

EQuIP Review Feedback



Lesson/Unit Name: Grit in Charlotte’s Web and Babe

Content Area: English language arts

Grade Level: 4

Overall Rating:

E

Exemplar

Dimension I – Alignment to the Depth of the CCSS

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

- ✓ Targets a set of grade-level CCSS ELA/Literacy standards.
- ✓ Includes a clear and explicit purpose for instruction.
- ✓ Selects text(s) that measure within the grade-level text complexity band and are of sufficient quality and scope for the stated purpose (e.g., presents vocabulary, syntax, text structures, levels of meaning/purpose, and other qualitative characteristics similar to CCSS grade-level exemplars in Appendices A & B).

A unit or longer lesson should:

- ✓ Integrate reading, writing, speaking and listening so that students apply and synthesize advancing literacy skills.
- ❑ (Grades 3-5) Build students’ content knowledge and their understanding of reading and writing in social studies, the arts, science or technical subjects through the coherent selection of texts.

Targets a Set of Grade Level CCSS: There is a set of related targeted standards; however, reviewers note that not all targeted standards are explicitly taught. The Lesson 1 Learning Target is stated: “I can use examples from a book to tell you what it means to have grit.” Fourth grade is the first time the word “example” appears in the standards; however, in this lesson, there is no explicit teaching of what defines an example or any emphasis on what sets an example apart from a detail. There is a reference in the "Students Say/Do" column that they will be sharing "examples," but throughout the instruction, the teacher never names what s/he is asking them to do is provide an example--and never uses the word until asking, “Who can give me an example of how grit helped you to accomplish a goal?” (p.3). As the day's lesson moves into the text, the teacher uses the word “example,” and finding examples becomes a central focus for this and future lessons: finding examples of gritty behavior, identifying that behavior and noting the quality as character traits...(p.4). The formative assessment (Character Traits Log) does not require students paraphrase--they only list traits and copy the quotation from which they derived the trait. With these examples brought to the forefront, the reviewers note: the unit designer may want to pay more attention to the language of the standards as they progress from grade three to grade four, being careful to attend to skills named for the first time at grade four in the standards document.

Clear & Explicit Purpose: A clear and explicit purpose regarding the four goals for reading and conversing about grit in literature and life gives the unit's focuses the unit's teaching and learning goals.

Text Complexity: Texts that measure within the grade-level text complexity band are of sufficient quality. There is an increasing complexity from Charlotte's Web to Babe.

Integrates Literacy Skills: The unit integrates reading, writing, speaking, and listening. More importantly, the unit provides mini-lessons on skills the students will need to be successful in completing performance tasks. For instance, on pages 13-15 in the lesson plans, the developer presents a lesson targeting online research, offers an example of how to complete the Gritty Bio sheet (reading & writing). Additionally, the lesson plans indicate the teacher should provide guidelines on the use of Prezi or other multimedia resources (p. 19) to support student success in the summative speaking & listening performance task and later in the unit, models how to use the information to craft a speech (p. 30). Another instance of integrating literacy skills is apparent in lesson three, primarily a lesson in language standards that transfers to the preparation of the summative speaking & listening performance task.

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

Dimension II – Key Shifts the CCSS

The lesson/unit addresses key shifts in the CCSS:

- ✓ **Reading Text Closely:** Makes reading text(s) closely, examining textual evidence, and discerning deep meaning a central focus of instruction.
- ✓ **Text-Based Evidence:** Facilitates rich and rigorous evidence-based discussions and writing about common texts through a sequence of specific, thought-provoking, and text-dependent questions (including, when applicable, questions about illustrations, charts, diagrams, audio/video, and media).
- ✓ **Writing from Sources:** Routinely expects that students draw evidence from texts to produce clear and coherent writing that informs, explains, or makes an argument in various written forms (e.g., notes, summaries, short responses, or formal essays).
- ✓ **Academic Vocabulary:** Focuses on building students' academic vocabulary in context throughout instruction.

