Lesson/Unit Name: Wildfires  
Content Area: English language arts 
Grade Level: 4 

Reviewer 1 

Dimension I – Alignment to the Depth of the CCSS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The lesson/unit aligns with the letter and spirit of the CCSS:</th>
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<tr>
<td>☐ Targets a set of grade-level CCSS ELA/Literacy standards.</td>
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<td>✓ Includes a clear and explicit purpose for instruction.</td>
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<td>✓ 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 &amp; B).</td>
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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. |

Targeted Standards: Pages 4 and 5 of the module overview list 20 standards from the strands of Reading for Information, Writing, Speaking and Listening, and Language. Reducing the number of standards would allow for a manageable progression towards proficiency for targeted standards. According to the developer's listing of targeted standards within each task, those receiving the most attention are: RI.4.1, W4.2, W4.5, W4.9b, W4.10, and SL4.1. Although in an integrated ELA unit many standards are addressed, it would improve the module to list those standards that will be specifically targeted in the module tasks and ultimately assessed in the module culminating task. Consider separating the list of standards on pages 4 and 5 into focus and supporting standards to aid the teacher in determining where the module might fit into his or her scope and sequence. Including targeted standards for each task does guide the teacher in making instructional decisions as students prepare for the culminating task that assesses standards RI.1; W.2 a,b,c,d; W.4, W9b, L.2, and L.3 

Note: 

1. Although the developer provides standards and elements for each task, there are a few inconsistencies in the alignment between the standards listed on pages 4 and 5 and those listed within the tasks, i.e., the elements for SL.1 are not written out in the overview but are coded in the tasks (p. 6), W.1, opinion, is listed but not addressed (p. 21), SL.4 is listed but not addressed (p.25), L.1f is appropriately listed for the task but not included in the overview (p. 25), Elements a - d are listed for L.2 but only element b is written out in the overview. Because implementing the CCSS is new for all teachers, it would be helpful ensure the accurate listing of standards throughout the module. It would be especially important for the novice teacher to have all standards and elements correct. 
2. No Foundational Skills standards are referenced in the module. Although the purpose statement of the module does not included Foundational Skills, Lesson 6 "some possible formats for re-reading include:" are examples of fluency (RF.4) practice. 

Clear and Explicit Purpose for Instruction: The module is designed to guide teachers in the "integration of interactive reading, writing, and speaking processes, text dependent writing and speaking, and formative assessment opportunities" as students gain understanding of science content. The materials reviewed provide guidance for teachers to deliver instruction on the first of three modules within a unit. It should be noted that the developer acknowledges the possible modifications that individual teachers may make to the materials. 

Selected Texts: The developer lists the texts used for the module with annotation. The texts do align with the purpose of the module. Resources available at the local district (Houghton-Mifflin textbook) are incorporated into the module (Seymour Simon’s Wildfire is 990L and within the grade-level text complexity band). Readability levels for all texts are included to
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.

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 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.

**Cultivates Student Interest and Engagement:** The variety of sources addressing the topic would appeal to a variety of students. The varied modes for interacting with the texts would facilitate engagement.

**Instructional Expectations:** Students completing the module would experience reading, writing, and speaking and listening about texts. The format of the module with introductory information, task sequence, glossary, and appendix will facilitate clear understanding as teachers utilize the module.

**Engagement with Complex Text:** The module does include text that is within the grade 4 - 5 text complexity band. Tools are provided to guide students through the texts.

**Focus on Challenging Sections of Text:** The graphic organizer provided for Wildfires directs a thoughtful analysis of specific portions of the text with opportunities for students to refine their understanding.

**Supports for Diverse Learners:** Each task includes a section entitled "meeting all students' needs" in which the developer includes suggestions for supporting students who may struggle with the task or task texts.

**Extension Opportunities:** The "Meeting all Students' Needs" section of each task offers suggestions for those students who may be ready for more challenging work.

**Progression of Learning:** The module begins with an anticipation guide to evaluate students' prior knowledge about the topic. Students then gather their evidence of understanding into Learning Logs. Through experience with a variety of texts students gain a deeper understanding needed to write an article about the topic.

**Gradual Removal of Supports:** There are multiple supports within the module. However, the culminating task asks students to cite evidence from texts that have been taught throughout the module. Also, revision, editing, and teacher feedback follow the culminating task making the "culminating task" appear more like instruction than a demonstration of students' independent capacities. It would strengthen the module to require students to demonstrate their independent capacities by application of the CCSS to similar but unfamiliar texts.

