

**Guiding Questions for Winnowing**

It is important to know all of the options available in the instructional materials market before narrowing the list of programs to investigate. Often there are products that an adoption committee has never heard of and that would be well-suited for the district and its priorities. There are products from large publishers, small publishers, open-education resources, and emerging titles that districts can consider. (Learn about what programs exist and how they measure up to standards expectations [in our report center](https://www.edreports.org/reports). [The compare feature](https://www.edreports.org/compare) is a great place to start.)

However, districts do not have time or capacity to take a deep dive in each available option, as every set of materials you review will require a heavy investment of time and consideration. One of the most important steps in the adoption process is to winnow the field to a manageable number of programs so that committees can review each potential set of materials in depth.

 **What is this resource?**

Once you have learned about all of the programs available, you need to narrow the choices to a select few that you will focus your investigation on in the next step. This resource provides guiding questions that can be used to support adoption teams in the first round of Step 3: Know and Winnow Your Choices.

 **How should this resource be used?**

We recommend you narrow your list to three to four options that will potentially meet the needs of your district. As part of your desk research, use the EdReports compare feature and read reports to learn more about how well materials meet expectations for alignment and other characteristics of quality. Contact other districts or experts to gather anecdotal information about programs. Then use these guiding questions to help your committee narrow the list of options and prepare to focus your investigation in Step 4: Investigate the Materials.

**Guiding Questions for Winnowing**:

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| **What are the district-specific priorities and/or parameters you previously established in Step 1: Develop Your District Lens (*e.g., aligned to standards, materials contain texts that represent diverse authors and central characters, materials have strong application problems, or materials meet district technology requirements*)?** |
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| **Start with the EdReports indicators that directly address your priorities.** * **Which priority will you focus on first as you look across the programs?**
* **Are there priorities that you cannot get information about from the EdReports reviews? How will you gather information on those *(e.g., committee review, internet research, contacting publishers)*?**
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| **Are there additional considerations your committee must take into account as you are narrowing your list of possibilities? What are they?** |
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| **Have you learned anything in your desk research that would point you toward or away from specific programs? What additional questions do you have for publishers?** |
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| **What is your timeline for the next phase of your investigation Step 4: Investigate the Materials? How many programs can you deeply study in this timeframe?** |
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| **How do you plan to communicate this shorter list of programs to your stakeholders? What, if any, methods will you establish for feedback on your focused list?** |
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