

Overview of the Instructional Materials Quality Evaluation Pilot Rubric English Language Arts and Reading Grades 3–8

Background on the Instructional Materials Quality Reviews

Teachers and students deserve the highest quality instructional materials that not only align to the TEKS but also reflect research-based instructional practices that provide teachers with support to challenge and inspire their students. Local education agencies (LEAs) across Texas are eager to purchase the best materials for their teachers and students, a desire which is backed by the growing body of research showing that selecting high-quality instructional materials is one of the most successful and cost-effective ways to improve student outcomes.¹

A common challenge among teachers, schools, and LEAs is finding the time, expertise, and information necessary to identify strong materials. Often, materials adoption processes are hampered by the realities of time and capacity at the local level, and without support it can be difficult to discern differences about the quality among multiple programs that are labeled and marketed as meeting the needs of all students.

The TEA will facilitate an independent analysis of the quality of instructional materials, as written into statute in 2017 (Texas Education Code § 31.081 and § 31.082). This process will empower and strengthen local decision-making and make it easier for educators at all levels to attend to the specific, unique needs of their students. LEAs will have complete autonomy to decide if and how they use the reviews as part of their local review and adoption processes.

Development of the Draft ELAR 3-8 Rubric

To ensure accurate, transparent, and reliable reviews, materials will be evaluated by teams of highly trained reviewers, consisting of Texas teachers and other Texas school and district personnel that have content expertise, using a Texas-specific rubric. The DRAFT rubric below, which will evolve over the next few months during the Instructional Materials Quality Evaluation (IMQE) pilot, will be used by review teams to evaluate the quality of English language arts and reading (ELAR) materials for grades 3–8.

The TEA will continue to solicit feedback from a variety of stakeholders throughout the state, including teachers, to hone the quality criteria and improve labeling language (terms, titles, etc.). Once finalized after the IMQE pilot is complete, this rubric will be shared publicly so it is readily available to LEAs, publishers, education service centers (ESCs), and parents.

¹ Steiner, David. (2017, March) Curriculum Research: What We Know and Where We Need to Go. StandardsWork



Design of the ELAR 3–8 Rubric

The goal of ELAR is for students to read, understand, and express understanding of complex texts independently. To accomplish this goal, instructional materials must build students' knowledge and skills in language, comprehension, conversations, and writing integrated around a volume of complex texts and tasks.² In grades K–5, materials must also build students' foundational skills to be able to read and write about a range of texts independently.³ Materials must also be closely aligned to the TEKS and be easy for teachers to use.

Therefore, this draft rubric includes the following broad categories reviewers will use to capture and report information about programs, helping Texas educators differentiate the quality of instructional materials:

- I. TEKS and ELPS Alignment: How well do the materials align to Texas' unique standards and context?
- II. Quality and Variety of Texts: What will students read, see, and hear?
- III. Interaction with and Response to Texts: How will students express their understanding of complex texts, and to what extent do these skills integrate with one another?
 - A. Reading: Questions and Tasks
 - B. Composition
 - C. Speaking and Listening
 - D. Inquiry, Research, and Integration
- IV. **Foundational Literacy Skills Development** (for limited grades): To what extent do the materials build the foundational skills (e.g., fluency) that students need to read and write about texts independently?
- V. Supports for Diverse Learners: How well do the materials support teachers in meeting the needs of students with diverse learning needs?
- VI. Ease of Use and Supports for Implementation: How user-friendly are the materials and how do they support students, teachers and administrators in assuring strong implementation?
- VII. Additional Information About Cost, Professional Learning, and Technology

Each category includes a series of more detailed indicators to help educators determine why a certain program is or is not considered high quality within each category.

Important note: This rubric and the review process are not intended to capture all the characteristics and components that high-quality ELAR materials should encompass. There are many other components within a set of instructional materials that may support students in their development in literacy. This rubric and the review process are intended to provide information for teachers, schools, and LEAs to discern quality components among programs to assist them in making the best choice for their students.