**Authentic Learning:** The application of the CCSS into the science module is authentic and meaningful. Students are encouraged to reflect and refine their thinking throughout the module.

**Targeted Instruction:** Language and Speaking & Listening standards are listed as being targeted in the module. There are opportunities with protocols for
students to engage in authentic discussion around the texts. The culminating task includes specific requirements that target Language standards. Tasks 16 - 20 explicitly address grammar and conventions (editing and revision). Foundational Skills (phonics and fluency) are not targeted in the module.

Independent Reading: There is a list of a possible text set that has the potential of being utilized for independent reading. It would strengthen the unit to indicate how students are accountable for independent reading and are able to use their independent reading to progress toward grade level proficiency.

Technology and Media: The module utilizes electronic text and video. As a possible after reading task, student groups may create a poster illustrating the causes and effects of wildfires. The addition of students' use of technology (W.6) would strengthen the module.

Rating: 3 – Meets most to all 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.
- Includes aligned rubrics or assessment guidelines that provide sufficient guidance for interpreting student performance.

**A unit or longer lesson should:**
- Use varied modes of assessment, including a range of pre-, formative, summative and self-assessment measures.

**Direct, Observable Evidence:** Students’ level of proficiency is assessed throughout the module with multiple checkpoints provided for the progression towards gaining knowledge from appropriately complex texts.

**Assesses Student Proficiency:** There are methods of assessment for varied learner types and levels of student ability. Application of a systematic method of monitoring students’ progress towards proficiency (such as a class profile) would strengthen the unit.

**Aligned Rubrics or Assessment Guidelines:** There is a culminating task for the module. The culminating task directions include the criteria for success. The GIST activity for the culminating task aids clarity of expectations for understanding the task. The Informative-Explanatory Writing Rubric for grade 3 - 5 (Smarter Balanced Consortium) is included in the module. A student-friendly rubric aids in clarifying grade-level expectations.

**Use Varied Modes of Assessment:** The anticipation guide is included to determine students’ background knowledge about the topic. There is guidance throughout the module labeled as formative assessment notes with suggestions on next steps based upon students’ performance. There is a summative assessment for the module. Activities within the module allow for individual to partner to small group consensus creating opportunities for self-assessment.

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

### Summary Comments

The module is organized in a manner that would allow the teacher to incorporate the ELA CCSS into the science content. Students are led to participate in a variety of authentic and thought-provoking activities that will lead to a deep understanding of the causes and effects of wildfires. Aspects noted as missing might be included in the module, or, if the ELA and science teacher are team teaching, it would work well to fill in the ELA CCSS areas not addressed (especially RL, RF, and accountability for Independent Reading) through an interdisciplinary unit.

Utilization of a progress monitoring tool such as a class profile to target a manageable number of standards that includes only those standards for which students are able to prove proficiency though independent demonstration of understanding would allow the teacher and students to document progress towards grade-level expectations.
Reviewer 2

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.

Targeted Standards: The Standards are listed on Pages 4 and 5. Twenty-three Common Core State Standards are targets. These Standards include a mix of Reading (7), Writing (6), Speaking and Listening (4), and Language (6). Standards specific to each task are clearly written in red font adjacent to the task. Targeted standards are addressed sufficiently. For example, on page 10, students are introduced briefly to RI5: "How is Wildfires organized?" Later a scaffold occurs for this standard on page 13 with students engaged in the identification of signal words associated with the cause and effect organizational pattern, descriptive of RI5.

Clear Purpose: The overview and most Tasks (i.e., 1 through 5) clearly identify the purpose of the Overall unit (Possible Launching the Module Tasks, p. 6) and the purpose of Tasks 1-5 (listed under Task number). The stated purposes align well with the instructional engagements, and subsequent formative and summative assessments of the overall unit. A purpose for why Close Reads are important to learning is clearly stated.

Text Complexity Grade-Level Band: The quantitative lexile band for the included texts is provided within the resource pages with clear explanations for why they were chosen.

