



Core Content Review Criteria v2.1

English Language Arts

Grades K-2

Figure 1: Gateways for Review of ELA Materials Based on Program Format

FS Supplemental	K-2 Comprehensive	3-5 Comprehensive	6-12 Comprehensive
Gateway 1*: Alignment to Research-Based Practices and Standards for Foundation Skills Instruction	Gateway 1: Alignment to Research-Based Practices and Standards for Foundation Skills Instruction (if applicable)	Gateway 1: Alignment to Research-Based Practices and Standards for Foundation Skills Instruction (if applicable)	N/A
N/A	Gateway 2: Comprehension Through Texts, Questions, and Tasks	Gateway 2: Comprehension Through Texts, Questions, and Tasks	Gateway 2: Comprehension Through Texts, Questions, and Tasks
Gateway 3**: Teacher and Student Supports	Gateway 3: Teacher and Student Supports	Gateway 3: Teacher and Student Supports	Gateway 3: Teacher and Student Supports
MLL Review <i>in Development</i>	Integrated MLL Review	Integrated MLL Review	Integrated MLL Review

*Gateway 1 indicators are consistent across all review tools.

**Gateway 3 differs for Foundational Skills Supplemental reviews.

Figure 2: Gateway Evaluation Process for Review of ELA Materials (Grades K-2)

Gateway 1*	Alignment to Research-Based Practices and Standards for Foundational Skills Instruction
	Do materials and instruction provide systematic and explicit instruction and practice for letter recognition?
	Do materials emphasize explicit, systematic instruction of research-based and/or evidence-based phonemic awareness?
	Do materials emphasize explicit, systematic instruction of research-based and/or evidence-based phonics?
	Do materials and instruction support students in learning and practicing regularly and irregularly spelled words?
	Do materials provide systematic and explicit instruction and practice in oral reading fluency by mid-to-late 1st and 2nd grade? Do materials for 2nd grade oral reading fluency practice vary (decodables and grade-level texts)?

*Only programs designed to address foundational skills are reviewed for Gateway 1. Materials not designed to address foundational skills will begin at Gateway 2.

Meets or Partially Meets: move to next applicable gateway

Gateway 2**

Comprehension Through Texts, Questions, and Tasks

Do materials include content-rich, engaging texts that meet the text complexity criteria for the grade level? Do texts and text sets cohesively work together to build knowledge of specific topics and/or content themes?

Do materials include questions, tasks, and assignments that are meaningful, evidence-based, and support students in making meaning and building knowledge as they progress toward grade-level mastery of literacy skills?

Do materials include clear, explicit instruction guidance for teachers across all literacy skills?

**Programs designed to ONLY address foundational skills will not be reviewed for Gateway 2.

Meets for all applicable gateways: move to Gateway 3

Gateway 3

Teacher & Student Supports

Do materials include opportunities for teachers to effectively plan and utilize with integrity to further develop their own understanding of the content?

Are materials designed for each child's regular and active participation in grade-level/grade-band/series content?

Do materials include a visual design that is engaging and references or integrates digital technology, when applicable, with guidance for teachers?

Gateway 1

Alignment to Research-Based Practices and Standards for Foundational Skills Instruction