² A volume of texts is a collection of texts written about similar topics, themes, or ideas.

³ A range of texts are texts written at different reading levels.



How to Read the Rubric Draft

Criterion/Category - This is the broadest category level. This is the "forest view."

Indicator - These make up the details within the categories. Together they are the "trees" that make the "forest."

1.1 Indicator- These are the branches/leaves of the tree.

1.2 Indicator- These are the branches/leaves of the tree.

Note on Existing SBOE TEKS Alignment Process:

The quality review process is designed to be complementary to the TEKS alignment process. All materials that are reviewed for quality will also complete the TEKS alignment review, which results in a percentage of TEKS coverage for a specific set of materials. The TEKS alignment process is designed to capture one threshold level of alignment (what standards are met). The quality review process, with the support of this rubric, will provide a broad overview of additional criteria required to determine high-quality materials (how well standards are met). The rubric identifies which quality components are present and how the instructional materials' components work together to support students and teachers in the classroom.



SCORING METHODOLOGY:

To ensure all Texas educators have access to the highest quality materials, the scoring methodology for this rubric captures what is non-negotiable as well as the additional components that are important in supporting strong differentiation and implementation.

Rationale for Scoring

- Materials must align to at least 51% of TEKS alignment per the SBOE process.
- Materials must achieve 80% or more in each non-negotiable section to meet the expectations of three or four stars. Materials which do not achieve 80% in these sections will receive one or two stars and are not recommended.
- To earn four stars, materials must meet the non-negotiable requirements *and* earn 80% or more of the total points possible.
- To earn three stars, materials must meet the non-negotiable requirements *and* earn less than 80% of the total points possible.
- To earn two stars, materials do not meet all non-negotiable requirements.
- To earn one star, publishers have not met all submission requirements.

Star Score	Description	Grades 3–5	Grades 6–8
****	Materials require VERY LITTLE WORK on the part of the	All non-negotiables met + a total score	All non-negotiables met + a total score
	teacher and/or LEA to ensure the materials support	of at least 75 out of 93 points (\geq 80%).	of at least 65 out of 81 points (\geq 80%).
	rigorous grade-level instruction.		
***	Materials require a REASONABLE AMOUNT OF WORK on	All non-negotiables met + a total score	All non-negotiables met + a total score
	the part of the teacher and/or LEA to ensure the	of 74 or fewer points out of 93 points	of 64 or fewer points out of 81 points
	materials support rigorous grade-level instruction.	(< 80%).	(< 80%).
**	Materials require a SIGNIFICANT AMOUNT OF WORK on	Not all non-negotiables met.	Not all non-negotiables met.
	the part of the teacher and/or LEA to ensure the		
	materials support rigorous grade-level instruction.		
*	Materials require a SIGNIFICANT AMOUNT OF WORK on	Publishers have not met all submission	Publishers have not met all submission
	the part of the teacher and/or LEA to ensure the	requirements.	requirements.
	materials support rigorous grade-level instruction.		
	Materials do not include all required submission		
	components.		

Raw Score Point Requirements



Section I.

I. TEKS and ELPS Alignment (percent of standards met in materials)

State review panel members review instructional materials to determine the extent to which the TEKS and ELPS are covered and to identify factual errors. To be eligible for adoption, instructional materials must meet at least 51% of the TEKS and 100% of the required ELPS in the components intended for student use and the components intended for teacher use, be free from factual error, meet manufacturing specifications, be suitable for the intended course and grade level, and be reviewed by academic experts.

Scoring: This section is non-negotiable. Materials must achieve 50% or better alignment per the SBOE process to meet the expectations of three or four stars.

Indicator	Scoring
1.1	50-74%: 1 point
Percentage of TEKS met (as determined by SBOE process).	75%-100%: 2 points
1.2	50-74%: 1 point
Percent of required ELPS met (as determined by SBOE process).	75%-100%: 2 points



Section II.

II. Texts (what students read, see, and hear)

Materials must include a wide variety and range of high-quality literary and informational texts that are appropriately challenging for the grade.