A unit or longer lesson should:

- ✓ **Increasing Text Complexity:** Focus students on reading a progression of complex texts drawn from the grade-level band. Provide text-centered learning that is sequenced, scaffolded and supported to advance students toward independent reading of complex texts at the CCR level.
- ✓ **Building Disciplinary Knowledge:** Provide opportunities for students to build knowledge about a topic or subject through analysis of a coherent selection of strategically sequenced, discipline-specific texts.
- ✓ **Balance of Texts:** Within a collection of grade-level units a balance of informational and literary texts is included according to guidelines in the CCSS (p. 5).
- ✓ **Balance of Writing:** Include a balance of on-demand and process writing (e.g., multiple drafts and revisions over time) and short, focused research projects, incorporating digital texts where appropriate.

Reading Closely: Examining textual evidence to determine the gritty characters is central to this unit. Students must think beyond the literal descriptions of characters and the plot progression to determine character grittiness. They are expected to consider how the character's thoughts, words, and actions depict, or do not depict, aspects of grit: the major theme of this unit. The reading skills taught within the context of the class text carry over into the gritty bio project as students identify characteristics of grit and draw inferences about the researched subject.

Text Based Evidence: Although reviewers are ticking this box because the unit depends on text-based language for the study of grit, we agree that there is not a sequence of "specific, thought-provoking" text dependent questions throughout the entire unit. Early lessons in this unit seem to focus on more superficial text dependent questions. The latter or second part of the unit offers more thoughtful questions of comparison and contrast intended to intentionally thread character analysis between fiction selections and among the combination of fiction and informational texts. These questions scaffold students as they make connections between the literary text and the informational texts, leading them to discover the importance of grit across time and literature causing them to think more deeply about the texts under study.

Writing from Sources: Throughout the unit, there are multiple opportunities for students to write from sources. Paired with the reading of Charlotte's Web, students are expected to maintain the character log. Students are also researching for their Gritty Bio, taking notes and eventually writing a speech. The writing expectations in the second half of the unit develop concepts of comparison and contrast and allow students to work collaboratively to achieve that goal. One suggestion: introduce how to write collaboratively (p.51) before giving students the collaborative writing prompt. That will allow them to focus on what the teacher is presenting rather than anticipate what they will be doing which in turn will provide a more focused and richer learning opportunity.

Academic Vocabulary: The unit is consistent in both the manner and level of attention paid to academic vocabulary. It also attends to both the needs of the teacher and the students by identifying words that are important for mature fourth graders to learn and by asking students to identify the words with which they are unfamiliar.

Increasing Text Complexity: The students begin with an on-level text and move to a higher complexity level. There are multiple informational texts in the form of newspaper or magazine articles which are incorporated within the unit. By nature, these informational texts have the potential to be more complex.

Building Disciplinary Knowledge: This unit provides opportunities for students to build knowledge about a topic or subject and learn about how grit is revealed in literature and life. They have an opportunity to learn about how farming has evolved as well as about immigration and farming. A cohesive focus threads grit from the first part of the unit, with the character analysis and gritty bio, to the latter part, with the struggle of immigrants (especially, farm workers). Text dependent questions scaffold the students as they make connections between the literary texts and the

	<p>informational texts and leads them to discover the importance of grit across time and literature therefore, achieving the purpose of this unit.</p> <p>Balance of Texts: There is a balance of informational and literary texts.</p> <p>Balance of Writing: The unit shows a balance of writing. Students are engaged in daily note-taking, journal writing, on-demand writing, and process writing in the preparation of their speeches with the benefit of feedback (referenced on p. 33 and p. 38).</p>
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Rating: **3 – Meets most to all of the criteria in the dimension**

