

EQuIP Review Feedback



Lesson/Unit Name: Kindergarten Skills Strand Unit 7

Content Area: English/language arts in grades K-2

Grade Level: K

Overall Rating:

E/I

Exemplar if Improved

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 K-2 ELA/Literacy CCSS for teaching and learning.
- ✓ Includes a clear and explicit purpose for instruction.
- ✓ Selects quality text(s) that align with the requirements outlined in the standards, presents characteristics similar to CCSS K-2 exemplars (Appendix B), and are of sufficient scope for the stated purpose.
- Provides opportunities for students to present ideas and information through writing and/or drawing and speaking experiences.

A unit or longer lesson should:

- ✓ Emphasize the explicit, systematic development of foundational literacy skills (concepts of print, phonological awareness, the alphabetic principle, high frequency sight words, and phonics).
- ✓ Regularly include specific fluency-building techniques supported by research (e.g., monitored partner reading, choral reading, repeated readings with text, following along in the text when teacher or other fluent reader is reading aloud, short timed practice that is slightly challenging to the reader).
- Integrate reading, writing, speaking and listening so that students apply and synthesize advancing literacy skills.
- Build students' content knowledge in social studies, the arts, science or technical subjects through a coherent sequence of texts and series of questions that build knowledge within a topic.

The unit lists RL.K.1, RL.K.3, RL.K.7, RL.K.10, RF.K.1a,b,d, RF.K.2d, RF.K.3a,b, RF.K.4 as target standards. It lists RL.K.2, SL.K.4, L.K.1a, L.K.2, L.K.2, and L.K.4b as additional standards. The unit overview acknowledges that the purpose and scope is to focus on Reading Foundational Skills because other standards will be addressed with other materials related to listening and learning. The unit succeeds in targeting the reading skills, contextualized mini-lessons on Language, Reading Literature 1, and Speaking and Listening 2. This is evident in the time dedicated to building phonemic awareness, encouraging student writing, and comprehension questions about decodable texts. Students do not use narrative language to describe characters, familiar people, illustrations, or read aloud for 15 minutes regularly enough to list those related Reading Literature and Speaking standards as fully aligned with the unit. The effort and intention to integrate a diverse range of standards is commendable. Fully addressing some of those standards or reclassifying some as primary and others as secondary would help guide instruction. In particular, the alignment chart at the beginning could reflect which are taught to mastery, and which are only touched upon.

The introduction section described the central focus of this unit as introducing, choosing, selecting, and producing digraph sounds, with reading comprehension, language, and handwriting as supporting standards. This section provide a clear and succinct picture of how the components of the lessons worked in conjunction with one another to promote literacy. The activities and teacher instructions in each lesson always aligned with the objectives listed at the outset.

The decodable texts do not align with the guidelines of Appendix B because their scope and purpose is to reinforce and teach Reading Foundational Skills. The texts listed in Appendix B are listed to support instruction on poetry, Reading Literature, and Reading Informational Texts. They are quality texts for the purpose of the unit, to build phonological awareness. There is an attempt in lesson two to include quality children's literature with the suggestion to include One Fish, Two Fish. The unit would be stronger in this criteria if it included a list of texts such as this, which could accompany and support the decodable reading.

Students have opportunities to share ideas about the text with their Think-Pair share activities that accompany the reading of their decodable as well as the comprehension questions. There are writing opportunities in the worksheets as well, but the focus of that type of writing is on motor skills, rather than thoughts. Nonetheless, the unit could meet this criteria if students were encouraged to share their questions and answers related to the text. More occasions for student writing and drawing of responses, or their own versions of the decodables would help reinforce the mastery of Reading Foundational Skills.