Integrated Reading, Writing, Speaking, Listening: Students are given processing opportunities through speaking and listening activities that are integrated with what they are reading (e.g., partner think, pair share, p.7, Backwards Book Walk Strategy, p. 8, partner reading, p. 9). Writing is integrated throughout the unit (e.g., GIST, p.7; Note Catchers, p.7; Quick Jots in Learning Logs, p.8). The activities allow students to apply literacy skills authentically and require synthesis of information about the topic.

Content Knowledge: The unit utilizes primary and secondary source text associated with social science.

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

Read Closely

The Overall unit targets the Close Read experience with Tasks 1-5 building the capacity of students to the actual Close Read in Tasks 6-8. The developers indicate the text that serve as the center of instruction and that students will need to closely examine textual evidence (see Tasks 6-8). Students are asked to read and annotate for the basic ideas in the text they are reading (Task 6). This part of the Close Read lesson engages students in rereading the text at least three times (e.g., read on own with annotating, teacher read, and choice of choral teacher reading, partner reading-p.9). In Tasks 7 and 8 the text is chunked into two parts where students delve into crucial parts of the text for deeper meaning.

Text-based Evidence

Text-dependent questions are reliant on the text for students to respond. For example, in Task 6 students use sticky notes to respond. "I do not know the meaning of..." "I want to dispute the comment..." "The most important part..." In Tasks 7 and 8, questions draw students' attention to text features,
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.

Writing from Sources
Students consistently write from sources throughout the unit. For example, in Task 2 (p. 7) students summarize a video and video. However, the texts students read do not provide content for this discussion. In Task 3 students complete Not Catchers to respond to a prompt (p. 7). The Culminating Task of the unit requires students to write an article for a science journal (p.13).

Academic Vocabulary
Text-dependent questions are posed in Tasks 7 and 8 that require students to use context clues to determine the meaning of academic vocabulary (e.g., ablaze, aggressively, affect. Task 4 focuses on academic vocabulary development. For example, Purpose of Task: Pre-teach vocabulary essential to understanding of big idea content and anchor text..." (p. 8)

Increasing in Text Complexity
The learning engagements are sequenced and scaffolded in a way to advance students towards independent reading of complex texts at the CCR level. For example, the unit begins with guided anticipation guide and short writing experiences around text and video and then progresses to a series of Close Read engagements that build "muscle" towards the Culminating Task.

Building Disciplinary Knowledge. Student engagements deepen disciplinary knowledge of a science topic that clearly align with the unit's "Big Idea: Change is inevitable," "Enduring Understanding: The Earth and its inhabitants are dynamic and continually changing." and "Essential Question: What are the effects of changes to the natural environment?" (p.4).

Balance of Text
The focus of the unit is around the Close Read experience with science-based learning targets. As a result, text central to the purposes of the unit are targeted. However, the developers include an extensive list of additional text that can be utilized. Literary text is not included but this is not the intent of the unit. Suggestion: Over the course of the year, be sure that students are engaged with a balance of literary and informational texts.

Balance of Writing
Students are engaged in a writing tasks that requires thinking (Tasks 2-5, answering questions (Tasks 6-8 specifically), and exploration (Task 1 Anticipation Guide). Suggestion: Students are not deeply engaged in the "exploration" component of this criteria; however, it is not the intent of the unit. Be sure that over the course of the students have opportunities to conduct research and other investigations.

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 use.

