**ELA/Literacy K-2**

**Session 1: Developing Criterion-Based Feedback and Ratings**

**Facilitator’s Notes**

**Intended Audiences:**

* New reviewers
* Reviewers who wish to deepen their ability to use the EQuIP quality review process to provide criterion-based observations and feedback

**Prerequisite Knowledge:**

* Common Core State Standards (CCSS) for English language arts (ELA)/literacy

**Time:**

Unit Review: 2–2.5 hours (1/2 day with introduction and break)

Lesson Review: 45 min.–1 hour

Note: Reviewers should review the common instructional materials independently a day or so BEFORE the review session.

**Materials Needed:**

1. Session PowerPoint slides (contains slides for unit and lesson review)
2. A copy of the common instructional materials for each reviewer. Choose from:

* Unit: Core Knowledge Kindergarten Listening and Learning Domain: *Seasons and Weather*
* Instructional materials from the state, district or school

1. Quality Review Rubric PDF (either electronic or print) for each reviewer
2. Copies of the CCSS for ELA/literacy for each table (reviewers may also use e-versions)
3. Copies of CCSS ELA/literacy Appendices A and B for each table (reviewers may also use e-versions)

**Session Goals:**

* Develop reviewers’ ability to use EQuIP quality review rubrics to provide criterion-based observations and suggestions for improvement
* Develop a common understanding of alignment and quality among reviewers
  + Develop a common understanding of the rating scale and descriptors for the four rubric dimensions and of the rating scale and descriptors for overall ratings
  + Develop reviewers’ abilities to use EQuIP criteria, rating scales and rating descriptors to review instructional materials

**Session Overview:**

In Session 1, a group of reviewers practices providing criterion-based feedback using evidence found in a CCSS lesson or unit (instructional materials). Unlike other sessions, reviewers will *not* assign ratings (for each dimension or overall) during this session. This allows reviewers to focus on improving the quality of their criterion-based feedback.

Throughout the review, use a set of guiding questions[[1]](#footnote-1) to help reviewers frame their observations and discussions about each dimension. As reviewers examine a common set of instructional materials, engage reviewers in a discussion of their observations and suggestions, always emphasizing the use of the criteria to frame or explain.

Each reviewer will:

* Look for evidence in the common instructional materials that addresses each criterion of the rubric.
* Determine if the example meets the criterion or not.
* Compare his/her criterion-based observations and suggestions for each dimension to those of other reviewers.

Use the instructional materials provided or other state, district or school instructional materials. Note that the PowerPoint slides will need to be revised to reflect a chosen state, district, or school common lesson/unit. Review teams may range in size from four to eight members. Conduct reviews at tables that allow for unobstructed conversation and have enough space for materials.

**Part One — Introducing the Review Steps** (Slides 1–11)

**Time: 15 minutes**

These slides present:

* + Session goals;
  + EQuIP quality review principles and agreements;
  + Review process and four dimensions;
  + Quality Review Rubric PDF;
  + Qualities of Effective Feedback and examples of feedback; and
  + Steps of the EQuIP quality review process.

Review slides 1–6 to introduce the session. In these slides, reviewers will learn the purpose of the session (goals) and the ways in which a reviewer engages in a review (principles and agreements). It is also helpful to share if the group will be using the EQuIP rubrics and quality review process for a specific purpose. For example, it would be beneficial to share that you hope to train group to vet materials before they shared on posted on a website or to provide feedback to colleagues on their lesson plans. Explain that adhering to the EQuIP principles and agreements creates a collegial environment in which reviewers can develop criterion-based suggestions for improving the alignment and quality of instructional materials. Read all of the principles and agreements.

Part one also provides an opportunity for an overview of the four domains of the EQuIP rubric(s) and the five steps of the review process itself. Pause on slide 4 to allow reviewers to scan the four dimensions of the rubric. Slides 5 and 6 explain using the EQuIP Rubric Quality Review Feedback Forms. The feedback forms are organized by Dimension, with Dimension 1 being on the first page and subsequent dimensions on the following pages. Each page in the form allows the reviewer to indicate the criteria that the lesson or unit met, a space to provide criterion-based feedback, and a space to assign a rating to the dimension. The last page of the form is used by the reviewer to assign the lesson or unit an overall rating and summary comments. Slides 7-11 explain the qualities of effective feedback and allow participants to engage in evaluating sample feedback based on the qualities of effective feedback. Instruct the participants to read the criteria in Dimension 1. Read the sample feedback on slide 8 aloud to the group and then have the participants consider if the feedback meets the qualities of effective feedback. Slides 9 provides an explanation of how Achieve assessed the sample feedback based on the qualities of effective feedback. Repeat this process for slides 10 and 11. Slides 12 and 13 outline the review steps. Before beginning part two, facilitators should introduce reviewers to the materials used during the session (see Materials Needed, above). If reviewers have not already introduced themselves, they should do so at this time.

