English Language Arts (ELA)/Literacy Curriculum Review:

Curriculum 2.0 – Elementary School

Montgomery County Public Schools, Maryland

Prepared by:

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Introduction and Methodology

To ensure that all students in Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) are able to meet the expectations of the Maryland College and Career Ready Standards (MCCRS), MCPS educators need access to high-quality standards-aligned instructional and assessment materials. This report presents the results of an alignment review of MCPS's English Language Arts (ELA) elementary school instructional materials, *Curriculum 2.0*. Because the Maryland College and Career Ready Standards incorporate the [Common Core State Standards](#) (CCSS) for ELA/Literacy, the review is based on the Instructional Materials Evaluation Tool ([IMET](#)), an authoritative rubric for aligning instructional materials with the requirements of the CCSS. In total, there are four IMET rubrics, each one specific to a subject area and grade band: ELA/Literacy grades K–2, ELA/Literacy grades 3–12, Mathematics grades K–8, and Mathematics high school. For the ELA elementary school review, both the ELA/Literacy K–2 and 3–12 IMETs served as the foundation for determining alignment. All references to standards in this report will be to the Maryland College and Career Ready Standards, which will be referred to throughout as "MCCRS" or simply "the standards."

Description of the IMET:
The ELA/Literacy IMET draws directly from the ELA/Literacy CCSS and the [Publishers' Criteria for Common Core State Standards in Literacy](#). Because of this, the ELA IMET is aligned with MCPS's emphasis on the Core Literacy Practices as the critical processes and proficiencies of the curriculum. For example, Non-Negotiable 1 of the ELA IMET 3–12 focuses on measuring whether the materials include high-quality text meeting the appropriate complexity criteria for each grade, including a mix of informational texts and literature. This directly aligns with MCPS' first Core Literacy Practice, ensuring that students read and discuss a wide variety of complex texts. In addition, because standards are for all students, evaluating instructional materials requires careful attention be paid to ensure that special populations, including English Language Learners and those with different learning needs, have access to high-quality aligned materials. The IMET, therefore, includes specific guidance ensuring that evaluators assess the availability, alignment, and quality of embedded supports within the instructional materials for English Language Learners and other special populations.

The ELA/Literacy IMETs include Non-Negotiable Alignment Criteria and Alignment Criteria. Together, the criteria cover critical features of aligned materials including: foundational skills (elementary); quality, complexity, and range of texts; quality of questions, tasks, and assignments including evidence-based discussion and writing; building knowledge; academic language; and support for all learners. The *Grade-Level Evidence and Ratings* table (Appendix), which was used to capture detailed evidence of *Curriculum 2.0*, is based on the IMET and is organized as follows:

	Grades 1 & 2	**Grade 4**
Section 1:	Foundational Skills	Close Reading of Complex Text
Section 2:	Close Reading of Complex Text	Building Academic Language
Section 3:	Building Academic Language	Volume of Reading to Build Knowledge
Section 4:	Volume of Reading to Build Knowledge	Evidence-Based Discussions
Section 5:	Evidence-Based Discussions	Volume of Writing to Build Knowledge

Section 6:	Volume of Writing to Build Knowledge	Foundational Skills/Fluency
Section 7:	Supporting All Students	Supporting All Students

This grouping of the criteria captures the essentials of the IMET while allowing the reporting of results to be organized in the way instructional materials are generally encountered by users.

Review Team:
This review was conducted by ELA/Literacy specialists at Student Achievement Partners (SAP). Student Achievement Partners is a nonprofit organization dedicated to helping teachers and school leaders implement high-quality college- and career-ready standards, with a focus on instructional materials, instructional practice, and assessment. Student Achievement Partners developed the IMET, working in concert with organizations and experts who likewise had originally participated in the development of the standards. The ELA/Literacy specialists who reviewed *Curriculum 2.0* are well versed in the Common Core State Standards, from the individual standards statements to the overall structure of the standards. SAP's content specialists are experienced in the design and use of the IMET, and have extensive experience applying the criteria to evaluate instructional materials and training other organizations, state education agencies and local education agencies to use the tool.

Process and Methodology:
The methods for this review consisted of a close reading of existing MCPS curricular documents found on myMCPS' Instructional Center and an evaluation of the materials based on specific evidence gathered to assess the criteria in the ELA/Literacy K–2 and 3–12 IMETs. This process was carried out in the following stages:

Project Set-Up and Planning: Once access to *Curriculum 2.0* was provided, the review team met with MCPS staff in the Office of Curriculum and Instructional Programs to understand the scope and background of *Curriculum 2.0* and to become familiar with the online platform. SAP collaborated with MCPS to create and refine a sampling plan that specified which documents from the curriculum the SAP team would review.

Phase 1: The phase 1 review of the written curriculum consisted of a detailed analysis of the elementary school curriculum framing documents: the Student Learning Progression charts, Administrator's Guide to Elementary Reading in *Curriculum 2.0*, and the Balanced Literacy Guides for Grades K–1 and 2–5. These were analyzed for their implementation of the ELA/Literacy Instructional Shifts: Regular practice with complex text and its academic language; reading, writing, and speaking grounded in evidence from text, both literary and informational; and building knowledge through content-rich nonfiction. This review was used primarily to understand to what extent the provided texts met the complexity expectations for the grade and how well the Common Tasks were specific to these texts and therefore able to support and lead students to a deep, rich, and complete understanding of texts chosen for instruction.

Phase 2: The phase 2 review consisted of a detailed review of the Reading and Writing curricular materials[1] from grades 1, 2, and 4. These grades were selected in conjunction with MCPS. Grade 1 was

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[1] Information Literacy was not included in the scope of the review and is not a part of this report.

selected as it provides an opportunity to understand how foundational skills are addressed. Similarly, reviewing grade 2 would also provide an opportunity to assess how foundational skills are further developed, with the addition of reading fluency. It also serves as an interim grade between grades 1 and 4 and was requested by MCPS. Grade 4 was also requested by MCPS to match the grades being reviewed within the parallel elementary mathematics review. The sampling plan focused on specific weeks across marking periods for grades 1, 2, and 4. For each week within the sampling plan, SAP executed a close reading of the Sample Learning Tasks provided in the Content Planner for Marking Period's weekly guidance for both Reading and Writing courses. Other key components of the curriculum were also reviewed: lists of Grade Level Core Book Lists, ESOL Resources and Materials, Grade level Subject Materials: Reading lists, Grade Level Marking Period Overview charts, Balanced Literacy Schedule Grades K-1, Balanced Literacy Schedule Grades 2–5, Grade 4 Writing Subject Overview, Writing – English Language Arts Grade 4 Indicators and Objectives by Marking Period and Weeks, Balanced Literacy schedules, Foundational Skills folder, Writing Workshop Professional Development modules, Strategies for Effective Writing handouts, Language and Vocabulary Resources.

To conduct the phase 2 review, the curricular materials were examined and evidence was collected corresponding to the criteria; see the *Grade-Level Evidence and Ratings* table (Appendix). The evidence gathered was used to determine the degree to which each individual metric was met.

Format of the Results:
The determination of alignment of the ELA elementary school instructional materials, *Curriculum 2.0*, to the Shifts and high-level features of the Maryland College and Career Ready Standards is based on the number of points obtained for both Non-Negotiables and Alignment Criteria. Because the grades reviewed fall into two separate grade bands (1st and 2nd grades: K–2 grade band; 4th grade: 3–5 grade band), there are two separate statements of alignment, which are supported by two separate *Grade-Level Evidence and Ratings* tables within the Appendix. Specifically, the following thresholds were used to determine overall alignment for all grades reviewed (1, 2 and 4):

Grades K-2

Alignment Determination	Component	Conditions	
		Required Non-Negotiable Alignment Criteria to Be Met	**Minimum Required Points on Alignment Criteria**
ALIGNED to the Shifts and high-level features of the Maryland College and Career Ready Standards when it meets all of the following conditions:	1. Foundational Skills	NN 4A, NN 4B, NN 4C	---
	2. Close Reading of Complex Text	NN 1A & NN 1B	3 out of 4
	3. Building of Academic Language	---	3 out of 4
	4. Volume of Reading to Build Knowledge	NN 3A & NN 1A	---
	5. Evidence-Based Discussions	---	3 out of 4
	6. Volume of Writing to Build Knowledge	NN 2B	5 out of 6
	7. Supporting All Students	---	4 out of 6

Grades K-2

Alignment Determination	Component	Conditions	
		Required Non-Negotiable Alignment Criteria to Be Met	Minimum Required Points on Alignment Criteria
APPROACHING ALIGNMENT to the Shifts and high-level features of the Maryland College and Career Ready Standards when it doesn't meet all of the conditions stated above for ALIGNED but meets all of the following conditions:	1. Foundational Skills	NN 4A, NN 4B, NN 4C	---
	2. Close Reading of Complex Text	NN 1A & NN 1B	2 out of 4
	3. Building of Academic Language	---	2 out of 4
	4. Volume of Reading to Build Knowledge	NN 3A & NN 1A	---
	5. Evidence-Based Discussions	---	2 out of 4
	6. Volume of Writing to Build Knowledge	NN 2B	4 out of 6
	7. Supporting All Students	---	3 out of 6

FAR FROM ALIGNED to the Shifts and high-level features of the Maryland College and Career Ready Standards when it does not meet the conditions for "Aligned" or "Approaching Alignment," as stated above.

Grades 3-5

Alignment Determination	Component	Conditions	
		Required Non-Negotiable Alignment Criteria to Be Met	Minimum Required Points on Alignment Criteria
ALIGNED to the Shifts and high level features of the Maryland College and Career Ready Standards when it meets all of the following conditions:	1. Close Reading of Complex Text	NN 1A & NN 1B	3 out of 4
	2. Building of Academic Language	---	3 out of 4
	3. Volume of Reading to Build Knowledge	NN 3A & NN 1A	---
	4. Evidence-Based Discussions	---	3 out of 4
	5. Volume of Writing to Build Knowledge	NN 2B	5 out of 6
	6. Foundational Skills/Fluency	---	3 out of 4
	7. Supporting All Students	---	4 out of 6

Grades 3-5

Alignment Determination	Component	Conditions	
		Required Non-Negotiable Alignment Criteria to Be Met	Minimum Required Points on Alignment Criteria
APPROACHING ALIGNMENT to the Shifts and high-level features of the Maryland College and Career Ready Standards when it doesn't meet all of the conditions stated above for ALIGNED but meets all of the following conditions:	1. Close Reading of Complex Text	NN 1A & NN 1B	2 out of 4
	2. Building of Academic Language	---	2 out of 4
	3. Volume of Reading to Build Knowledge	NN 3A & NN 1A	---
	4. Evidence-Based Discussions	---	2 out of 4
	5. Volume of Writing to Build Knowledge	NN 2B	4 out of 6
	6. Foundational Skills/Fluency	---	2 out of 4
	7. Supporting All Students	---	3 out of 6
FAR FROM ALIGNED to the Shifts and high-level features of the Maryland College and Career Ready Standards when it does not meet the conditions for "Aligned" or "Approaching Alignment," as stated above.			

Summary of Findings and Recommendations: ELA/Literacy (Elementary School)

The MCPS Elementary ELA curriculum (grades Kindergarten through 5th) is built around a series of instructional guides for Reading and Writing courses that provide suggested texts and associated tasks. This review is based on curricular materials from the myMCPS website, including the Sample Learning Tasks found for each Marking Period week available in the Content Planner for grades 1, 2, and 4 for both Reading and Writing courses and any ancillary materials referenced.

Based on the materials reviewed, the curriculum in Grades K–2 is far from aligned to the Shifts and high-level features of the Maryland College and Career Ready Standards: The Non-Negotiables required for alignment or approaching alignment were not met, and none of the thresholds for alignment or approaching alignment in the Alignment criteria were met. (A score breakdown is found in the Appendix.)

Based on the materials reviewed, the curriculum in Grades 3–5 is far from aligned to the Shifts and high-level features of the Maryland College and Career Ready Standards: The Non-Negotiables required for alignment or approaching alignment were not met, and none of the thresholds for alignment or approaching alignment in the Alignment Criteria were met. (A score breakdown is found in the Appendix).

While the materials articulate an intent to ensure that all students are exposed to high-quality learning experiences, the materials themselves fall far short of the expectations established by the Maryland College and Career Ready Standards. Without the clear articulation of complex texts that all students read to build knowledge, the clear articulation of Foundational Skills Instruction, and the use of high-quality text-specific questions and tasks, it will be very challenging for teachers and students to meet the expectations of the Maryland College and Career Ready Standards.

- Although the materials provide a list of suggested texts for each grade-level and within Sample Learning Tasks, they fail to identify which of these texts should be taught as anchor texts that are to be read carefully and deeply, or which might be supporting texts. The materials also do not provide adequate guidance on the complexity of the listed texts: Only some have a quantitative measure (and many of those are outside the grade band) and none have a qualitative measure. This lack of clarity on *what* specific texts might be taught and an analysis to *ensure* that these texts meet the complexity requirements set by the standards is a central fault of the materials and is the core cause of its weaknesses. Lacking a clear identification of complex text that is both appropriate for the grade-level and worthy of close study, there is insufficient evidence that students will engage in regular practice with complex text. Additionally, the lack of text identification *and* lack of complexity analysis or information makes it impossible to clearly articulate a staircase of text complexity required by the standards and other requirements of the standards, such as a series of high-quality text-specific questions, a systematic study of academic vocabulary, or evidence-based writing tasks or discussions that are connected to specific texts.
- Additionally, the materials provided very little specific resources and guidance to support reading instruction aligned to the CCSS. Without such guidance and support, it is unclear that all students will receive the variety of literary experiences necessary to achieve grade-level reading proficiency. These include reading grade level complex text, reading a volume of texts at a variety of complexity levels and receive small group instruction that responds to their

specific reading needs. In addition, collaborative conversations between students, writing centered on what students are reading and researching, and vocabulary and fluency work are critical components.

Among the **strengths:**
- The suggested texts in the Sample Learning Tasks and the grade-level Core Book Lists from which teachers can choose, represent a selection of some previously published texts and some classic text materials.

In several important ways, the materials examined fall short of meeting the criteria and all three instructional Shifts (complex text, evidence, and building knowledge). These **weaknesses** include:
- No assurance of regular practice with complex text in grades 2 and 4; and in grades 1 and 2, a lack of clearly identified read-aloud texts that are two to three years above grade-level complexity.
- No systematic support for the development of Foundational Skills, including fluency at grades 2 and 4.
- Expectations for the study or building of academic language are not accompanied with specific resources or directions for teachers
- With little to no guidance tied to teaching specific texts, there is no assurance that students across the district will engage in text-dependent questions and writing prompts matched to specific texts to support close reading, writing, and speaking grounded in evidence from text.
- Texts are not organized around conceptually-related topics or themes that allow students to build general knowledge about the world.

The following **recommendations** are offered as steps to bring the curricular materials into alignment with the Shifts and high-level features of the Maryland College and Career Ready Standards:
1. Identify a sequence of grade-level appropriate complex anchor and supporting texts that will be used by all teachers and students as the core of grade-level instruction. This should include:
    a. a robust text-selection process based on text-complexity analysis (quantitative and qualitative) and a quality analysis to determine that the anchor text is worth reading;
    b. the creation of a series or sets of texts organized by robust topics or concrete themes—preferably connected to the topic of the anchor text;
    c. a series of read-aloud texts that are two to three years above grade-level complexity for grades 1 and 2;
    d. the careful sequencing of anchor texts so a staircase of complexity is built from the beginning of the school year to the end.
2. Build in opportunities on a regular basis for *all* students to read text within the complexity grade band with regular support.
3. Articulate a systematic, sequential research-based grade-level Foundational Skills resources to support all students and provide intervention materials to support those falling behind.
4. Integrate robust and challenging *text-specific* questions, discussion tasks, and writing prompts that support students' deep analysis of selected texts and students' use of textual evidence to buttress their analysis.
5. Deeply integrate into the instructional materials a series of lessons and modules organized around quality topics or themes that span an entire school year so daily instruction and learning goals are clear to teachers.
6. Integrate a yearlong clearly articulated plan to develop students' academic language (both

vocabulary and syntax) that provides practice and learning both in and out of context. This plan must include specific academic vocabulary from provided texts.

7. Provide formative and summative assessments that inform teachers about the learning needs of students *and* provide clear recommendations for instructional change. These assessments must be text-specific (to a single text or a set).

8. Integrate clear supports, protocols, and a system for writing instruction that is embedded throughout the curricular materials that provide robust and specific lessons, tasks, etc.

It is evident that MCPS has adopted an approach in which teachers are asked to make local decisions and build their own lessons and units, but there are not sufficient resources in the current materials to support teachers to do so. The recommendations listed above are an exceptionally heavy lift and will take months if not years of sustained work to accomplish. Therefore, it is recommended that MCPS adopt high-quality instructional materials that already reflect the full demands of college- and career-readiness in ELA/literacy. Such a standards-aligned, high-quality curriculum should be completely articulated, previously vetted by authoritative sources, and highly aligned to the Shifts and high-level features of the Maryland College and Career Ready Standards. As a critical part of this adoption process, MCPS educators could use the IMET to evaluate curricular programs that are highly rated by external expert panels (e.g., EdReports) and determine which one(s) best reflects the needs of local students and schools. Instead of requiring each teacher to create his or her own lessons and accompanying supports, teachers need and deserve to be provided with materials that are aligned to the academic demands (and the research underlying them) so they can make principled and productive adaptations and devote their time to honing their instructional delivery of the materials. As one AFT educator put it: "Teachers should not be expected to be the composers of the music as well as the conductors of the orchestra.[2]"

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[2] http://www.aft.org/sites/default/files/periodicals/editorsnote_0.pdf

Detailed Findings and Recommendations

On the pages that follow, please find a narrative discussion of the findings and recommendations based on the review of the provided MCPS curricular materials for 1st, 2nd, and 4th Grade Reading and Writing courses. The discussion is organized according to each of the sections of the review tool. Each section header appears in a box, followed by a summary of findings and corresponding recommendations. More detailed information is included in the *Grade-Level Evidence and Ratings* (Appendix).

Foundational Skills/Fluency

High-Level Summary: Foundational Skills for Grades 1 and 2

Curriculum 2.0 does not include the necessary components to adequately address foundational skills. Missing from the materials are: a complete sequence of spelling/sound patterns; frequent assessments; a clear specific and concrete protocol to support students performing poorly on assessments; and abundant, easily implemented and accessed materials to provide additional support for students who need it. This lack of support and concrete protocols applies to fluency as well as letter/sound patterns. Though the materials do include valid suggestions regarding teaching fluency, no guidance is provided regarding how often to do this, how to assess using national norms, protocols to determine which students need more work in this area, or how and when that should be implemented. In both areas, no materials are present to support students in independent practice of these skills.