Cultivates Interest: Small and whole group discussion opportunities set the stage for naturally cultivating student interest. The variety of texts (e.g., text, video) and writing experiences provides student with multiple formats in learning about the topic.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A unit or longer lesson should:</th>
<th>Instructional Expectations and Ease of Use: The unit's instructional expectations are addressed through the instructional engagements and resources used. As already stated, list the targeted Standards for each Task at the top of each. The structure is easy to follow and understand. For example, the specificity of materials, directions, and instructional sequence are provided in each Task.</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>✓ 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.</td>
<td>Provides ALL Students Multiple Opportunities to Engage with Complex Text: The unit is designed to give students opportunities to engage with complex texts (e.g., graphic organizers, small and whole group discussions, independent analysis). Within each Task there is a section called &quot;Meeting All Students' Needs&quot; that describes strategies for differentiating for struggling students as well as for secure students. For example, on page 9, &quot;For students who demonstrate a command of these vocabulary words...&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ Focuses on challenging sections of text(s) and engages students in a productive struggle through discussion questions and other supports that build toward independence.</td>
<td>Challenging Sections: The unit includes text selections that appear to be challenging for the grade level. Students are directed to challenging sections through text dependent questions that go beyond simple recall. In addition, Tasks 7 and 8 chunk the text into two sections in order to delve deeper into challenging sections.</td>
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<td>✓ 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.</td>
<td>Integrates Reading, Writing, Speaking and Listening Supports for ELL and Students with Disabilities: Supports are provided for ELL and students with disabilities to ensure all students can access the intended engagements at the end of each Task, &quot;Meeting All Students' Needs&quot; section.</td>
</tr>
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<td>✓ Provides extensions and/or more advanced text for students who read well above the grade level text band.</td>
<td>Provides Extensions for Students Above Grade Level: Evidence could not be gathered to indicate that the unit provides extension for students above grade level. Suggestion: Explicitly identify and/or strengthen extension activities for secure students who are able to go beyond the targeted lessons. Within each Task there is a section called &quot;Meeting All Students' Needs&quot; that describes strategies for differentiating for secure students. For example, on page 9, &quot;For students who demonstrate a command of these vocabulary words...&quot;</td>
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<td>✓ A unit or longer lesson should:</td>
<td>Includes Progression of Learning: The unit scaffolds learning engagements through multiple formats (e.g., whole group, small group) where students' have opportunities to deepen understanding of concepts, knowledge, and skills that guide them to the independent, culminating task. For example, the Anticipation Guide, Vocabulary Task 4, quick writes, video integration build understanding along the way.</td>
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<td>✓ Include a progression of learning where concepts and skills advance and deepen over time (may be more applicable across the year or several units).</td>
<td>Gradually Removes Supports: Tasks 1-8 build student understanding to be successful in the culminating task. However, this criteria may be addressed more fully over the course of the year.</td>
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<tr>
<td>✓ Gradually remove supports, requiring students to demonstrate their independent capacities (may be more applicable across the year or several units).</td>
<td>Provides for Authentic Learning: As stated throughout, students are provided opportunities to apply literacy skills in authentic ways around a science topic.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ Provide for authentic learning, application of literacy skills, student-directed inquiry, analysis, evaluation and/or reflection.</td>
<td>Integrate Targeted Instruction...Grammar, Conventionsss, Writing Strategies: Targeted instruction is provided for grammar and conventions, and the writing process along the way in order to support students in the Culminating Task as described on the Rubric. For example, on page 25, &quot;Consider using an Editing Checklist (in appendix) for peer work...&quot; Also, Task 16 specifically focuses on these areas.</td>
</tr>
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<td>✓ Integrate targeted instruction in such areas as grammar and conventions, writing strategies, discussion rules and all aspects of foundational reading for grades 3-5.</td>
<td>Independent Engaged Reading: The unit resource list indicates that other</td>
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<td>✓ 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).</td>
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texts are available for independent reading; however, the purpose of the unit focuses on texts associated with the topic of the unit.

Use Technology and Media: No evidence was collected that indicates students use technology to deepen learning at a significant level. The video and poster lessons do require students to analyze and synthesize information in order to respond to a prompt; however, a lack of sufficiency exists to state that "...students use technology to deepen learning at a significant level."

Rating: 3 – Meets most to all 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.
✓ Includes aligned rubrics or assessment guidelines that provide sufficient guidance for interpreting student performance.

A unit or longer lesson should:
✓ Use varied modes of assessment, including a range of pre-, formative, summative and self-assessment measures.

Direct and Observable Evidence: Graphic organizers, language frames, and responses to short writing prompts, discussion observations are included in the unit to provide evidence of the degree to which students are acquiring independent application of the unit’s targeted Standards along the way and at the end of the unit. Specific suggestions for how assessment will be analyzed and possibilities for providing students with meaningful, descriptive feedback is included in the Formative Assessment Notes sections. For example, on page 7: "Examine the students' anticipation reaction..." and "During the formal discussion, make note of..." Also, on page 9: "Provide feedback to students indicating whether or not they have accurately defined...

Assessing Proficiency through Unbiased Methods and Accessibility: Supports are provided for ELL and students with disabilities to ensure all students can access the intended engagements (e.g., providing graphic organizers, graphic organizers, language frames).

