated in the Unit 1: Overview which includes background information about the content of the unit and summarizes the learning trajectory by providing learning targets for each of the 10 individual lessons.) The unit used the learning targets as instructional tools for the students . Ex: Lesson 1 p7.

Longer units-Integrate reading, writing, speaking and listening:

The unit is carefully constructed to incorporate all literacy skills (reading writing speaking and listening) for authentic application and synthesis of information about adolescent brain development. Integrating more opportunities for students to discuss their ideas would enhance the unit. Ex: Lesson 4.

Reviewers not in full agreement:

Selects texts that measure within the grade level text complexity band:
Two of the three reviewers after calibration did not feel there was strong evidence of this in the unit.

This unit includes a large number of informational texts in a variety of formats: print, visual, video, audio. The unit includes a wide range of text complexity, sufficient in both quality and scope for the intended purposes outlined in each lesson, although a section of rationale supporting the choice of these texts and/or the quantitative measure would increase usability for teachers. The unit also includes an independent reading list geared to help build content knowledge about the topic of adolescent brain development. The list is organized by Lexile only.

It is recommended by the group that both the articles used in class and the independent readings have text complexity measures for quantitative and qualitative components along with a rationale for the choice of text and the progression. That would make the criteria strongly aligned.

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

Dimension II – Key Shifts the CCSS

The lesson/unit addresses key shifts in the CCSS:

- ✓ **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 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.

Full agreement of strong evidence:

Reading Text Closely: Close reading and text-dependent questions are the central focus of lesson 6, 7, and 8. Close reading strategies are extensively modeled to aid in comprehension of a complex text while providing scaffolding as students learn to identify the main ideas of informational texts. The gradual release of responsibility through these three lessons is noteworthy, by lesson 8 students are ready to apply the close reading strategies learned to answer text-dependent questions about a complex text independently.

The reviewers commented there was some confusion about who was actually doing the reading in Lessons 6-9, from the various notes and supports it states students read silently while teacher reads aloud which contradicts students will be reading with support or in pairs. It is recommended that who is doing the reading be made explicitly clear in all the lesson materials.

Text-Based Evidence:

Almost every lesson in this unit requires students to cite evidence from texts (including photos, videos, and quotes) during discussion and writing. Lessons 1,2,3,6, 7, 8, and 10 require students to use text-based evidence for increasingly complex purposes. The text dependent questions were written to provide opportunities for close examination of the text and to understand at a deeper level. Students were also using text information to complete their brain development anchor chart.

Writing from Sources:

In the neurologist's notebook and thinking log, students are asked to answer questions and catch notes in writing. Writing is used to record and reflect on their own thinking and comprehension in the students' Thinking Log. Students were provided multiple note taking organizers. Examples were: a note-catcher to get the gist, main idea, and supporting idea/details; a Thinking Log that was used in many lessons to help students synthesize their understanding of their homework readings; and also a Brain Development anchor chart to complete throughout most of the lessons to help keep track of the major areas of brain development. Students are asked to summarize the main idea and supporting details of the articles they have read using a well-explained paragraph in lesson 4. Exit tickets (post-its or cards) were used to add to the Brain Development chart. In lesson 10 students also completed a form on their independent reading book to self assess if they were meeting their reading goal. As part of their Mid-unit assessments students were providing short responses, sentences, paragraphs, and for homework writing a letter summarizing what they have learned about the neurological development of teenagers.

Academic Vocabulary:

This unit focuses on building students' academic vocabulary in context throughout the entire lesson sequence. The neurologist's notebook involves domain-specific vocabulary work, and this is where students will hold important definitions related to neuroscience. Students listened and highlighted what they felt was the domain-specific words as the teacher read aloud. Words were discussed and with definitions and recorded on graphic organizers. The class also collectively records academic vocabulary on an anchor chart. Many vocabulary acquisition strategies are used to aid in comprehension. For example, lesson 1 focuses on prefix work around more science and medical words and lesson 2 requires students to identify academic vocabulary to include on the Domain Specific Vocabulary Anchor

Chart then teaches academic vocabulary using a kinesthetic demonstration. Most lessons include vocabulary recording in the gist notes section. Academic vocabulary is self-assessed in Lessons 8 (quiz-quiz-trade) and formally assessed in Lesson 10.

Building Disciplinary Knowledge:

This unit did intentionally build content knowledge incorporating science concepts and themes to support potential cross-standards connections on the topic through digital and print resources. The graphic organizers and thinking logs were evidence of that meaning making by students.

Balance of Texts:

This unit focuses the lesson instruction on informational texts, but provides an appropriate balance of literature with the inclusion of a graphic novel and fiction in recommended texts for the independent reading program that runs parallel to this unit.

Reviewers not in full agreement:

Increasing text complexity:

Without the complete text complexity information, the progression of complexity is unable to be fully determined. It is recommended that the increasing rigor would be more transparent for teachers if rationales about text complexity were included.

Balance of Writing:

Writing to build understanding and meta-cognition evident in two notebooks, use of exit slips, paragraph summaries, anchor charts and graphic organizers.