Findings:
- *Area for Improvement:* The only recommendation on dedicated time for foundational skills instruction calls for 10–15 minutes a day; this is not nearly enough time or practice opportunity for most students to master foundational skills. Specifically, there are no decodable readers for students to read that address the phonics patterns they are learning in the context of text. [3]
- *Area for Improvement:* Materials for foundational skills do not include more active approaches, such as movement, music, games, and puzzles that will engage students while providing adequate practice opportunities.
- *Area for Improvement:* Instructions and materials pay very little attention to spelling/sound

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[3] Decodable readers are books primary students use to practice the phonics skills (the phonetic codes) they have been taught. Using decodables has a solid research base (e.g., Ackerman, 1984; Bond & Dykstra, 1967; Chall, 1967; Hanson & Farrell, 1995, for a clear explanation of why see Adams in Hiebert 2008). Decodables are predictable texts that use multiple repetitions of phonetic patterns (i.e. the short 'a' vowel sound in a single-syllable words, "The fat cat sat on the hat."). These texts are designed for students to read independently (or with slight prompting and support). A child at the beginning stages of reading who has learned the short vowel sounds needs opportunity and practice to decode simple words like hat, bed, and pig. Decodables, with their "predictable texts," provide multiple repetitions so students can use correct phonological processing and practice decoding correctly. Decodables are different from other texts (leveled texts, complex texts, etc.), as these other texts do not follow a predictable decodable pattern. Decodables have an especially important place in K-1 instruction as students begin to learn and practice decoding; the child who has just learned the short "a" vowel sound and is ready to decode simple words like "hat", "bat", or "cat" is not yet ready to decode words like "see" and "owl "that might appear in less predictable or more complex text. However, because decodables have this specific use, they therefore are not the *only* texts K-1 students read; primary students must also be exposed to the range and volume of text required by the standards. SAP has protocols for how decodables should be used as does any of the good programs now out there.

patterns in general and do not include a complete sequence of spelling/sound patterns; the sequence provided in the Fountas and Pinnell and Words Their Way programs are incomplete and do not qualify as a systematic, explicit, research-based foundational skills program at any grade. Words Their Way is a suitable program to use in building out of context phonics and word recognition skills, however, for students in grades 3-5 with strong foundational skills.

- *Area for Improvement:* Although research-based methods to improve fluency are mentioned, there is no guidance for teachers indicating how often to address fluency nor how to assess fluency using national norms.
- *Area for Improvement:* Fluency instruction occurs only with texts at students' current reading levels, despite the standards expectation that students must be fluent with grade-level texts.
- *Area for Improvement:* Frequent assessments are not provided to measure progress with foundational skills and/or fluency, nor is a protocol to address students who need more work, allowing phonics instruction to be appropriately differentiated.

Recommendations:
1. ***Adopt a systematic, explicit, research-based foundational skills program,*** *for example a research-based foundational skills program available as part of a core K–5 reading program, or a research-based stand-alone phonics program.* Having a systematic, explicit, research-based foundational skills program is essential to ensure all MCPS students learn to read, and read well, by grade 3. If students don't learn to read well so they can access complex texts and ideas for themselves, they will read less in general, extending the performance gap between students who are comfortable readers and those who are not.
2. ***Ensure instructional guidance contains clear protocols for addressing Reading Fluency.*** This guidance should provide clear direction for teachers to make reading fluency with grade-level texts (starting in 2nd grade) a regular part of their instructional routine.

High-Level Summary: Foundational Skills/Fluency for Grade 4
Because the instructional materials fail to provide clear anchor or supporting texts and specific corresponding fluency support materials, there is no evidence that all MCPS students will engage in the range and volume of reading necessary to ensure they achieve grade-level reading fluency in either oral or silent reading.

Findings:
- *Area for Improvement:* There is no clear required range of reading, volume of reading, or fluency support materials.
- *Area for Improvement:* There is no evidence of regular practice with or any assessment of oral or silent reading fluency.
- *Area for Improvement:* No guidance is provided to ensure students practice reading grade-level prose and poetry with appropriate accuracy, rate, and expression.

Recommendations:
1. ***When selecting anchor and supporting texts for each grade, be sure materials include opportunities for both fluency practice and a range and volume of reading for students.*** Doing so ensures that teachers and students will work on appropriate and necessary foundational skills during instruction.
2. ***Revise materials to make explicit the expectation that students be provided regular practice with oral and silent reading to build fluency with grade-level complex text; provide specific***

guidance to teachers about how to engage students in practice with both oral and silent reading. This ensures a clear protocol and practice for building grade-level silent and oral reading fluency (appropriate accuracy, rate, and expression).

3. *Include assessment materials for fluency that use grade-level texts.* This provides teachers with regular feedback on students' fluency levels at the expected reading level set by the standards.

4. *In the upper elementary grades, consider developing or adopting a research-based Tier 2 fluency intervention program designed to enhance fluency and address foundational skill deficiencies in later grades.* This ensures that students who are performing below grade-level are appropriately supported in building the fluency and foundational reading proficiency required by their grade-level.

Close Reading of Complex Text

High-Level Summary: Close Reading of Complex Text

The curricular materials for grades 1, 2, and 4 suggest texts teachers might use through a "Core Book List" for every grade-level. However, the materials do not specifically define any of these texts as anchor texts. There can be no confidence that across the district, or even across a school, there is a shared standards-aligned curriculum without designated anchor texts. The standards demand close reading of complex, quality texts, which means that lessons have to deeply and precisely explicate how to instruct with those texts. As things stand, each teacher must do this for himself or herself. MCPS cannot be assured that students across the district are receiving instruction to support them in reaching grade-level expectations.

Moreover, the evidence suggests that most texts on the list have not been selected according to grade-level complexity measures of the MCCRS, and instead Fountas and Pinnell levels (never recalibrated to prepare students for college and career level reading) were used to select suggested text for Curriculum 2.0. Fountas and Pinnell levels do not reflect the levels of text complexity outlined by the MCCRS[4]. For example, in grade 4, only half of the 188 texts have a quantitative score (a Lexile), and of those, more than half (51 out of 96) are below the complexity grade band (a few are above). None have been through a qualitative review.

The curricular materials also do not provide any high- quality sequences of text-specific questions, tasks, or lessons that correspond to the listed core texts. Again, the lack of anchor texts makes that impossible. The curricular materials do provide some text-dependent questions[5] but they are generic and repeated from text to text. None of these questions are tailored to support students in understanding the particulars of each text. There are but scant few tasks that support students' deep analysis of the core

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[4] See https://www.readinga-z.com/updates/raz_correlation_chart.pdf for correlation between Fountas and Pinnell and Lexile levels.

[5] Text-dependent questions are those that require use of evidence from text; they push students to rely solely on the text for insight and analysis, they must be traceable "back to the text," and they rely on the language and mechanics of the text itself rather than personal experience or opinion. Examples include: What is the author's message in the text?, What is the main idea of the passage?, What details can you find that support the main idea?. Text-specific questions are a subset of text-dependent questions. These questions probe the specifics of the text and avoid "canned" questions that could be asked of any text and can only be applied to one specific text. Examples include, Why does Monk ask this question, "Which 'We the People' has 'troubled the nation'?"?, Why does Monk claim that popular sovereignty is the form of government in America?, What evidence is there in paragraph three regarding Marshall's claim about the "evolving nature of the constitution"?

texts listed. Several of the example lessons and common tasks provided in the materials do not require the use of listed core texts or any text at all. The tasks in the Writing instructional materials are not clearly tied to those in the Reading instructional materials; they are not based on carefully selected and reviewed texts.

Findings:

- *Strength:* Many of the listed Core Texts for Grades 1, 2, and 4 are of publishable quality and many are classic texts enjoyed by students of these ages.
- *Area for Improvement:* Texts in the Sample Learning Tasks are only listed as suggestions. No guidance is provided on which texts might be anchor texts and which might constitute a series of texts connected to them to build knowledge on a topic (or theme).
- *Area for Improvement:* Teachers may select any text from the grade-level Core Book List, and those could easily include texts that may not be grade-level complex. (See below for complexity information on suggested texts.)
- *Area for Improvement:* It is often unclear in the Sample Learning Tasks which of the suggested texts are read-alouds and which are designated for independent reading. It should be made abundantly clear which texts are used for read-aloud in K–2 and which ones are for students to read themselves. In addition, it also should be made clear that texts read-aloud need to be at least 2–3 years above students' grade-level.
- *Area for Improvement:* The materials do not provide high-quality sequences of text-dependent questions; there are no exemplar close reading lessons, questions, or tasks dependent on specific core anchor texts provided for use by teachers (no examples of close reading of Core Books are provided).
- *Area for Improvement:* Grade-level Core Book lists and Sample Learning Task suggested texts are not clearly connected to conceptually related topics or themes (other than text genre or vague concepts).
- *Area for Improvement:* Text complexity data is incomplete. Quantitative data is provided for only a subset of texts on the recommended lists. No qualitative analysis of any type is provided for any listed text. As teachers make their selections, they need to understand the quantitative dimensions of complexity (vocabulary, length of sentences, text cohesion) and qualitative elements of complexity (language, structure, meaning/purpose and knowledge demands) of each text for both proper text sequencing and instruction. Currently, in second grade, out of 225 texts, only 119 have Lexile levels. Of those 119, 54 are on grade-level, 36 are above grade-level and 29 are below. In 4th grade, out of 188 texts, only 96 have Lexile levels. Of those 96, 39 are at grade-level, 51 are below grade-level, and 6 are above grade-level. Providing students with regular opportunities to access complex texts is demanded by the standards, but more important, it is key to preparing students for college and careers.
- *Area for Improvement:* Texts listed do not provide a balance of literature and informational text (made potentially more severe by lack of identification of anchor and support texts). In other words, teachers could select only literature for their students to read.
- *Area for Improvement*: Culminating tasks in Reading and Writing courses are not always apparent, and of those that are, they are not specific to any given text or text set.

Recommendations:

1. ***Select anchor texts according to grade-level standards for complexity and sequence these texts throughout the year to build a clear staircase of complexity.*** Naming anchor texts that are aligned to complexity expectations ensures that the instructional materials are centered

around high-quality grade-level complex texts as called for by the standards. Ensuring a staircase of text complexity also supports all students to meet the expectations of Reading Standard 10 by the end of the year. Being able to read complex text critically with understanding and insight is essential for confidence throughout school and to successfully navigate modern life, college, and the workplace. In K and grade 1, these complex texts are read-alouds and years above what students can read independently; in grade 2, complex texts should include a mix of read-alouds and texts read by students. In grade 3 most texts should be read by students, though texts well above the band can also be read-aloud.

2. ***Select supporting texts connected to the anchor texts that clearly reflect topics or concrete themes and provide a balance of literature and informational texts.*** Such series of texts supports teachers and students to build knowledge of important topics and engage in a volume of reading that spans a range of complexities. Students are more interested and learn more when they can stick with a topic that is of interest to them for a while. It is essential to provide opportunities for students to hear high-quality texts read-aloud, and for teachers to choose texts that stay on a topic so students can accelerate their knowledge and vocabulary growth.

3. ***Develop sequences of high-quality, standards-based, text-specific questions for each named anchor text.*** Learning to read closely and carefully takes time and focus. It is important to move beyond professional learning materials and provide teachers with a series of high-quality questions tied to specific anchor texts to ensure that students conduct careful analyses of texts and regularly dive deeply into texts to build a full understanding of their central ideas, key details, craft, and structure.

4. ***Develop culminating tasks that are specific for each anchor text and its accompanying set of supporting texts.*** Such culminating tasks provide students with the practice they need to develop *and* demonstrate learning of what is most essential in the text(s) and address multiple grade-level standards.

Building Academic Language

High-Level Summary: Building Academic Language

Though the instructional materials available in the Content Planner provide occasional lists of activities that are intended to build academic vocabulary for English Language Learners and word lists for each grade-level, these resources fall far short of providing strategic supports for building students' academic language. There are no clear opportunities, plans, or resources provided in the instructional materials for the building of students' academic language in regular instruction. The lack of a coherent selection of texts across the grade-level translates into a lost opportunity for the curricular materials to provide systematic work with building vocabulary in context. Additionally, there is no systematic plan provided for students to build academic vocabulary in context (or out of context) and no questions or tasks that support students' understanding of academic language in complex text.

Findings:

- *Area for Improvement:* There is no clear text or series of text selected for use in class (organized around conceptually related topics or themes) that could build knowledge and vocabulary. Additionally, the listed texts are not organized into any topics or themes and do not provide detail on any text's central messages, themes, or knowledge contained within.
- *Area for Improvement:* There is no cohesive yearlong plan for students to interact with and build vocabulary.

- *Area for Improvement:* No words are chosen for careful study from texts on the provided Core Book Lists.
- *Area for Improvement:* No text-specific questions or tasks that support systematic work with vocabulary in context are provided.
- *Area for Improvement:* No out of context systematic work with vocabulary or syntax is provided.

Recommendations:
1. ***Ensure that selected texts are organized around a variety of conceptually related topics appropriate for the grade-level.*** This supports reading, writing, and speaking tasks that build knowledge and vocabulary. Strategically organizing texts into such discrete topics provides the conditions needed for students to build robust knowledge and large vocabularies quickly and efficiently.
2. ***Develop a cohesive yearlong plan for students to work with and build a robust and sophisticated academic vocabulary. This plan should include both in-context tasks (text-specific questions, text-specific discussion tasks, etc.) and out-of-context tasks (games, exercises, strategies, etc.).*** Such a plan ensures that students learn, work with, and use complex academic vocabulary that supports their building of knowledge, reading comprehension, writing, and speaking in academic settings.
3. ***Select specific words to study in context from anchor and supporting texts. Be clear about which words should be highlighted from any given text, including which merit more time and attention and which merit less and why they merit these differences.*** Doing so supports teachers' strategic focus on important words and helps to ensure that all students are building a robust and worthwhile vocabulary.
4. ***Craft questions and tasks that focus on high-value words in context that merit more time and attention. These should be provided for each selected anchor and supporting texts.*** Including such tasks in instructional materials supports an already-articulated cohesive vocabulary development plan with specific opportunities for all students to build their knowledge and vocabulary base.

Volume of Reading to Build Knowledge

High-Level Summary: Volume of Reading to Build Knowledge
The curricular materials do not support students to build knowledge on clearly articulated topics. Text genre is the only guidance provided in the instructional materials and genre does not constitute topics or themes. Much of the genre selection is done in the service of strategy-based instruction (as opposed to content-based instruction). For the suggested genres, there is no clear articulation of the significance or meaning these texts contain nor what distinct knowledge might be born from a close study of any of the texts.

Findings:
- *Area for Improvement:* Though some books appear to be on similar topics, there is no series of texts provided that organizes texts around conceptually related topics or themes to build knowledge through reading, writing, speaking or listening.
- *Area for Improvement:* There is no evidence that texts are organized to provide students experience with texts from a variety of complexity levels in order to build knowledge, or organized so that access to more complex texts (and the knowledge and ideas therein) are

supported by the reading of less complex texts.

Recommendations:
1. ***Ensure that a series of texts build knowledge by organizing selected texts around conceptually related topics or themes.*** This not only allows for students to build knowledge through the careful reading of a clear sequence of materials, but also allows enough time for such knowledge and vocabulary to grow. Building knowledge is a known research-based accelerator for literacy gains for all students. Rather than just "accessing students' background knowledge," it is critical to find concrete ways to build student's general knowledge through what we do with students in school. Increasing knowledge also increases vocabulary, since words are the names we use to talk about what we know. Increasing students' banks of words and knowledge accelerates students' comprehension growth.
2. ***Select texts for independent reading that are clearly connected to anchor texts and support access to complex anchor texts.*** Providing students regular opportunities to read on a topic of interest to them is a well-researched pathway to improving reading, so is making opportunities for students to independently read texts that are supportive of learning more about the topics introduced in the complex anchor texts.
3. ***Provide clear accountability for independent reading.*** This ensures that students will consistently engage in reading independently and that teachers can keep track of who is reading what.

Evidence-Based Discussions

High-Level Summary: Evidence-Based Discussions
The materials regularly state that discussion is important and regularly provide opportunities for students to engage in discussion. However, the materials do not provide multiple protocols for extended discussion, text-specific tasks, lessons, or plans that engage students in evidence-based discussions that systematically build their speaking and listening skills.

Findings:
- *Strength:* The Sample Learning Tasks and Balanced Literacy Schedules regularly state that students must engage in small and large group discussions.
- *Strength:* The materials provide professional learning resources, pedagogical tools, and text-agnostic strategies to support teachers in creating some discussion tasks.
- *Area for Improvement:* There are few discussion tasks that are connected to any specific text because there is no identification of anchor or supporting texts.
- *Area for Improvement:* There are few extensive and text-based opportunities to integrate speaking and listening into reading and/or writing lessons.
- *Area for Improvement:* The materials do not provide a plan for or activities that support the use of academic language in students' speech.

Recommendations:
1. ***Develop a series of discussion tasks that are specific to selected text(s).*** Such development helps teachers move beyond the professional learning materials to regularly engage all students in high-quality speaking and listening tasks clearly connected to selected text(s).
2. ***Create lessons specific to a text or series of texts that integrate short and extensive speaking***

and listening tasks alongside reading and/or writing. Designing lessons with such integrated literacy not only aligns with the Instructional Shifts, but also allows students to authentically meet multiple standards.

3. ***Include clear protocols and robust discussion structures with the text-specific speaking tasks.*** This ensures that students' speaking and listening skills grow throughout the year and that student discussions allow not only for the sharing of findings but also for students to build on one another's ideas.

Volume of Writing to Build Knowledge

High-Level Summary: Volume of Writing to Build Knowledge
The listed Sample Learning Tasks in both Reading and Writing courses are rarely specific to any single text, set of texts, topic, or clear theme. Without a clear connection between writing tasks and texts, there is no assurance that all students will write in a variety of ways in order to build knowledge of topics or themes.

Findings:
- *Strength:* The instructional materials provide writing opportunities for various genre types (informational, argumentative, narrative).
- *Area for Improvement:* Writing tasks are largely skills or process based, rather than based on clear topics and texts.
- *Area for Improvement:* Writing tasks are not connected to any specific text and so do not clearly support careful analysis, claims, or information about a given text.
- *Area for Improvement:* There are few concrete opportunities for students to engage in short- or long-term grade-level research projects.
- *Area for Improvement:* The instructional materials include few lessons or tasks that provide explicit instruction on the fundamentals of writing.
- *Area for Improvement:* The instructional materials did not make a distinction between on-demand and process writing.

