

EQuIP Review Feedback



Lesson/Unit Name: Seasons and Weather

Content Area: English language arts in grades K-2

Grade Level: Kindergarten

Reviewer 1

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.

Targets Set of CCSS: There is an alignment chart at the beginning of the unit noting standards addressed in each lesson and alignment between CCSS and Core Knowledge Language Arts. Also, each lesson begins with a list of objectives targeted within the upcoming lesson. CCSS and CKLA alignment is often evident "Demonstrate understanding of the adjective severe by relating it to its opposite, gentle (L.K.5b)". However, in some instances the alignment is not as evident, for example: "Listen to a variety of texts, including stories such as the fable 'The Grasshopper and the Ants' (RL.K.5)". Even though the lesson does address the intention of RL.K.5, Recognize common types of texts by explaining the characteristics of fables, the Language Arts Objectives do not clarify the alignment.

Clear and Specific Purpose for Instruction: "Why Seasons and Weather Are Important" (p. 2) clarifies the purpose of the unit as to teach Kindergarten students about seasons and weather.

Selects Quality Texts: The texts in the unit are designated as teacher read-aloud to build content knowledge. The text complexity of the texts is above what a Kindergarten student would be expected to read independently.

Present Ideas and Information Through Writing and/or Drawing and Speaking: Students' weather journals integrate writing and/or drawing and speaking.

Explicit, Systematic Development of Foundational Literacy Skills: This unit does not address Foundational Literacy Skills. CKLA provides a Skills Strand for Unit 9, but the Skills Strand is stand-alone and not integrated into this unit.

Fluency-Building Techniques: This unit does not address fluency-building techniques.

Apply and Synthesize Advancing Literacy Skills: There is evidence of students integrating reading (listening), writing, and speaking as they build content knowledge. Also, students create a class book for independent rereading. Including students independently gaining knowledge from texts (as appropriate for a Kindergarten learner) would strengthen the unit.

Build Students' Content Knowledge: This unit is designed to teach Core Knowledge concepts for seasons and weather. There are several texts used in the lessons and suggested at-home reading in trade books that build knowledge about the topic. Although the pen pal Annie text is written from the perspective of a 5th grade student, there are some statements in the text that are incorrect or misleading: Some animals, like squirrels, sleep

through the winter season (hibernate - some do, many do not), When they've harvested their crops, the farmers all get together for a really fun event: the county fair (rural students would know that farmers do not "all" get together), When it is cold outside, you might see hail during a storm (storms are caused when the cold and warm fronts collide - most often storms severe enough for hail require a hot day).

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 (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.

A unit or longer lesson should:

- ☐ **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.
- ✓ **Balance of Texts:** Focus instruction equally on literary and informational texts as stipulated in the CCSS (p.5) and indicated by instructional time (*may be more applicable across a year or several units*).
- ✓ **Balance of Writing:** Include prominent and varied writing opportunities for students that balance communicating thinking and answering questions with self-expression and exploration.

Reading Text Closely: The lessons include guiding questions for the teacher to lead students to a close reading of the read aloud texts. However, opportunities for students to ask questions are limited. Each lesson's read aloud includes an "After hearing today's read-aloud, do you have any remaining questions?" prompt, but opportunity to find the answers to the questions is only if time permits. A tool, such as a Parking Lot, could provide a location for recording questions. The class could then categorize and answer the questions as enrichment. On page 98 of the unit, the activity labeled Above and Beyond would give students an opportunity to ask and answer questions about the text (video).

Text-Based Evidence: Each lesson's read-aloud is followed by a sequence of questions labeled as literal, inferential, or evaluative. There are also questions embedded to guide the teacher during reading. However, the tie to the text is not always evident. For example, because the teacher is directed to tell students the main idea of the lesson prior to reading, the question "What is the main topic, or main idea, of today's lesson?" that follows each reading should be labeled as recall (of the teacher's statement) rather than inferential.

Academic Vocabulary: Each lesson includes Word Work to address one target word from the text for the lesson. Core vocabulary words are also noted and defined in the unit. Students are reminded in the unit to use words from the text in their own descriptions. Student's oral responses are in complete sentences.

Grade-Level Reading: This unit does not address grade reading of grade-level texts.

Balance of Texts: This unit is content-driven (science), but it does include a fable that relates directly to the topic. The trade book list includes a variety of text types.

Balance of Writing: Writing is evident each day through both shared (chart) and independent (journal) writing.

Rating: 2 – Meets many 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

Cultivates Student Interest and Engagement: The lesson makes connections to students' daily lives (weather & seasons) and provides opportunity for reading, writing, and speaking about texts. The interactive read aloud offers

