

EQulP Review Feedback



Lesson/Unit Name: Steve Jobs' 2005 Stanford University Commencement Address

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>A unit or longer lesson should:</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>Targeted Standards:</p> <p>This unit targets several key Common Core standards in reading, writing, and speaking and listening. On page 3, the introduction states that this unit targets standards RI.1 and W.9b as the main focus of learning. The unit also brings in RI.2, RI.3, W.4, and SL.1 as supporting standards. For each part of the unit the targeted and supported standards are also listed, showing clearly throughout the unit how those standards are met.</p> <p>Clear and Explicit Purpose for Instruction:</p> <p>In the introductory sections on pages 3-5, the authors of this unit lay out clear explanations of the purpose for instruction. The objective of this unit is for students to understand the purpose of and to make evidence-based claims, and the unit is carefully scaffolded to help them meet that goal More than just teaching students to restate what is in the text, the unit seeks to help students see themselves as "creators of meaning," bringing their own authority into their analysis of the text. It is clear from the attention paid to laying out these clear objectives and instructions that the developers went out of their way to make it clear that students should understand the purpose.</p> <p>Selected Texts:</p> <p>The sole text is a commencement speech by Steve Jobs, which is listed as a 880L. The Lexile score is low for the grade level, but it has many of the qualitative features that make it a worthy text. This text supports the stated purpose well; there are plenty of details in the text that can be pulled out as evidence for the various claims that students may make. A suggestion to the developers would be to call out these qualitative features in the introductory sections of the unit.</p> <p>Integrating Reading, Writing, Listening, and Speaking:</p> <p>Students do engage in reading, writing, listening, and speaking over the course of the unit It is especially powerful that students have the opportunity to watch and listen to the address via YouTube, which is good practice and adds interest to the experience.</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 discerning deep meaning a central focus of 	<p>Reading Text Closely/Text-based Evidence: Students engage in several close reads of the text, independently and with support, looking for evidence to answer text-dependent questions that can then be used in their writing.</p> <p>Writing From Sources: At the end of the unit, the students make claims</p>
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<p>instruction.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ 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. <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>based on their reading of the text and evidence gleaned from it to back up their claims.</p> <p>Academic Vocabulary: There are numerous academic vocabulary words explicitly taught in the course of the unit, as well as some provided in the context of the lessons. Words such as "claim," "evidence-based claim," and "evidence" are introduced early in the unit and tools such as the EBC Checklist reinforce that learning and share additional terms.</p> <p>Increasing Text Complexity/Balance of Texts: There is only one text in this unit, Steve Jobs' commencement address. Students are certainly scaffolded to read this single text independently, but are not asked to use those same skills in another piece or type of text. This aligns closely with the purpose of the unit, which is to focus students on reading closely to find evidence to answers to text-dependent questions, making claims based on their understanding of the text, and supporting their claims with evidence. One particular strength of the unit is the way in which the carefully crafted text-centered activities scaffold the students towards independence.</p> <p>Building Disciplinary Knowledge: While the introduction invites teachers to make links to other content areas, this unit is not necessarily from one subject area. This is not the purpose, though; it is being used as a tool for students to gain practice finding and using text-based evidence. Teachers could easily substitute a more content-specific text if they desired, as long as it met the stated outcomes of the unit.</p> <p>Balance of Writing: Students have opportunities to write towards the end of the unit, with the specific goal being that they make increasingly global claims supported by evidence. They do this both independently and with support, in class and at home. They do not complete multiple drafts nor do they engage in a research project, though there a specific reference to the importance of revision in activity two of part four. It's clear that the writing activities were tightly designed to support the unit objectives.</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. ✓ Focuses on challenging sections of text(s) and engages students in a productive struggle 	<p>Cultivates Student Interest and Engagement: This commencement address certainly provides a good deal of fodder for discussion and writing, so there is plenty of opportunity for the students to be engaged. Being that this is a commencement address, many students at this age may need some building of background knowledge as to the purpose and structure of this type of speech. Also, this piece has some pretty heavy existential leanings and while some students may be very interested in this discussion, some students may find it inaccessible. Some suggestions for other texts that could meet the same purpose would be a welcome addition to the unit.</p> <p>Instructional Expectations: This unit is very clearly laid out for the teacher and would be easy to use. On page 6, there is a section entitled "How To Use These Materials," which clearly lays out how teachers should use the various tools in the unit. On</p>
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through discussion questions and other supports that build toward independence.

- ✓ 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.

A unit or longer lesson should:

- ✓ Include a progression of learning where concepts and skills advance and deepen over time (*may be more applicable across the year or several units*).
- ✓ Gradually remove supports, requiring students to demonstrate their independent capacities (*may be more applicable across the year or several units*).
- ✓ 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 (*may be more applicable across the year or several units*).
- ✓ Use technology and media to deepen learning and draw attention to evidence and texts as appropriate.

page 7, there is a synopsis of the activities in each part so that someone just becoming familiar with the unit can see an overview of how the learning will progress. Each part and activity follows a similar outline and reflects the same level of clarity.