Recommendations:
1. ***Develop writing tasks that are connected to specific texts.*** This allows students to develop and demonstrate careful analysis, claims about, or information from a given text. The ability to find, evaluate, and present evidence is a critical skill in college- and career-readiness standards. Providing lots of practice, and a variety of ways to help students strengthen the 'evidence-seeking muscle' is important to include for every literacy lesson.
2. ***Provide concrete opportunities for students to engage in short- and long-term research projects that develop or extend topics and themes under study.*** This ensures that the materials help students meet the standards' expectations for research and support students to further develop concrete knowledge of course topics and themes.
3. ***Create lessons and tasks that include explicit instruction on the fundamentals of writing as well as instruction on grammar and conventions. These lessons and tasks should be provided both in and out of context.*** Writing is complicated and students need lots of practice and instruction. Such opportunities support teachers and students to engage in a yearlong pursuit of the craft of writing. In context instruction ensures exemplars are used from provided texts.
4. ***Provide clear opportunities for both on-demand and process writing.*** This means that

students will engage in a regular cycle that provides a variety of writing activities to prepare them for the authentic writing tasks required by colleges and careers.

Supporting All Students

High-Level Summary: Supporting All Students
The instructional materials provide some general guidance for teachers to help all students meet grade-level standards, but these supports are not sufficiently robust. A variety of tools ancillary to the instructional materials (texts or tasks) are provided through the myMCPS website, however, these tools are disjointed from the instructional materials and so do not provide regular instructional supports that will ensure all students meet grade-level standards.

Findings:

- *Strength:* Teachers and students can reasonably complete the common tasks in the Curriculum Guide in a school year.
- *Area for Improvement:* Although the materials include a variety of guidance resources for English language instruction (planning documents, assessment design guidelines, language structures, professional learning resources, etc.), there is no clearly articulated system, protocol, supports, or time provided specific to the instructional materials (texts or tasks) for students reading below grade-level or whose language is other than English.
- *Area for Improvement:* There are no clear assessments for grade-level performance found in the curricular materials.
- *Area for Improvement:* No recommendations are provided for addressing the results of assessments.

Recommendations:
1. ***Integrate a systematic structure to provide the resources, time, and supports for students below grade-level and English Language Learners. This structure should move beyond the isolated ELL supports and professional learning materials currently included to provide teachers and students with text and lesson specific opportunities for strategic and appropriate support.*** This ensures the materials regularly provide the opportunity for all students to work with and meet grade-level standards, including regular access to grade-level complex texts.
2. ***Supply a systematic assessment that accurately measures grade-level reading and writing proficiency and provides recommendations on how to address results.*** A clear assessment system (such as interims) aligned with high-quality instructional materials would support teachers to provide the appropriate interventions, adjustments to instruction, and extended supports to meet the needs of students as they arise throughout the school year.

Appendix: Grade-Level Evidence and Ratings

Grade-Level Evidence and Ratings: Grades 1 & 2

Section	# of Non-Negotiables Met	Does This Section Meet All Non-Negotiables?	Alignment Criteria Points
1. Foundational Skills	0/4	☐ YES ☒ NO	
2. Close Reading of Complex Text	0/2	☐ YES ☒ NO	0/4
3. Building Academic Language	0/1	☐ YES ☒ NO	0/4
4. Volume of Reading to Build Knowledge	0/3	☐ YES ☒ NO	
5. Evidence-Based Discussions	1/1	☒ YES ☐ NO	1/4
6. Volume of Writing to Build Knowledge	0/1	☐ YES ☒ NO	2/6
7. Supporting All Students			1/6

| 1. Foundational Skills |||| |

IMET Metric	Guiding Questions	Evidence	Score
NN 4A Materials address grade-level CCSS for foundational skills by providing instruction in concepts of print, letter recognition, phonemic awareness, phonics, word awareness, vocabulary development, syntax, and reading fluency in a research-based and transparent progression in each grade level.	Do the materials include evidence of *systematic, explicit research-based and differentiated phonics and fluency instruction* that: - Addresses grade-level standards? - Consists of at least 45 minutes/day? - Emphasizes fluency instruction (grades 2–3) - Includes instruction in regular and irregular high-frequency words?	The Sample Learning Tasks found in the Content Planner for Reading courses in grades 1 and 2 do not include systematic, explicit, research-based, and differentiated phonics instruction. Though foundational skills are addressed in various Sample Learning Tasks, this guidance is presented as "examples of how to teach foundational skills indicators" and not a systematic progression of instruction or resources. The Sample Learning Tasks do not regularly mention or provide resources for phonemic awareness, phonics, or fluency in these weekly instructional materials. In addition, there is no mention of a sequence that teachers should follow, nor could we find any mention of how additional practice opportunities are provided (either independent or otherwise) for those students who need more time and attention. Furthermore, it is not clear that the close relationship between decoding and encoding (writing and reading) is utilized anywhere in this program. An example of the Sample Learning Task that targets foundational skills: "Recognize the spelling-sound correspondences for common consonant digraphs: /*sh*/ - Revisit a book such as *Math-terpiecs* [sic] *The Art of Problem-Solving* and guide students in identifying words that have /*sh*/ in them. Engage students in listening to the poem "Dancing Shoes" and identifying the /*sh*/ digraph in the word *shoes*. Read the titles of other poems in the book (i.e., "April Showers," "Go Fish") and instruct students to listen for words with /*sh*/ in them and indicate when they hear the sound by giving a thumbs-up, clap, or other sign. Guide students in identifying the /*sh*/ words and creating a class graphic organizer (e.g., three-column chart) in which they match the sound to the letters *sh* and determine if the sound is in the beginning, middle, or end of the words. Allow time for students to brainstorm other words with /*sh*/ in them that can be added to the	☐ Meets ☒ Does Not Meet

1. Foundational Skills			
IMET Metric	**Guiding Questions**	**Evidence**	**Score**
		graphic organizer. Ask: How does identifying /*sh*/ in words help you learn to read and write?"	
		Linked under grade-level "Subject Materials — Reading" in the Content Planner is a "Reading Toolkit Grade K, 1, 2". Within this Reading Toolkit is a link for the "Foundational Skills" page. This page is a list of resources intended to target Foundational skills instruction. These resources are not referenced in the Sample Learning Tasks. The resources include the following titles: "A Bridge from Spoken to Written Words," "Fluency," "Foundational Skills and Word Study," 'Suggestions for Teaching High Frequency Words." This list of resources does not create a research-based and transparent progression in each grade-level. None of these resources provide guidance on how much time to spend on any given portion of foundational skills development. Furthermore, the same resources are provided for 1st and 2nd grades (no different resources to attend to different grade-level foundational skills).	
		The foundational skills document "Suggestions for Teaching High Frequency Words" provides adequate general guidance as to how to approach high-frequency words, but nothing about how much time to spend on these words, how to select these words, or how to assess these words.	
		The district recommends an early version of the Fountas and Pinnell program, which was written prior to the publication of the MCCRS and so does not fully address the MCCR foundational skills standards. The program does not mention how much time should be devoted to foundational skills, so it is unlikely that students will receive 45 minutes of foundational skills instruction each day, as is recommended by research underlying the standards.	
		From the review of curricular materials, it is unclear when or where grade-level fluency is either addressed instructionally or assessed by teachers. A rubric for	

1. Foundational Skills			
IMET Metric	**Guiding Questions**	**Evidence**	**Score**
		evaluating fluency from the NAEP 2005 work is recommended, although no references are made to more recent and practical work, for example by Tim Rasinski and David Paige. Additionally, a good number of fluency techniques are referenced briefly (on the document titled "Fluency" linked on the "Reading Toolkit: Foundational Skills"), however, there is no mention of how often to do this, which methods provide more support and which less, how these can be integrated into any texts, and most importantly that this should be done with grade-level as opposed to instructional level text.	
NN 4B Materials include a variety of student reading material and activities that allows for systematic, regular, and frequent practice of all foundational skills. **NN 4E (grades 2-3 only)** Materials provide opportunities for students to engage in a range and volume of reading to achieve reading fluency of grade-level text as required by the Foundational Skills Standards.	Do the materials include evidence of providing students with *abundant practice materials* to achieve phonics skills (K–2) and grade-level reading fluency (by the end of grade 3) that: - Are easily accessible? - Include a liberal dose of techniques that incorporate movement, music, games, puzzles, and performances? - Can be used by students independently and with support?	The Sample Learning Tasks found in the Content Planner for Reading courses in grades 1 and 2 do not provide practice materials to achieve phonics skills and grade-level fluency. Materials linked on the "Foundational Skills" page include a number of teacher-facing materials, such as "Eight Ways of Working with Letters" and "Verbal Path for the Formation of Letters," but few materials are intended directly for students' use (beyond Elkonin boxes, and alphabet charts) and none provide students with abundant practice materials to achieve any foundational skills (including fluency). The fluency materials included in the "Fluency Portfolio" contain a good description of what fluency is, how to teach it, and examples of stand-alone fluency lessons. However, the "Fluency Portfolio" does not indicate how these lessons might be integrated into regular instruction to provide students with abundant practice or how and when to assess and which students to assess. Additionally, instruction is done with texts at students' level rather than grade-level texts**.** The Fountas and Pinnell program does not include enough techniques incorporating movement, music, games, puzzles, or performances. There are no materials for students to practice foundational skills independently. Nor is it clear how these should be	☐ Meets ☒ Does Not Meet

1. Foundational Skills			
IMET Metric	**Guiding Questions**	**Evidence**	**Score**
		assessed, and how the results of these assessments should be used. Words Their Way is not a complete phonics program and does not meet the criteria in two ways. One, the program does not include the reading of any texts and so students do not get to practice decoding in the context of reading. Thus, as Marilyn Adams points out in *Beginning to Read* and in Hiebert and Sailors [2008], the students never read the words they are studying. Second, the program does not include any independent practice of discrete skills for students to get differentiated practice. All instruction is done as small group work.	
NN 4D Materials guide students to read with purpose and understanding and to make frequent connections between acquisition of foundational skills and making meaning from reading.	Do the materials provide work with *decodables* (especially in K and grade 1) as well as other readers that address: - Phonics - Making meaning from reading	Neither the Sample Learning Tasks nor the resources linked on the "Foundational Skills" page provide decodables or other readers to address phonics or making meaning from reading. There is no mention of decodables in the materials. It is unclear if all foundational skill work is done with leveled readers or the suggested texts in the Sample Learning Tasks and Core Books listed for each grade-level. However, none of these text sources would be sufficient for supporting foundational skills. Leveled texts are insufficient because they approach word recognition predominantly by use of context, repetition, and prediction as opposed to attention to the spelling/sound patterns within words. The Sample Learning Tasks do not include frequent opportunities to connect the acquisition of foundational skills and making meaning from reading, so using Sample Learning Task books or others from the Core Book lists will not sufficiently support foundational skills.	☐ Meets ☒ Does Not Meet

1. Foundational Skills

IMET Metric	Guiding Questions	Evidence	Score
NN 4C Materials provide clear, well-structured diagnostic assessment protocols and materials for all foundational skills to guide instruction and remediation.	Do the materials include *weekly foundational skills' assessments* that include: - Weekly phonics and high-frequency word assessments (K–2)? - Fluency assessments, including prosody, that use nationally verified norms (grades 2–3)? - Clear, concrete, and specific protocols to address what to do with students who perform poorly?	There was no evidence of weekly foundational skills' assessments or guidance to support students who are struggling with foundational skills. The Content Planners for Reading courses in 1st and 2nd grades includes resources under the headings "Assessing Instructional Reading Level." These resources detail level reading targets by month and fluency scales for instructional reading. However, none of these resources include actual assessments for high-frequency words, fluency scores *other than* Fountas and Pinnell lettered levels, or protocols to address students who perform poorly. There are two additional resources addressing how to assess fluency ("Fluency Scales" and "Checklist of Assessing Fluency"), however these also do not address the complexity level of the text, there are no instructions as to how often this should be done or with which students, directions for the teacher are somewhat minimal, and there is no reference whatsoever to how many words correct per minute (WCPM) students should be reading based on national norms [Hasbrouck and Tindal (2006)]. The instructional materials (Sample Learning Tasks, supporting links in the Content Planner) do not indicate how often foundational skills or vocabulary and comprehension are assessed and how the results of these assessments should be employed.	☐ Meets ☒ Does Not Meet
Rating (Foundational Skills):		**Non-Negotiables**	
		Are All NNs Met? ☐ Yes ☒ No	

2. Close Reading of Complex Text

IMET Metric	Guiding Questions	Evidence	Score
NN 1A Texts intended for reading aloud are rich and above students' current reading abilities. Anchor texts in grade 3 materials have the appropriate level of complexity for the grade as defined by the standards, according to quantitative and qualitative analysis. (Texts that are part of a series or chosen to build knowledge or for independent student reading should vary in complexity levels.)	Do the materials include evidence of *regular practice with high-quality, grade-level complex anchor texts* (including read-alouds) as defined by: - Quantitative analyses? - Detailed qualitative analyses? (In K and grade 1, these texts are read-aloud; In grade 2, it includes a mix of read-aloud and texts read by students. In grade 3 most texts should be read by students, texts well above the band can be read-aloud.)	There is little evidence in the instructional materials of regular practice with high-quality, grade-level complex text as defined by the standards. Teachers are expected to select books from the grade 1 and grade 2 "Core Book List" provided by the district. However, the information that would be needed in order to determine that the books are at the appropriate level of complexity is incomplete. Specifically, Lexile levels are not provided for approximately half of the listed books. In first grade, out of 116 texts, 73 have Lexile levels. Of those, 44 are on grade-level, 7 are below and 22 are above. In second grade, out of 225 texts, only 119 have Lexile levels. Of those 119, 54 are on grade-level, 36 are above grade-level and 29 are below. Qualitative analyses are completely absent from the materials. Without *both* quantitative and qualitative analysis for *all* texts, it is impossible to determine if the suggested texts meet the complexity expectations set by the standards. In addition, there are scant instructions as to how often texts are read-aloud in K–2. There are few indications whether Sample Learning Task suggested texts are for read-alouds, read to self, or otherwise. Making things more unclear is the fact that the Content Planner includes a link to grade 1 and grade 2 "Subject Materials: Reading", which lists a "Balanced Literacy Schedule" for grades K–1 and 2–5 that is not referenced in the Sample Learning Tasks. These schedules provide generic outlines for "Whole Group Instruction," "Small Group Instruction," and "Independent Application of Skills and Strategies"; but because they are not integrated into the Sample Learning Tasks, it is very unclear what texts are to be used for any given portion of the "Balanced Literacy Schedule" (guided reading, read-alouds, independent reading, etc.). Furthermore, these "Balanced Literacy Schedules" and the Sample Learning Tasks do not mention or make clear whether or when students are regularly reading grade-level texts as required by the MCCRS. It is important to note that the standards provide no complexity requirements for what students read themselves in K and 1. However, text read-aloud to students should be at least 2-3 years above grade-level. This is important information to understand, and it is not made clear in the materials provided to teachers.	☐ Meets ☒ Does Not Meet

Note: Bold font indicates the portion of the metric being reviewed in this section (e.g. Close Reading of Complex Text).

2. Close Reading of Complex Text

IMET Metric	Guiding Questions	Evidence	Score
NN 1B Anchor texts (including those selected for reading aloud) in the materials are of publishable quality and worthy of especially careful reading; they include a mix of informational texts and literature.	Do the materials include evidence of *anchor texts* (including read-alouds) that are: - Worthy of especially careful reading and of publishable quality? - The right balance of literature and informational texts? - Connected mostly to topics or themes under study?	There is no clear indication in the instructional materials what texts are considered anchor texts that all students will read. The materials do provide book suggestions and genre parameters in the weekly Sample Learning Tasks and additional texts are listed in the "Grade 1 Core Book List" or "Grade 2 Core Book List." However, it is not clear in the instructional materials to what extent teachers should use these texts and to what extent teachers are free to choose and/or design their own. For example: Grade 1, Marking Period 1, Week 1: - "Text Type: narrative - Text Example: _This Is the Way We Go to School: A Book About Children Around the World_, by Edit Baer - Comprehension Strategies: Questioning, Self-Monitoring, Determining importance, Activate prior knowledge - Notes to Teacher: …This book is also used in grade 1 Social Studies, MP3, Week 9. Other texts that may be used for this task are _The Very Hungry Caterpillar_ by Eric Carle, _The Important Book_ by Margaret Wise Brown, or _Two Bad Ants_ by Chris Van Allsburg." Grade 1, Marking Period 3, Week 5: - "Text Type: Informational - Text Example: _The Statue of Liberty: A Gift From France_ by Carol Talley - Comprehension Strategies: Determining importance, Synthesis, Inferring - Notes to Teacher: Other resources that may be used for this task are Statue of Liberty and The Statue of Liberty from Discovery Education. _The Statue of Liberty_ by Mary Firestone and _Signs, Songs, and Symbols of America_ by Alma Ransford may be used for highly able readers." Grade 2, Marking Period 4, Week 8 - "Text Type: Informational - Text Example: _Snowflake Bentley_ by Jacqueline Briggs Martin - Comprehension Strategies: Determining importance, Synthesis, Self-monitoring - Resource: Information Equation - Note to Teacher: Another text that may be used for this task is _Ellen Ochoa_ by Elizabeth D. Jaffe."	☐ Meets ☒ Does Not Meet

2. Close Reading of Complex Text			
IMET Metric ➡	**Guiding Questions**	**Evidence**	**Score**
		The grade 1 and grade 2 "Core Book Lists" do include a substantial number of well-known, high-quality works. Examples for grade 1 include: - *Caps for Sale* by Esphyr Slobodkina - *Chrysanthemum* and *Julius the Baby of the World* by Kevin Henkes. Examples for grade 2 include: - *Alexander and the Terrible, Horrible, No Good, Very Bad Day* by Judith Viorst - *Amazing Grace* by Mary Hoffman - *The Keeping Quilt* by Patricia Polacco - *This Is the Way We Go to School* by Edith Baer. It is unclear if the suggested texts represent the 50/50 balance of literature and informational text required by the standards. Without the clear identification of anchor and supporting texts (required texts all students will read), ensuring a proper balance of informational to literature text is nearly impossible. The materials make no explicit mention of such a balance, and the suggested texts do not represent such a balance. Moreover, the texts listed in the "Grade 1 Core Book List" and "Grade 2 Core Book List" do not represent a clear balance of text type. For grade 1, of the 134 texts listed, only 30 are a form of nonfiction (identified as "biography," "informational," and "literary nonfiction" on the list). For grade 2, of 224 texts listed, 100 are a form of nonfiction (identified as "biography," "informational," and "literary nonfiction" on the list). The suggested texts are not clearly connected to any topics or themes under study; there was no mention of a relationship between these texts and any topics or themes under study.	