	<p>The unit is systematic in the approach to digraphs because it encourages conceptual understanding of how they work, as well as a gradual introduction with an emphasis on differentiating between sound and spelling patterns.</p> <p>There are multiple opportunities for students to practice reading aloud with the variations in grouping for the decodables. Students also read and sound out letter sounds, promoting the focus of the unit, phonological awareness. The unit would be stronger in this criteria if it included a timed practice component, choral reading, and more monitoring of the independent rereading activities.</p> <p>There is reading of the decodable texts, letter sounds and CVC words. There is letter formation practice for writing, and speaking and listening about the decodables as well as sound discrimination. The focus of the unit is phonological awareness; however, placing more emphasis on synthesizing these activities would advance literacy skills and retain the focus of the unit. There are ample opportunities for this to occur if the writing related to the worksheets was more strategic and purposeful in encouraging students to perceive themselves as authors. There are also opportunities for group discussions about the reading and reading foundational skills activities to help students understand how and why they can control language to suit their needs.</p> <p>The unit does not build content knowledge, but that is not the scope or focus of the unit. This criteria is not applicable to the scoring because the focus is on addressing Reading Foundational Skills.</p>
<p>Rating: 2 – Meets many 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 (including read alouds) a central focus of instruction and includes regular opportunities for students to ask and answer text-dependent questions. ❑ Text-Based Evidence: Facilitates rich text-based discussions and writing through specific, thought-provoking questions about common texts (including read alouds and, when applicable, illustrations, audio/video and other media). ✓ Academic Vocabulary: Focuses on explicitly building students’ academic vocabulary and concepts of syntax throughout instruction. <p><i>A unit or longer lesson should:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Grade-Level Reading: Include a progression of texts as students learn to read (e.g., additional phonic patterns are introduced, increasing sentence length). Provides text-centered learning that is sequenced, scaffolded and supported to advance students toward independent grade-level reading. 	<p>The succession of phonological texts about Seth include read-alouds and opportunities for students to ask and respond to questions about the texts. Students read the brief texts that they are provided multiple times and are encouraged to master decoding them.</p> <p>Text-Based evidence is not a focus of this unit, and it is not applicable because the focus is on phonological awareness. Nonetheless, this criteria could be more prominent in the way that students respond to the comprehension questions. Asking students to refer to the text to support their answers and generate their questions would help the unit satisfy this criteria. Citing illustrations as evidence would also address some of the Reading Literature standards.</p> <p>Tier two words are introduced as needed in the stories that they occur. These words contain the spelling patterns that students are focusing on. Introducing them to students promotes their comprehension of the decodable texts. The teacher uses academic words like capital, first, last, and middle; however, the words are not revisited or contextualized to promote acquisition. Kindergarten students could be introduced to the term digraph as well.</p> <p>The decodable texts are tailored carefully to the phonemes that have already been taught. They gradually increase in complexity as the unit progresses. Students review decodables from a previous unit until they are adequately prepared to succeed with the Seth series of stories.</p>
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Balance of Texts: Focus instruction equally on literary and informational texts as stipulated in the CCSS (p.5) and indicated by instructional time (<i>may be more applicable across a year or several units</i>). <input type="checkbox"/> Balance of Writing: Include prominent and varied writing opportunities for students that balance communicating thinking and answering questions with self-expression and exploration. 	<p>The balance of texts does not apply to a single unit focused on phonological awareness.</p> <p>Writing is limited to handwriting practice. The unit could satisfy this criteria and better accomplish the focus of the unit on phonological awareness with student written/drawn responses to the texts, creation of words, and more strategic use of the writing that already occurs in the worksheets to help promote meaningful student compositions.</p>
<p>Rating: 2 – Meets many 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 for teachers (e.g., clear directions, sample proficient student responses, sections that build teacher understanding of the whys and how of the material). ✓ Integrates targeted instruction in multiple areas such as grammar and syntax, writing strategies, discussion rules and aspects of foundational reading. ✓ Provides substantial materials to support students who need more time and attention to achieve automaticity with decoding, phonemic awareness, fluency and/or vocabulary acquisition. <input type="checkbox"/> Provides <i>all</i> students (including emergent and beginning readers) with extensive opportunities to engage with grade-level texts and read alouds that are at high levels of complexity including appropriate scaffolding so that students directly experience the complexity of text. <input type="checkbox"/> Focuses on sections of rich text(s) (including read alouds) that present the greatest challenge; provides discussion questions and other supports to promote student engagement, understanding and progress toward independence. <input type="checkbox"/> Integrates appropriate, extensive and easily implemented supports for students who are ELL, have disabilities and/or read or write below grade level. <input type="checkbox"/> Provides extensions and/or more advanced text for students who read or write above grade level. <p><u><i>A unit or longer lesson should:</i></u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Include a progression of learning where concepts, knowledge and skills advance and 	<p>This is a skills unit, so a certain degree of repetition is expected. The riddles, wiggly words, group, and variety of activities engage students enough for them participate and learn. The unit could be stronger in this criteria if it provided a purpose for the importance of developing skills and stated the connection to the Listening and Learning Units.</p> <p>One of the strengths of the unit is how it is organized and the sharing of materials. It is very clear, nicely spaced and organized for a teacher to understand how to use the first time as well as for quick references and review.</p> <p>Aspects of foundational reading are thoroughly addressed in this unit. There is some discussion, although rules are not established. The unit author tries to integrate mini-lessons on capitals, periods, and apostrophes. Carrying this emphasis over to the writing as well would help with this criteria.