

EQuIP Review Feedback



Lesson/Unit Name: Bridge to Terabithia/Narnia Unit

Content Area: English language arts

Grade Level: 5

Overall Rating:

E

Exemplar

Dimension I – Alignment to the Depth of the CCSS

<p><i>The lesson/unit aligns with the letter and spirit of the CCSS:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Targets a set of grade-level CCSS ELA/Literacy standards. ✓ Includes a clear and explicit purpose for instruction. ✓ Selects text(s) that measure within the grade-level text complexity band and are of sufficient quality and scope for the stated purpose (e.g., presents vocabulary, syntax, text structures, levels of meaning/purpose, and other qualitative characteristics similar to CCSS grade-level exemplars in Appendices A & B). <p><i>A unit or longer lesson should:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Integrate reading, writing, speaking and listening so that students apply and synthesize advancing literacy skills. ✓ (Grades 3-5) Build students’ content knowledge and their understanding of reading and writing in social studies, the arts, science or technical subjects through the coherent selection of texts. 	<p>Each lesson clearly targets a set of CCSS which are clearly described in the unit rationale. A clear and explicit purpose for instruction is provided in the rationale and included in the unit overview and at the beginning of the lesson plan. Additionally, each lesson includes clear objectives and a learning target written for student use. The texts selected are classic and engaging children’s novels. With Lexile levels of 810 and 870, they fall within the recommended text complexity band for fifth grade students. Reading, writing, speaking, listening, language, and foundational skills are effectively incorporated throughout the unit. The integration of listening and speaking skills (in response to the Call to Action) is a particular strength of this unit. Students have multiple opportunities to use accountable talk to deepen their understanding of characters, setting, and theme. Students engage in a variety of reading tasks, including partner reading, readers’ theater, read aloud, and independent reading. This approach allows a wide range of readers to access the complexity of the texts, while also increasing engagement. Students also have opportunities to write at various points through the unit to synthesize what they are learning. While the focus of this lesson is literary, it does include building content knowledge through lessons that allow the students to explore social studies and the arts.</p>
<p>Rating: 3 – Meets most to all of the criteria in the dimension</p>	

Dimension II – Key Shifts the CCSS

<p><i>The lesson/unit addresses key shifts in the CCSS:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Reading Text Closely: Makes reading text(s) closely, examining textual evidence, and discerning deep meaning a central focus of instruction. ✓ Text-Based Evidence: Facilitates rich and rigorous evidence-based discussions and writing about common texts through a sequence of specific, thought-provoking, and text-dependent questions (including, when applicable, questions about illustrations, charts, diagrams, audio/video, and media). ✓ Writing from Sources: Routinely expects that students draw evidence from texts to produce 	<p>The text is clearly the focus of this unit and every single lesson. Specific parts of the text are highlighted throughout the plan to draw students’ attention to specific narrative elements including tone, setting, and character traits. Throughout each lesson students are engaging deliberately with the text and answering text-dependent questions. Developers do a great job of including questions for specific sections and various activities for students to engage with those sections. These carefully considered response activities serve to build and deepen students’ understanding of story events. Students write from the text in a variety of forms including notes on graphic organizers, short responses, and extended responses. However, there could be more explicit instruction and directions for students about writing from sources and including evidence in their writing. Academic vocabulary is addressed throughout the plan as students highlight idioms and locate specific words to identify</p>
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<p>clear and coherent writing that informs, explains, or makes an argument in various written forms (e.g., notes, summaries, short responses, or formal essays).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Academic Vocabulary: Focuses on building students' academic vocabulary in context throughout instruction. <p><i>A unit or longer lesson should:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Increasing Text Complexity: Focus students on reading a progression of complex texts drawn from the grade-level band. Provide text-centered learning that is sequenced, scaffolded and supported to advance students toward independent reading of complex texts at the CCR level. ✓ Building Disciplinary Knowledge: Provide opportunities for students to build knowledge about a topic or subject through analysis of a coherent selection of strategically sequenced, discipline-specific texts. ✓ Balance of Texts: Within a collection of grade-level units a balance of informational and literary texts is included according to guidelines in the CCSS (p. 5). ☐ Balance of Writing: Include a balance of on-demand and process writing (e.g., multiple drafts and revisions over time) and short, focused research projects, incorporating digital texts where appropriate. 	<p>moods, feelings, and setting details. Key vocabulary words are identified by the teacher; students also find and highlight challenging vocabulary. These words are used in both oral and written responses to the text. Vocabulary from the story is pulled in context with the instruction and a list is compiled as the unit progresses. Students also practice the skill of rereading for context clues when encountering challenging words in the text. The unit does include increasing text complexity as students progressively read more and more independently throughout the unit; additionally, students have multiple opportunities to make comparisons between two texts. The developer has included content lessons that build knowledge for the students. The lessons are integrated into the lessons for the novels. During the instruction on <i>Bridge to Terabithia</i>, a lesson on the National Art Gallery gives the students a window to experience what Jesse might have experienced during his visit. Also a lesson on Katherine Paterson helps the students to understand why she wrote the book. Before the students start into the land of Narnia, they review a website about <i>Children at War</i>, which the main characters in Narnia experienced themselves. There is also another lesson about the evacuations in London during WWII - fitting for the characters and the time period of the book. This unit does include a balance of texts including informational texts about historical background and interviews/articles about the authors. The chosen texts will help broaden the students' understandings of the time periods and spark ideas for further, independent research. There are some opportunities for short, written responses, as well as a drafted speech. Additional writing opportunities, such as a literary essay exploring themes or the role of setting in both stories could help further connect the two texts and provide more cohesion to this unit.</p>
<p>Rating: 3 – Meets most to all of the criteria in the dimension</p>	