Aligned Rubrics or Assessment Guidelines:
A rubric for Informational/Explanatory Writing is included and aligns with the targeted Standards for the culminating task of the unit. It is not evident that this rubric or another provides feedback to students along the way about how to improve. Specific suggestions for how assessment will be analyzed and possibilities for providing students with meaningful, descriptive feedback is included in the Formative Assessment Notes sections. For example, on page 7: "Examine the students' anticipation reaction..." and "During the formal discussion, make note of..." Checklists for writing and editing are also included.

Varied Modes of Assessment: The unit includes varied modes of assessment opportunities that are listed at the end of several Tasks. Formative assessments are clearly identified at the end of several tasks and student self assessment is evidenced through student reflections about their learning (page 17).

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

Summary Comments

The unit does an impressive job in guiding students to successfully accomplishing the targeted standards. The overall purpose of the unit and the individual Task purposes are achieved through a crisp alignment of standards, instructional engagements that clearly motivate students, and an assessment plan that includes formative and summative assessments.

This is a unit descriptive of being exemplar.
Reviewer 3

Dimension I – Alignment to the Depth of the CCSS

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

| Targets a set of Standards: This unit includes a set of 20 fourth grade level CCSS ELA standards. |
| The targeted standards are placed at the point of instruction in each task, the teacher is then able to more accurately connect standard, instruction, and assessment. |
| It is noted that while most of these standards are well addressed at some point in the module, not all that are indicated with each individual task are actually taught within the task. Here are a few examples: |
| In the first task, the standards targeted were SL.4.1b and 1c. With one exception, these standards are described and taught in this task. ("Carry out assigned roles" for discussion is not addressed.) The other standard identified in this task was L.4.3c. It states that students are "going to use this time to practice formal English." One could assume that knowledge of language and conventions is include in the use of formal English as sentence frames with academic language are provided. |
| With task # 2, an excellent strategy to ensure that students understand what is expected of them in this module, there are four standards identified, however two of them are not addressed in the instruction or assessment. While RI.4.4 Determine the meaning of general academic and domain-specific words or phrases in a text relevant to a grade 4 topic or subject area, is addressed by using class discussion and the construction of a Frayer Model, L.4.4 Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases based on grade 4 reading and content, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies, sounds very similar, but actually asks that students use "a range of strategies that are then delineated below in standards 4a through 4c. These Language-based strategies are context, Greek and Latin roots and affixes, and resources materials. These are not mentioned in the task. That particular standard could be omitted. Also, standard W.4.5 calls for editing and revising of writing which is not required in this task. |
| Task # 5 is focuses on RI.4.5 which asks students to describe text structure. The backwards book walk has as its stated purpose, "engage students in a conversation not only about the topic but also about the text features within the text." There is a question given, "Based upon what you have seen so far, what do you think some of the causes of wildfires might be?" This is not the same as understanding the cause and effect structure of a text. |
| Task # 6 cites standard RI.1 Refer to details and examples in a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text. While students are annotating the text as they read, they are not explaining, inferring, or using details as they do so. In subsequent tasks students are asked text dependent questions which require this. |
| Task # 7 does a nice job of addressing most of the standards it lists, with the exception of W.4.9.b, Apply grade 4 Reading standards to informational texts (e.g., "Explain how an author uses reasons and evidence to support particular points in a text"). This is a writing standard and students are not asked to write about this. They are, however asked to discuss this as part of a text dependent question. |
It is suggested that the developer continue to more specifically align the standards to the precise instruction.

Reading Standards for Foundational Skills were not included. It is recommended that at least part of RF.4.3 or RF.4.4 be addressed in this module. Each task contains a section "Meeting the needs of all students." This is a place where the Foundational Reading Skills might be included.

Clear and Explicit Purpose for Instruction: The three purposes on the cover page, integration of interactive reading, writing and speaking process, text dependent writing and speaking, provide anyone looking at this module, with easy access to the CCSS aligned purpose. It might be applicable to also state that this module builds and deepens content knowledge in science.

Selected Texts: The selected anchor text falls well within the higher level of the grades 4 and 5 grade level band. (990L) The suggested additional text, Skylark, is significantly lower and could be used to support struggling readers in independent reading opportunities. The texts align well with the stated purpose of the module.

Integrates Reading, Writing, Speaking & Listening: Reading, writing, speaking and listening are well integrated into this module.

Builds Students’ Content Knowledge: Because this module revolves around a science text, it does build content knowledge and the well-organized sequence of instruction increases students’ ability to read and comprehend this particular genre.