Gateway 1 Overview	Available Points	
<p>Criterion 1.1: Alphabet Knowledge (Grade K only) Indicators 1a-1b Materials and instruction provide systematic and explicit instruction and practice for letter recognition.</p>	<p>10 (Kindergarten)</p>	
<p>Criterion 1.2: Phonemic Awareness (Grades K-1 only)* Indicators 1c-1f Materials emphasize explicit, systematic instruction of research-based and/or evidence-based phonemic awareness. *Criterion 1.2 is non-negotiable. Instructional materials being reviewed must score Meet Expectations in this criterion to proceed to Gateway 3.</p>	<p>16 (Kindergarten and Grade 1)</p>	
<p>Criterion 1.3: Phonics (Foundational Decoding and Encoding) * Indicators 1g-1n Materials emphasize explicit, systematic instruction of research-based and/or evidence-based phonics that includes letter sounds and blending sounds to pronounce a word. *Criterion 1.3 is non-negotiable. Instructional materials being reviewed must score Meet Expectations in this criterion to proceed to Gateway 3.</p>	<p>32</p>	
<p>Criterion 1.4: Word Recognition and Word Analysis Indicators 1o-1r Materials and instruction support students in learning and practicing regularly and irregularly spelled words.</p>	<p>12</p>	
<p>Criterion 1.5: Reading Fluency Development (Grades 1-2 only)* Indicators 1s-1u Materials provide systematic and explicit instruction and practice in fluency by mid-to-late 1st and 2nd grade. Materials for 2nd grade fluency practice should vary (e.g, decodables and grade-level texts). Instruction and practice support students’ development of accuracy, rate, and prosody to build fluent, meaningful reading. *Criterion 1.5 is non-negotiable. Instructional materials being reviewed must score Meet Expectations in this criterion to proceed to Gateway 3.</p>	<p>12 (Grades 1 and 2)</p>	
<p>Total Available Points in Gateway 1 (Kindergarten)</p>	<p>70</p>	<p>Meets: 63-70 Partially Meets: 35-62 Does Not Meet: < 35</p>
<p>Total Available Points in Gateway 1 (Grade 1)</p>	<p>72</p>	<p>Meets: 64-72 Partially Meets: 36-63 Does Not Meet: < 36</p>
<p>Total Available Points in Gateway 1 (Grade 2)</p>	<p>56</p>	<p>Meets: 50-56 Partially Meets: 28-49 Does Not Meet: < 28</p>

Gateway 1

Alignment to Research-Based Practices and Standards for Foundational Skills Instruction

Criterion 1.1 Alphabet Knowledge (Grade K only)

Materials and instruction provide systematic and explicit instruction and practice for letter recognition.

Indicators + Scoring Criteria	Scoring
1a. Alphabet Knowledge	
1a.i. Materials provide systematic and explicit instruction in letter names and their corresponding sounds.	0 1 2 (Not Scored for Grades 1-2)
1a.ii. Materials provide opportunities for student practice in letter names and their corresponding sounds.	0 1 2 (Not Scored for Grades 1-2)
1a.iii. Materials provide explicit instruction and teacher modeling in printing and forming the 26 letters (uppercase and lowercase).	0 1 2 (Not Scored for Grades 1-2)
1a.iv. Materials provide opportunities for student practice in printing and forming the 26 letters (uppercase and lowercase).	0 1 2 (Not Scored for Grades 1-2)
1b. Materials regularly and systematically offer assessment opportunities that measure student progress through mastery of letter recognition and printing letters (as indicated by the program scope and sequence).	0 1 2 (Not Scored for Grades 1-2)

Materials must meet the expectations of all scoring criteria in order to receive full points for the indicator.

Total Available Points	10	Meets: 9-10 Partially Meets: 5-8 Does Not Meet: < 5
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Criterion 1.2
Phonemic Awareness*
 (Grades K-1 only)

Materials emphasize explicit, systematic instruction of research-based and/or evidence-based phonemic awareness.

Indicators + Scoring Criteria	Scoring
1c. Scope and sequence clearly delineate the sequence in which phonemic awareness skills are to be taught, with a clear, evidence-based explanation for the expected hierarchy of phonemic awareness competence.	0 2 4 (Not Scored for Grade 2)
1d. Materials include systematic and explicit instruction in phonemic awareness with repeated teacher modeling.	0 2 4 (Not Scored for Grade 2)
1e. Materials include daily, brief lessons in phonemic awareness.	0 2 4 (Not Scored for Grade 2)
1f. Materials regularly and systematically offer assessment opportunities that measure student progress in phonemic awareness (as indicated by the program scope and sequence).	0 2 4 (Not Scored for Grade 2)

Materials must meet the expectations of all scoring criteria in order to receive full points for the indicator.