</p> <p>The unit provides all of the required materials for the activities focused on phonological awareness. It also grants adequate time to introduce, review and distinguish between new sounds. It also provides materials to take home as well as extra decodable stories.</p> <p>The unit is not focused on understanding complex texts because it is centered on phonological skills. This criteria and the criteria related to a focus on challenging sections of text were not included in the scoring for this unit.</p> <p>Supports for ELLs are assumed, rather than provided. For example, Spanish speakers often have great difficulty distinguishing between the /ch/ and /sh/ sounds. Yet this is not mentioned specifically until much later in the teacher's information, not within the lessons themselves. Sister sounds do not include the /ch/sh/ dilemma. The pausing points and redirection to activities to multiple re-teaching activities that can be built into each lesson. The notes in the left margins include reference to which section of the Pausing Points the teacher can turn to for immediate help with the skill being taught. The structure and timing of the Student Performance Task Assessment provide ample opportunity to inform instruction and help with remediation. The small-groups for the read alouds created a structure to provide support; however there is not enough guidance or variety for the group not working with the teacher to supply meaningful support.</p> <p>The grouping strategy in and of itself is not an adequate extension for advanced students. They need to be provided opportunities to investigate</p>
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<p>deepen over time (<i>may be more applicable across the year or several units</i>).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Gradually remove supports, allowing students to demonstrate their independent capacities (<i>may be more applicable across the year or several units</i>). <input type="checkbox"/> Provide for authentic learning, application of literacy skills and/or student-directed inquiry. <input type="checkbox"/> Indicate how students are accountable for independent engaged 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 type="checkbox"/> Use technology and media to deepen learning and draw attention to evidence and texts as appropriate. 	<p>where they see the sound and spelling patterns in texts they are interested in. Providing them more texts like One Fish, Two Fish would help them connect what they're learning to engaging stories. Finally, more writing opportunities and instruction related to the targeted sounds could be utilized more to challenge students above grade level. Challenging extensions could also be added as suggestions on the Take Home worksheets.</p> <p>The learning progresses through a continuum of phonological awareness in the material, and it retains and becomes more complex in this focus throughout the unit.</p> <p>While the removal of supports is evident for the more able students, it is less apparent with the struggling learner within the unit. There is a gradual removal of supports in the introduction of sounds, and the progression to identifying differences between them. The worksheets are also introduced as whole group and gradually handed over to individual students. The Pause and Point and discretion for teachers to decide on what to review helps satisfy this criteria.</p> <p>The unit does not provide opportunities for authentic learning or student directed inquiry. This is listed as something that is focused on in the Listening and Learning section of the unit. Even if it is focused on elsewhere, there are opportunities for students to position themselves as inquirers and experimenters with language. The unit shows some promise with this in the games where students create real and imaginary words. It also taps this curiosity with some of the riddles and chaining activities. If these moments were leveraged more and students were asked to share examples of where they see spelling patterns used, the unit would satisfy this criteria.</p> <p>Holding students accountable for independent reading is not applicable because the unit focuses on phonological awareness. However, this could be included in regards to the rereading of decodables or inclusion of exemplary children's literature.</p> <p>The option to fill out the worksheets with a word processor or online would help students feel more comfortable locating particular letters on the keyboard. Media should be used to help with sound discrimination and exposure to language for students that require it.</p>
<p>Rating: 2 – Meets many 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"> <input type="checkbox"/> Elicits direct, observable evidence of the degree to which a student can independently demonstrate foundational skills and targeted grade level literacy CCSS (e.g., reading, writing, speaking and listening and/or language). ✓ 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 and 	<p>The Student Performance Task and worksheets provide evidence that students can independently demonstrate skills related to standards for Reading Foundational Skills and Language. Students do not provide evidence of their mastery of Reading Literature standards and Speaking and Listening standards that are listed as targeted. Assessing these standards and explicitly teaching them or reclassifying them as secondary would help the unit satisfy this criteria.</p> <p>The Student Performance Task is structured in a way that all students are prepared to be successful. Everything that is included in the assessment is taught explicitly prior to the assessment.</p>
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<p>responding to areas where students are not yet meeting standards.</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>There is a rubric that explains how the Student Performance Task should be interpreted. The unit provides several activities that help formulate a response to students that are not yet meeting standards.</p> <p>Throughout the unit there were multiple opportunities for the teacher to gather information about student understanding, although they were not named as "formative" assessments. The anecdotal notes section helps address this criteria as well, but it could be emphasized and referenced more in the daily lessons.</p>
<p>Rating: 2 – Meets many of the criteria in the dimension</p>	

Summary Comments

This unit addresses the limited focus on reading skills thoroughly and is sustained throughout. The effort to integrate comprehension standards is something that should continue to be explored and strengthened. Connecting the process of reading to the act of making meaning of the world would underscore the value for students to dedicate their time and effort to practicing the skills.

There are certain criteria that clearly do not apply to this unit, such as complex texts and reading them closely. However, there are some criteria such as balance of writing and engaging students in inquiry that could have greater prominence in this unit, even though they are not the primary focus. Like the integration of reading comprehension standards, addressing these to a greater extent would elevate this good unit to exemplar.

More specific recognition of the needs of English Learners with sound recognition, vocabulary and advanced students with writing should also be considered in the future.

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.