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

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<tr>
<th>Dimension II – Key Shifts the CCSS</th>
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**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-reading Text Closely: Students are given many opportunities to go back into the anchor text and read for different purposes. Students are taught to find evidence in the text in order to support their answers. Suggested text dependent questions are provided for the teacher. Scaffolds are provided to reinforce that expectation and support students as they grow in their ability to support answers with evidence from the text.

Text-based Evidence: The tasks are structured so that students take notes on evidence from the text. When students share or discuss with each other, they use their own notes to aid them in providing evidence for their discussions. The expectation is that students find the details that support their answers and inferences.

Writing From Sources: It is also the expectation that students do some sort of writing whether in the form of note taking, quick writes, or graphic organizers during every task. Since the focus of this module is textual evidence, each task is structured to provide students with the opportunity to write using evidence from the anchor text or video.

Academic Vocabulary: Academic and content specific vocabulary is called out and a process for teaching the words is provided as a suggestion. Students are given opportunities to discuss words and their meaning and decide on those that are most important. Struggling readers are also allowed to identify those words that might be stumbling blocks for them.
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.

Increasing Text Complexity: Since there is only one anchor text given, the students are not led through a process of advancing in their ability to read increasingly complex text. It is recognized that this centers on one text from the Houghton Mifflin Anthology and it supposed that subsequent lessons would build upon this one. Additionally, other text and web sites were provided for possible use and one site even includes an article at increasing levels of complexity so that students might "stair step" their way into more complex texts with a topic that is now familiar.

- **Building Disciplinary Knowledge:** There was a strategic selection of discipline-specific texts designed to build content knowledge.

- **Balance of Texts:** There was not a balance of informational and narrative texts presented in the directions for instruction. It is also supposed that this is addressed in earlier or later modules. It is also recognized that this module focuses specifically on informational texts. There are some narrative texts on this subject that might be provided for independent reading. The story Skylark, by Patricia MacLachlan is listed as additional reading.

- **Balance of Writing:** There was a balance of writing opportunities ranging from quick writes to production of a scientific magazine article. Students are provided opportunities to brainstorm, plan, and revise their culminating task before writing.

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

### Dimension III – Instructional Supports

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The lesson/unit is responsive to varied student learning needs:</th>
<th>Cultivates Student Interest and Engagement: This is an engaging topic that will interest most students. The variety of materials used will appeal to students. Students are provided with many different opportunities to interact with one another.</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>✓ Cultivates student interest and engagement in reading, writing and speaking about texts.</td>
<td>Instructional Expectations: This module is well written and presented in a way that supports ease of use. The objective of every task is stated at the beginning and the activities are easy to follow. There are many supports for all teachers from the novice to experienced, including and explanation of each strategy or activity that is used. All the materials such as graphic organizers and charts or student papers are there for easy access.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ Addresses instructional expectations and is easy to understand and use.</td>
<td>Engagement with Complex Text: The module does include text that is within the grade 4 - 5 text complexity band. Activities, scaffolds, text dependent questions and opportunities to process through writing and discussion allow students to engage with the text. There are also additional texts suggested that will engage gifted and talented students who need further challenge.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ 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.</td>
<td>Focus on Challenging Sections of Text: Through the use of text dependent questions, students are carefully guided through sections of the text that might be difficult. There are repeated readings for different purposes and to focus and the demands of different reading standards.</td>
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<tr>
<td>✓ Focuses on challenging sections of text(s) and engages students in a productive struggle through discussion questions and other supports that build toward independence.</td>
<td>Supports for Diverse Learners: Each task includes a section entitled &quot;meeting all students’ needs&quot; in which the developer includes suggestions for supporting students who may struggle with the task. Some of the supports include use of primary language for second language learners, review of materials, mini-lessons and modeling of tasks, extra time and multiple exposures to videos, Students are provided with sentence/discussion frames with academic language as well as safe and scaffolded discussion formats.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ 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.</td>
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<tr>
<td>✓ Provides extensions and/or more advanced text for students who read well above the grade level text band.</td>
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**A unit or longer lesson should:**