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| <p>reading, writing and speaking about texts.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ 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. ✓ 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. ✓ 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. ☐ Integrates appropriate, extensive and easily implemented supports for students who are ELL, have disabilities and/or read or write below grade level. ☐ 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"> ✓ Include a progression of learning where concepts, knowledge and skills advance and deepen over time (<i>may be more applicable across the year or several units</i>). ✓ Gradually remove supports, allowing students to demonstrate their independent capacities (<i>may be more applicable across the year or several units</i>). ✓ Provide for authentic learning, application of literacy skills and/or student-directed inquiry. ☐ 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>). ☐ Use technology and media to deepen learning and draw attention to evidence and texts as appropriate. | <p>a method to sustain engagement in the reading.</p> <p>Instructional Expectations/Easy to Use & Understand: The unit includes an introduction, Table of Contents, and At a Glance overviews. Symbols throughout the lessons inform teachers of actions or preparation needed. Recommended pacing for each lesson segment is provided. Including sample student responses would strengthen the unit.</p> <p>Integrates Targeted Instruction: The purpose of the unit is to teach the core content for science (as evident in the introduction and unit assessments). Integrating grammar and syntax, writing strategies, discussion rules and aspects of foundational reading would strengthen the unit. For example, when students share with partners, discussion rules could make the student conversations more meaningful.</p> <p>Supports for Foundational Skills: Automaticity with decoding, phonemic awareness, fluency, and/or vocabulary acquisition are not included in the unit.</p> <p>Extensive Opportunities to Engage with Grade-Level Texts and Read Alouds: Each lesson includes a teacher read aloud of complex text with class and paired discussion.</p> <p>Focuses on Sections of Rich Text(s): The unit includes questions that are designed to measure students' comprehension of the read aloud. There are also questions and notes to guide the teacher's read aloud.</p> <p>ELL, Have Disabilities and/or Read or Write Below Grade Level: There are activities provided during the Pausing Point to be assigned based upon students' performance on a mid-domain content assessment. These activities relate to content knowledge. The introduction and page 118 of the unit reference a Supplemental Guide appropriate for students with limited English proficiency (including ELL and special needs). However, this Supplemental Guide is not included with the unit and is only "if available." Including the Supplemental Guide would strengthen the unit.</p> <p>Read or Write above Grade Level: There are activities labeled as Above and Beyond. However, in aligning the unit to the CCSS these activities are grade-level. "Have students include a word, phrase, or sentence that describes their drawing using the sound-spelling correspondences taught thus far" is within grade-level expectations as indicated in W2 and L.2.d. "Have students draw a picture that illustrates a scene from the video. Students can then ask and answer who and what questions about their illustrations with a partner" is a Kindergarten expectation (L.1.d).</p> <p>Progression of Learning: Students' understanding of the characteristics of each season is added to those previously learned. This progression is recorded on the shared chart.</p> <p>Gradually Remove Supports: The unit includes opportunities for students to demonstrate their independent capacities (cycle of seasons worksheet, weather reports, interactive illustrations, the class book).</p> <p>Authentic Learning, Application of Literacy Skills and/or Student-Directed Inquiry: Students observe the weather, conduct experiments as selected by the teacher, and record information on charts and journals.</p> |
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Accountable for Independent Engaged Reading: There is a trade book list for parent read aloud, but a method for accountability is not included. Student independent reading is not included in the unit. Including independent reading based on student choice would strengthen the unit. There might be a classroom library of texts on varying levels. With direction on how to choose a just right text, students could select independent reading and chart their growth across the school year.

Technology and Media: Although an optional lesson for a video and websites for possible exploration are included, technology and media are not part of the lesson. Adding technology (such as interactive weather maps, etc.) would strengthen the unit.

Rating: 1– Meets some 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 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 responding to areas where students are not yet meeting standards.

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 opportunities through students' drawing/writing and speaking activities that the teacher could use to assess the degree to which a student can independently demonstrate foundational skills and targeted grade-level literacy CCSS.

Unbiased and Accessible: Proficiency is assessed through various methods (verbal, written/drawing, motions, acting, sorting) designed to be unbiased and accessible to all students. The unit would be strengthened by carrying supports designed for ELL and Students with Disabilities into the assessments.

Aligned Rubrics or Assessment Guidelines: The Tens score and Tens Conversion Chart provide a method for tracking student progress on both item-based and observational data. Methods of assessing students' performance on ELA CCSS were not evident in the unit. There were methods for assessing students' acquisition of content. However, because the final assessment on content relies heavily on true/false (smiley face/frown face), there is a 50% chance that students demonstrate through guessing an understanding of content they do not possess. Adding assessments that include how students know an answer is correct would strengthen the unit.

Varied Modes of Assessment: The unit includes formal formative and summative assessments of content knowledge. There is no evidence of pre- or self-assessment measures. Both pre- and self-assessment measures would strengthen the unit.

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

Summary Comments

Exemplar if Improved – Aligned and needs some improvement in one or more dimensions (total 8 – 10)

Students' gaining science content knowledge through text is aligned with the intentions of the ELA CCSS. The organization of the unit, including teacher and student materials, pacing, coding for special instructions, and the Tens score method for tracking progress, make the unit ready to teach.

Suggestions to move this unit into the Exemplar range include: Revisit the alignment between CCSS and CKLA. There are some discrepancies in the Core Knowledge Language Arts Objectives and the assigned CCSS and in some activities within the unit and in

the designation as on- or above-grade-level. To make the unit more accessible to teachers outside the Core Knowledge network, consider aligning the lessons to the CCSS and adding the CKLA crosswalk as a reference. Attention to Instructional Supports, Dimension III, will make the content provided in the learning accessible and appropriate for all learners.

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 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.

Targeted Standards: The Alignment Chart identifies the core content objectives addressed in each lesson and their alignment to the CCSS (v-xi). The language arts objectives and corresponding CCSS are listed at the beginning of each lesson (pg. 10-11, 24-25, 37-38, 49-50, 61-62, 78-79, 90-91, 99-100).