**Criterion 1.2 is non-negotiable. Instructional materials being reviewed must score Meet Expectations in this criterion to proceed to Gateway 3.*

Total Available Points	16	Meets: 14-16* Partially Meets: 8-13 Does Not Meet: < 8
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**Criterion 1.3
Phonics (Decoding and Encoding)***

Materials emphasize explicit, systematic instruction of research-based and/or evidence-based phonics.

Indicators + Scoring Criteria	Scoring
1g. Scope and sequence clearly delineate an intentional sequence in which phonics skills are to be taught, with a clear evidence-based explanation for the order of the sequence.	0 2 4
1h. Materials are absent of the three-cueing system.	0 4
1i. Materials, questions, and tasks provide reasonable pacing where phonics (decoding and encoding) skills are taught one at a time and allot time where phonics skills are practiced to automaticity, with cumulative review.	0 2 4
1j. Materials include systematic and explicit phonics instruction with repeated teacher modeling.	0 2 4
1k. Materials include frequent practice opportunities for students to decode and encode words that consist of common and newly-taught sound and spelling patterns.	0 2 4
1l. Spelling rules and generalizations are taught one at a time at a reasonable pace. Spelling words and generalizations are practiced to automaticity.	0 2 4
1m. Materials include decodable texts with phonics aligned to the program’s scope and sequence and opportunities for students to use decodables for multiple readings.	0 2 4
1n. Materials regularly and systematically offer assessment opportunities that measure student progress of phonics in- and out-of-context (as indicated by the program scope and sequence).	0 2 4

Materials must meet the expectations of all scoring criteria in order to receive full points for the indicator.

**Criterion 1.3 is non-negotiable. Instructional materials being reviewed must score Meet Expectations in this criterion to proceed to Gateway 3.*

Total Available Points	32	Meets: 30-32* Partially Meets: 16-29 Does Not Meet: < 16
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Criterion 1.4
Word Recognition and Word Analysis

Materials and instruction support students in learning and practicing regularly and irregularly spelled words.

Indicators + Scoring Criteria	Scoring
1o. Materials include explicit instruction in identifying the regularly spelled part and the temporarily irregularly spelled part of words. High-frequency word instruction includes spiraling review.	0 1 2
1p. Instructional opportunities are frequently built into the materials for students to practice and gain decoding automaticity of high-frequency words.	0 1 2
1q. Materials include explicit instruction in syllabication and morpheme analysis and provide students with practice opportunities to apply learning.	0 2 4
1r. Materials regularly and systematically offer assessment opportunities that measure student progress of word recognition and analysis (as indicated by the program scope and sequence).	0 2 4

Materials must meet the expectations of all scoring criteria in order to receive full points for the indicator.

Total Available Points	12	Meets: 10-12 Partially Meets: 6-9 Does Not Meet: < 6
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Criterion 1.5
Reading Fluency Development*
(Grades 1-2 Only)

Materials provide systematic and explicit instruction and practice in oral reading fluency by mid-to-late 1st and 2nd grade. Materials for 2nd grade oral reading fluency practice should vary (e.g., decodables and grade-level texts). Instruction and practice support students' development of accuracy, rate, and prosody to build fluent, meaningful reading.

Indicators + Scoring Criteria	Scoring
1s. Instructional opportunities are built into the materials for systematic, evidence-based, explicit instruction in oral reading fluency.	0 2 4 (Not Scored for K)
1t. Varied and frequent opportunities are built into the materials for students to engage in supported practice to gain automaticity and prosody beginning in mid-Grade 1 and through Grade 2 (once accuracy is secure).	0 2 4 (Not Scored for K and early Grade 1)
1u. Materials regularly and systematically offer assessment opportunities that measure student progress in oral reading fluency (as indicated by the program scope and sequence).	0 2 4 (Not Scored for K)

Materials must meet the expectations of all scoring criteria in order to receive full points for the indicator.