Scoring: This section is non-negotiable. Materials must achieve 80% or more in each non-negotiable section to meet the expectations of three or four stars. This equates to at least 10 out of 12 points in this section.

Indicator	Scoring	Guidance for Texas Quality
II.1 Materials include high-quality texts for ELAR instruction and cover a range of student interests.	0/2/4	 The texts are well-crafted (e.g., representing the quality of content, language, and writing that is produced by experts in various disciplines). Materials include texts of contemporary, classic, and traditional literature from Western Civilization, as well as various cultural settings of relevance to Texas students.
II.2 Materials include a variety of text types and genres across multiple disciplines (e.g., support connections to science and social studies) that meet the requirements of the TEKS for each grade level.	0/2/4	 Text types must include those outlined for specific grades by the TEKS: Literary texts must include those outlined for specific grades (e.g., works of fiction, poetry, drama). Informational texts include texts of information, exposition, argumentative, procedures, and documents as outlined in the TEKS. Materials include opportunities for students to analyze the use of print and graphic features (e.g., maps, charts, illustrations, graphs, timelines, tables, and diagrams).
II.3 Texts are appropriately challenging and are at an appropriate level of complexity to support students at their grade level.	0/2/4	 Texts are accompanied by a text complexity analysis provided by the publisher and are at the appropriate quantitative levels (e.g., Lexile) and qualitative features (e.g., text structure, language features, meaning, and knowledge demands) for the grade level.





III. Interaction with and Response to Texts (what students are asked to write, speak, and demonstrate) Materials provide questions and tasks for students to both develop and deepen comprehension of texts and topics. Students demonstrate grade level literacy skills through reading, writing, listening, and speaking opportunities that require use of text evidence for response. Materials contain meaningful, interconnected questions and tasks that build student knowledge. Tasks integrate reading, writing, speaking, and listening (including components of vocabulary, syntax, and fluency, as needed) and provide opportunities for increased independence.

Scoring: This section is non-negotiable. Materials must achieve 80% or more in each non-negotiable section to meet the expectations of three or four stars. This equates to at least 38 out of 47 points in this section.

III.a Reading: Questions and Tasks

Indicator	Scoring	Guidance for Texas Quality
III.a.1 Materials contain high-quality questions and tasks that support students in analyzing and integrating knowledge, ideas, themes, and connections within and across texts.	0/2/4	 Most questions and tasks build conceptual knowledge, are text-specific/dependent, target complex elements of the texts, and integrate multiple TEKS. Most formal and informal assignments and activities focus on texts students are reading/hearing and require close attention to the meaning and inferences as students demonstrate comprehension.
III.a.2 Materials contain questions and tasks that require students to analyze the language, key ideas, details, craft, and structure of individual texts.	0/2/4	 Questions and tasks support students critically analyzing vocabulary, form, and meaning of texts. Questions and tasks require students to: identify and discuss important big ideas, themes, and details; demonstrate clear comprehension of the texts; make connections to personal experiences, other texts, and the world around them; analyze, make inferences, and draw conclusions about the author's purpose in cultural, historical, and contemporary contexts and provide evidence from the text to support their understanding;



		 compare and contrast the stated or implied purposes of different authors' writing on the same topic. Questions and tasks support students' analysis of the literary elements of texts by: asking students to identify author's purpose and craft (in single and multiple texts); asking students to analyze the author's choices and how they influence and communicate meaning (in single and across a variety of texts); asking students to study the language within texts to support understanding, including questions and tasks that support students making personal connections to the work.
III.a.3 Coherent sequences of questions and activities focus students on understanding the text and its illustrations (as applicable), making connections among the texts in the collection, and expressing their understanding of the topics, themes, and/or ideas presented in the texts.	0/2/4	 The activities and questions with which students engage support students' analysis and understanding of language use, comprehension of details, and craft of texts that grow increasingly more challenging over the course of school year. Questions and activities grow students' understanding of topics and literacy skills over the course of each unit. Materials provide opportunities for students to analyze and integrate information from multiple places within a text and across multiple texts.
III.a.4 Most oral and written tasks require students to use clear and concise information and well- defended text-supported claims to demonstrate the knowledge gained through analysis and synthesis of texts. All tasks should require the use of grade-level language and conventions.	0/2/4	 Oral and written tasks provide students practice in applying language that is critical to conveying their purpose, the content, and the meaning of texts. This may include deep practice with new vocabulary in multiple text types. Materials provide students practice in applying newly acquired vocabulary in speaking and writing.
III.a.5 Materials include a clearly defined plan to support and hold students accountable as they engage in independent reading .	0/1 (binary)	 Procedures and/or protocols, along with adequate support for teachers, are provided to foster independent reading. Materials provide a plan for students to self-select texts and read independently for a sustained period of time, including planning and accountability for achieving independent reading goals.