Purpose for Instruction: A clear and explicit purpose for this domain is stated: to introduce students to the concept of weather, weather patterns, four seasons, and why weather is important and how it affects our day-to-day lives and activities (pg. 2). The purpose was also stated at the beginning of the every lesson.

Quality Texts: The texts include both informational and literature that are of sufficient quality and scope for the stated purpose.

Recommendation: While lexile levels are not required for Kindergarten students, teachers would benefit from knowing the lexile and an explanation of why the texts were chosen.

Opportunities to Present Ideas and Information: Students are given multiple opportunities to present their ideas through writing and/or drawing and speaking experiences. In the Interactive Illustrations lesson, students draw a picture of a thunderstorm using the information from the read aloud and meet with a partner to talk about their picture (pg. 98). After the video is viewed the students use the information in the video to draw a picture and discuss it with a partner (pg. 97)

Unit or Longer Lesson:

Foundational Skills: Not addressed in this unit. It is noted that foundational skills are addressed in the skills strand but it would be helpful to incorporate a way to connect and post the skills as they integrate with this unit.

Fluency Building: There are no fluency building activities built into this unit (kindergarten).

Integrated Instruction: Reading, writing, speaking and listening are addressed throughout the lessons of this domain as described on vi-xi so that students apply and synthesize advancing literacy skills.

Build Content Knowledge: Students learn about this domain through science and art lessons that teach about Seasons and Weather.

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

Dimension II – Key Shifts the CCSS

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| <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><u><i>A unit or longer lesson should:</i></u></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. ☐ 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>). ✓ Balance of Writing: Include prominent and varied writing opportunities for students that balance communicating thinking and answering questions with self-expression and exploration. | <p>Reading Text Closely: (RI.K.1, RI.K.2, RL.K.1) After each read aloud students are asked to answer questions to recall key details, identify the main topic, or retell key details based on the information in the read aloud text or video. Recommendation: The questions are identified as literal, inferential, or evaluative. Some of the questions are leveled incorrectly and need to be reviewed - either change the question to reflect that level, or re-level the questions. There were ample opportunities for students to answer questions but very few opportunities for students to ask questions. The developers should think of additional ways to engage students in asking questions.</p> <p>Text-Based Evidence: Students access the text through listening activities. Many of the questions only require students to recall facts from listening to the read aloud. Recommendation: The students would benefit from seeing the text, either the text along with pictures, or giving student copies of the actual text. Students would also benefit from listening to the read aloud more than once. The developers should also consider changing the level of the questions to require students to show "where" they found their answer (evidence from the illustrations) or "why?" to allow students to justify their answers.</p> <p>Academic Vocabulary: All of the core vocabulary words are identified on page 4. The Boldfaced words have an associated Word Work activity (in every lesson) that places importance on building students' general academic, or Tier 2 vocabulary (pgs. 4 & 6). Syntax is addressed through the Syntactic Awareness Activity (pg. 88). The Vocabulary Instructional Activity (pg. 109) provides students the opportunity to use information from the text to make predictions that are followed up by a discussion activity. Some of the Word Work vocabulary activities include looking at characteristics, antonyms and Making Choices activities.</p> <p>Unit or Longer Lesson:</p> <p>Grade-Level Reading: The lessons in this domain provide text-centered learning on Seasons and Weather. They are strategically sequenced, discipline-specific texts that follow a progression from the four seasons, to safety issues around weather, to predicting weather (Meteorology).</p> <p>Balance of Writing: W.K.2 or W.K.3 are addressed in every lesson. Examples: draw a picture of the weather outside (pgs. 11 & 99); draw winter, spring, summer, and autumn scenes showing the seasonally appropriate colors, plants and animals (pgs. 11, 25, 38, 50); Interactive Illustrations are identified as process writing by the authors in which students add pictures to the Cycle Chart about the seasons based on oral directions (W.K.6 - pg. 98); draw a picture of what someone should do during bad weather and state simple safety directions (pg. 91). In a Multiple Meaning Word Activity they write a sentence (pg. 22). A Daily Weather Activity is an ongoing research project (W.K.7 pg. 11, 22, 110). Recommendation: Students would benefit from writing journals to practice their writing skills. The Alignment Chart for Writing (ix) groups W.K.6, W.K.7, and W.K.8 are grouped under the subheading "Production and Distribution of Writing." W.K.7 and W.K.8 should be listed under the subheading "Integration of Knowledge and Ideas."</p> |
| <p>Rating: 2 – Meets many of the criteria in the dimension</p> | |

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 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.
- ✓ Provides *all* 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.
- ☐ 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.
- ☐ Integrates appropriate, extensive and easily implemented supports for students who are ELL, have disabilities and/or read or write below grade level.
- ✓ Provides extensions and/or more advanced text for students who read or write above grade level.

A unit or longer lesson should:

- ✓ Include a progression of learning where concepts, knowledge and skills advance and deepen over time (*may be more applicable across the year or several units*).
- ☐ Gradually remove supports, allowing students to demonstrate their independent capacities (*may be more applicable across the year or several units*).
- ✓ Provide for authentic learning, application of literacy skills and/or student-directed inquiry.
- ☐ Indicate how students are accountable for independent engaged reading based on student choice and interest to build stamina, confidence and motivation (*may be more applicable across the year or several units*).