**Criterion 1.5 is non-negotiable. Instructional materials being reviewed must score Meet Expectations in this criterion to proceed to Gateway.*

Total Available Points (Grades 1-2)	12	Meets: 10-12* Partially Meets: 6-9 Does Not Meet: < 6
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Total Available Points in Gateway 1 (Kindergarten)	70	Meets: 63-70 Partially Meets: 35-62 Does Not Meet: < 35
Total Available Points in Gateway 1 (Grade 1)	72	Meets: 64-72 Partially Meets: 36-63 Does Not Meet: < 36
Total Available Points in Gateway 1 (Grade 2)	56	Meets: 50-56 Partially Meets: 28-49 Does Not Meet: < 28

Gateway 2

Comprehension Through Texts, Questions, and Tasks

To identify the Gateway rating, educators use evidence gathered to score indicators related to each criterion.

REMINDER:

- Materials must “Meet Expectations” or “Partially Meet Expectations” in Gateway 1* to be reviewed in Gateway 2**.
- Materials must “Meet Expectations” in BOTH Gateway 1* and Gateway 2** to be reviewed in Gateway 3.

Materials include engaging, content-rich texts that meet grade-level text complexity standards and work together to build knowledge on specific topics. They feature meaningful, evidence-based questions, tasks, and assignments that aid students in understanding and mastering literacy skills. Additionally, materials provide clear, explicit instructional guidance for teachers across all literacy skills.

**NOTE: Materials being reviewed must score above zero points in each indicator. Otherwise, the materials automatically do not proceed to Gateway 3.

Gateway 2 Overview	Available Points	
<p>Criterion 2.1: Text Quality and Text Complexity Indicators 2a-2e</p> <p>Materials include content-rich, engaging texts that meet the text complexity criteria for the grade level. Texts and text sets cohesively work together to build knowledge of specific topics and/or content themes.</p>	14	
<p>Criterion 2.2: Knowledge Building Through Reading, Writing, and Language Comprehension Indicators 2f-2v</p> <p>Materials include questions, tasks, and assignments that are meaningful, evidence-based, and support students in making meaning and building knowledge as they progress toward grade-level mastery of literacy skills.</p> <p>Materials include clear, explicit instruction guidance for teachers across all literacy skills.</p>	42	
Total Available Points in Gateway 2	56	Meets: 50-56 Partially Meets: 28-49 Does Not Meet: < 28

Gateway 2

Comprehension Through Texts, Questions, and Tasks

Criterion 2.1 Text Quality and Text Complexity

Materials include content-rich, engaging texts that meet the text complexity criteria for the grade level. Texts and text sets cohesively work together to build knowledge of specific topics and/or content themes.

Indicators + Scoring Criteria	Scoring
2a. Materials provide opportunities for students to engage in a range and volume of reading through content-rich and engaging texts.	0 2 4
2b. Core/Anchor texts have the appropriate level of complexity for the grade according to documented quantitative analysis, qualitative analysis, and relationship to their associated student task.	0 2 4
2c. Materials provide appropriate scaffolds for core/anchor texts that ensure all students can access the text and make meaning. Scaffolds align with the text's qualitative analysis.	0 1 2
2d. Text sets (e.g., unit, module) are organized around topic(s) or theme(s) to cohesively build student knowledge.	0 2 4
2e. Materials include a range of texts and provide teacher support in helping students learn about people who are similar to and different from them.	Narrative Evidence Only

Materials must meet the expectations of all scoring criteria in order to receive full points for the indicator. Materials may not score any 0s to meet expectations for this scoring criterion.

Total Available Points	14	Meets: 12-14 Partially Meets: 7-11 Does Not Meet: < 7
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Criterion 2.2 Knowledge Building Through Reading, Writing, and Language Comprehension

Materials include questions, tasks, and assignments that are meaningful, evidence-based, and support students in making meaning and building knowledge as they progress toward grade-level mastery of literacy skills. Materials include clear, explicit instruction guidance for teachers across all literacy skills.