**Part Two — Review Process**

**Step 1. Review Materials** (Slides 12–13)

**Time: lesson, 15 minutes; unit, 20 minutes**

During Step 1, reviewers should *not* try to read every word of the lesson/unit from start to finish but rather get an overall sense of what is contained in the instructional materials. It is particularly important that reviewers read the text(s) and note the quality of the text(s) and in the case of grade 2 materials, its complexity.[[2]](#footnote-2) Use slide 10 to summarize key parts of the instructional materials, including notes on the quality and/or complexity of the text. Slide 10 will increase the likelihood that reviewers are thoroughly oriented to the instructional material and able to locate key information during the session. Remind reviewers not to use the EQuIP rubric(s) during Step 1. Reviewers will have ample opportunity to think deeply about the criteria in each dimension during subsequent steps of the review process.

Note the distinction between the criteria for a lesson or unit and the additional criteria for units and longer lessons.

* If reviewing a lesson, clarify that the first three criteria in Dimension I are applicable.
* If reviewing a unit or longer lesson, clarify that all criteria in Dimension I are applicable.

Reviewers should:

* Select the box for each criterion where there is clear and substantial evidence.
* Leave the box blank if there is insufficient or no evidence of a criterion.
* Record input on specific improvements needed to meet criteria, and thus strengthen alignment.
* Focus on recording constructive, criterion-based feedback. *Do not rate during this session.*

Each team member should engage in the criterion-based analysis of the example’s CCSS alignment *individually* (and silently) before any discussion occurs. As the team(s) review, use the following kinds of questions to support reviewers at their tables:

* What direct evidence can I cite that supports my decisions?
* For criteria not yet met, what constructive observations and suggestions for improvement can I make?
* Can I connect my observations and suggestions to specific evidence from the instructional materials (both what I see and do not see)?

**Step 2. Apply Criteria in Dimension I: Alignment to the Depth of the CCSS** (Slides 14–25)

**Time: lesson, 15 minutes; unit, 25 minutes**

Note that Dimension I is non-negotiable. In order for the review to continue, a rating of 2 or 3 is required. If the review is discontinued, consider general feedback that might be given to developers/teachers regarding next steps.

As reviewers apply the criteria in **Dimension I,** it may be helpful to ask the following questions regarding criteria 1, 2 and 3:

* + For criterion 1: Does the teacher/developer articulate alignment to a reasonable number of standards? Do the assignments, tasks and activities suggest a set of standards has been targeted for instruction? Does the teacher/developer make a distinction between targeted and supporting standards? Do the instruction, assignments and activities make sense given the standards listed?
  + For criterion 2: Where in the lesson/unit is the instructional purpose communicated? Is the purpose for instruction well-aligned to the standards identified and/or the assignments and activities? Remember there are different ways to capture “clear and explicit purpose”; the rubric is template-agnostic.
  + For criterion 3: Is the text of sufficient quality *and* scope for the instructional purpose? Does the text present characteristics similar to the K-2 exemplars in the CCSS Appendix B? For grade 2, does the text measure within the grade-level complexity band?

After reviewers have checked the criteria and recorded observations on their own, they should discuss their feedback at their tables. Then, ask tables to share reflections with the room. *Use the examples of criterion-based feedback in the slide deck to guide reviewers to reflect on their observations and feedback.* Compare both the degree to which observations are based on the examples found in the common lesson/unit and the degree to which the suggestions are framed in the language and spirit of the criteria. Explain that criteria may be checked only if there is clear and substantial evidence of the criterion (there are no “half-checks”). There may be instances when reviewers find clear and substantial evidence of a criterion and constructive suggestions still can be made. In such cases, reviewers may provide feedback related to criteria that have been checked.

**Step 3. Apply Criteria in Dimensions II–IV** (Slides 26-51)

**Time: lesson, 45 minutes; unit, 75 minutes**

If reviewers are learning to use the EQuIP quality review process for the first time, stop to discuss and compare the observations and suggestions made by reviewers to the examples of observations and suggestions provided in the slide deck. If the group of reviewers is experienced, you may delay conversation until reviewers have recorded their input for Dimensions II–IV.