Although this unit is building background for a future essay in Unit 4, only one writing standard is addressed (lesson 4, W.7.10) and structured process writing is only formalized one time as homework in lesson 4. Short constructed on-demand answers are collected in writing throughout each lesson of this unit. The writing process (revision of drafts to clarify meaning) is not addressed during this unit, but would add to a balanced approach to integrating writing.

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

Dimension III – Instructional Supports

The lesson/unit is responsive to varied student learning needs:

- ✓ Cultivates student interest and engagement in reading, writing and speaking about texts.
- ✓ Addresses instructional expectations and is easy to understand and use.
- ✓ Provides *all* students with multiple opportunities to engage with text of appropriate complexity for the grade level; includes appropriate scaffolding so that students directly experience the complexity of the text.
- ✓ Focuses on challenging sections of text(s) and engages students in a productive struggle through discussion questions and other supports that build toward independence.
- Integrates appropriate supports in reading, writing, listening and speaking for students who

Full agreement of strong evidence:

Cultivates student interest and engagement:

Student interest and motivation comes from both the content (the changing adolescent brain and how technology effects it) as well as the multiple note-taking guides and multimedia integrated into the lesson.

Addresses instructional expectations:

This unit is structured in a logical, usable way that allows teachers to grasp the whole picture quickly, but also supports their instruction lesson by lesson. Inclusion of detailed overview, cautions, notes and sidebar about meeting student needs. Preparation and materials notes provide in-depth description of routines, agenda with estimated times helpful in planning.

Focuses on challenging sections of text:

The unit very purposely focuses on the most challenging sections of text, and students engage in productive struggle through key passages of text. The Thinking Logs provided opportunities for all students to respond critically to the text and how that resonated and connected with them. The Brain

<p>are ELL, have disabilities, or read well below the grade level text band.</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><u>A unit or longer lesson should:</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>). ✓ 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>Development Anchor charts was a daily way to capture their understanding of the specific areas of the brain from that day which helps synthesize the challenging texts for all students. In lessons 6-9 the text dependent questions did provide students to struggle with the understanding of the text whole class and working with a partner to gain independence of the text starting in lesson 8. In Lesson 8 the close reading process allowed for students to answer with a partner instead of the whole class. This provided a structure for the teacher to work with students needing additional support.</p> <p>Provides extensions: The overview of the unit did provide optional extensions that could be used throughout any of the lessons. Two of the lessons provided above grade level text for the students. In Lesson 3 students can read entire article as a challenge, recommended reading in higher Lexiles offers stretch thinking for more accelerated students.</p> <p>Include a progression of learning: The progression evidenced in this unit by the skills application to different text and multimedia. This increases the depth of knowledge to the highest level. For example throughout the first half of the unit, the learner targets remain primarily the same, but the text level increases while the level of support decrease as the students become more equipped to analyze various types of texts for main idea and cite text-based evidence.</p> <p>Use of technology and media: Making students thoughtful consumers of media is the focus of this unit, so it feels like a natural fit that this unit should offer students abundant examples of using technology to deepen students' understanding. It does not disappoint in its effortless incorporation of technology. Students are required on multiple occasions to analyze photos, video, and quotes to find a main idea. Students are also required to explain how ideas presented in different media and formats clarify a topic, text, or issue. (SL.7.2) They must also analyze impact of the techniques unique to each medium. (RI.7.7)</p> <p>Reviewers not in full agreement:</p> <p>All students with multiple opportunities to engage in text: Most of the reviewers responded that there were many examples of multiple ways to access and engage in the text. Every lesson expects every learner to engage with text of appropriate complexity for the grade level while offering supports to those who need assistance. All students are expected to actively engage with key readings during the unit with learning style entry points that include; visual with gallery walks and media, kinesthetic learning with use of movement and vocabulary in action, auditory with lots of speaking and listening to process. There are many scaffolds in place to support learners who need it, but at no point are they given an alternative text, only strategies that allow them access. Disagreement centered on the large amount of support, not all learners would need this amount of scaffolding. A recommendation to in the Notes section of the Overview might discuss the use of professional judgement as a teacher in removing or adding scaffolds as needed.</p> <p>Provides for authentic learning: The unit leads students in a guided inquiry, it shows them how to think through articles about the effect of technology on developing brains without ever trying to sway them into what they should think. Students are required to extensively analyze and synthesize information to evaluate their own use of technology. Reflection of the content of the lesson, but also</p>
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metacognition about how the learning process is occurring is encouraged at multiple points in the unit. The only piece in the unit that feels unauthentic is the letter in Lesson 5 homework.

Set some guidelines to support writing of this summary, for example using details from texts and videos to support ideas. Not clear whether students can use anchor charts or notebooks in writing.

The purpose of the letter might feel more authentic if you had to explain to an adult why you made or make impulsive decisions and how what you have learned can explain that action. (make sure your explanation includes learning around the pre-frontal cortex, the limbic system and neurons).