Cultivates Student Interest: The lessons in this domain incorporate many ways to engage kindergarten students in Seasons and Weather. Examples include direct observations and hands-on activities associated with documenting the daily weather (i.e., looking at a thermometer, examining precipitation collected in a rain gauge, observing the types of clouds in the sky).

Ease of Use: Every lesson is organized with a similar pattern: Lesson objectives; Language Arts Objectives aligned to CCSS; Core Vocabulary words; Read Aloud with comprehension questions; Word Work; and Extensions.

Integrates Targeted Instruction: The Syntactic Awareness Activity (pg. 88) offers practice with answering questions that use the question word "who." Recommendation: Answering questions is the targeted instruction for this unit. While drawing was more prominent than writing, students would benefit with more instruction and practice in writing. Students discuss with partners often but would benefit from targeted instruction on how to follow agreed-upon rules for discussion.

Material to Support Automaticity: Automaticity with foundational skills was not addressed in this unit. Recommendation: The Skills Strand needs to have sign postings throughout this unit.

Extensive Opportunities to Engage: Students are given multiple opportunities to interact with some of the read alouds and video. Two examples: 1) A Video about staying safe during storms, is viewed multiple times for practice answering questions (i.e., who, what, where, when, how, and why - [RI.K.1] - pg. 97). Afterwards the students use the information in the video to draw a picture and discuss it with a partner. 2) The Extensions provide multiple opportunities for students to interact with parts of text, such as sayings and phrases like the multiple meanings for "April showers bring May flowers" (pg. 48).

Challenging Text: Students engage in productive struggles such as the discussion around the multiple meanings of "April showers bring spring flowers." Recommendation: More opportunities with the text (either actual text or read aloud more times) would provide a richer context for engagement with parts of text that present the greatest challenge.

Support for Diverse Learners: Page 5 describes a Supplemental Guide designed to provide enhanced oral language practice for students with limited English language skills or students with limited home literacy experience, which may include ELLs and children with special needs. Recommendation: The Supplemental Guide was not available for review. Make this Guide available and signpost throughout the unit where it connects and can be utilized.

Advanced Students: The lessons in this domain clearly identify opportunities for advanced students. At the end of every lesson, an arrow icon indicates

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| <p><input type="checkbox"/> Use technology and media to deepen learning and draw attention to evidence and texts as appropriate.</p> | <p>"Above and Beyond" for easy identification (i.e., include a word, phrase, or sentence that describes their drawing or collage; draw a picture and ask and answer who and what questions). The Culminating Activity contains Enrichment Activities (pgs. 118-121) to provide students with opportunities to enliven their experiences with domain concepts.</p> <p>Unit or Longer Lesson: Progression: The lessons in this domain progress to deepen student understanding of the seasons, safety during a storm, and predicting the weather over the length of the unit.</p> <p>Provide Authentic Learning, Application of Literacy Skills, Student-Directed Inquiry: This unit provides students with many hands-on activities (i.e., Weather Diary (pg. 22), create a thermometer activity (pg. 76), Interactive Illustration (pg. 98), Weather Report (pg. 110)).</p> |
| <p>Rating: 1 – Meets some of the criteria in the dimension</p> | |

Dimension IV – Assessment

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| <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 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 responding to areas where students are not yet meeting standards. <p><u><i>A unit or longer lesson should:</i></u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Use varied modes of assessment, including a range of pre-, formative, summative and self-assessment measures. | <p>Direct Evidence: The developers provide several opportunities to assess students: Pausing Point following Lesson 5 with a Student Performance Task Assessment to assess students' knowledge of seasons and weather and other activities; Domain Review (at the end of the domain) with activities for students to demonstrate their learning of this domain; Domain Assessment to evaluate each student's retention of domain and academic vocabulary words and the core content.</p> <p>Assesses Student Proficiency: The Student Performance Task Assessment (pg. 74), the Cycle of the Seasons (pg. 89), and the Domain Assessment (pgs. 115-117) are unbiased and accessible to all students through the use of smiling and frowning faces, circling symbols, and cutting and pasting for each season in response to the questions.</p> <p>Aligned Rubrics: Formative assessments such as the Student Performance Task Assessment (pg. 74) and the Cycle of the Seasons (pg. 89) are identified by a circled 10 to indicate that the raw score can be converted into a Tens score. The end-of-domain summative assessment is also converted to a Tens Score and a basic rubric (pg. 166) is provided to interpret student performance. Recommendation: (Pg.163) The Sample Student on the Tens Recording Chart has scores for DA-1, DA-2, and DA-3. There is no narrative explanation that accompanies this example but it seems one number on the top row under each assessment should equal the total number of questions on that assessment. DA-1 has 15 questions, DA-2 has 7 questions, and DA-3 has 10 questions. These are not reflected on the Student Sample. One and/or two additions would be helpful: a narrative to explain the Sample Student record would clarify any confusion and/or the Sample Student scores may need to be updated to align with changes made on the assessments. Recommendation: Although the basic rubric provides information for how the Tens scores reflect student understanding, it would be more helpful if the rubric delineated descriptive levels of understanding for the skills tested.</p> <p>Varied Modes of Assessment:</p> |
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| <p>This unit of study provided two modes of assessment. Formative assessment: Informal observations, such as Think-Pair-Share and some Extension activities, and more formal written assessments, such as the Mid-Domain Student Performance Task Assessments to assess students' knowledge of seasons and weather. The Summative assessment is the End-of-Domain Assessment. The DA also doubles as a formative assessment in that Culminating Activities are provided based on the results of the Domain Assessment for remediation to target specific areas of weakness.</p> |
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Rating: 3 – Meets most to all of the criteria in the dimension

Summary Comments

The lessons in this domain meet many criteria and have many elements that are aligned with CCSS but would benefit from revisions in others.