Dimension III – Instructional Supports

<p><i>The lesson/unit is responsive to varied student learning needs:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Cultivates student interest and engagement in reading, writing and speaking about texts. ✓ Addresses instructional expectations and is easy to understand and use. ✓ Provides <i>all</i> students with multiple opportunities to engage with text of appropriate complexity for the grade level; includes appropriate scaffolding so that students directly experience the complexity of the text. ✓ Focuses on challenging sections of text(s) and engages students in a productive struggle through discussion questions and other supports that build toward independence. ✓ Integrates appropriate supports in reading, writing, listening and speaking for students who are ELL, have disabilities, or read well below the grade level text band. ☐ Provides extensions and/or more advanced text for students who read well above the grade level text band. <p><i>A unit or longer lesson should:</i></p>	<p>This unit does a great job of engaging students. The teacher makes an effort to build on background knowledge and preview the text in several of the lessons. The unit also includes creative activities that relate directly to the text such as the race and the show-and-tell. They are also engaged through a variety of reading strategies, so it is not the same activity every day. The lessons are easy to understand and use. They clearly reference the objectives being addressed, the standards, timeframes, and the evidence from assessments. They also have clear instructions with specific page numbers and scripted notes about where to stop throughout the book and how to engage students throughout the reading. The supplemental materials are a bit confusing though. For instance, there are summative assignments included for both books, but it is not clear in the lesson plans how they are to be used. There are a variety of ways that all students are given opportunities to engage with the text including read alouds, choral reading, partner reading (with heterogeneous pairings), and independent reading. Use of readers' theater during the second half of the unit is an excellent way to increase engagement, fluency, and comprehension, and is a terrific addition to the unit plan. Response activities are thoughtfully developed and challenge students to make sense and draw meaning from critical points throughout the story. Modeling of key concepts takes place before the reading of the day helping students to be prepared and be on the lookout for the concept. When a more challenging part of the text comes up, the teacher-led, text dependent questions in the lesson guide the students toward understanding. There</p>
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Include a progression of learning where concepts and skills advance and deepen over time (<i>may be more applicable across the year or several units</i>). ✓ Gradually remove supports, requiring 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, student-directed inquiry, analysis, evaluation and/or reflection. ✓ Integrate targeted instruction in such areas as grammar and conventions, writing strategies, discussion rules and all aspects of foundational reading for grades 3-5. ✓ Indicate how students are accountable for independent reading based on student choice and interest to build stamina, confidence and motivation (<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>are many supports listed for ELLs and low readers while they are in class, including the heterogeneous pairings, sentence stems, choral reading, and audio recordings. Developers may consider adding some more explicit previewing of key vocabulary before reading and engaging students with learning challenges in discussion before written responses. Developers may also consider ways to ensure that ELL students and lower readers are supported at home, which will be important given the large amount of reading that is done outside of school. Included in the plan is a list of possible book extension activities, however, the extension activities appear generic and it is not clear that they will deepen the students' understandings of the targeted standards in the unit. Consider including more rigorous activities that are tied more closely aligned to the unit goals. Also consider allowing advanced learners to explore the disciplinary knowledge further with their own independent research. The unit does offer students opportunities for authentic learning by allowing them choice throughout the unit and incorporating connections to their lives. Days 5 and 6 focus on grammar and prepositional phrases and how they add to the story. There is also a focus on tone and how it helps focus a story. Students are reading independently throughout the unit and increasingly so as the unit progresses. The use of the iPads with the Venn diagrams and the prediction polls demonstrates a creative use of technology.</p>
<p>Rating: 3 – Meets most to all of the criteria in the dimension</p>	