As reviewers apply the criteria in **Dimension II,** it may be helpful to ask the following questions regarding criteria 1, 2 and 3:

* For criterion 1: Is a text and the evidence contained within it the central focus of the lesson? Is it clear from the lesson that a majority of class time is to be spent reading, writing, or speaking directly about a text or texts? Are students being asked to read and reread (or listen to) the text, think deeply about it, participate in thoughtful discussions, and grapple with the particulars of the text?
* For criterion 2: Is there a series of questions that require evidence from text *that* work together to facilitate rich conversations and writing? If these types of questions are present, reviewers should check the criteria. *(Note: There may be instances when reviewers find clear and substantial evidence of this criterion and constructive suggestions can still be made. In such cases, reviewers may provide feedback related to criteria that have been checked*.*)*
* For criterion 3: Does the lesson/unit explicitly focus on building students’ academic vocabulary and concepts of syntax?” Academic vocabulary is important in K-2 and there may be instances where lessons/units focus on academic vocabulary more overtly than others. If there is clear evidence that academic language is taught within the lesson/unit, this criterion should be checked.

As reviewers apply the criteria in **Dimension III,** it may be helpful to ask the following questions:

* For criterion 2: Does this set of materials address instructional expectations? Is it easy to understand and follow? Are the teacher resources (annotated responses, supports for ELLs, SPED, etc.) clear?

***•*** For criterion 3: Does this lesson/unit integrate targeted instruction in multiple areas such as grammar and syntax, writing strategies, discussion rules and aspects of foundational reading?

• For criterion 6: Does this lesson/unit focus on sections of rich text(s) (including read alouds) that present the greatest challenge? Do discussion questions and other supports promote student engagement? Rich text(s) are texts that are worthy of rereading, include Tier 2 words, incorporate layers of meaning, and serve as mentor texts for writing. Challenging sections often require scaffolding for close reading.

*Note: Checking the criteria in a manner that accurately reflects the evidence in the instructional material will help reviewers to provide criterion-based feedback.*

As reviewers apply the criteria for **Dimension IV,** it may be helpful to ask the following questions:

* For criterion 2: Do students have multiple ways to show what they have learned?
* For criterion 3: Do assessments produce a description of how close students have come to meeting expectations (e.g., annotated student work, descriptive rubrics/checklists).

**Step 4. Provide Summary Comments[[3]](#footnote-3)** (Slide 52-53)

**Time: lesson, 15 minutes; unit, 25 minutes**

Because Session I is focused on the ability of reviewers to use the EQuIP quality review rubrics to provide criterion-based observations and suggestions, Step 4 in this session will focus only on providing summary comments. ***During Session 1,*** ***reviewers will not apply an overall rating.*** Explain to reviewers that the summary comments should highlight the most critical issues that have emerged over the course of the review. Summary comments should acknowledge what the developer has done well, identify the criteria that were not checked, and provide suggestions for improving the alignment and quality of instructional materials. Reviewers should record summary comments on the Quality Review Rubric PDF. *Use the examples of criterion-based feedback in the slide deck to guide reviewers to reflect on the observations and feedback they have generated.* Compare both the degree to which observations are based on the examples found in the common unit and the degree to which the suggestions are framed in the language and spirit of the criteria. When working in a group, individuals should record summary comments prior to conversation.

**Step 5. Determine Next Steps** (Slide 55)

**Time: lesson, 15 minutes; unit, 20 minutes**

During group discussions, note the evidence cited to arrive at summary comments and similarities and differences among reviewers. The goal for this step is to recommend next steps for the lesson/unit and provide recommendations for improvement to developers/teachers. Participants may finalize summary observations after discussion. After reviewers learn the protocol, this would be the time to **compare overall ratings**, and to the extent possible, come to consensus about whether it is an E, EI, R, or N.

**Reflect on Session Goals** (Slide 54)

**Time: lesson, 15 minutes; unit, 20 minutes**

Pose the following questions to the review team(s):

* + Did we use the EQuIP criteria to frame and explain evaluation of evidence found in instructional materials?
  + Did we develop a common understanding of EQuIP criteria among reviewers?
  + Are there any criteria or evidence about which reviewers disagree?

**Collect Review Data**

**Time: 5 minutes**

Reviewers can submit review data by:

* Clicking the “submit” button on the Quality Review Rubric PDF;
* Emailing the Quality Review Rubric PDF to the session facilitator; or
* Handing in their paper copies of the Quality Review Rubric PDF.

Although reviewers will not produce dimensional or overall ratings during Session 1, the qualitative data that reviewers produce can be analyzed for trends. For details on using the Quality Review Rubric PDF as part of an electronic feedback system, see the EQuIP Professional Development Series Users’ Guide.

1. Guiding questions are intended to support reviewers as needed. Reviewers should not feel obligated to answer all guiding questions. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. A description of the quantitative and qualitative complexity is provided for the instructional materials included. For more on text complexity, see CCSS Appendix A and/or Supplemental Information for Appendix A of the Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts and Literacy: New Research on Text Complexity. Also, consider using EQuIP Session 3 — ELA, Selecting Quality Texts. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Ordinarily, at this time reviewers would apply an overall rating and in the next step, to compare overall ratings. Include this as part of your process once reviewers are experienced with EQuIP. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)