Indicators + Scoring Criteria	Scoring
2f. Materials include a clear, research-based core instructional pathway with reasonable pacing throughout the year, which allows students to work towards grade-level proficiency.	0 2 4
2g. Most questions, tasks, and assignments are text-based, allowing students to demonstrate their thinking in various formats.	0 2 4
2h. Materials support students in developing their ability to comprehend complex ideas within and across texts through opportunities to analyze and evaluate texts.	0 1 2
2i. Materials provide clear protocols and teacher guidance that frequently allow students to engage in listening and speaking about texts they are reading (or read aloud).	0 1 2
2j. Materials provide opportunities for students to engage in listening and speaking about texts they are reading (or read-aloud).	0 1 2
2k. Materials include explicit instruction on independent word-learning strategies and key vocabulary words to build knowledge within and across texts.	0 1 2
2l. Materials include opportunities for students to practice independent word-learning strategies, as well as newly taught vocabulary words.	0 1 2
2m. Materials include explicit instruction on sentence composition appropriate to grade-level standards, embedded in what students are studying throughout the unit.	0 1 2
2n. Materials include evidence-based opportunities for students to practice sentence composition and editing of their own writing, appropriate for their grade level.	0 1 2
2o. Materials include a mix of both on-demand and process writing opportunities that are appropriately aligned in purpose, genre, and/or topic to the reading and listening of that unit.	0 1 2
2p. Materials include explicit instruction in varied writing processes, embedded in what students are studying throughout the unit.	0 1 2
2q. Materials include frequent opportunities for students to practice the writing processes using evidence-based strategies, embedded in what students are studying throughout the unit.	0 1 2
2r. Materials include frequent opportunities for students to practice evidence-based writing (by drawing from the texts and knowledge built throughout the unit) to ask and answer questions about key details in a text.	0 1 2

2s. Materials include explicit instruction of research skills that guide shared research to develop students' knowledge using multiple texts and source materials.	0	1	2
2t. Materials include multiple opportunities for students to apply research skills to develop their knowledge of topics.	0	1	2
2u. Materials include formative assessments and guidance that provide the teacher with information for instructional next steps.	0	2	4
2v. Materials include culminating tasks/summative assessments that require students to demonstrate the knowledge and skills acquired throughout the unit/module while integrating multiple literacy skills (e.g., a combination of reading, writing, speaking, and listening).	0	2	4

Materials must meet the expectations of all scoring criteria in order to receive full points for the indicator. Materials may not score any 0s to meet expectations for this scoring criterion.

Total Available Points	42	Meets: 38-42 Partially Meets: 21-37 Does Not Meet: < 21
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Total Available Points in Gateway 2	56	Meets: 50-56 Partially Meets: 28-49 Does Not Meet: < 28
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Gateway 3

Teacher & Student Supports

To identify the Gateway rating, educators use evidence gathered to score indicators related to each criterion.

REMINDER:

- Materials must “Meet Expectations” or “Partially Meet Expectations” in Gateway 1* to be reviewed in Gateway 2**.
- Materials must “Meet Expectations” in BOTH Gateway 1* and Gateway 2** to be reviewed in Gateway 3.

Materials support teachers to fully utilize the curriculum, understand the skills and learning of their students, and support a range of learners.

Gateway 3 Overview	Available Points	
<p>Criterion 3.1: Teacher Supports Indicators 3a-3i</p> <p>Materials include opportunities for teachers to effectively plan and utilize with integrity to further develop their own understanding of the content.</p>	10	
<p>Criterion 3.2: Student Supports Indicators 3j-3q</p> <p>Materials are designed for each child’s regular and active participation in grade-level/grade-band/series content.</p>	4	
<p>Criterion 3.3: Intentional Design Indicators 3r-3u</p> <p>Materials include a visual design that is engaging and references or integrates digital technology, when applicable, with guidance for teachers.</p>	Narrative Evidence Only	
Total Available Points in Gateway 3	14	Meets: 12-14 Partially Meets: 7-11 Does Not Meet: < 7

Gateway 3

Teacher and Student Supports

Criterion 3.1 Teacher Supports

Materials include opportunities for teachers to effectively plan and utilize with integrity to further develop their own understanding of the content.