2. Close Reading of Complex Text

IMET Metric	Guiding Questions	Evidence	Score
AC 2A High-quality sequences of text-dependent questions (TDQs) designed for comprehension are prevalent in the materials, whether designed to be read aloud or accessed by students directly, and build to a deep understanding of the knowledge and central ideas of the text.	Do the materials include evidence of *high-quality sequences of standards-based TDQs* for anchor texts that: - Require students to draw on textual evidence to support both what is explicit as well as valid inferences from the text? - Support students to delve deeply into anchor texts? - Focus on building a full understanding of the central ideas, key details, craft, and structure?	There are no anchor texts identified and therefore no high-quality sequence of standards-based questions dependent on any one (anchor) text. The grade 1 and grade 2 ELA materials are divided into two courses: Reading and Writing. This separation of literacy makes very challenging the provision of text-dependent questions that build a deep understanding and knowledge of central ideas in the texts. Though there are some text-dependent questions and tasks present in the Reading course materials, there are few such questions in the Writing materials. Grade 1 and grade 2 Reading Sample Learning Tasks for each marking period week provide some text-dependent questions and suggested texts (these are both based on the genre under study: i.e., traditional literature, historical nonfiction). Though many of the questions and tasks are text-dependent, very few are text-specific. Many of the text-dependent questions are generic and can be applied to any text the teacher chooses. The few text-specific questions that do exist are of poor quality. Questions in the materials do not represent a high-quality sequence because they do not support students to draw conclusions or inferences based on a specific text or set of texts (these questions do not focus on words, phrases, or sections of complex text; they do not concentrate on text structure or author's purpose; they do not focus on compelling key details, etc.). Furthermore, if a teacher chooses a text other than the one that is suggested, it is unclear if they will have any text-specific questions at all. Taken together, it is unlikely that individual lessons address all a text has to offer or that students will engage in deep analysis for each text. This approach cannot build "a full understanding of the central ideas, key details, craft and structure" of a text. Examples of these questions and tasks include: Grade 1, Marking Period 1, Week 6: "Before Reading: - Remind students that they are working on the critical thinking skill of <u>analysis</u>. Good readers analyze text by looking at both text and illustrations/photographs to learn important information. During Reading:	☐ 2 ☐ 1 ☒ 0

2. Close Reading of Complex Text			
IMET Metric ➡️	Guiding Questions	Evidence	Score
		- Display the photographs for a chapter (e.g., birds) with the text covered and ask: How do the photographs provide information in a text? What information can you gather from these photographs? - Uncover the text and read the text on the page with the photograph. Ask: What additional information did we learn by reading the text? How can we put the information from the photograph together with the information from the text to show our understanding of the chapter? After Reading: - Provide time for students to share information. Provide opportunities for students to view and identify additional photographs and read new information from the text. - Ask: How does information in photographs compare to information in text?" Grade 2, Marking Period 2, Week 3 "Before Reading: - Ask: What strategies can we use to determine the meaning of a word (e.g., use our prior knowledge, use clues within a word, and use clues within the text)? What other clues could you use (e.g., context clues, sentence-level clues)? - Revisit the contextual redefinition strategy using the Word Detective graphic organizer and think aloud about clues within the word and prior knowledge that helps you analyze what the word *galaxy* or *gravity* might mean. During Reading: - Model using context in the texts to determine the meaning of the word *galaxy or gravity*. Think aloud as you predict the meaning of the word based upon the information collected within the sentences. - Verify the meaning of the word by looking up the definition using a print or an online dictionary such as Merriam Webster Dictionary. - Ask: How did using prior knowledge and the text help me determine the meaning of words and phrases in text? After Reading: - Provide time for students to gather in pairs or small groups to determine the meaning of another word using the Word Detective	

2. Close Reading of Complex Text			
IMET Metric ➡️	**Guiding Questions**	**Evidence**	**Score**
		graphic organizer. - Coach students to use word-level clues and background knowledge to predict the word meaning. Provide time for students to add more information about their words by analyzing sentence-level context from the text. - After reading, allow time for students to verify the actual word meaning using a glossary or an online dictionary such as <u>Merriam Webster Dictionary</u>. Ask: What background knowledge did you have about the word? What clues from the text did you have about the word? How accurate was your prediction? - Ask: How does analyzing sentence-level context clues help you understand the meaning of words or phrases?"	
<u>AC 3A</u> Materials regularly ask students to complete culminating tasks in which they demonstrate their knowledge of a topic.	Do the materials include evidence of *culminating assignments* that: - Regularly reflect what is most essential to learn from the text(s)? - Address several grade-level (or above) standards?	Culminating tasks are largely generic and not specific to any one text or set of texts. As no specific anchor or supporting texts are called for in the instructional materials, culminating assignments cannot reflect what is most essential to learn from the texts. Additionally, these questions may or may not reflect what is most essential as books are not authored in an effort to demonstrate, reflect, or illuminate any one specific standard or any other construct or feature of text. Many of these generic tasks were mapped to a standard, so they do address one or more standards. In the Reading materials, few culminating assignments are provided. Of those that are present, they are largely skills based, generic to any text within a given genre, and do not provide an opportunity to synthesize learning when the book is finished. For example: Grade 1 Reading, Marking Period 4, Week 9 "After Reading: - Provide time for students to engage in one of the art activities related to the poem (Session 1 and Session 2: Junior Great Books, Read-Aloud, Sun Series). Ask: How does asking and answering questions help you demonstrate understanding of key details in text? After Reading: - Explain that students will participate in a <u>Sharing Questions Discussion</u>. Review the agreed-upon rules for class discussion	☐ 2 ☐ 1 ☒ 0

IMET Metric ➡	Guiding Questions	Evidence	Score
		and begin the Sharing Questions Discussion by stating the interpretive questions (e.g., Why does the miller try to impress the king by saying his daughter can spin straw into gold? Why does Rumpelstiltskin demand payment for his help when he can spin as much gold as he wants?). - Provide time for students to answer each question and coach students to provide details and evidence from the text that explain, clarify, or support their ideas. Model ways for students to build on others' talk in conversations by linking comments to the remarks of others (e.g., ask other children if they agree or disagree with what they have heard by linking to the comments/opinions of others). - Coach students to build on the talk of others. Ask: How does putting together information about the story help you understand the text? How does following agreed-upon rules for discussion allow you to link your comments to the remarks of others?" Grade 2 Reading, Marking Period 3, Week 5 "Written Response: - Engage students in a discussion and use guided writing to answer the following questions: Select two characters from the text. Identify each character's point of view. What words, or key details help you understand the character's point of view? Structure student to student discourse (e.g. turn and talk). Provide time for students to write a journal entry response. As needed, revisit ask questions embedded in the sample learning task to scaffold student understanding. The student response should include connections between facts, ideas, or opinions, and explicit text-based evidence. Use Grade 3 PARCC scoring rubric for literacy [*sic*] analysis." Grade 2 Reading, Marking Period 4, Week 8 "Written Response: - Structure student to student discourse (e.g., turn and talk, or think-pair-share). Provide an opportunity for students to write several sentences in response to the following prompt using instructional level text: Compare and contrast important points in two different texts on the same topic. As needed, revisit ask questions embedded in the sample learning task to scaffold	

2. Close Reading of Complex Text			
IMET Metric ➡	Guiding Questions	Evidence	Score
		student understanding. The student response should include connections between facts, ideas, or opinions, and explicit text-based evidence. Use the Grade 3 PARCC Scoring Rubric for Literary Analysis Tasks to evaluate written responses."	
		The marking period and week-specific materials for the Writing course include writing tasks each week, though few of these require students to demonstrate knowledge of a topic based on a text (or set of texts). Many of the teacher notes state that student tasks do not require any use of a specific text(s). Because such tasks are not specific to any set of resources (texts), they do not regularly reflect what is essential to learn from texts or address grade-level standards. Additionally, rather than address what is most essential in a text or address multiple grade-level standards, these tasks are mostly based on genre-based writing skills or disparate portions of a writing process.	
		Examples of these tasks include:	
		Grade 1 Writing, Marking Period 3, Week 9:	
		- "Write an opinion piece which provides a sense of closure	
		- Produce and expand complete simple interrogative, imperative, and exclamatory sentence	
		- Writers synthesize as they review ideas and information in a draft to write a conclusion. Good writers carefully consider word choice when composing, especially for the conclusion of an opinion piece. There are several different types of sentences that might be used as effective closings. Review three types of sentences: An imperative sentence gives instructions and ends with a period. An exclamatory sentence expresses excitement or emotion and ends with an exclamation point. An interrogative sentence asks a question and ends with a question mark. Think aloud to review an opinion draft and model writing three different closings for the piece that reflect on the three types of sentences (e.g., Visit the Grand Canyon soon. Wouldn't you like to visit the Grand Canyon? What a wonderful place the Grand Canyon is!). Ask: Which closing sentence should I use in my draft? Why would that be an effective closing? How did that type of sentence make you feel as a reader (e.g., exclamatory sentence made me excited to visit, interrogative sentence helped	

2. Close Reading of Complex Text

IMET Metric ➡	Guiding Questions	Evidence	Score
		me relate to the opinion)? What type of sentence (e.g., interrogative, imperative, exclamatory) will you write as your closure? How does the closing relate to the information in your piece? Provide time for students to orally rehearse and draft closing sentences for their opinion texts. Ask: How does your closing integrate ideas from the text?"	
		Grade 2 Writing, Marking Period 3 Week 5 - "Write an opinion piece that states an opinion - Use adjectives and adverbs, and choose between them depending on what is to be modified - Writers listen to and consider the ideas of others when selecting a topic to write about, which is what students did when they discussed and selected a book to review with peers. Remind students that an opinion text contains an opinion statement. Good writers include adjectives and adverbs to provide detail to their writing and convey information to readers. Re-read a mentor book review (e.g., Book Review 1, Book Review 2). Think aloud to identify the opinion statement. Ask: What is the author's opinion? What adjectives or adverbs does the author include? Guide students to identify the nouns and verbs that are modified by the adjectives and adverbs. How did the adjective and adverbs help you understand the opinion? Provide time for students to orally rehearse and draft an opinion statement about the book they selected to review with adjectives and adverbs in response to the question: How do the ideas in a text connect to you? Encourage students to share the opinion statements about the book they selected with peers. Ask: How does listening to ideas of others help you as a writer? Note to Teacher: Students select a book to review in the previous task."	

Rating (Close Reading of Complex Text):	Non-Negotiables	Alignment Criteria
	Are All NNs Met? ☐ Yes ☒ No	*Section Points:* 0/4

3. Building Academic Language

IMET Metric	Guiding Questions	Evidence	Score
NN 3A Materials provide a sequence or series of texts that build knowledge and vocabulary systematically through reading, writing, listening, and speaking. These texts are organized around a variety of topics at each grade level.	Do the materials include evidence of *systematic work with vocabulary and syntax*: - In context, through text-based questions and tasks? - Out of context, through games, exercises, etc.? (In K and 1, these words come from read-alouds.)	There is no mention of systematic work with syntax and limited guidance on vocabulary instruction. There is no guidance on how to choose the best words to focus on (i.e., which words are essential to understanding the text, which words should receive more time and attention and which less). In addition, there is no guidance on how much time to spend on vocabulary, how systematic it should be, nor how to use read-alouds to support work with vocabulary and syntax as should be done in K–1 and to a great extent, in grade 2 as well. Guidance on teaching academic vocabulary includes headings titled, "Developing Academic Language for English Learners" in various points throughout the Sample Learning Tasks in the Reading course materials. However, these sections are not intended for all students, and (for their target audience) do not provide systematic work with vocabulary and syntax, do not provide text-based questions, and do not include games or exercises. For example, Grade 2 Reading, Marking Period 3, Week 5: "Developing Academic Language for English Learners: - Introduce the Point of View Graphic Organizer prior to the think-aloud. - Think aloud to model recording thoughts on the graphic organizer. - Support students to complete the Point of View Graphic Organizer as they discuss the different points of view in the text. - Guide students to use the graphic organizer to support completing the written response." The materials provide out-of-context academic vocabulary lists for each marking period within each grade-level. These lists are organized under the following headings: "General Language Vocabulary," "Thinking and Academic Success Skills Vocabulary," and "Specific Language Vocabulary and Technical Language Vocabulary by Content." However, there are no instructional guidelines	☐ Meets ☒ Does Not Meet

3. Building Academic Language			
IMET Metric ➡️	**Guiding Questions**	**Evidence**	**Score**
		accompanying any of these word lists to create instructional games, exercises, etc.	
AC 3C Materials include a cohesive yearlong plan for students to interact with and build academic vocabulary and increasingly sophisticated syntax.	Do the materials include evidence of *a cohesive yearlong plan that requires students to*: - Interact with and build academic vocabulary? - Interact with and build increasingly sophisticated syntax? - Address morphology in a coherent sequence?	There is not a coherent yearlong plan in that attends to vocabulary, syntax or morphology.	☐ 2 ☐ 1 ☒ 0
AC 2B Questions and tasks in the materials designed for comprehension, whether designed to be read aloud or accessed by students directly, support students in understanding the academic language (vocabulary and syntax) prevalent in texts (including those selected for reading aloud).	Do the materials include evidence of *words chosen for study in context* (including read-alouds) that: - Are essential to understanding, more abstract, part of a semantic word family, and likely to appear in other complex texts students will read? - Encourage the use, review, and assessment of the targeted words within a unit or module?	The materials do not provide a selection of words to study in context, nor do they provide information about questions or tasks in the lesson details that support students in understanding academic language of texts. There is no guidance given about the greater time and attention that should be devoted to more abstract words, words that are part of a semantic word family, or which words more likely to appear in future texts.	☐ 2 ☐ 1 ☒ 0

Rating (Building Academic Language):	**Non-Negotiables**	**Alignment Criteria**
	Are All NNs Met? ☐ Yes ☒ No	*Section Points:* 0/4

4. Volume of Reading to Build Knowledge

IMET Metric	Guiding Questions	Evidence	Score
NN 3A Materials provide a sequence or series of texts that build knowledge and vocabulary systematically through reading, writing, listening, and speaking. These texts are organized around a variety of topics at each grade level.	Do the materials include evidence of *sequences or series of texts that build knowledge and vocabulary* through: - Texts that are organized around a variety of conceptually related topics (or themes for literary texts)? - Allotting enough time for growth of knowledge and vocabulary? (In grades K and 1, texts are read-aloud; in grade 2, there should be a mix with more texts read by students toward the end of the grade but still *many* read-aloud; and in grade 3, most texts are read by students themselves buoyed by read-alouds.)	There is no series of texts that build knowledge and vocabulary. Suggested texts in the instructional materials and the "Grade 1 Core Book List" and "Grade 2 Core Book List" are not organized around a variety of related topics or themes. Additionally, no mention is made of such organization or sequencing of text throughout the instructional materials. A list titled "Approved Text Connections Titles and Theme Sets" can be found in the "Reading Toolkit: Instructional Materials" page. This list provides topics that includes titles under the heading "Text Connection Topic Set" that provide the title of leveled text sets, but provides no specific texts or titles. Additionally, the list is not mentioned in the instruction guidance so it is unclear how teachers might use this list. The weeks of instruction are organized by text type rather than topic (under headings such as: "historical fiction", "literature", "literary nonfiction", etc.). The topics and titles of suggested readings range widely and rarely stay focused on a single or related topics from week to week. Instead, texts are largely organized by genre or study of a given genre's craft. Examples of the various test topics include: Grade 1 Reading, Marking Period 2 - Week 6: Tug-of-war (image only, no text), Pushing and pulling things, Wheels - Week 7: Telephones, Comparisons of technology through time, Magnets - Week 8: Types of neighborhoods, bread Grade 2 Reading, Marking Period 1 - Week 1: Stories about absent and substitute teachers, The experience of being bilingual - Week 2: History of the cakewalk - Week 3: A story of a Russian dancing bear, a story about a boy and his balloon Additionally, though some suggested texts are specific, teacher notes in Sample Learning Tasks include comments such as, Grade 1, Writing, Marking Period 1, Writing 1: "When selecting a	☐ Meets ☒ Does Not Meet

4. Volume of Reading to Build Knowledge				
IMET Metric	**Guiding Questions**	**Evidence**		**Score**
		text to use as a mentor text, consider selecting a narrative text that contains a relatable experience for students." Such direction does not afford the opportunity for students to build knowledge about topics or words they might be unfamiliar with.		
NN 3B Materials provide instructions, clear design, and lightweight student accountability that guide instructors regarding how students will regularly engage in a volume of independent reading both assigned texts (related to the anchor texts) and texts of their own choosing, in or outside of class.	Do the materials include *evidence of lightweight student accountability systems for regularly engaging in a volume of reading,* including: - Assigned reading related to the topics and themes being studied? - Texts of student's own choosing?	There is no mention of assigned readings related to topics. Independent reading is mentioned in the "Balanced Literacy Schedule" for grades K–1 and 2–5 and states these texts should be self-selected but does not include any attention to topic or themes and does not mention any accountability system.		☐ Meets ☒ Does Not Meet
NN 1A Texts intended for reading aloud are rich and above students' current reading abilities. Anchor texts in grade 2 materials have the appropriate level of complexity for the grade as defined by the standards, according to quantitative and qualitative analysis. **(Texts that are part of a series or chosen to build knowledge or for independent student reading should vary in complexity levels.)**	Do the materials include evidence of a *series of texts to build knowledge* that are*:* - At a variety of complexity levels? - Organized so less complex texts support access to more complex texts? (In grades K and 1, texts are read-aloud; in grade 2, many texts are still read-aloud but more texts read by students in the latter part of the grade; and in grade 3, most texts read by students themselves buoyed by read-alouds.)	The materials do not include evidence that students regularly experience appropriately complex anchor texts and supporting texts at a variety of complexity levels. Absent identification of anchor and read-aloud texts, there is no evidence that students will have texts read-aloud or anchor texts that are of the appropriate complexity for the grade (read-alouds should be rich and above students' reading abilities, grade 2 anchor texts should be appropriately complex for the grade as defined by the standards). It is also unclear if students will experience a variety of complexity levels. For example, there are no clearly identified texts for reading aloud, no identified anchor texts, and no series or sets of texts in the materials. Additionally, suggested and lists of texts are not organized around topics. Furthermore, complete text complexity analysis is not provided for any texts.		☐ Meets ☒ Does Not Meet
Rating (Volume of Reading to Build Knowledge):		**Non-Negotiables**		
		Are All NNs Met? ☐ Yes ☒ No		