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. <input type="checkbox"/> Focuses on challenging sections of text(s) and engages students in a productive struggle through discussion questions and other supports that build toward independence. <input type="checkbox"/> 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> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> 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>). <input type="checkbox"/> 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>). 	<p>Cultivates Student Interest: The variety of collaborative activities, the routine engagement of iPads, digital tools, etc., and the actual texts promote engagement in and with this unit.</p> <p>Organized & Easy to Use: The organization of the materials is appreciated. The "Gritty Bio" should be named in file folder as it is referenced in the lesson plans.</p> <p>Provides all Students Opportunity to Engage with Complex Text: The unit provides a variety of ways to ensure students are reading complex text. As the unit rationale points out, the texts are on grade-level and above while the supports of read aloud, read with partner, and read with audio render the texts accessible. The reviewers do want to highlight the strengths of the first half of the unit. In the first half, there is more evidence of scaffolding. The students work as a whole class, then with a partner, and then independently. This sequence was evident on most of the days. When the unit transitions to Babe, there seems to be fewer scaffolds in place however, there is more emphasis on the teacher's role in formative assessment, feedback, and group involvement.</p> <p>Focuses on Challenging Sections of the Text: Asking students to identify qualities and characteristics as well as examples of grit may require students to productively struggle with complex sections of the text. The reviewers did see the teacher model the process with Wilbur in chapter one, but recognize that students may need more than just that one instance. While this may be the case, the reviewers note that kind of laser focus on complex sections and wonder if the text themselves offer sections that invite close reading and interpretation.</p> <p>Integrates Appropriate Supports: While there are examples of supports provided by the developer: audio books, "Reader check-ins," pairing below grade readers with stronger readers, and grouping activities, the reviewers note few interventions/adaptations for students who are ELL, have disabilities, and/or read below grade level.</p> <p>Provides Extensions: A one-page sheet provides some ideas on what advanced students can work on, but these are not specifically related to the unit's study.</p> <p>Includes Progression of Learning: The criteria regarding a progression of learning was not considered for this unit.</p> <p>Gradually Removes Supports: The gradual removal of supports was not considered for this unit.</p>
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<p>✓ Use technology and media to deepen learning and draw attention to evidence and texts as appropriate.</p>	<p>Provides Authentic Learning: Authentic learning is supported through the students' personal goals and the study for the gritty bio. Student-directed inquiry is supported through the gritty bio project. Analysis is happening through the character analysis for grit, and reflection is happening in regard to the personal grit goal.</p> <p>Integrates Targeted Instruction: Targeted instruction on grammar and conventions is integrated within the unit. Students are also provided with discussion rules ("yes and..." "no but..."). Students are also provided opportunities to practice utilizing the language lessons in their writing.</p> <p>Indicates Student Accountability for Independent Reading: Students are accountable for their independent reading through the creation of their gritty bio speech and Prezi. They are also accountable for their independent reading of the novel through the character analysis for gritty traits.</p> <p>Use of Technology & Media: Media is used. Students develop a Prezi and use iPads on a regular basis.</p>
<p>Rating: 2 – Meets many of the criteria in the dimension</p>	

Dimension IV – Assessment

<p><i>The lesson/unit regularly assesses whether students are mastering standards-based content and skills:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Elicits direct, observable evidence of the degree to which a student can independently demonstrate the major targeted grade-level CCSS standards with appropriately complex text(s). ✓ Assesses student proficiency using methods that are unbiased and accessible to all students. ✓ Includes aligned rubrics or assessment guidelines that provide sufficient guidance for interpreting student performance. <p><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>Elicits Independent Demonstration of Targeted CCSS: The unit focuses on grit and though one may think grit to be a difficult concept or characteristic to evaluate, through perseverance to the tasks of this unit, students will be not only learning about the qualities of grit but also demonstrating grit in their reading of two novels, their research and delivery of a speech about a "gritty" person, and their resolve in working with a writer's workshop early in the unit and a book club later in the unit.</p> <p>Unbiased & Accessible Assessment: The scaffolds of the summative assessment (writing about Charlotte's Web and Babe) either as a multi-paragraph essay or through the support of a frame and sentence stems offers unbiased and accessible opportunities for students to show their learning aligned to the unit's purpose.</p> <p>Aligned Rubrics & Assessments: The unit includes check-lists and rubrics for self-assessment, group assessment, and individual assessment as well as tools for feedback in the preparation for summative performance.</p> <p>Varied Modes of Assessment: The use of formative and pre-assessments are a definite strength of the unit. There are many informal means for the teacher to determine whether students retained information which was taught the day before: thumbs up, thumbs down, and white-boards.</p>
<p>Rating: 3 – Meets most to all of the criteria in the dimension</p>	

Summary Comments

The reviewers thank the developer for the work s/he put into crafting this unit. We understand this is no small task. This unit is unique in exploring concepts educators may not always consider and supporting behaviors from which all students will benefit.

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.