Dimension IV – Assessment

<p><i>The lesson/unit regularly assesses whether students are mastering standards-based content and skills:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Elicits direct, observable evidence of the degree to which a student can independently demonstrate the major targeted grade-level CCSS standards with appropriately complex text(s). <input type="checkbox"/> Assesses student proficiency using methods that are unbiased and accessible to all students. ✓ Includes aligned rubrics or assessment guidelines that provide sufficient guidance for interpreting student performance. <p><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>The formative assessment pieces of this unit will help the teacher know if students are getting the content. While there are many types of formative assessment used, students aren't always demonstrating independence with the target standards when they are working in pairs or in groups. Assessment methods don't have explicit scaffolding so that they are accessible to all students. Aligned rubrics are included for both writing and speaking/listening. Before giving the summative assessment, however, teachers should be guided to review the rubric with students, making sure that students understand the expectations of the task including drawing from their notes throughout the lesson and quoting evidence from the text. Also going through the summative assignment toward the beginning of the unit would give students the ability to gather evidence throughout and consider the text carefully as they read during the lessons. The developer might consider modifying some of the language used in the rubrics to avoid use of finite descriptors such as "never" or "always" (perhaps substituting with "seldom" or "consistently"). The developer might also consider modifying the grammar error ratios in the writing rubric (currently 2/200 words for all three levels) to include a broader range of competency for each rating descriptor. The unit does include various methods of assessment including formative assessment and summative assessment. As mentioned above, it appears that there is a summative assessment included that combines both texts, but it isn't mentioned in the lesson plans. There is an entire plan included at the end of the Narnia section devoted to completing the final assignment for just that novel. A similar plan could be made to fully prepare the students for the final summative assessment over both books. The inclusion of this assessment strengthens the unit and should be made explicit.</p>
<p>Rating: 2 – Meets many of the criteria in the dimension</p>	

Summary Comments

This unit plan focuses on specific speaking, listening, and writing tasks to support the reading and understanding of *The Bridge to Terabithia* and the *Chronicles of Narnia*. A series of well-developed response activities address targeted standards throughout the lesson plan, and a variety of formative, summative, and reflective assessments measure student growth. The instructional format is a real strength of this plan, making goals, standards, and implementation easy to follow. Another strength is the inclusion of explicit teaching and assessment of speaking and listening standards. Instructional supports are incorporated throughout the lesson plan, providing scaffolding in the classroom for students with language or learning challenges. Content area lessons are also included in this plan that will give students a glimpse of what the characters in the book are experiencing, as well as whetting their appetite for further research on their own. The plan could be enhanced by the inclusion of explicit strategies for addressing the needs of advanced learners and strategies for supporting lower readers and ELL students with the significant amount of reading done at home. The unit could also benefit from including a summative assessment that incorporates both of the texts read throughout the unit.

Rating Scales

Rating Scale for Dimensions I, II, III, IV:

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

2: Meets many of the criteria in the dimension

1: Meets some of the criteria in the dimension

0: Does not meet the criteria in the dimension

Overall Rating for the Lesson/Unit:

E: Exemplar – Aligned and meets most to all of the criteria in dimensions II, III, IV **(total 11 – 12)**

E/I: Exemplar *if* Improved – Aligned and needs some improvement in one or more dimensions **(total 8 – 10)**

R: Revision Needed – Aligned partially and needs significant revision in one or more dimensions **(total 3 – 7)**

N: Not Ready to Review – Not aligned and does not meet criteria **(total 0 – 2)**

Rating Descriptors

Descriptors for Dimensions I, II, III, IV:

3: Exemplifies CCSS Quality - meets the standard described by criteria in the dimension, as explained in criterion-based observations.

2: Approaching CCSS Quality - meets many criteria but will benefit from revision in others, as suggested in criterion-based observations.

1: Developing toward CCSS Quality - needs significant revision, as suggested in criterion-based observations.

0: Not representing CCSS Quality - does not address the criteria in the dimension.

Descriptor for Overall Ratings:

E: Exemplifies CCSS Quality – Aligned and exemplifies the quality standard and exemplifies most of the criteria across Dimensions II, III, IV of the rubric.

E/I: Approaching CCSS Quality – Aligned and exemplifies the quality standard in some dimensions but will benefit from some revision in others.

R: Developing toward CCSS Quality – Aligned partially and approaches the quality standard in some dimensions and needs significant revision in others.

N: Not representing CCSS Quality – Not aligned and does not address criteria.