One nice feature is the level of detail in the instructional notes. Not only are the teaching moves clearly outlined, but there are also notes about various interpretations teachers and students can make. This makes this unit easily accessible to teachers with different levels of background with this type of instruction.

There are many different tools that are used throughout this unit to support students in their learning. As someone is using the unit, though, they may find the tools a bit overwhelming to use, as they have similar titles and look similar. One suggestion would be to include a table in the introductory section of the unit to clarify which tool is used when.

Engagement with Complex Text/Focus on Challenging Sections of Text:
Much thought has clearly been given to the design of this unit and how students will interact with this challenging text. The text is chunked into several sections to provide students with the opportunity to engage more deeply in the complex text and also to provide opportunities for the teacher to support students in their reading and creation of claims. The text is formatted in a way that students can interact with the text by making notes or refer specifically to line numbers.

Supports for Diverse Learners:

This unit is designed to support all learners in engaging with grade-level text. Suggestions for support for students who need more scaffolding are described on page 31. The main text comes with key words defined in tables at the bottom of the page which can also be edited by the students or the teacher as more unfamiliar words need to be defined.

The language on the handouts and tools, especially the EBC Criteria Checklists, are at a high level and may be difficult for students to access. Perhaps simplified versions of these tools could be created.

Extension Opportunities:

No explicit opportunities for extension outside the text are given, though there is an alternate plan for Part 5 on page 31 that teachers could use if their students didn't need as much support in making the global claims.

Progression of Learning/Gradual Removal of Supports:

This unit is carefully scaffolded so that students are able to achieve independent mastery of making evidence-based claims of increasing complexity: the teacher reads aloud and demonstrates their thinking, students work together in pairs, and, by the end of the unit, students are able to demonstrate their ability to make evidence-based claims in writing on their own. The unit is also scaffolded so that students can first make evidence-based claims from short sections of text all the way to more global claims based on the entire piece.

Targeted Instruction: There are opportunities for students to learn more about having an effective discussion through practice. The "Text-Centered Discussion Checklist" provides students guidance in engaging in effective instruction.

Independent Reading: There are no opportunities suggested for

	<p>independent reading of the student's own choice, but it is suggested throughout that students could be given the opportunity to read the text at home to prepare for the next day, such as on page 14. The skills being taught, however, could easily be applied to another text, so teachers would certainly have the ability to add in a more specific independent reading opportunity.</p> <p>Technology and Media: Students have an opportunity to watch Steve Jobs deliver this speech via YouTube. If the teacher does some modeling of how they think about watching such a speech, it could increase student understanding of the text.</p> <p>Also, this unit is designed for classrooms that represent the spectrum of technology access. The PDFs are all writeable and students could complete them on the computer and email them to the teacher.</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><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/Assesses Student Proficiency: Throughout the unit, there are many opportunities for students to demonstrate their growing abilities to make claims and elicit evidence to support those claims. All students have the opportunity to independently demonstrate their learning, through multiple chances at writing and participating in discussion. By collecting student tools and listening to discussions, the teacher has access to plenty of evidence of student learning.</p> <p>Aligned Rubrics or Assessment Guidelines: There are several supports for assessment throughout the unit. The "Assessment Opportunities" section in each part suggests what teachers might expect at the various stages of development of these skills. There are several models of the different tools students will be asked to complete over the course of the unit. These will be especially useful to teachers as they prepare for instruction and assess student understanding. These could certainly be used with students as well to demonstrate what successful support of evidence-based claims look like.</p> <p>The developers may want to review the standards on the Text-Centered Discussion Checklist, as there are places where it is not quite targeting the sixth grade expectation of the standard.</p> <p>Use Varied Modes of Assessment: There are different modes of assessment throughout the unit, including formative and summative assessment. Students have the opportunity to self-assess their creation and support of evidence-based claims through the EBC Criteria Checklist.</p>
<p>Rating: 3 – Meets most to all of the criteria in the dimension</p>	

Summary Comments

<p>This unit engages students in a range of reading, writing, speaking, and listening as they are introduced to the idea of evidence-based claims. It is thoughtfully arranged and artfully scaffolded; it maintains the balance of being easy to use while scaffolding students towards rigorous objectives. All students are expected to work with the grade level-appropriate main text, and a good deal of support is provided to help them do so.</p> <p>There are areas in which this unit is not aligned to the shifts of the Common Core, namely the balance of texts and students being engaged in the full writing process. This does not detract from the unit, however, as it is clearly designed to meet very specific ends: supporting students as they learn about and make evidence-based claims. Maintaining this focus on this one key skill through strong</p>

coherence and tight alignment is indeed the strength of this 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.