III.b. Composition

Indicator	Scoring	Guidance for Texas Quality
III.b.1 Materials provide support for students to develop composition skills across multiple text types for a variety of purposes and audiences.	0/2/4	 Materials facilitate students' coherent use of the elements of the writing process (planning, drafting, revising, editing, and publishing) to compose text. Materials provide students opportunities to write texts for multiple purposes and audiences: Students write literary texts to express their ideas and feelings about real or imagined people, events, and ideas. Students write personal narratives that convey their thoughts and feelings about an experience. Materials provide students practice with writing informative and procedural or work-related texts to communicate ideas and information to specific audiences for specific purposes. Materials provide students practice with writing argumentative texts to influence the attitudes or actions of a specific audience on specific issues. Materials provide students practice with writing argumentative essays for appropriate audiences that establish a position and include sound reasoning, detailed and relevant evidence, and consideration of alternatives.
III.b.2 Over the course of the year, composition convention skills are applied in increasingly complex contexts, with opportunities for students to publish their writing.	0/2/4	 Materials provide opportunities for practice and application of the conventions of academic language when speaking and writing, including punctuation and grammar. Grammar, punctuation, and usage are taught systematically, both in and out of context, and grow in depth and complexity within and across units.
III.b.3 Materials include practice for students to write legibly in cursive.	0/2	 Materials include instruction in cursive handwriting for students in the appropriate grade(s). Materials include a plan for procedures and supports for teachers to assess students' handwriting development.



III.c Speaking and Listening

Indicator	Scoring	Guidance for Texas Quality
III.c.1 Materials support students' listening and speaking about texts and research to give organized presentations in both formal and informal settings.	0/2/4	 Materials provide opportunities for students to listen closely to and correctly interpret a speaker's messages (both verbal and nonverbal) and ask questions to clarify the speaker's purpose or perspective. Materials provide practice for students to follow, restate, and give oral instructions that include multiple action steps and determine both main and supporting ideas in the speaker's message. Materials provide opportunities for students to give organized presentations and speak in a clear and concise manner using the conventions of language.
III.c.2 Materials engage students in productive teamwork and in student-led discussions.	0/2/4	 Materials provide consistent opportunities for students to practice discussions and oral presentations using grade level appropriate protocols. Materials provide consistent opportunities for students to engage in discussions that require support of sources in an accurate and focused manner. Materials provide students guidance and practice in eliciting and considering suggestions from other group members, including identifying points of agreement and disagreement.
III.c.3 Materials include a cohesive, year-long plan for students to interact with and build key academic vocabulary in and across texts.	0/2/4	 Materials include a year-long plan for building academic vocabulary, including ways to apply words in appropriate contexts. Materials include scaffolds and supports for teachers to differentiate vocabulary development for all learners.