5. Evidence-Based Discussions

IMET Metric	Guiding Questions	Evidence	Score
NN 2B Materials include frequent opportunities and guidance for grade-appropriate evidence-based discussions and writing to support analyses, claims, and clear information about texts to address the analytical thinking required by the standards at each grade level.	Do the materials include evidence of *frequent opportunities for a variety of collaborative evidence-based discussions:* - About the texts and content under study? - That address the analytical thinking required by the grade-level (or above) standards? - That vary among student pairs, small groups, and whole class?	Materials include opportunities for some collaborative discussions that are sometimes evidence-based discussions. Materials in the Reading course do call for work in small groups, and it appears much work is structured that way. Quick, small group discussion protocols such as "Turn and Talk" and "Think-Pair-Share," are often called for in the materials and sometimes require evidence from suggested texts. However, protocols for any extended discussion are absent in the materials; the instructions offer some variation on "engage students in small group discussions." Without guidance on structure, grouping, etc., it is unclear that the materials provide quality opportunities for collaborative discussions. Additionally, opportunities are not routinely tied to a specific text. Examples of discussion prompts include: Grade 1, Reading, Marking Period 1, Week 1: - "Ask students to use Think-Pair-Share to discuss: What does it mean to be an active listener during a collaborative conversation? Work with students to use this information to generate a list of rules for collaborative conversations (e.g., using eye contact, adding on or disagreeing in respectful ways, listening to others with care, speaking one at a time about the topic and text under discussion). Ask: How does discussing the challenges of collaboration help you understand why it is important to develop rules for collaborative conversations?" Grade 2 Reading, Marking Period 2, Week 5: "After Reading: - After reading "Cinderella" retold by Charles Perault [*sic*] (*Junior Great Books, Series 2, Second Semester*) remind students that they are working on the critical thinking skill of analysis. Explain that students will participate in a Shared Inquiry Discussion.	☒ Meets ☐ Does Not Meet

5. Evidence-Based Discussions

IMET Metric	Guiding Questions	Evidence	Score
		- Pose a student generated question and provide time for students to participate in a Shared Inquiry Discussion. Model respectful ways to ask for clarification or explanation of responses to the questions posed. Coach students to provide details and evidence from the text that explain, clarify, or support their ideas. - Ask: How does asking for clarification about the topics or text under discussion help you understand the story?" There are not clear discussion tasks in the Writing course materials.	
AC 2D Materials integrate speaking and listening into lessons, questions, and tasks and build in frequent opportunities for collaborative discussions.	Do the materials include evidence of the *integration of speaking and listening opportunities:* - That are designed into lessons, questions, and tasks? - That have frequent opportunities for students to share their findings and conclusions and build directly on others' ideas?	Materials integrate speaking and listening into lessons with the same small group discussion approach noted above.	☐ 2 ☒ 1 ☐ 0
AC 3C Materials include a cohesive yearlong plan for students to interact with and build academic vocabulary and increasingly sophisticated syntax.	Do the materials include evidence of *encouraging students to use targeted academic language in their speech:* - Through modeling? - Through clear directions?	There were no directions or guidance found in the materials to encourage students to use targeted academic language. Embedded in various portions of the Reading course instructional guides are instructions for "Developing Academic Language for English Learners." These are the most regular (if not sole) mention of academic language within the instructional materials. However, they do not target students' speech and do not provide any targeted language, models, or clear directions. For example: "Developing Academic Language for English Learners: - Display and review "book talk" language frames (e.g., what do you think? I agree with you because __. I see it another way __. I want to add	☐ 2 ☐ 1 ☒ 0

5. Evidence-Based Discussions			
IMET Metric →	**Guiding Questions**	**Evidence**	**Score**
		that ___).	
		- Select one of the posted "My Questions" or G.B.'s questions. Model thinking first and then stating an answer supported by a key detail from the story (e.g., I don't feel sorry for the rats because they would not leave the townspeople alone no matter what they did to stop them. What do you think?). Select a student from the group to respond to your answer with a "book talk" language frame (e.g., I see it another way. I think the Pied Piper could have taken the rats to a place far away instead of drowning them). Continue guiding the discussion, allowing various students to take turns sharing their opinions.	
		- Provide time for student pairs to <u>Think Pair Share</u> their answers to the remaining questions. Support students in using the "book talk" language frames as they discuss each question. Paraphrase and extend their thoughts (e.g., you didn't like the townspeople losing their children. Why not?).	
		- Have student pairs share their ideas with the group. Write students' ideas on a T-Chart that has questions in the left-hand column and their corresponding answers in the right-hand column."	

Rating (Evidence-Based Discussions):	**Non-Negotiables**	**Alignment Criteria**
	Are All NNs Met? ☒ Yes ☐ No	*Section Points:* 1/4

6. Volume of Writing to Build Knowledge

IMET Metric ➡	Guiding Questions	Evidence	Score
NN 2B Materials include frequent opportunities for evidence-based discussions and **writing to support careful analyses, well-defined claims, and clear information about texts to address the analytical thinking required by the Standards at each grade level.**	Do the materials include evidence of *writing and research* that includes: - Frequent opportunities for evidence-based writing? - Regular opportunities for short, focused research? - Assignments and tasks that address the analytical thinking required by the grade-level (or above) reading and writing standards?	Writing and Reading materials are provided in separate courses, so opportunities for evidence-based writing are limited within the instructional materials. Though writing tasks in the Reading and Writing courses are written from the standards and many require evidence, they do not support careful analysis, well-defined claims, and clear information about texts to address the analytic thinking required by the standards. Additionally, writing tasks are only sometimes tied to suggested texts, so no tasks are specific to any particular text or set of texts. Opportunities for research are included in the grade 1 and 2 materials, but these are often vague and unfocused. See indicator AC3B below for elaboration on research. Some supports for writing instruction are provided to the teacher in the form of linked professional development materials on Writers Workshop. There are also graphic organizers to support writing, as well as suggested instructional activities. None of these resources are specifically tailored to any text or writing task in the materials. Most writing tasks in the Reading course are based on standards, though they are skills-oriented, rather than encouraging text-based inquiry and supports for sending students back to text to support their writing. Thus, the writing tasks do not address the analytical thinking required by the grade-level standards. Additionally, though these tasks require use of evidence from text, they are not tied to any specific text. For example: Grade 1 Reading, Marking Period 3, Week 7 - "Written Response: Select one of the student "My Generated" questions to answer. Engage students in guided writing to use several key details from the text to support responses to a question. Structure student to student discourse (e.g. turn and talk). As needed, revisit ask questions embedded in the sample learning task to	☐ Meets ☒ Does Not Meet

6. Volume of Writing to Build Knowledge			
IMET Metric	**Guiding Questions**	**Evidence**	**Score**
		scaffold student understanding. The student response should include connections between facts, ideas, or opinions, and explicit text-based evidence. Use the <u>Kindergarten and Grade 1 Scoring Rubric for Written Comprehension</u> to evaluate written responses." - Grade 2 Reading, Marking Period 1, Week 2 "Written Response: Structure student to student discourse (e.g. turn and talk, Think-Pair-Share) about a student generated who, what, when, where, why, or how question. Provide time for students to write several sentences in response to the following prompt: Answer one of the questions about the text using key details from the text. As needed, revisit ask questions embedded in the sample learning task to scaffold student understanding. The student response should include explicit, text-based evidence. Use <u>Grade 3 PARCC Scoring Rubric for Literary Analysis Tasks</u> to evaluate written responses." - Reading Grade 2, Marking Period 3 Week 7 "Written Response: Engage students in guided writing to explain, what is the challenge in the text? And to describe how the character responds to the challenge. Use instructional leveled text. Structure student to student discourse (e.g., turn and talk). As needed, revisit ask questions embedded in the sample learning task to scaffold student understanding. The student response should include connections between facts, ideas, or opinions, and explicit text- based evidence. Use the <u>Grade 3 PARCC Scoring Rubric for Literary Analysis Tasks</u> to evaluate written responses" Writing tasks in the Writing course are largely skills-based. Some of these tasks include a suggested text or topic while others are text-agnostic. For example, - Grade 1 Writing, Marking Period 3, Week 7 "During weeks 7–9, as part of <u>Young Geographers 2.0,</u> students compose an opinion piece about a place they	

6. Volume of Writing to Build Knowledge			
IMET Metric ➡	**Guiding Questions**	**Evidence**	**Score**
		would like to visit. Students share their informative writing with peers and select a place to visit. They gather additional information about the place from peers' writing and make decisions about whether the information gathered is a relevant reason to support their opinion. As they compose the opinion, students may decide they need additional information to support their reasons and can use print and digital text as needed. Students write opinion texts that introduce a topic, state an opinion, provide reasons and a sense of closure. After publishing using a digital tool, students share their opinion pieces with peers, reflect on the process of writing, and decide on a format and organization for a shared writing publication. Use of language instruction focuses on complete interrogative, exclamatory and declarative sentences, end punctuation, use of commas to separate words in a sentence, singular and plural noun and verb agreement, and using verbs to convey a sense of the future."	
		- Grade 2 Writing, Marking Period 4, Week 8 "During weeks 4–9, students write an informative extended writing piece in which they compare the effort/motivation/persistence they used to reach a goal to that of an accomplished individual. During weeks 4 and 5, students recall one of their accomplishments and the effort/motivation/persistence they used to meet that goal or accomplishment. They compose a short informative piece about the accomplishment, including relevant details and information such as the strategies they used to meet the goal. This short informative piece is part of pre-writing for the informative text that is composed during weeks 6–9. Beginning in week 6 students select an accomplished individual to research and write an informative piece comparing themselves to the accomplished individual. Throughout the writing process, students gather relevant information using keywords; use facts to	

	6. Volume of Writing to Build Knowledge		
IMET Metric ➡️	**Guiding Questions**	**Evidence**	**Score**
		develop points in their informative writing; and produce, expand and rearrange sentences for sentence fluency. Students publish their piece using a digital tool, such as *MS Word* and share with an audience. Use of language instruction focuses on irregular plural nouns, apostrophes and producing, expanding and rearranging complete and simple compound sentences." Throughout the marking period, as students write, they should use a <u>variety of tools to produce, revise, and publish</u> their work. Students may benefit in particular from word processor tools, text to speech, and digital reference tools in revising their writing.	
AC 3B Materials require students to engage in many short, focused research projects annually to develop students' knowledge in a range of areas and to enable students to develop the expertise needed to conduct research independently.		Research projects are prompted in the Writing Sample Learning tasks for 1st and 2nd grade, but are too vague and general to ensure research encompasses a range of topics or that materials are appropriate for the grade-level to build students' independence. In sum, the tasks are too loosely defined to provide confidence that students will be getting the research experiences called for in the MCCR. For example: - Grade 1, Writing, Marking Period 1, Week 6: "During weeks 5–7 of the marking period students engage in shared research and write informative texts. Students identify a topic during week 4 of information literacy, pose questions about the topic and gather information to share with a small group in the classroom and media center." - Grade 1, Writing, Marking Period 3, Week 3: "During weeks 1–4, students engage in shared research using a digital resource and write a short informative piece as part of <u>Young Geographers 2.0</u> to answer the question: *What is in a place*? Students select a place, examine an image of the place and record notes about what they notice about the place in the image."	☐ 2 ☐ 1 ☒ 0

6. Volume of Writing to Build Knowledge				
IMET Metric ➡️	**Guiding Questions**	**Evidence**	**Score**

AC 2C Materials support students' developing writing skills over the course of the school year. This includes writing opportunities that are prominent and varied and reflect the types and purposes for writing.	Do the materials include evidence *of prominent and varied writing assignments over the course of the year* that address:
	
	- On-demand and process writing?
	- Different genres and blended forms of writing?
		Materials provide for different genres because each week of writing tasks is focused on the skills and process of writing a different genre. Examples of writing type focus for various weeks include:
		Grade 1, Marking Period 4
		  - Weeks 1 through 4: Narrative
		  - Weeks 5 through 7: Informative/Explanatory
		  - Weeks 8 and 9: Opinion
		Grade 2, Marking Period 2
		  - Weeks 1 through 4: Informative/Explanatory
		  - Weeks 5 through 9: Narrative
		The materials do not present varied writing assignments, blended forms, or on-demand writing.
			☐ 2
			☒ 1
			☐ 0

AC 2E Materials include explicit instruction on the grammar and conventions standards for grade level as applied in increasingly sophisticated contexts, with opportunities for application both in and out of context.	Do the materials include evidence of *developing students' writing skills over the course of the year* as defined by: - Explicit instruction in the fundamentals of writing? - Grammar and conventions instruction in and out of context?	A language focus is provided at the start of Sample Learning Tasks for each Marking Period in Writing course materials. Some suggestions are made for using suggested texts to teach grammar and conventions in context. Instructional resources specific to text or task are varied in their specificity. Examples of language instruction includes: - Grade 1, Writing, Marking Period 1, Week 1: "Use of language instruction focuses on end punctuation, capitalizing proper nouns, and using adjectives to include details in narratives." - Grade 1, Writing, Marking Period 1, Week 6 Sample Learning Task includes: "Revisit a familiar text that contains singular and plural common nouns, such as *In the Treetops* by Marilyn Woolley. Using page 9, identify the common nouns (e.g., koalas, treetops, tree, leaves, paws, teeth, koala) and the verbs (e.g., live, climb, uses, eat). Ask: Which nouns are singular, meaning they are only referring to one person, place or thing? Which nouns are plural, meaning there is more than one? Using a sentence from page 9 of the text, such as, "Koalas live in the treetops" Ask: Is the noun koalas singular or plural? How do you know? - Grade 2, Marking Period 3, Week 5, Sample Learning Task includes: Writers listen to and consider the ideas of others when selecting a topic to write about, which	☐ 2 ☒ 1 ☐ 0

6. Volume of Writing to Build Knowledge			
IMET Metric ➡️	**Guiding Questions**	**Evidence**	**Score**
		is what students did when they discussed and selected a book to review with peers. Remind students that an opinion text contains an opinion statement. Good writers include adjectives and adverbs to provide detail to their writing and convey information to readers. Re-read a mentor book review (e.g., <u>Book Review 1</u>, <u>Book Review 2</u>). Think aloud to identify the opinion statement. Ask: What is the author's opinion? What adjectives or adverbs does the author include? Guide students to identify the nouns and verbs that are modified by the adjectives and adverbs. How did the adjective and adverbs help you understand the opinion?" - Grade 3, Writing, Marking Period 1, Week 6: "Provide time for students to revisit their writing to find examples of regular and irregular nouns and record them on the <u>Nouns I Use</u> organizer. Ask: What irregular nouns did you use in your writing? What is the plural form of those words? Encourage students to use strategies for checking the nouns in their sentences by asking questions such as, "How will I know if a noun is irregular?"" - Grade 3, Writing, Marking Period 2, Week 2: "Review <u>Pronoun-Antecedent Agreement</u> (Marking Period 1, Week 2). Model identifying pronouns substituted for nouns in writing and ensuring that pronouns and their antecedents agree. Provide time for students to revisit their narrative poems, circle nouns and pronouns and discuss which pronouns were substituted for nouns. Provide time for students to check for pronoun-antecedent agreement within their narrative poems."	

	Non-Negotiables	**Alignment Criteria**
Rating (Volume of Writing to Build Knowledge):	*Are All NNs Met?* ☐ Yes ☒ No	*Section Points:* 2/6

7. Supporting All Students

IMET Metric	Guiding Questions	Evidence	Score
AC 4A Teachers and students can reasonably complete the core content within a regular school year to maximize students' learning.	Do the materials include evidence of teachers/students reasonably being able to complete *the core content within a regular school year?*	The materials seem to provide a reasonable amount of content to cover in a year, though it is not clear how much time any given task should take. There is a vague scope and sequence of instruction provided in the narrative description of Sample Learning Tasks for each week within each of the four marking periods in a school year for both Reading and Writing courses. However, this narrative scope and sequence does not provide enough detail nor does it provide specific resources and does not integrate the myriad of other resources provided for teachers ("Balanced Literacy Schedule", ESOL resources, assessment guidelines, etc.). Therefore, it is unclear how these Sample Learning Tasks would unfold over a year. There is not a series of resources clearly matched to the "Balanced Literacy Schedule" for grades K–1 and 2–5. It is unclear how teachers should use the curricular resources provided (the Sample Learning Tasks in Reading and Writing, Fountas and Pinnell materials, Words Their Way, etc.) to fulfill the expectations of a balanced literacy schedule or how these resources might be employed for daily instruction.	☐ 2 ☒ 1 ☐ 0
AC 4B Materials regularly provide all students, including those who read, write, speak, or listen below grade level, or whose first language is other than English, with extensive opportunities to work with and meet grade-level standards.	Do the materials include evidence of *all students having the opportunity to work with and meet grade-level standards* by: - Systematically building in the time, resources, and supports for students below grade-level? - Systematically building in the time, resources, and supports for students whose first language is other than English?	The materials do not include specific supports or protocols for students who are below grade-level. The Guided Reading materials are based on students reading texts at their instructional level (rather than grade-level) and no supports were found for students to read texts at the complexity band appropriate for their grade-level. There were not any specific, concrete protocols as to what to do with students below grade-level. Grades 1 and 2 materials provide a link to a document titled "ESOL Resources and Materials," providing professional development links to documents detailing guidance for ESOL and content teacher planning, including guiding questions, WIDA standards, and instructional strategy charts. These teacher-facing resources are not content-specific, tied to examples or lessons, or related to any text-specific resources.	☐ 2 ☐ 1 ☒ 0

7. Supporting All Students			
IMET Metric	**Guiding Questions**	**Evidence**	**Score**
		Student-facing resources are not provided. Additionally, there is no systematic building in of time, resources, or support for students whose first language is other than English.	
		The most frequent support for students whose first language is other than English are the various parts of the Reading course guidance titled "Making Content Comprehensible for English Learners." Though occasionally requiring the use of text, none of these supports are tailored to any given text. It also isn't clear that these supports are providing ELLs the opportunity to work with and meet grade-level standards. For example:	
		Grade 2 Reading, Marking Period 4, Week 8	
		"Making Content Comprehensible for English Learners:	
		- Remind students that when people read informational texts, they often don't read the whole book cover-to-cover the way they read a story. Readers often just choose sections of the book that include information on the specific topics they want to learn more about.	
		- Show a brief video clip or a photograph of a snowflake. Ask students to turn and talk about what questions they might want to find answers to about snowflakes."	