Recommendations for revision:

- 1) While the lexile levels are not required for Kindergarten students, teachers would benefit from knowing the lexile and an explanation of why the texts were chosen.
- 2) The students would benefit from seeing the text, either the text along with pictures, or giving student copies of the actual text. Students would also benefit from listening to the read aloud more than once. The developers should also consider changing the level of the questions to require students to show "where" they found their answer (evidence from the illustrations) or "why?" to allow students to justify their answers.
- 3) Students would benefit from writing journals to practice their writing skills. The Alignment Chart for Writing (ix) groups W.K.6, W.K.7, and W.K.8 under the subheading "Production and Distribution of Writing." W.K.7 and W.K.8 should be listed under the subheading "Integration of Knowledge and Ideas."
- 4) Answering questions is the targeted instruction for this unit. While drawing was more prominent than writing, students would benefit with more instruction and practice in writing. Students discuss with partners often but would benefit from targeted instruction on how to follow agreed-upon rules for discussion [SL.K.1a].
- 5) More opportunities with the text (either actual text or read aloud more times) would provide a richer context for engagement with parts of text that present the greatest challenge.
- 6) The Supplemental Guide was not available for review. Make this Guide available and signpost throughout the unit where it connects and can be utilized.
- 7) (Pg. 163) The Sample Student on the Tens Recording Chart has scores for DA-1, DA-2, and DA-3. There is no narrative explanation that accompanies this example but it seems one number on the top row under each assessment should equal the total number of questions on that assessment. DA-1 has 15 questions, DA-2 has 7 questions, and DA-3 has 10 questions. These are not reflected on the Student Sample. One and/or two additions would be helpful: a narrative to explain the Sample Student record would clarify any confusion and/or the Sample Student scores may need to be updated to align with changes made on the assessments.
Recommendation: Although the basic rubric provides information for how the Tens scores reflect student understanding, it would be more helpful if it delineated descriptive levels of understanding for the skills tested.

Overall Rating: E/I (8)

Reviewer 3

Dimension I – Alignment to the Depth of the CCSS

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| The lesson/unit aligns with the letter and spirit of the CCSS: | Targets CCSS: |
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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ 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. <p><u>A unit or longer lesson should:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☐ 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. | <p>CCSS are clearly identified and evident in each lesson located under the section, LA Objectives.</p> <p>PURPOSE The purpose of the overall unit/domain is communicated on page 2, "This unit introduces students to the concept of weather." Each lesson's purpose is communicated under the section, "Purpose for Listening" and includes specific information to share with students so they also are clear about the purpose of the lesson, "Tell students to listen carefully to learn about different places on Earth that have different types of weather" (p.14).</p> <p>TEXTS SIMILIAR TO CCSS-K-2 EXEMPLARS Lexiles are not provided for the texts used in each of the lessons nor are they provided for the trade books listed on pgs. 6-9. While lexiles are not assigned in Appendix A, it would be helpful to provide some information about the complexity of the texts in the unit to ensure that they prepare students for 1st grade. This will also be helpful to the teachers implementing the unit to be sure that they are establishing a foundation of progression throughout the kindergarten year.</p> <p>OPPORTUNITIES FOR READING/WRITING/DRAWING In all formal lessons in the unit, students present information predominantly through drawing (e.g., Drawing Book) and speaking (e.g., Think-Pair-Share). Suggestions: Increase opportunities for students to present information through writing. For example, since the lesson texts focus on letter writing, students could "write" letters back to the author or other family members. Students could also maintain reading/writing journals to respond to the lesson read alouds; the journal would serve as a formative assessment throughout the unit to monitor individual students' writing development.</p> <p>FOUNDATIONAL LITERACY SKILLS The unit does not include any CCSS Foundational Standards. Unit 9 targets literacy but is confusing as to how this fits in the unit. Suggestion: note in the unit overview where foundational skills are presented.</p> <p>FLUENCY BUILDING SKILLS Students predominantly follow the teacher's read aloud viewing only images versus the actual text. As a result, the learning emphasizes listening. Engagement of students in choral, pair, or repeated reading is absent. Suggestion: Display the text or excerpts of the text where students can be "brought into" the text other than just listening. Students can highlight or underline parts of the text to build word knowledge first hand.</p> <p>INTEGRATE READING, WRITING, SPEAKING, AND LISTENING As stated, include opportunities in which students can write and read/reread text versus only listening and speaking.</p> <p>BUILD CONTENT KNOWLEDGE The unit builds content knowledge about the topic of seasons and weather.</p> |
| <p>Rating: 2 – Meets many of the criteria in the dimension</p> | |