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<td>✓ Include a progression of learning where concepts and skills advance and deepen over time (may be more applicable across the year or several units).</td>
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<td>✓ Gradually remove supports, requiring students to demonstrate their independent capacities (may be more applicable across the year or several units).</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>be more applicable across the year or several units).</strong></td>
<td>such talking sticks and numbered heads together.</td>
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<tr>
<td>✓ Provide for authentic learning, application of literacy skills, student-directed inquiry, analysis, evaluation and/or reflection.</td>
<td>Extension Opportunities: There are a few activities for students to extend beyond the regular classroom. However these activities seem to be used for those students who need more challenging activities. Two of them include personal research on the topic and with the expectation that the students report back to the class. Students may also make their own vocabulary PowerPoints.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ Integrate targeted instruction in such areas as grammar and conventions, writing strategies, discussion rules and all aspects of foundational reading for grades 3-5.</td>
<td>Progression of Learning: There is a well considered progression designed to enable students to be successful with the culminating activity of writing a magazine article. Students collect and organize information. Graphic organizers are used to help students arrange their thoughts. Before the final activity, students practice with the information by creating a poster in small groups. Then the culminating writing activity is accomplished independently and must include all proper conventions and textual evidence.</td>
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<td>□ 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).</td>
<td>Gradual Removal of Supports: Many of the tasks are heavily scaffolded and thus provide supports for students. The beginning tasks build understanding and background in preparation for the culminating task. While the culminating task is more independent, additional opportunities to see supports removed over time might be present in future modules.</td>
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<td>□ Use technology and media to deepen learning and draw attention to evidence and texts as appropriate.</td>
<td>Authentic Learning: In the discussion opportunities, the creation of the poster and the writing of the scientific magazine article for kids, students are provided several occasions to reflect and apply their learning and skills in authentic settings.</td>
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<td>Targeted Instruction: There is specific instruction provided for discussion protocols, rules, roles and procedures. Targeted instruction for grammar and conventions was not evident in this module. The focus of this lesson was to help students draw upon textual evidence to use it in their writing. While there are several expectations for grammar and conventions in the final task, this area was not specifically addressed in this module. Foundational Reading Skills were also not addressed.</td>
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<td>Independent Reading: There are, quite a few additional resources for further study provided. These resources are at varying levels of text complexity so as to engage all students. The modules would be strengthened if it provided suggestions for accountability during independent reading.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Technology and Media: While there is a video used to enhance comprehension for this module, and several Internet sites are provided in the resources, it is not explicit where these might be used during the module. Technology is used for input, however students were not provided the opportunity to write, create, or collaborate using technology tools. The option to use a web 2.0 tool to produce the poster or create the magazine article might be provided as well as an electronic magazine style program might be employed where there is access. There are opportunities for students who need to be challenged to access more technology as extension activities. These activities could be provided all students.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Rating: 3 – Meets most to all 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.
- Includes aligned rubrics or assessment guidelines that provide sufficient guidance for interpreting student performance.

**A unit or longer lesson should:**

- Use varied modes of assessment, including a range of pre-, formative, summative and self-assessment measures.

**Direct, Observable Evidence:** There are many opportunities for assessment, both formative and summative in this module. Each day, the targeted task is assessed in a formative manner. This might be listening to student conversations, reviewing the notes from the day, or reading a student’s quick-write.

**Assesses Student Proficiency:** Because the formative assessments vary for each task, and there are usually several means of assessing provided, evaluating the progress of each student is facilitated. Suggestions for intervention based on the assessment are sometimes provided.

**Aligned Rubrics or Assessment Guidelines:** There is a rubric for the group poster. The culminating performance task includes a rubric for writing. The rubric was correlated to the specific standards so that there was a connection between the standards taught and the expectations for the culminating activity. There was also a student friendly rubric provided. The Effort & Achievement Rubric provides students with an excellent guideline for expectations in the class and allows them to self-evaluate.

**Use Varied Modes of Assessment:** There are varied modes of assessment included. Using an adapted version of the California State University Expository Reading and Writing Course "Responding to Feedback" form provides students with peer assessment and the opportunity to reflect and improve before the product is complete.

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

**Summary Comments**

This module is an excellent example of a Common Core aligned module for English Language Arts. While there were a few instances where the standards identified in a task were not addressed strongly within that day’s instruction, they are well addressed at some time during the module.

The suggestions provided for students who are struggling or those who are second language learners are varied depending on the objective of the lesson and present in each task. This is a strength of this module.

Students are given the opportunity to make meaning by reflecting on the topic and their own work. Time is provided to allow students to process their learning through writing and discussion.

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**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.