7. Supporting All Students

IMET Metric	Guiding Questions	Evidence	Score
AC 4E Materials regularly and systematically offer assessment opportunities that genuinely measure progress on reading comprehension and writing proficiency as well as on mastery of grade-level standards. This progress includes gradual release of supporting scaffolds for students to measure their independent abilities.	Do the materials include evidence of *regularly and systematically offering assessments* that: - Measure progress on grade-level reading and writing proficiency? - Include valid recommendations as to how to address results?	The first grade and second grade materials did not mention measurement of progress toward grade-level reading. Assessments are available only to test students' independent reading level. Included in the assessment approach is a form of the MIRL that is given three times a year, but more guidance is needed about how teachers are to use this information. The myMCPS page for 1st and 2nd Grade Reading provides "ESOL Formative Assessments" that link to various "Speaking" or "Listening Assessments". The materials state these assessments are intended for use to "evaluate English language proficiency levels in listening, speaking, reading, and writing. All assessments are aligned with the content of *Curriculum 2.0*; therefore, they can also be scored for content proficiency." However, the content of these assessments is wide-ranging (from identification of numbers to identification of animal characteristics) and so not tied to or always appropriate for an ELA/Literacy course. These assessments do not include reading texts or writing tasks. No other systematic assessments of students' independent abilities could be found.	☐ 2 ☐ 1 ☒ 0
Rating (Supporting All Students):		**Alignment Criteria**	
		Section Points: 1/6	

Grade-Level Evidence and Ratings: Grade 4

Section	# of Non-Negotiables Met	Does This Section Meet All Non-Negotiables?	Alignment Criteria Points
1. Close Reading of Complex Text	0/2	☐ YES ☒ NO	0/4
2. Building Academic Language	0/1	☐ YES ☒ NO	0/4
3. Volume of Reading to Build Knowledge	0/3	☐ YES ☒ NO	
4. Evidence-Based Discussions	1/1	☒ YES ☐ NO	1/4
5. Volume of Writing to Build Knowledge	0/1	☐ YES ☒ NO	2/6
6. Foundational Skills/Fluency			0/4
7. Supporting All Students			2/6

1. Close Reading of Complex Text

IMET Metric ⟶ Guiding Questions		Evidence	Score
NN 1A Anchor texts in the materials have the appropriate level of complexity for the grade as defined by the standards, according to quantitative and qualitative analysis. (Texts that are part of a series, chosen to build knowledge or for independent student reading should vary in complexity levels.)	Do the materials include evidence of *regular practice with high-quality grade-level complex anchor texts* as defined by: - Quantitative analyses? - Detailed qualitative analyses?	There is little evidence in the instructional materials of regular practice with high-quality grade-level complex text as defined by the standards. Books are chosen from the "Grade 4 Core Book List" provided by the district, and the information that would be needed in order to determine that the books are at the appropriate level of complexity is incomplete. Of 188 titles listed on the "Grade 4 Core Book List", 96 (a little more than one half) have Lexile levels and 57 of these (more than one half) are out of the grade band set by the standards (a full 51 are lower than the expected complexity for 4th grade and 6 are higher). Qualitative analyses are completely absent from the materials. Without *both* quantitative and qualitative analysis for *all* texts, it is impossible to determine if the suggested texts meet the complexity expectations set by the standards. In addition, there are few indications whether Sample Learning Task suggested texts are for read-alouds, read to self, or otherwise. Making things more unclear is the fact that the Content Planner includes a link "Grade 4 Subject Materials: Reading", which lists a "Balanced Literacy Schedule for grades 2–5" that are not referenced in the Sample Learning Tasks. These schedules provide generic outlines for "Whole Group Instruction," "Small Group Instruction," and "Independent Application of Skills and Strategies," but because they are not integrated into the Sample Learning Tasks, it is very unclear what texts are to be used for any given portion of the Balanced Literacy Schedule (guided reading, read-alouds, independent reading, etc.). Furthermore, this "Balanced Literacy Schedule" and the Sample Learning Tasks do not mention or make clear expectations that students regularly read grade-level texts.	☐ Meets ☒ Does Not Meet

Note: Bold font indicates the portion of the metric being reviewed in this section (e.g. Close Reading of Complex Text).

1. Close Reading of Complex Text			
IMET Metric ➡	**Guiding Questions**	**Evidence**	**Score**
NN 1B Anchor texts in the materials are of publishable quality and worthy of especially careful reading; they include a mix of informational texts and literature.	Do the materials include evidence of *anchor texts* that are: - Worthy of especially careful reading and of publishable quality? - The right balance of literature and informational texts? - Connected mostly to topics or themes under study?	There is no clear indication in the instructional materials which texts are considered anchor texts that all students will read. The materials do provide book suggestions and genre parameters in the weekly Sample Learning Tasks and additional texts are listed in the "Grade 4 Core Book List." However, it is not clear in the instructional materials to what extent teachers should use these texts and to what extent teachers are free to choose and/or design their own. For example: Marking Period 1, Week 1: "Materials: - Text Type: Literature - Text Example: *Freedom Summer* by Deborah Wiles, historical fiction" Marking Period 2, Week 6: "Materials: - Text Type: Informational Text - Text Example: *Adventure in the Americas* by Barbara Fifer, *A Whole New World* by Barbara Fifer, *Exploring a New World* by Barbara Fifer, electronic informational texts Before reading a short portion of an informational text (e.g. *Adventure in the Americas* by Barbara Fifer, *A Whole New World* by Barbara Fifer, *Exploring a New World* by Barbara Fifer) discuss with students that good readers use the skill of paraphrasing, or putting information that they have read into their own words, as a way to summarize or review the information in the text." Marking Period 4, Week 8: "Materials: - Text Type: Informational Text - Text Example: *Childtimes: A Three Generation Memoir* by Eloise Greenfield and Lessie Jones Little, memoir Before reading: - Frame the lesson by challenging students to take an intellectual risk to determine the main idea of passage selected from a memoir.... Read "Landscape" pages 2–7 from *Childtimes: A Three Generation Memoir* by Eloise Greenfield and Lessie Jones Little. During reading: - Read aloud a passage from a memoir/firsthand account, such as "Chores" and "School" on pages 31–33."	☐ Meets ☒ Does Not Meet

1. Close Reading of Complex Text

IMET Metric ➡ Guiding Questions	Evidence	Score
	Many of the suggested texts are previously published materials, including some well-known high-quality works. For example: - *Aesop's Fables* by Michael Hague - *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory* by Roald Dahl - *The Moon and I* by Betsy Byars - *The Trumpet of the Swan*, by E.B. White - *The Velveteen Rabbit* by Margery Williams - *The Wind in the Willows* by Kenneth Grahame Without the clear identification of anchor and supporting texts (required texts all students will read), ensuring a proper balance of informational-to-literature text for each student is nearly impossible. When teachers select from the current suggested texts to create their students' reading experience, it is unclear that the selection will represent the 50/50 balance of literature and informational text required by the standards. Moreover, the materials make no explicit mention of such a balance and the suggested texts do not represent such a balance. Finally, the texts listed in the "Grade 4 Core Book List" do not represent a clear balance of text type; of the 188 texts listed on the "Grade 4 Core Book List," only 67 are a form of nonfiction (identified as "biography," "informational," and "literary nonfiction" on the list). The suggested texts are not clearly connected to any topics or themes under study; there was no mention of a relationship between these texts and any topics or themes under study.	

1. Close Reading of Complex Text

IMET Metric ➡	Guiding Questions	Evidence	Score
AC 2A High-quality sequences of text-dependent questions (TDQs) are prevalent in the materials and build to a deep understanding of the knowledge and central ideas of the text.	Do the materials include evidence of *high-quality sequences of standards-based TDQs* for anchor texts that: - Require students to draw on textual evidence to support both what is explicit as well as valid inferences from the text? - Support students to delve deeply into anchor texts? - Focus on building a full understanding of the central ideas, key details, craft, and structure?	In order to have developed a high-quality sequence of standards-based text-dependent questions, the materials would have to identify anchor texts upon which those questions are based. As there are no anchor texts identified, these sequences of questions cannot be included. The Grade 4 ELA materials are divided into two courses; Reading and Writing. This separation makes very challenging the provision of text-dependent questions that build a deep understanding and knowledge of central ideas in the texts. Though there are some text-dependent questions and tasks present in the Reading course materials, there are few such questions in the Writing materials. Grade 4 Reading Sample Learning Tasks for each marking period week provide some text-dependent questions and suggested texts (these are both based on the genre under study; i.e. traditional literature, historical nonfiction). Though many of the questions and tasks are text-dependent, very few are text-specific. Many of the text-dependent questions are generic and can be applied to any text the teacher chooses. The few text-specific questions that do exist are of poor quality. Questions in the materials do not represent a high-quality sequence because they do not support students to draw conclusions or inferences based on a specific text or set of texts (these questions do not focus on words, phrases, or sections of complex text; they do not concentrate on text structure or author's purpose; they do not focus on compelling key details, etc.). Furthermore, if a teacher chooses a text other than the one that is suggested, it is unclear if they will have any text-specific questions at all. Taken together, this doesn't ensure that individual lessons address all a text has to offer or that students will engage in deep analysis for each text. This approach cannot build "a full understanding of the central ideas, key details, craft and structure" of a text." The questions found to be used with historical fiction and informational text primarily address text features, making it very difficult to achieve a full and deep understanding of any text. Examples of these questions and tasks include: Reading Marking Period 1, Week 1 "Before reading: - Before reading, ask: *What do you know about historical fiction?*	☐ 2 ☐ 1 ☒ 0

IMET Metric ➡️	Guiding Questions	Evidence	Score
		Explain to students that historical fiction is a classification of literature containing stories that are a mixture of history and realistic fiction. The stories take place in a real setting of the past, have characteristics of the time period, and real and imaginary events. - Describe the real event that is the basis of the story. Explain that they will be investigating many aspects of change as they explore historical fiction. - Ask: *What are the* <u>generalizations about change</u>*? Which generalizations do you predict might apply to historical fiction? What criteria can you use to decide which generalization might apply to characteristics of historical fiction (e.g. characteristics of historical fiction)?* During reading: - Collaborate with students to mark text to identify the characters' [*sic*] thoughts, words, and actions in order to describe events in the story. Chart students' responses. After reading: - Model how to match generalizations to characters' [*sic*] thoughts, words (e.g., "Let's be the first one there," says John Henry. change can be positive) or actions from the chart that represent change. - Provide time for small groups to describe events in depth and identify the generalizations that connect to the characters' [*sic*] thoughts, words or actions on <u>Change in Freedom Summer</u>. - Ask: *What criteria did you use to decide which generalization about change applies to the character's' thoughts, words, or actions?"* Marking Period 2, Week 6: "Before reading: - Remind students that they are working on the critical thinking skill of elaboration, or combining or adding ideas as a way to understand concepts. Explain that students are going to read an informational text about European exploration and combine ideas to describe the goals of European explorers. - Before reading, a short portion of an informational text (e.g. <u>Adventure in the Americas</u> by Barbara Fifer, <u>A Whole New World</u>	

1. Close Reading of Complex Text

IMET Metric ⟶ Guiding Questions		Evidence	Score
		by Barbara Fifer, _Exploring a New World_ by Barbara Fifer) discuss with students that good readers use the skill of paraphrasing, or putting information that they have read into their own words as a way to summarize or review the information in the text. During reading: - Model the skill of paraphrasing by combining key ideas and details. Record paraphrased information about explorers' goals on the Goals of European Explorers graphic organizer. - Provide time for students to complete reading and recording paraphrased statements in small groups or individually. After reading: - Engage students in discussing the goals of European exploration using their notes. Guide students in using their paraphrased statements to summarize the goals of explorers and exploration. - Ask: How did paraphrasing the key ideas in text help you summarize the goals of European explorers? How did combining ideas by summarizing help you understand the goals of European explorers? Structure student to student discussion of the ask questions (e.g., think, pair, share, turn and talk)." Marking Period 3, Week 3: "Before viewing: - Before viewing a video segment from slide 12 of Mythology such as Discovery Streaming's video _Myths and Legends: Ancient Greece_, revisit a myth such as, "Theseus and the Minotaur", from _The McElderry Book of Greek Myths by Eric Kimmel_. Encourage students to share the summaries of the story they wrote previously and jot brief notes about the details of characters, events, or themes on Theseus and the Minotaur Comparison Circles. During viewing: - Remind students that myths are stories that have been told for many generations and are presented in many different versions and formats. Explain to students that they will watch a visual presentation that includes the myth of "Theseus and the	

1. Close Reading of Complex Text			
IMET Metric ➡	**Guiding Questions**	**Evidence**	**Score**
		Minotaur" to make connections between different presentations of the same text. After viewing: - Display <u>Theseus and the Minotaur Comparison Circles</u>. Ask: What connections can you make between specific details in this video presentation and with the text version of "Theseus and the Minotaur"? (e.g., both have Theseus, Minotaur, labyrinth, Ariadne, thread, etc.)?" Record student responses to how the stories are the same on the overlapping part of Theseus and the Minotaur Comparison Circles. - Structure student to student discourse (e.g., think, pair, share, turn and talk) so that students may discuss key ideas related to the similarities and differences between the two presentations. - Ask: What details in the video version are different? (e.g., includes the story of Daedalus and Icarus, Ariadne gets the secret of the labyrinth from Daedalus, Theseus goes into the labyrinth alone, Theseus kills the Minotaur with the horn, etc.) What details in the text version are different? (e.g., Theseus went into the labyrinth with others, Minotaur is killed with a sword, Ariadne wants to marry Theseus, Theseus is punished by the Gods for leaving Ariadne on the beach alone). Record student responses to how stories are different on each side of the circles. - Ask: How do making connections between details of a text in a story and a visual representation help you monitor your understanding? What conclusions can you draw about the similarities and differences between the two presentations?" Marking Period 4, Week 8: "Before reading: - Before rereading sections of firsthand and secondhand accounts such as "School" on page 33 from *Childtimes: A Three Generation Memoir* and *A Day at Seneca Schoolhouse* by E.I.See., ask students to review the notes from their <u>Oral Summary: Key Details & Talking Points</u> and notes compiled on *A Day at Seneca Schoolhouse*. Frame the lesson by explaining to students that they will be challenged to describe the differences in focus for the two accounts.	

1. Close Reading of Complex Text			
IMET Metric ➡	Guiding Questions	Evidence	Score
		During rereading: - Ask: What is the point of view of each text? How is the information provided different? How can each text provide you with valuable information about the experience of attending school in a one room schoolhouse? Structure student to student discussion of the ask questions (e.g., think, pair, share, turn and talk). Encourage students to capture the key points from the discussion. After reading: - Provide time for students to use notes to compare the firsthand and secondhand accounts. Prompt students with the following questions: What information is the same about the two accounts? What is different? - Ask: What are the costs and benefits of gathering information from both firsthand and secondhand accounts?"	
AC 3A Materials regularly ask students to complete culminating tasks in which they demonstrate their knowledge of a topic.	Do the materials include evidence of *culminating assignments* that: - Regularly reflect what is most essential to learn from the text(s)? - Address several grade-level (or above) standards?	As no specific anchor or supporting texts are called for in the instructional materials, culminating assignments cannot reflect what is most essential to learn from the texts. Since the questions provided for use are not tailored to specific books, it is nearly impossible for them to point at what is most essential in any particular book. In the Reading materials, few culminating assignments are provided. Of those that are present, many are mapped to a standard and so do address one or more standards. However, these tasks are largely skills based, generic to any text within a given genre, and do not provide an opportunity to synthesize learning when the book is finished. For example: Reading, Marking Period 1, Week 1. - "Written Response: Students use a graphic organizer, such as Point of View Freedom Summer, to organize their thoughts before writing. Provide time for students to write a paragraph responding to the question: *Who is the narrator? What is the narrator's point of view of the events in the story?* As needed, revisit ask questions embedded in the sample learning task to scaffold student understanding. The student response should use clear reasoning supported by explicit, relevant, text-based evidence in the	☐ 2 ☐ 1 ☒ 0

IMET Metric ➡️	Guiding Questions	Evidence	Score
		development of the topic. Use the <u>Grades 4–5 PARCC Scoring Rubric for Literary Analysis Tasks</u> to evaluate written responses." Reading, Marking Period 4, Week 8: - "Written Response: Students use a graphic organizer to organize their thoughts before writing. Provide time for students to write several paragraphs in response to the question: *Compare a firsthand and secondhand account of an event or topic. What are the similarities and differences in the key details and information in each text?* As needed, revisit ask questions embedded in the sample learning task to scaffold student understanding. The student response should use clear reasoning supported by explicit, relevant, text-based evidence in the development of the topic. Use the <u>Grades 4–5 PARCC Scoring Rubric for Literary Analysis Tasks</u> to evaluate written responses." The marking period and week-specific materials for the Writing course materials include writing tasks each week, though few of these require students to demonstrate knowledge of a topic based on a text (or set of texts). The teacher notes state that student tasks do not require any use of a specific text(s). Because such tasks are not specific to any set of resources (texts), they do not regularly reflect what is essential to learn from texts or address grade-level standards. Additionally, rather than address what is most essential in a text or address multiple grade-level standards, these tasks are mostly based on genre-based writing skills or disparate portions of a writing process. Examples of these tasks include: Writing, Marking Period 1, Week 1 - "Revisit a mentor text such as, <u>*Freedom Summer* by Deborah Wiles</u>. Think aloud to state your opinion about the affect the character had on the outcome of the story. Model gathering more details about the characters [*sic*] thoughts, words, or actions to support the reasons for your opinion. Record additional evidence on <u>Character Analysis: Historical Fiction</u>. Provide time for students to revisit their story to gather more evidence from the text and record details about the characters [*sic*] thoughts, words, and actions. Ask: How does reexamining evidence from the text help you develop your opinion?"	