Dimension II – Key Shifts the CCSS

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| <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) | <p>READING TEXTS CLOSELY The emphasis is on listening with students viewing images and listening to</p> |
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| <p>closely (including read alouds) a central focus of instruction and includes regular opportunities for students to ask and answer text-dependent questions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> 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><u>A unit or longer lesson should:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> 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. <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 texts being read aloud. Students do not view any actual text in the lessons; however, this is acceptable at this grade level. Suggestion: Display the text on chart paper so students see the text more often and can refer to it, bringing them back into the text being read aloud.</p> <p>TEXT-BASED EVIDENCE Page 45 indicates that the teacher should reread passages if students have difficulty with answering the questions; additionally, section of the can be available for display, if necessary.</p> <p>The questions are text-inspired but not text dependent. Several questions are decontextualized from the text. For example, page 45, #6: "What activities do you like to do during the spring?" This question is labeled as being evaluative; however, it is not evaluating the information in the actual text. Questions labeled as "Inferential" are actually literal. For example, "Why is spring an important time on farms?" (p. 45) The answer is right in the text.</p> <p>ACADEMIC VOCABULARY Both academic and domain-specific vocabulary is listed in the unit (p. 4 and within each lesson). Each lesson's Word Work section (p. 20) provides vocabulary instruction but the activities are decontextualized from the actual lesson's text. Suggestion: Display text on chart paper and intersperse vocabulary so students can view in context.</p> <p>Because of the emphasis on listening, the Grade Level Reading and Balance of Texts and Writing criteria are not evidenced in this unit. Suggestion: Provide students with their own Reading and Writing Journals and include anchor charts from which they can incorporate words and follow directions.</p> |
| <p>Rating: 2 – Meets many of the criteria in the dimension</p> | |

Dimension III – Instructional Supports

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| <p><i>The lesson/unit is responsive to varied student learning needs:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> 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). <input type="checkbox"/> 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 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – While the Pausing Point lessons are interactive and engaging, the regular lessons follow the same format with students predominantly listening versus actually engaging with text. Suggestion: Provide texts for students to see and hold in order to increase interaction in different ways over the course of the lessons. – The unit is easy to follow since each lesson follows the same routine. – Lexiles are not included to evaluate if students are engaged in text of appropriate complexity. Also, because students listen to text being read with all students doing the same activities, it is not evident that that the unit provides for "all" students. – The Supplemental Guide provides scaffolded lessons to address the needs of ELL and students with disabilities. Scaffolding for these students within the actual lessons is not evident. – The "Above and Beyond" sections of each lesson provide activities for students who are secure (p. 36). – The unit includes provisions for trade books for students to choose from and use as a "lending Library." |
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| <p>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.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <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. ✓ Integrates appropriate, extensive and easily implemented supports for students who are ELL, have disabilities and/or read or write below grade level. ✓ 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 deepen over time (<i>may be more applicable across the year or several units</i>). <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>). ✓ Provide for authentic learning, application of literacy skills and/or student-directed inquiry. ✓ 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>Rating: 2 – Meets many of the criteria in the dimension</p> | |

Dimension IV – Assessment

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| <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 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. <input type="checkbox"/> Includes aligned rubrics or assessment guidelines that provide sufficient guidance for interpreting student performance and responding to areas where students are not yet meeting standards. <p><u><i>A unit or longer lesson should:</i></u></p> | <p>OBSERVABLE EVIDENCE The unit includes opportunities for the teacher to observe student learning through their responses to questions, think-pair-share, and drawing books. Suggestion: Integrate more opportunities for students to read and write in order to broaden the scope of CCSS literacy skills. Most of the observable evidence is targeted to how well students are listening or remembering information from the read aloud.</p> <p>ASSESSES STUDENT PROFICIENCY Informal and summative end-of-domain assessments are unbiased; however, it could be easy to draw inaccurate conclusions about student learning due to a reliance on remembering information from the read aloud.</p> <p>INCLUDES RUBRICS/ASSESSMENT GUIDELINES The summative assessment includes a rubric; however, this rubric is not available to review.</p> |
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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Use varied modes of assessment, including a range of pre-, formative, summative and self-assessment measures. | <p>VARIED MODES OF ASSESSMENT</p> <p>The unit does not include pre- or self-assessments. There are numerous formative assessments (again, may be reliant on listening skills), and a summative end-of-unit assessment. Suggestion: Sprinkle summative assessments throughout the unit so assessment becomes part of the learning process versus at the end.</p> |
| <p>Rating: 2 – Meets many of the criteria in the dimension</p> | |

Summary Comments

The unit spends a lot of time with listening skills as described within each Dimension's Comment sections. A suggestion would be to integrate a balance of literacy opportunities for student reading and writing. Providing students with actual text to view would enhance the unit greatly. Also, integrating vocabulary, assessment, and foundational engagements throughout each lesson will allow for integration versus being decontextualized from the unit.