III.d Inquiry, Research, and Integration Indicator Scoring **Guidance for Texas Quality** 0/2/4 III.d.1 Materials support identification and summary of high-quality primary and • Materials engage students in both short-term and secondary sources (e.g., vetted reference texts, periodicals, online sources, and sustained recursive inquiry processes to confront data from experts). and analyze various aspects of a topic using Materials support student practice in organizing and presenting their ideas and ٠ relevant sources. information in accordance with the purpose of the research and the appropriate grade level audience. 0/2/4 III.d.2 Questions and tasks are designed so that students build and apply knowledge and • Materials contain meaningful, interconnected skills in reading, writing, speaking, listening, and language through quality, gradetasks that build student knowledge and provide level complex texts. For example, in Grade 6, students read a text, develop a plan opportunities for increased independence. for analyzing or emulating the text, write a response, and share their writing with a peer who reviews the writing against metrics using a peer review checklist. Materials contain a coherently sequenced set of high-quality, text-dependent questions and tasks that require students to analyze the integration of knowledge and ideas within individual texts as well as across multiple texts. Tasks integrate reading, writing, speaking, and listening; include components of ٠ vocabulary, syntax, and fluency, as needed; and provide opportunities for increased independence.

Section IV.



IV. Developing and Sustaining Foundational Literacy Skills (Grades 3–5 only) Materials follow a sequence of appropriate foundational skills instruction indicated by the TEKS while providing abundant opportunities for

every student to become proficient in each of the foundational skills.

Scoring: This section is non-negotiable. Materials must achieve 80% or more in each non-negotiable section to meet the expectations of three or four stars. This equates to at least 10 out of 12 points in this section.

Indicator	Scoring	Guidance for Texas Quality
IV.1 Materials provide systematic instruction and practice of foundational skills, including opportunities for phonics and word analysis skills (e.g., examination of grade-level prefixes and suffixes, decoding of multisyllabic words by using syllabication, and automaticity with grade-level regular and irregular spelling patterns).	0/2/4	 Materials include a research-based sequence of grade-level foundational skills instruction and opportunities for sufficient student practice to achieve grade-level mastery. Materials systematically develop knowledge of grade-level phonics patterns and word analysis skills as delineated in the TEKS for grades 3–5. Materials provide opportunities for students to practice grade-level word recognition skills to promote automaticity. Materials provide opportunities for students to practice and apply word analysis skills both in and out of context. Materials include building spelling knowledge as identified in the TEKS. Materials specifically attend to supporting students in need of effective remediation.
IV. 2 Materials include diagnostic tools and provide opportunities to assess student mastery, in and out of context, at regular intervals for teachers to make instructional adjustments.	0/2/4	 Materials support the teacher in working with students to self-monitor, use context to confirm or self-correct understanding, and employ rereading when appropriate. Materials include support and direction for teachers to assess students' growth in, and mastery of, foundational skills (e.g., skill gaps in phonics and decoding) both in and out of context. Materials support teachers with guidance and direction to respond to individual students' literacy needs, based on assessments appropriate to the grade level.



 IV. 3 Materials provide frequent opportunities for students to practice and develop oral and silent reading fluency, while reading a wide variety of grade-appropriate texts at the appropriate rate with accuracy and expression. 	0/2/4	 Materials provide students opportunities to read grade-level texts as they make meaning and build foundational skills. Materials include explicit instruction in fluency, including phrasing, intonation, expression, and accuracy. Materials provide opportunities and routines for teachers to regularly monitor and provide corrective feedback on phrasing, intonation, expression, and accuracy.
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Section V.

V. Supports for Diverse Learners

Materials provide guidance and support that help teachers meet the diverse learning needs of all students.

Scoring: Materials may receive up to 8 points in this section which will contribute to the overall score. The total number of points received will impact the material's star classification.