Students accountable for independent reading:

Although there was time in Lesson 6 that students choose from books one to use for independent reading, the process of developing the accountability with the student was an assumption that this had been established. There were two articles referenced to aid in creating a structure of independent reading in the classroom. The independent books were referred to in later lessons to read when students were finished with their activities and an independent check in was used in lesson 10 for students to complete about meeting a reading goal. The reading goals had not been discussed before reading this self-reflection. It was felt by all the reviewers that while there was independent reading - it felt like an add-on rather than an integral part of the unit.

Integrates appropriate supports in reading, writing, listening and speaking for ELL:

Most of the reviewers felt that with the structured scaffolding and variety of access points into text, that there were appropriate supports for ELL or below grade level readers. This criteria and the one discussed below were seen as linked in that over scaffolding and support may be as harmful as a lack of support in moving students to independence. The reviewers having discussed this issue, felt the criteria was there but wish to have a note to teachers added about using professional judgement in applying or removing scaffolds.

Gradually remove supports demonstrating independent capabilities:

Again, the unit is built around the gradual release of responsibility, complete with heavy amounts of modeling and guided practice that slowly turns to independent practice as students are ready as determined by the teacher. Some thoughts about appropriate removal of scaffolding may be needed to encourage teachers to use their professional judgment and knowledge of their learners to decide when to offer students more independence.

Reviewers also noted that this was the first unit of a multi-unit module and it may be we do not see the release to independence in this particular unit.

Rating: 2 – Meets many of the criteria in the dimension

Dimension IV – Assessment

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

- ✓ 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.

Full agreement of strong evidence:

Elicits direct, observable evidence:

The unit features gradual release of responsibility, including an independent demonstration of understanding, for each targeted skill. The Notices and Wonders note-catcher, Neurologist notebook, thinking logs, and exit tickets provide ongoing formative assessments throughout the lessons and were aligned with the standards. The group work can still be individualized by the student's comments in each of these note takers and students held accountable for completing the specific one for the lesson and homework.

<p>✓ Includes aligned rubrics or assessment guidelines that provide sufficient guidance for interpreting student performance.</p> <p><u>A unit or longer lesson should:</u></p> <p>✓ Use varied modes of assessment, including a range of pre-, formative, summative and self-assessment measures.</p>	<p>The lessons also feature guidance in the teacher’s notes for collecting observable evidence.</p> <p>Assess student proficiency that is unbiased: The supportive environment planned in each lesson provides students access to the formative, mid-unit, and end of unit assessment. Lessons offer multiple access points for all learning styles and many risk-free options for all students. End of unit assessment is multiple choice and performance assessment balances pen and paper assessment for more visually inclines students.</p> <p>Includes aligned rubrics: Suggested acceptable answers are included with every piece of student material. There are also multiple places in each lesson that provide teachers guidance in regards to monitoring and measuring student’s performance toward the learning target. Each lesson begins by drawing students' attention to specific learning targets. All tasks throughout the lessons as well as the teacher script and student materials consistently supports those learning targets, so students have a strong understanding of their goal. Students also get to self assess with the use of the independent reading self evaluation, and a reflection grid. The mid and final assessments are clearly aligned to those learning targets, both at the lesson level, but at the unit level as well. The performance task has key criteria for success, some may find a rubric with a continuum of success easier to work with than a simple list, rubrics can show students what they need to do in order to succeed rather than a grade. It is recommended that rubrics or scoring guides be provided for the summative assessments and performance tasks for teachers to use as teaching points with their students.</p> <p>Use varied modes of assessment: Teachers have a summative assessment option in lessons 6 and lesson 10. Each lesson also includes guidance about how to collect and review formative assessment data. During lesson 6 students have an opportunity to self-assess their learning.</p>
<p>Rating: 3 – Meets most to all of the criteria in the dimension</p>	

Summary Comments

The alignment to the Common Core State Standards is apparent in this unit. Evidence from all the the key shifts of the CCSS is present. The unit's organizational structure allows ease of access for teachers. Also of note, is the unit's careful alignment between targeted teaching of standards and assessment of those learning targets.

Teachers will be very appreciative of the completed templates and answer sheets for their reference to enhance classroom discussion and serve as a assessment guidelines. The videos, multimedia, and interactive websites will be exciting for the students and the teacher to explore and learn together.

Suggestions:

Clearer guidelines for who conducts the first reading on the Close Reading guide would be recommended.

Additional opportunities to engage all students discussing throughout all lessons would be recommended to ensure all students are experiencing the complexity of the texts.

The only misalignment with CCSS is the use of the term "position paper" Unit would be stronger and more aligned to the CCSS if the terms emphasized in the "3 modes of writing" were used consistently. May be confusing for teachers and students when term position paper is used interchangeably with argument. Another term which could be more aligned with CCSS is use of anecdote, CCSS uses term narrative - so modeling how a narrative often functions as an introduction to a more complex scientific concept can be demonstrated with a read aloud of some of the unit text. Since this unit is focused on the scientific rather than the literary, would

be more aligned if term narrative was used.

Editing comments:

Add a parenthesis Lesson 7 p18 around Giedd

In Recommended Books "Walk Two Moons" is listed incorrectly as an informational text- it is Literature.

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.