Indicators + Scoring Criteria	Scoring
3a. Materials provide teacher guidance with useful annotations and suggestions for how to enact the student materials and ancillary materials to support students' literacy development.	0 1 2
3b. Materials contain explanations and examples of grade-level/course-level concepts and/or standards and how the concepts and/or standards align to other grade/course levels so that teachers can improve their own knowledge of the subject.	0 1 2
3c. Materials include a year-long scope and sequence with standards correlation information.	0 1
3d. Materials provide strategies for informing all stakeholders, including students, parents, or caregivers about the program and suggestions for how they can help support student progress and achievement.	Narrative Evidence Only
3e. Materials explain the program's instructional approaches, identify research-based strategies, and explain the role of the standards.	0 1 2
3f. Materials provide a comprehensive list of supplies needed to support instructional activities.	0 1
3g. The assessment system provides consistent opportunities to determine student learning throughout the school year. The assessment system provides sufficient teacher guidance for evaluating student performance and determining instructional next steps.	0 1 2
3h. <i>This is not an assessed indicator in ELA.</i>	
3i. <i>This is not an assessed indicator in ELA.</i>	

Materials must meet the expectations of all scoring criteria in order to receive full points for the indicator. Materials may not score any 0s to meet expectations for this scoring criterion.

Total Available Points	10	Meets: 8-10 Partially Meets: 5-7 Does Not Meet: < 5
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Criterion 3.2
Student Supports

Materials are designed for each child’s regular and active participation in grade-level/grade-band/series content.

Indicators + Scoring Criteria	Scoring
3j. Materials provide strategies and support for students in special populations to work with grade-level content and meet or exceed grade-level standards, which support their regular and active participation in learning.	0 1 2
3k. Materials regularly provide extensions for advanced students who are above grade level to engage with literacy content and concepts in greater depth.	0 1 2
3l. Materials provide varied approaches to learning tasks over time and variety in how students are expected to demonstrate their learning with opportunities for students to monitor their learning.	Narrative Evidence Only
3m. Materials provide opportunities for teachers to use a variety of grouping strategies.	Narrative Evidence Only
3n. Assessments offer accommodations that allow students to demonstrate their knowledge and skills without changing the content of the assessment.	Narrative Evidence Only
3o. Materials provide a range of representation of people and include detailed instructions and support for educators to effectively incorporate and draw upon students’ different cultural, social, and community backgrounds to enrich learning experiences.	Narrative Evidence Only
3p. <i>This is not an assessed indicator in ELA.</i>	
3q. <i>This is not an assessed indicator in ELA.</i>	

Materials must meet the expectations of all scoring criteria in order to receive full points for the indicator. Materials may not score any 0s to meet expectations for this scoring criterion.

Total Available Points	4	Meets: 4 Partially Meets: 2-3 Does Not Meet: < 2
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**Criterion 3.3
Intentional Design**

The program includes a visual design that is engaging and references or integrates digital technology, when applicable, with guidance for teachers.

Indicators + Scoring Criteria	Scoring
3r. Materials integrate technology such as interactive tools, virtual manipulatives/objects, and/or dynamic software in ways that engage students in the grade-level/series standards, when applicable.	Narrative Evidence Only
3s. Materials include or reference digital technology that provides opportunities for teachers and/or students to collaborate with each other, when applicable.	Narrative Evidence Only
3t. The visual design (whether in print or digital) supports students in engaging thoughtfully with the subject, and is neither distracting nor chaotic.	Narrative Evidence Only
3u. Materials provide teacher guidance for the use of embedded technology to support and enhance student learning, when applicable.	Narrative Evidence Only

Total Available Points	Narrative Evidence Only	Meets: N/A Partially Meets: N/A Does Not Meet: N/A
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Total Available Points in Gateway 3	14	Meets: 12-14 Partially Meets: 7-11 Does Not Meet: < 7
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