Reviewer 4

Dimension I – Alignment to the Depth of the CCSS

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| <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 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. <p><u><i>A unit or longer lesson should:</i></u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Emphasize the explicit, systematic development of foundational literacy skills (concepts of print, phonological awareness, the alphabetic principle, high frequency sight words, and phonics). <input type="checkbox"/> 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. | <p>This unit targets 31 Common Core standards or sub-standards (SL.K.1a, SL.K.1b). While some key standards are addressed well, not all of these standards are address to the extent that fulfills the requirement of the CC, and one, RI.K.9 "With prompting and support, identify basic similarities in and differences between two texts on the same topic," is not addressed at all.</p> <p>W.K.6, "With guidance and support from adults, explore a variety of digital tools to produce and publish writing, including in collaboration with peers," is not addressed with the opportunity to view an online video in one lesson. The intent of this standard is to produce and publish. SL.K.2 "Confirm understanding of a text read aloud or information presented orally or through other media by asking and answering questions about key details and requesting clarification if something is not understood," is not stated as a standard addressed, would have worked with this activity.</p> <p>RL.K.7 "With prompting and support, describe the relationship between illustrations and the story in which they appear" is addressed in lesson 6B. This lesson deals with photographs only and there was no text or story with which to make a connection. This could more appropriately be addressed in any of the other read alouds with their supporting photographs.</p> <p>The strongest connection with the standards is in RL.K.1 and RI.K.1 where students are asked to ask and answer questions. These questions should be who, what, when, and where as this leads students into the ability to give evidence based answers. Only who and what were addressed over and over and it would have been easy to include other questions types.</p> <p>RL.K.5 "Recognize common types of texts," is addressed minimally as students were TOLD what a fable was before reading a fable. There is not instruction or follow up to address the depth of the standard regarding the word "recognize."</p> <p>"Includes a clear and explicit purpose for instruction" is evident. Before instruction for each lesson began, there is an overview that sets the purpose</p> |
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and background for the unit. The purpose for each lesson specifically is called out. For example, on page 28, it states, "Tell students that today they will listen to a new letter from their pen pal, Annie, about the season of winter. Tell students that the main topic, or the main idea, of today's lesson is winter. Tell them to listen carefully so that they can tell you about the characteristics of, or ways to describe, winter."

The text selected meets the intent and stated goal of each lesson. There is articulation and coherence between the purpose of each lesson and the text. It would be helpful to have the Lexile levels of each text noted. While there are no Lexile levels for the K-1 band, it is helpful for the teacher to have this information.

Students are given opportunities to write, or draw, and listen. Speaking opportunities are mostly limited to choral response and repeated answers. There are a few opportunities to pair/share with peers. Interaction with text is limited to listening only. Depending when in the kindergarten year this is used, this may be very appropriate as students are developing knowledge of text and how to interact with it.

Foundational skills are not addressed; however, there appears to be other material that deals with them and this unit is based on core knowledge.

Fluency is not address; however, as stated above, this may found in the skills unit.

There is integration of all the ELA strands.

Building students' content knowledge in science was the great strength of this unit.

Rating: 2 – Meets many 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 (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.

A unit or longer lesson should:

- ☐ **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

Reading Text Closely: There is great emphasis placed on asking questions to help students recall information gained from the text that was read aloud. Each selection is followed by a set of questions. Most of the questions are simple recall. Although some are identified as inference, the answers are still clearly found stated in the text. "Inferential: How do you dress for winter?" The text states: "Hats, mittens, and scarves help you stay warm in the winter." An inferential question cannot be answered by looking at the text itself, but can be answered by reference to some outside information while using the textual evidence to support the answer.

Students are given the opportunity to answer questions and the answers to them (with the exception of the evaluation questions) will all be found within the text. However, in order to teach student to dig deeply into text, questions that go beyond recall should be asked. It takes instruction to learn to answer them. This was addressed and should be considered upon revision.

There are no examples where students are asked to give evidence related to the text in support of their answers. Students could have been asked to refer to text or pictures specifically. Even in section 6B where students are asked questions based on pictures, they were not taught or required to state

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| <p>learning that is sequenced, scaffolded and supported to advance students toward independent grade-level reading.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ 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>). ✓ Balance of Writing: Include prominent and varied writing opportunities for students that balance communicating thinking and answering questions with self-expression and exploration. | <p>how they came to the answer.</p> <p>Academic Vocabulary: The Vocabulary that is chosen is a strength of the unit. Tier two general academic and tier three content specific words are well selected. These words are taught in a routine of define, example, ask and then students are given practice with each word. However, that practice is decontextualized. Revisiting, or being required to use the words in context later would strengthen this piece of the unit. The unit does go further into some of the vocabulary by addressing antonyms and multiple meaning words.</p> <p>Grade-Level Reading: Text is above grade level as all was a read aloud. It would be beneficial to have grade level reading available for student to do independent reading. There was an extensive list of trade books on the topic.</p> <p>Balance of Texts: There are seven examples of expository reading along with one literary text, a fable. Students are also given an informational video and exposed to reading pictures. While there are different types of reading, there may not be an actual balance. However, I would expect to see more of a balance in the skills unit that evidently accompanies this core unit.</p> <p>Balance of Writing: Students are given the opportunity draw, write, report and research.</p> |
| <p>Rating: 2 – Meets many of the criteria in the dimension</p> | |