1. Close Reading of Complex Text			
IMET Metric ➡️	**Guiding Questions**	**Evidence**	**Score**
		Writing, Marking Period 2, Week 6 - "Ask: What is the purpose of a conclusion paragraph in informative writing (e.g., summarizes so the reader understands the main idea, answers questions)? Display and read aloud from an informative text that ends with a conclusion paragraph which makes an inference from information presented such as, _Westminster Community Profile_ by E. I. See. Ask: What do you notice about the information that is included in the conclusion paragraph (e.g., no new information presented, made an inference, paraphrased ideas from the introduction and body paragraphs)? Model reviewing the thesis statement in the introduction, key ideas and details of the body paragraphs of _Westminster Community Profile_, and any related notes. Ask: What inferences did you make? Think aloud to evaluate if any revisions are needed. Should any information be deleted, added or reorganized? Ask yourself: What do all my inferences mean (e.g., Westminster needs a specialized business. The exact one needs to be determined by looking at the opportunity cost of building a recreation center in the community)? What conclusions can I draw? Ask students to provide any additional ideas for the conclusion paragraph based on the information. Model elaboration by combining and adding the student ideas to the conclusion paragraph. Provide opportunities for students to review their notes, thesis statement, and body paragraphs. Ask: How can you use _Inspiration_ to help you synthesize your ideas to draft a conclusion paragraph (e.g., review and group similar ideas by colors or placement in graphic organizer)? What inferences did you make from the new way you have combined your notes? What conclusions can you draw? Provide time for students to draft a conclusion paragraph for their informative texts and to share their conclusions paragraphs with multiple partners. Facilitate student revisions to conclusion paragraphs. Ask: How did combining facts help you draft a conclusion paragraph?" Writing, Marking Period 3, Week 3 - "Discuss how authors of media messages use persuasive techniques to influence their audience. Ask: What criteria help you determine if a technique is used responsibly (e.g., truth based on	

IMET Metric ➡	Guiding Questions	Evidence	Score
		facts, avoiding stereotypes, author avoids a bias)? Select and display a media message from <u>MCPS G4 MP3 Media Messages</u> LiveBinder. Ask: How did the author craft the message to create an effect on the reader? Think aloud to critique the author's message (e.g., Who is the author and what is the purpose?); the use of persuasive techniques (e.g., What techniques are used to attract and hold attention?, How might different people understand this message?), and the intended audience (e.g., What assumptions are made about the audience?, What lifestyles, values, and points of view are represented?, What is omitted?). Point out how authors use text features such as bold print, underlining, captions, and font size to emphasize points. After modeling how to critique an advertisement, ask: Which techniques were used to create this media message? Are the techniques used responsibly? What makes you think that? How did the media marketing techniques used in this advertisement clarify the truth about the product or exaggerate the truth about the product? Why do you think that? What information from your critique supports your thinking? Why do you think the author included text features in this media message? What makes you say that? Encourage students to record and organize notes on their graphic organizers about the author's message, use of persuasive techniques, text features, and the intended audience as they critique various media messages. Ask: How does monitoring your thinking help you critique media messages?" Writing, Marking Period 4, Week 8 - "Encourage students to continue taking intellectual risks to communicate and defend their personal stance on the selected topic or issue. Distribute <u>Strategies for Writing Effective Opinion Essays</u> and facilitate a general discussion of the strategies used to develop a well-constructed opinion piece. Ask: How will you use the summaries you have created to develop paragraphs (e.g., to support my point of view on the topic or issue, to create topic sentences and support for each body paragraph, to elaborate on each reason by providing precise facts and details.)? Model how to move information from the *One Note* [*sic*] notebook into a *Word* document. If needed, provide time for students to revise their	

1. Close Reading of Complex Text

IMET Metric ➡ Guiding Questions		Evidence	Score
		summaries to support their point of view. Provide time for students to develop an introductory paragraph which includes background information, a thesis statement, and lists reasons. Students will develop body paragraphs that provide reasons supported by facts and details and a concluding sentence that links back to the reason and point of view. Partner students to listen to each other's arguments and provide feedback. Post the following questions on a chart for students to discuss: Did my partner write a clear thesis or position statement? Did my partner maintain a clear point of view? Did my partner use facts and details to support each reason? Does my partner need to add more information to the introductory or body paragraphs? Provide time for students to record peer feedback on the back of the Strategies for Writing Effective Opinion Essays sheet and use the resource to strengthen their opinion essay. Ask: Why is it important to support your point of view using reasons that are supported by facts and details? Ask: What are the benefits and costs of using feedback to improve your argument?"	

Rating (Close Reading of Complex Text):	Non-Negotiables	Alignment Criteria
	Are All NNs Met? ☐ Yes ☒ No	**Section Points:** 0/4

2. Building Academic Language		
IMET Metric	**Guiding Questions**	**Evidence**	**Score**

IMET Metric	Guiding Questions	Evidence	Score
<u>NN 3A</u> Materials provide a sequence or series of texts that build knowledge and vocabulary systematically through reading, writing, listening, and speaking. These texts are organized around a variety of topics at each grade level.	Do the materials include evidence of *systematic work with vocabulary and syntax*: - In context, through text-based questions and tasks? - Out of context, through games, exercises, etc.?	There is no mention of systematic work with syntax and limited guidance on vocabulary instruction. There is no guidance on how to choose the best words to focus on (i.e., which words are essential to understanding the text, which words should receive more time and attention and which less). In addition, there is no guidance on how much time to spend on vocabulary nor how systematic it should be. Guidance on teaching academic vocabulary includes headings titled "Developing Academic Language for English Learners" in various points throughout the Sample Learning Tasks in the Reading course materials. However, these sections are not intended for all students and (for their target audience) do not provide systematic work with vocabulary and syntax, do not provide text-based questions, and do not include games or exercises. For example: "Developing Academic Language for English Learners - Guide student use of <u>Three Types of Information Graphic Organizer</u> to record critical information about a concept, such as establishing a business. - Align the purpose for reading with the written response question (appears at the top of the organizer), What critical information did you learn from reading about _____ (topic/concept)? Explain how each type of information contributed to the understanding of the concept. - Ensure students understand key vocabulary within the objective and written response question. Use the visuals on the organizer to discuss the meaning of visual, oral, and quantitative information. Use the synonyms within the focus questions on the graphic organizer to discuss the meaning of "critical" and "contributed." (e.g., What critical (*important*) visual information contributed (*helped*) you understand _____?) - Prompt students to add oral, visual, and quantitative information to the organizer, as they read <u>*A Citizen's Guide to Zoning in Rockville*</u> and <u>Zoning Map of Rockville</u>. - Support students as needed to transfer the critical information recorded on their organizer to a written response." The materials provide for out-of-context vocabulary with academic	☐ Meets ☒ Does Not Meet

2. Building Academic Language

IMET Metric ➡	Guiding Questions	Evidence	Score
		vocabulary lists for each marking period within each grade-level. These lists are organized under the following headings: "General Language Vocabulary," "Thinking and Academic Success Skills Vocabulary," and 'Specific Language Vocabulary and Technical Language Vocabulary by Content." However, there are no instructional guidelines accompanying any of these word lists to create instructional games, exercises, etc.	
AC 3C Materials include a cohesive year-long plan for students to interact with and build academic vocabulary and increasingly sophisticated syntax.	Do the materials include evidence of *a cohesive yearlong plan that requires students to*: - Interact with and build academic vocabulary? - Interact with and build increasingly sophisticated syntax?	There is not a coherent yearlong plan that attends to vocabulary, syntax, or morphology.	☐ 2 ☐ 1 ☒ 0
AC 2B Questions and tasks in the materials support students in understanding the academic language (vocabulary and syntax) prevalent in complex texts.	Do the materials include evidence of *words chosen for study in context* that: - Are essential to understanding, more abstract, part of a semantic word family, and likely to appear in other complex texts students will read? - Encourage the use, review, and assessment of the targeted words throughout a unit or module?	The materials do not provide a selection of words to study in context, nor do they provide information about questions or tasks in the lesson details that support students in understanding academic language of texts. There is no guidance given about the greater time and attention that should be devoted to more abstract words, words that are part of a semantic word family, or which words more likely to appear in future texts.	☐ 2 ☐ 1 ☒ 0

Rating (Building Academic Language):	Non-Negotiables	Alignment Criteria
	Are All NNs Met? ☐ Yes ☒ No	*Section Points:* 0/4

3. Volume of Reading to Build Knowledge

IMET Metric	Guiding Questions	Evidence	Score
NN 3A Materials provide a sequence or series of texts that build knowledge and vocabulary systematically through reading, writing, listening, and speaking. These texts are organized around a variety of topics at each grade level.	Do the materials include evidence of *sequences or series of texts that build knowledge and vocabulary* through: - Texts that are organized around a variety of conceptually related topics (or themes for literary texts)? - Allotting enough time for growth of knowledge and vocabulary?	There is no series of texts that build knowledge and vocabulary. Suggested texts in the instructional materials and the "Grade 4 Core Book List" are not organized around a variety of related topics or themes. Additionally, no mention is made of such organization or sequencing of text throughout the instructional materials. A list titled "Approved Text Connections Titles and Theme Sets" can be found listed on the Reading Toolkit: Instructional Materials page. This list provides titles under the heading "Text Connection Topic Set" that provide the title of leveled text sets, but provides no specific texts or titles. Additionally, the list is not mentioned in the instruction guidance so it is unclear how teachers might use this list. The weeks of instruction are organized by text type (historical fiction, literary nonfiction, etc.). The topics of suggested readings range widely and rarely stay focused on a single or related topics from week to week. Instead, texts are largely organized by genre or study of a given genre's craft. Examples of the various test topics include: Reading, Marking period 1 - Week 1: Freedom Summer - Week 2: The building of the Golden Gate Bridge - Week 3: A South American fable, Building the Golden Gate Bridge Reading, Marking Period 2: - Week 5: Westminster, Zoning in Rockville - Week 6: European explorers in the New World - Week 7: Christopher Columbus Reading, Marking Period 4 - Week 7: Science, Memoir on the cross-cultural experience of a Japanese American, Graphic novel on WWII - Week 8: An African American memoir, Description of a one-room school house in Maryland in the 1890s - Week 9: The work of Gershwin, Biographical information on	☐ Meets ☒ Does Not Meet

3. Volume of Reading to Build Knowledge			
IMET Metric ➡️	**Guiding Questions**	**Evidence**	**Score**
		Romare Bearden, artifacts from various museum collections	
NN 3B Materials provide instructions, clear design, and lightweight student accountability that guide instructors regarding how students will regularly engage in a volume of reading both assigned texts (related to the anchor texts) and texts of their own choosing, in or outside of class.	Do the materials include *evidence of lightweight student accountability systems for regularly engaging in a volume of reading,* including: - Assigned reading related to the topics and themes being studied? - Texts of student's own choosing?	There is no mention of assigned readings related to topics. Independent reading is mentioned in the Balanced Literacy Schedule for grades 2–5, and it states these texts should be self-selected, but it does not include any attention to topic or themes and does not mention any accountability system.	☐ Meets ☒ Does Not Meet
NN 1A Anchor texts in the materials have the appropriate level of complexity for the grade as defined by the standards, according to quantitative and qualitative analysis. **(Texts that are part of a series or chosen to build knowledge or for independent student reading should vary in complexity levels.)**	Do the materials include evidence of a *series of texts to build knowledge* that are*:* - At a variety of complexity levels? - Organized so less complex texts support access to more complex texts?	The materials do not include evidence that students regularly experience appropriately complex anchor texts and supporting texts at a variety of complexity levels. Absent identification of anchor and supporting texts, there is no evidence that students will experience texts that are of the appropriate complexity and volume for the grade. It is also unclear if students will experience a variety of complexity levels. For example, there are no clearly identified anchor texts and no series or sets of texts in the materials. Additionally, suggested and lists of texts are not organized around topics. Furthermore, complete text complexity analysis is not provided for any texts.	☐ Meets ☒ Does Not Meet
Rating (Volume of Reading to Build Knowledge):	**Non-Negotiables**		
	Are All NNs Met? ☐ Yes ☒ No		

4. Evidence-Based Discussions

IMET Metric → Guiding Questions		Evidence	Score
NN 2B Materials include frequent opportunities for evidence-based discussions and writing to support careful analyses, well-defended claims, and clear information about texts to address the analytical thinking required by the Standards at each grade level.	Do the materials include evidence of *frequent opportunities for a variety of collaborative evidence-based discussions:* - About the texts and content under study? - That address the analytical thinking required by the grade-level standards? - That vary among student pairs, small groups, and whole class?	Materials include opportunities for some collaborative discussions that are sometimes evidence-based discussions. Materials in the Reading course do call for work in small groups, and it appears much work is structured that way. Quick, small group discussion protocols such as "Turn and Talk" and "Think-Pair-Share," are often called for in the materials and sometimes require evidence from suggested texts. However, protocols for any extended discussion are absent in the materials, the instructions often some variation on "engage students in small group discussions." Without guidance on structure, grouping, etc., it is unclear that the materials provide quality opportunities for collaborative discussions. Additionally, opportunities are not routinely tied to a specific text. Examples of discussion prompts include: Reading, Marking Period 4, Week 8 - "After reading: Provide time for small groups to discuss the information from both texts. - Ask: What key details are the same from each text? What key details are different? How can you use the graphic organizer to collect information from each resource efficiently? Why is it important to notate when information is repeated in multiple sources or not included at all (e.g. helps you determine which ideas are important)? How does a composer's life experience influence his work? Structure student to student discussion of the ask questions (e.g., think, pair, share, turn and talk). Students may jot notes from the discussion." Reading, Marking Period 3, Week 3 - "Display the text and model a self-monitoring strategy such as, Stop-Think-Paraphrase for students. Model identifying key words, feelings, ideas, images, and structure as you summarize details from pages 77 and 78 of the story. Record details in the appropriate section of the Literature Web. To support students in completing and discussing the Literature Web, use the discussion questions for the Literature Web Model in Section 2 of the Teacher Guide, *Autobiographies and Memoirs, Second Edition:* College of William and Mary."	☒ Meets ☐ Does Not Meet

4. Evidence-Based Discussions			
IMET Metric → **Guiding Questions**		**Evidence**	**Score**
		Reading, Marking Period 2, Week 6 "Developing Academic Language for English Learners: - Engage pairs or small groups in discussion about the main idea of the text. Chart students' responses using complete sentences to describe their main idea statements. - Facilitate small group discussion about the main idea statements that were included on the chart. Guide the group to circle reasonable main idea statements on the chart and cross out statements on the chart that do not accurately identify the main idea." Many of the weekly Sample Learning Tasks are preceded by information on "differentiated, small group reading instruction." Included in this is the following guidance on discussion: "When implementing *Curriculum 2.0*, small group instruction takes three forms: guided reading groups, flexible needs-based groups, and discussion groups". However, the Guided Reading materials included do not provide any text specific discussion prompts or guidance on discussion protocols. There are not clear discussion tasks in the Writing course materials.	
AC 2E Materials integrate speaking and listening into lessons, questions, and tasks and build in frequent opportunities for collaborative discussions.	Do the materials include evidence of the *integration of speaking and listening opportunities:* - That are designed into lessons, questions, and tasks? - That have frequent opportunities for students to share their findings and conclusions and build directly on others' ideas?	Materials in the Reading course integrate speaking and listening into lessons with the same small-group-discussion approach noted above. There are not clear discussion tasks in the Writing course materials.	☐ 2 ☒ 1 ☐ 0

4. Evidence-Based Discussions

IMET Metric ➡ Guiding Questions		Evidence	Score
AC 3C Materials include a cohesive yearlong plan for students to interact with and build academic vocabulary and increasingly sophisticated syntax.	Do the materials include evidence of *encouraging students to use targeted academic language in their speech*: - Through modeling? - Through clear directions?	There were no directions or guidance found in the materials to encourage students to use targeted academic language. Embedded in various portions of the Reading course instructional guides are instructions for "Developing Academic Language for English Learners." These are the most regular (if not sole) mention of academic language within the instructional materials. However, they do not provide any targeted language, models, or clear directions. For example: Reading, Marking Period 1, Week 1 "Developing Academic Language for English Learners: - Provide the <u>POV Comparison T-Chart</u> if necessary to help students organize examples and evidence from the text." Reading, Marking Period 4, Week 8 "Developing Academic Language for English Learners: - Direct students to label each circle on <u>Comparison Circles - Firsthand & Secondhand Accounts</u> with the title of the text. - During rereading, think aloud to model recording key points from the discussion on the comparison circles. - During rereading, guide students to capture key points from the discussion on the comparison circles. - During and after rereading, use the language frames on slides two and three of <u>Firsthand & Secondhand Accounts</u>, Model using the frames to orally describe a similarity and a difference. During discussion of the ask questions, guide students to use the frames to describe the similarities and differences of information in each text."	☐ 2 ☐ 1 ☒ 0

	Non-Negotiables	Alignment Criteria
Rating (Evidence-Based Discussions):	***Are All NNs Met?*** ☒ Yes ☐ No	***Section Points:*** <u>1/4</u>

5. Volume of Writing to Build Knowledge

IMET Metric → Guiding Questions		Evidence	Score
NN 2B Materials include frequent opportunities for evidence-based discussions and **writing to support careful analyses, well-defended claims, and clear information about texts to address the analytical thinking required by the Standards at each grade level.**	Do the materials include evidence of *writing and research* that includes: - Frequent opportunities for evidence-based writing? - Regular opportunities for short focused research? - Assignments and tasks that address the analytical thinking required by the grade-level (or above) reading and writing standards?	Writing and Reading materials are provided in separate courses, so opportunities for evidence-based writing are limited within the materials. Though writing tasks in the Reading and Writing courses are written from the standards and many require evidence, they do not support careful analysis, well-defined claims, and clear information about texts to address the analytic thinking required by the standards. Additionally, writing tasks are only sometimes tied to suggested texts, so no tasks are specific to any particular text or set of texts. Only one research project is present in the 4th grade materials. See indicator AC3B below for elaboration on research. Some supports for writing instruction are provided to the teacher in the form of linked professional development materials on Writers Workshop. There are also graphic organizers to support writing, as well as suggested instructional activities. None of these resources are specifically tailored to any text or writing prompt in the materials. Most writing tasks in the Reading course are based on standards, though they are skills-oriented, rather than encouraging text-based inquiry and supports for sending students back to text to support their writing. Thus, the writing tasks do not address the analytical thinking required by the grade-level standards. Additionally, though these tasks require use of evidence from text, they are not tied to any specific text For example: Reading, Marking Period 2, Week 6 - "Written Response: This is one of two options for the required written response question for Marking Period 2. Students use a graphic organizer, such as <u>Goals of European Explorers graphic organizer</u>, to capture and organize their thoughts before writing. Provide time for students to write at least two paragraphs in response to the prompt: *Summarize the text. Use key ideas and details to explain the main idea.* - As needed, revisit ask questions embedded in the sample learning task to scaffold student understanding. The student response should use clear reasoning supported by explicit, relevant, text-	☐ Meets ☒ Does Not Meet

5. Volume of Writing to Build Knowledge				
IMET Metric	**Guiding Questions**	**Evidence**		**Score**

		based evidence in the development of the topic. Use the <u>Grades 4-5 PARCC Scoring Rubric for Literary Analysis Tasks</u> to evaluate written responses."
		
		Writing tasks in the Writing course are skills-based. Some of these tasks include a suggested text while others are text-agnostic.
		For example:
		Writing, Marking Period 1, Week 1
		"Gather and record evidence from narrative text to inform an opinion.
		   - Explain to students that they will analyze two characters from a historical fiction text to develop a character analysis. Clarify that after analyzing two characters in the story they will select a character and analyze how that character had an impact on the outcome of the story. Revisit a historical fiction story in which two characters face a problem related to a historical context such as, <u>*Freedom Summer* by Deborah Wiles</u>. Ask: How do characters impact the outcome of a story? Think aloud to identify evidence about the characters actions, thoughts, and feelings and make inferences. Record ideas on <u>Character Analysis: Historical Fiction</u> using criteria and evidence from the text. Ask students to select a text with two characters from a story who face a problem related to a historical context. Provide time for students to use the criteria for character analysis, Character Analysis: Historical Fiction, and the text to gather and record evidence that shows how the character's actions contributed to the outcome of the story. Ask: How does using criteria and evidence from the text help you build an understanding of a character?"
		Writing, Marking Period 2, Week 6
		   - "Display and revisit a writing sample that develops main ideas with information and examples such as <u>*Westminster Community Profile*</u> by E.I. See. Think aloud to identify examples and information the author uses to develop the community profile and business analysis (e.g., The population of Westminster has increased 11% since 2000. However, there are numerous public waters around the Westminster area to freshwater fish, such as branches of water off of the Patapsco River, lakes, ponds, runs, and streams). Ask:		

5. Volume of Writing to Build Knowledge				
IMET Metric	➡ **Guiding Questions**		**Evidence**	**Score**
			Why is it beneficial to use information or examples in writing (e.g., clarifies writing for the reader, provides a description the reader can visualize, gives more specific details)? Model analyzing the text for places where there could be questions from a reader (e.g., What major metropolitan areas and attractions located near Westminster?). Think aloud, revisiting notes to find examples and information to add to the text to answer that question. Ask: What would an author do if there were no examples and information in the notes that answer the question (e.g., go back to the source for additional information). Model checking the paraphrased information within the body of the community profile and business analysis for accuracy Model elaborating by adding details from notes. Ask: Are there other places in the text where you have questions? Ask pairs to record their questions and share them with the class. Ask: What could the author do to answer these questions (e.g., search recorded information for details and add information and examples to clarify the text)? Provide opportunities for student pairs to identify places where additional information and examples could be used to answer questions within their partner's business proposals and discuss their feedback. Provide time for students to revise their drafts incorporating information and examples necessary to answer their partner's questions, doing additional research if not enough information is in their notes. Ask: How does adding examples improve my writing?" Writing, Marking Period 3, Week 3 "Analyze how modal auxiliaries convey tone and point of view - Revisit Modal Auxiliaries (MP1 week 2) and lead a discussion about the purpose of modal auxiliaries (e.g., provide additional and specific meaning to the main verb in a sentence, convey a specific meaning, present a point of view, compliment [*sic*] the verb). Display sentences which contain modal auxiliaries and guide students to match the modal auxiliary to its meaning using Modal Auxiliary Matching (e.g., might / small possibility, should / obligation, ought to / formal obligation, had better / warning, can / possibility). Encourage groups to discuss how authors choose	

5. Volume of Writing to Build Knowledge			
IMET Metric ➡️	**Guiding Questions**	**Evidence**	**Score**
		modal auxiliaries to convey a tone (e.g., warning, possibility) or point of view. Engage students in viewing a media message from <u>MCPS G4 MP3 Media Messages</u> to analyze how the tone influences consumers. Provide time for groups to select one media message from the resource and create a Tableau that includes how a modal auxiliary was used by the author to influence the consumer. Ask: How do modal auxiliaries help you understand the opinion presented in a media message? How did you know that your team's tableau clearly communicated the meaning of a modal auxiliary in a media message?"	
<u>AC 3B</u> Materials require students to engage in many short, focused research projects annually to develop students' knowledge in a range of areas and to enable students to develop the expertise needed to conduct research independently		Although guidance documents indicate that the instructional materials provide regular practice for research, few opportunities exist. For example, the "Writing – English Language Arts Grade 4 Indicators and Objectives by Marking Period and Weeks" lists research standards as addressed in all marking period weeks. However, a review of the materials did not reveal any short- or long-term projects. The PowerPoint "Writing Overview for Grade 4" indicated that research was part of the Writing course materials for Marking Period 4. The early weeks of these materials do prompt for research and inquiry. However, these opportunities are limited to mostly modeling and think-alouds, and very few specific strategies, resources, or tasks that might clearly develop research skills are provided. For example, Writing, Marking Period 4, Week 3 states, "Provide time for students to review their inquiry questions to identify keywords. Ask: How will you use these keywords to gather information from digital sources (e.g., use them as search terms within a selected web site if site has a search feature; enter the keywords in a search using the Edit > Find feature from the toolbar; scan web page for keywords)? From print sources (e.g., use the table of contents or index to locate pages with the keywords; scan pages for keywords)?...Provide time for students to use their selected resources to locate and select relevant information for their inquiry questions. Ask: How did you use flexibility to gather information for your inquiry?" As this is the only clearly articulated opportunity for research, the instructional materials do not provide multiple short, focused research projects annually to develop students' knowledge in a range of areas and	☐ 2 ☐ 1 ☒ 0

5. Volume of Writing to Build Knowledge

IMET Metric ➡ Guiding Questions		Evidence	Score
		to enable students to develop the expertise needed to conduct research.	

AC 2C Materials focus on argument and informative writing, spending approximately 1/3 of time on each genre (exposition, opinion, narrative). Alternately, they may reflect blended forms in similar proportions (e.g., exposition and persuasion):	Do the materials include evidence *of prominent and varied writing assignments over the course of the year* that address:
	
	 - On-demand and process writing?
	 - Different genres, with a focus on argumentative, informative, and blended forms of writing?
		Materials provide for different genres because each week of writing tasks is focused on the skills and process of writing a different genre. Examples of writing type focus for various weeks include:
		 Grade 4, Writing, Marking Period 4
		   - Weeks 1–2 Narrative
		   - Weeks 3–7 Informative
		   - Weeks 8 and 9 Opinion.
		 Grade 4, Writing, Marking Period 2
		   - Weeks 1–3 Narrative
		   - Weeks 4–6 Informational
		   - Weeks 7–9 Opinion
		
		 However, the materials do not present varied writing assignments, blended forms, or on-demand writing.
			☐ 2
			 ☒ 1
			 ☐ 0

AC 2D Materials support students' developing writing skills over the course of the school year. This includes writing opportunities that are prominent and varied.	Do the materials include evidence of *developing students' writing skills over the course of the year* as defined by: - Explicit instruction in the fundamentals of writing? - Grammar and conventions instruction in and out of context?	Grammar and conventions are infrequently taught in context and some out-of-context instruction is provided. It is unclear what resources, other than the teacher think-alouds and teacher-selected texts, might be used to strategically provide explicit instruction on grammar and conventions. For example, "Display a resource that defines prepositions, such as <u>Prepositions and Prepositional Phrases</u>. Guide students in generating examples of prepositions. Provide time for students to Think-Pair-Share: What is the purpose of a preposition in a sentence (e.g., part of speech that clarifies location, timing and direction: shows the relationship between two things)? Discuss a resource that details samples of prepositional phrases, such as Prepositions and Prepositional Phrases. Revisit a recently read text that includes prepositional phrases, such as <u>*Freedom Summer* by Deborah Wiles</u>, and ask students to identify prepositional phrases in excerpts read aloud and displayed on an ELMO or projector. Ask: How does using prepositional phrases enhance the text (e.g., shows the reader relationships about location, time, or direction)? How	☐ 2 ☒ 1 ☐ 0

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will including prepositional phrases impact your writing? Provide time for students to record a list of prepositional phrases they can use to describe relationships in their Writer's notebooks and share their ideas with a partner. What criteria did we use to identify prepositional phrases?"

Writing instruction is limited mostly to a Writer's Workshop model and teacher modeling. There is little explicit instruction on the fundamentals of writing.
For example,
Writing Marking Period 2, Week 6
"Ask: What is the purpose of a conclusion paragraph in informative writing (e.g., summarizes so the reader understands the main idea, answers questions)? Display and read aloud from an informative text that ends with a conclusion paragraph which makes an inference from information presented such as, *Westminster Community Profile* by E. I. See. Ask: What do you notice about the information that is included in the conclusion paragraph (e.g., no new information presented, made an inference, paraphrased ideas from the introduction and body paragraphs)? Model reviewing the thesis statement in the introduction, key ideas and details of the body paragraphs of *Westminster Community Profile*, and any related notes. Ask: What inferences did you make? Think aloud to evaluate if any revisions are needed. Should any information be deleted, added or reorganized? Ask yourself: What do all my inferences mean (e.g., Westminster needs a specialized business. The exact one needs to be determined by looking at the opportunity cost of building a recreation center in the community)? What conclusions can I draw? Ask students to provide any additional ideas for the conclusion paragraph based on the information. Model elaboration by combining and adding the student ideas to the conclusion paragraph. Provide opportunities for students to review their notes, thesis statement, and body paragraphs. Ask: How can you use *Inspiration* to help you synthesize your ideas to draft a conclusion paragraph (e.g., review and group similar ideas by colors or placement

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5. Volume of Writing to Build Knowledge			
IMET Metric	**Guiding Questions**	**Evidence**	**Score**
		in graphic organizer)? What inferences did you make from the new way you have combined your notes? What conclusions can you draw? Provide time for students to draft a conclusion paragraph for their informative texts and to share their conclusions paragraphs with multiple partners. Facilitate student revisions to conclusion paragraphs. Ask: How did combining facts help you draft a conclusion paragraph?" Materials do include direct instruction guidance, such as a handout titled "Strategies for Effective Opinion Essays." However, these resources are not clearly sequenced or supported so that writing might develop from the start to the end of the school year.	

Rating (Volume of Writing to Build Knowledge):	**Non-Negotiables**	**Alignment Criteria**
	Are All NNs Met? ☐ Yes ☒ No	*Section Points:* 2/6

6. Foundational Skills/Fluency

IMET Metric → Guiding Questions		Evidence	Score
AC 2G Materials address grade-level standards for foundational skills by providing instruction and diagnostic support in phonics, word recognition, and fluency through a research-based and transparent progression to develop proficient readers.	Do the materials include evidence of addressing foundational skills with *instruction and diagnostic support in phonics, word recognition, and fluency* that: - Addresses grade-level standards? - Is research-based? - Includes a transparent progression of skill development? (Grades 4–5 only)	The Sample Learning Tasks found in the Content Planner for Reading courses in grade 4 do not include systematic, explicit, research-based and differentiated phonics instruction. The Sample Learning Tasks do not regularly mention or provide resources for phonemic awareness, phonics, or fluency. In addition there is no mention of a sequence that teachers should follow nor was there any mention of how additional practice opportunities are provided (either independent or otherwise) for those students who need more time and attention. Linked under grade-level "Subject Materials — Reading" in the Content Planner is a "Reading Toolkit Grades 3, 4, 5." Within this "Reading Toolkit" is a link for the "Foundational Skills" page. This page is the same list of resources provided for grades K, 1, and 2 intended to target foundational skills instruction. These resources are not referenced in the Sample Learning Tasks. The resources include the following titles: "A Bridge from Spoken to Written Words," "Fluency," "Foundational Skills and Word Study," "Suggestions for Teaching High Frequency Words." This list of resources does not create a research-based and transparent progression in each grade-level. None of these resources provides guidance on how much time to spend on any given portion of foundational skills development. Furthermore, as this is the same list provided for primary grades, there are not different resources to attend to different grade-level foundational skills. The district recommends an early version of the Fountas and Pinnell program, which was written prior to the publication of the MCCRS, so it does not fully address the MCCR foundational skills standards. From the review of curricular materials, it is unclear when or where grade-level fluency is either addressed instructionally or assessed by teachers. A rubric for evaluating fluency from the NAEP 2005 work is recommended, although no references are made to more recent and practical work, for example by Tim Rasinski and David Paige. Additionally, a good number of fluency techniques are referenced briefly (on the document titled "Fluency" linked on the "Reading Toolkit: Foundational Skills"), however, there is no mention of how often to do this, which methods provide more support and which less, how these can be integrated into any texts, and most importantly that	☐ 2 ☐ 1 ☒ 0

6. Foundational Skills/Fluency

IMET Metric ➡ Guiding Questions		Evidence	Score
		this should be done with grade-level as opposed to instructional-level text.	
AC 1C Support materials for the anchor text(s) provide opportunities for students to engage in a range and volume of reading to achieve reading fluency of grade-level complex text as required by the Foundational Skills Standards.	Do the materials include evidence of providing students *the practice they need to achieve grade-level reading fluency in oral and silent reading* through: - A range and volume of reading? - Practice reading grade-level prose and poetry with appropriate accuracy, rate, and expression? (Grades 4–12)	There is no guidance nor practice opportunities to support grade-level reading fluency. The texts included in the "Core Book List" represent a possible volume and range of reading. However, without clear complexity information for the provided titles, it is impossible to determine if the volume of text is of sufficient complexity to support reading fluency. Additionally, there are few guidelines beyond the provided list and suggested titles in the instructional materials, so it is unlikely there is sufficient practice for students' grade-level fluency in either oral or silent reading. Additionally, the curricular materials do not include practice reading grade-level prose or poetry with appropriate accuracy, rate, and expression.	☐ 2 ☐ 1 ☒ 0
Rating (Foundational Skills/Fluency):		**Alignment Criteria**	
		Section Points: 0/4	

7. Supporting All Students

IMET Metric	Guiding Questions	Evidence	Score
AC 4A Teachers and students can reasonably complete the core content within a regular school year to maximize students' learning.	Do the materials include evidence of teachers/students reasonably being able to complete *the core content within a regular school year?*	The materials seem to provide a reasonable amount of content to cover in a year, though it is not clear how much time any given task should take. There is a vague scope and sequence of instruction provided in the narrative description of Sample Learning Tasks for each week within each of the four marking periods in a school year for both Reading and Writing courses. However, this narrative scope and sequence does not provide enough detail and specific resources and does not integrate the myriad of other resources provided for teachers ("Balanced Literacy Schedule", ESOL resources, assessment guidelines, etc.). Therefore, it is unclear how these Sample Learning Tasks would unfold over a year. There is not a series of resources clearly matched to the "Balanced Literacy Schedule for Grade 4". It is unclear how teachers should use the curricular resources provided (the Sample Learning Tasks in Reading and Writing, Fountas and Pinnell materials, Words Their Way, etc.) to fulfill the expectations of a balanced literacy schedule or how these resources might be employed for daily instruction.	☐ 2 ☒ 1 ☐ 0
AC 4B Materials regularly provide all students, including those who read, write, speak, or listen below grade level, or whose first language is other than English, with extensive opportunities to work with and meet grade-level Standards.	Do the materials include evidence of *all students having the opportunity to work with and meet grade-level standards* by: - Systematically building in the time, resources, and supports for students below grade-level? Systematically building in the time, resources, and supports for students whose first language is other than English?	The materials do not include specific time, resources, or support for students who are below grade-level. The Guided Reading materials are based on students reading texts at their instructional level (rather than grade-level) and there did not appear to be any supports for students to read texts in the grade-level complexity band as opposed to at their independent reading level. There were not any specific, concrete protocols as to what to do with students below grade-level. Grade 4 materials provide a link to a document titled "ESOL Resources and Materials," providing professional-development links to documents detailing guidance for ESOL and content teacher planning, including guiding questions, WIDA standards, and instructional strategy charts. These teacher-facing resources are not content-specific, tied to examples or lessons, or related to any text-specific resources. Student-facing resources are not provided. Additionally, there is no systematic building in of time, resources, or support for students whose first language is other than English. The most frequent support for students whose first language is other	☐ 2 ☐ 1 ☒ 0

7. Supporting All Students			
IMET Metric	**Guiding Questions**	**Evidence**	**Score**
		than English are the various parts of the Reading course guidance titled "Making Content Comprehensible for English Learners." Though occasionally requiring the use of text, none of these supports are tailored to any given text. It also isn't clear that these supports are providing ELLs the opportunity to work with and meet grade-level standards. For example: "Making Content Comprehensible for English Learners: - Guide students to sort examples and non-examples [*sic*] of paraphrased statements based on key ideas and details in the text. - Add examples and non-examples [*sic*] of paraphrased statements to Paraphrased [*sic*]Statements Flipchart to support presenting examples and non-examples to students. See the Notes Browser of the flipchart for more details. - Based on the key details within the text, present a strong example of a paraphrased statement that clearly combines key details and is written in one's own words Consider presenting a non-example of a paraphrased statement that is copied directly from the text to highlight the importance of putting details in their own words."	
AC 4E Materials regularly and systematically offer assessment opportunities that genuinely measure progress on reading comprehension and writing proficiency as well as on mastery of grade-level standards. This progress includes gradual release of supporting scaffolds	Do the materials include evidence of *regularly and systematically offering assessments* that: - Measure progress on grade-level reading and writing proficiency? - Include valid recommendations as to how to address results?	The 4th grade materials did not mention measurement of progress toward grade-level reading. Assessments are available only to test students' independent reading level. Included in the assessment approach is a form of the MIRL that is given three times a year, but more guidance is needed about how teachers are to use this information. The myMCPS website for 4th grade Reading course materials provides "ESOL Formative Assessments", which are intended for use to, "evaluate English language proficiency levels in listening, speaking, reading, and writing. All assessments are aligned with the content of *Curriculum 2.0*; therefore, they can also be scored for content proficiency." However, the content of these assessments is wide-ranging (from identification of numbers to identification of animal characteristics) and so not tied to or always appropriate for an ELA/Literacy course. These assessments do not include reading texts or writing tasks. No other systematic assessments of students'	☐ 2 ☒ 1 ☐ 0

7. Supporting All Students			
IMET Metric →	**Guiding Questions**	**Evidence**	**Score**
for students to measure their independent abilities.		independent abilities could be found.	

	Alignment Criteria
Rating (Supporting All Students):	*Section Points:* 2/6