Dimension III – Instructional Supports

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| <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). <input type="checkbox"/> 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; | <p>This unit cultivates student interest and engagement with the use of interesting, personal read alouds with engaging photographs of children. Students are constantly drawn back into the read aloud to answer questions and perform tasks related to the text. The subject matter is interesting to kindergartners.</p> <p>Instructional expectations are clearly articulated at the beginning of the unit and then in each section at point of delivery. The flow is easy to follow and routines for reading, questioning and vocabulary are established and followed in each lesson.</p> <p>Since this is a kindergarten lesson and apparently used during the beginning of the year, students are provided with access and opportunities to engage with the text as a read aloud. The instruction is highly scaffolded through the read aloud and questioning. Students are given the think-pair-share protocol and it is modeled and practiced.</p> <p>Suggesting where in the year this unit is best used would be helpful to teachers.</p> <p>The Above and Beyond sections give further opportunities for individuals or whole class. There is also an extensive list of trade books that might provide further reading for advanced students.</p> <p>This unit does include a progression of learning where concepts such as the ability to answer questions with who and what, core knowledge of weather and seasons, and skills for responding with writing and drawing are</p> |
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| <p>provides discussion questions and other supports to promote student engagement, understanding and progress toward independence.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <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. ✓ Provides extensions and/or more advanced text for students who read or write above grade level. <p><u>A unit or longer lesson should:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Include a progression of learning where concepts, knowledge and skills advance and deepen over time (<i>may be more applicable across the year or several units</i>). ✓ Gradually remove supports, allowing students to demonstrate their independent capacities (<i>may be more applicable across the year or several units</i>). ✓ Provide for authentic learning, application of literacy skills 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>developed with a very gradual release of responsibility.</p> <p>Grammar, syntax, foundational reading, decoding, phonemic awareness, and fluency are not addressed in this core knowledge unit. These skills may be taught separately in supplemental skills units. It would always be optimal for connecting learning if all skills were integrated.</p> <p>Specific reading strategies for attacking particularly difficult sections are not called out. Depending on the time of year in kindergarten, focusing on listening skills and comprehension may have been very appropriate.</p> <p>Although this lesson is highly scaffolded on its own, there are no specific references to address the needs of students with specific needs. The pieces that inherently support all students include a review of prior learning at the beginning of each lesson. The pictures that accompanied the text are a support as is the choral response support. Suggesting or structuring positive interdependence activities such as numbered heads together to support students with special needs would be helpful. On page 20 teachers are instructed to model language for students using the frame, "Some characteristics of _____ are . . ." Providing this frame to students before they respond would strengthen the support system for all students.</p> <p>As for building stamina, it is completely developmentally appropriate to first build stamina in listening to a read aloud for ten minutes and then increase that time. Perhaps in future units, this is increased as students may be expected to read on their own.</p> <p>Technology is very weak in this unit. There were many places where the unit could have been made stronger, varied, and engaging with supplemental videos, online investigations, live chats, writing apps, etc., depending on the technology available.</p> |
| <p>Rating: 2 – Meets many of the criteria in the dimension</p> | |

Dimension IV – Assessment

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| <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 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. <input type="checkbox"/> Includes aligned rubrics or assessment guidelines that provide sufficient guidance for interpreting student performance and responding to areas where students are not yet meeting standards. <p><u>A unit or longer lesson should:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Use varied modes of assessment, including a range of pre-, formative, summative and self-assessment measures. | <p>Page 5 of the unit states "These assessment opportunities range from informal observations, such as Think–Pair–Share and some Extension activities, to more formal written assessments."</p> <p>While many of these opportunities are not specifically called out as assessment opportunities in the text of the unit, as students are asked to respond to comprehension questions regarding each selection of text, the teacher has to opportunity to listen to and observe answers. These responses seemed to be choral in nature. The teacher could also call on individual students. In either of these instances, hearing the answers of individual students would be difficult. Alternative practices such as turn and talk or numbered heads together would allow the teacher a better chance to hear from more students and better evaluate comprehension.</p> <p>Highlighting the opportunity to formatively assess would be helpful to teachers.</p> <p>Formative assessment is further facilitated with the writing opportunities. Because of developmental appropriateness, students are allowed to make drawings. This provides access to students who may not be proficient in</p> |
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language.

While the summative assessments at the end of the unit require students to circle pictorial answers and are developmentally appropriate, they are completely language dependent. This can handicap second language learners or communicatively disabled students.

The addition of rubrics that describe what might be included in drawing/writing assignments would be helpful. While there is a scoring chart that helps define proficiency by percentages, there are no rubrics that identify movement towards that in the formative opportunities.

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

Summary Comments

This unit is engaging and a wonderful unit on Seasons and Weather. At first read it is exciting to find so much real world application and complexity of read aloud text. The unit builds knowledge in the discipline of science. However, on closer examination, the ability to teach to the depth of the standards for English Language Arts is not present. The shifts that are so crucial to prepare for college and career readiness, even at kindergarten, are not fully developed in this unit. Text complexity, as stated, is present. Text-based questions beyond recall are few and far between. The use of textual evidence is not present. While the vocabulary chosen is appropriate, students are not expected to use it in their responses either orally or in writing. Many different types of text are used in the unit, but there is not a balance. (We also recognize that text types may be balanced over the course of the year.)

There are many Kindergarten ELA CCSS standards identified. A few of those are not actually addressed at all. Of those that are addressed many are only partially attacked. More careful alignment is necessary and where standards are partially addressed, it should be noted. There were missed opportunities to develop standards not identified. This begs the question, is this unit designed to meet the requirement of the CCSS or are they an after-thought?

With more attention and understanding of the standards given to the planning, this unit could be an exemplar.

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.