Indicator	Scoring	Guidance for Texas Quality
V.1 Materials include year-long plans and supports for teachers to identify needs of students and provide differentiated instruction to meet the needs of a range of learners to ensure grade-level success.	0/1/2	 Materials provide an overarching year-long plan for teachers to engage students in multiple grouping (and other) structures, including alternate pacing and delivery options, etc. Plans are comprehensive and attend to differentiation to support students via many learning opportunities.
V.2 Materials include supports for students who demonstrate proficiency above grade-level.	0/1/2	 Materials provide planning and learning opportunities (including extensions and differentiation) for students who demonstrate literacy skills above that expected at the grade level. For example, materials may provide instructional organization of projects that extend over time, options for extended rigorous study, and/or practice with literacy skills development above the grade level.
V.3 Materials include supports for students who perform below grade-level to ensure they are meeting the grade level literacy standards.	0/1/2	 Materials provide planning and learning opportunities (including extensions and differentiation) for students who demonstrate literacy skills below that expected at the grade level. For example, materials provide accelerated skill development to advance comprehension and vocabulary and/or connections across content areas to increase application of literacy skills in rigorous coursework.
V.4 Materials include supports for English Learners (EL) to meet grade-level learning expectations.	0/1/2	 Materials must include accommodations for linguistics (communicated, sequenced, and scaffolded) commensurate with various levels of English language proficiency as defined by the ELPs. Materials provide scaffolds such as adapted text, translations, native language support, cognates, summaries, pictures, realia, glossaries, bilingual dictionaries, thesauri, and other modes of comprehensible input.





 Materials encourage strategic use of students' first language as a means to linguistic, affective, cognitive, and academic development in English (e.g., to enhance vocabulary development).
 Vocabulary is developed in the context of connected discourse.



Section VI.

VI. Ease of Use and Supports for Implementation

Materials provide support for implementation including clear and easy-to-follow guidance and support for teachers.

Scoring: Materials may receive up to 10 points in this section which will contribute to the overall score. The total number of points received will impact the material's star classification.

Indicator	Scoring	Guidance for Texas Quality
VI.1 Materials include implementation support for teachers and administrators.	0/2/4	 Materials include a school years' worth of literacy instruction, including realistic pacing guidance and routines and support for both 180-day and 220-day schedules. Materials are accompanied by a TEKS-aligned scope and sequence outlining the essential knowledge and skills that are taught in the program, the order in which they are presented, and how knowledge and skills build and connect across grade levels. Units and lessons contain clear, articulated objectives and learning goals aligned to the TEKS. Materials include additional supports to help teachers implement the materials as intended (e.g., exemplar videos, suggestions for how to use PLC time to prepare to teach lessons). Materials include additional implementation supports for administrators to gauge level of fidelity of implementation (e.g., "look for" guides, suggested supports for common challenges teachers face with implementation, etc.).
VI.2 Teacher edition materials include annotations and support for engaging students in the materials, as well as support for implementing ancillary and resource materials and student progress components.	0/1/2	 Annotations and ancillary materials provide support for student learning and assistance for teachers. Materials include guidance and tools for teachers to measure student progress over the course of the year.

TEA ELAR 3–8 Pilot Rubric



VI.3 The visual design of the student edition (whether in print or digital) is not distracting nor chaotic but supports students in engaging thoughtfully with the subject.	0/1/2	 Materials include appropriate use of white space and design that supports and does not distract from student learning. Pictures and graphics are supportive of student learning and engagement without being visually distracting.
VI.4 Materials include assessment information and guidance for teachers and administrators to monitor progress including how to interpret and act on data yielded.	0/1/2	 Assessments and scoring information provide sufficient guidance for interpreting and responding to student performance. Assessments include clear purpose and intended use and identify which TEKS are being emphasized. Assessments included should be connected to the regular content to support student learning.
VI.5 If present, technology components included are appropriate for grade level students and provide support for learning.	NOT SCORED	 Technology, if present, supports and enhances student learning as appropriate, as opposed to distracting from it, and includes appropriate teacher guidance.



Section VII.

VII. Technology, Cost, and Professional Learning Support

The following information will appear on the portal for end users to provide additional information about the set of materials being reviewed.

Scoring: To be determined during course of pilot.

Indicator	Scoring	Guidance for Texas Quality
VII. 1	TBD	Technology checklist is completed.
Technology components are identified per the		
information requirement checklist.		
VII.2	TBD	Cost worksheet completed.
Cost worksheet completed.		
VII.3	TBD	 [Professional learning indicators will be built out prior to the pilot's end.]
Professional learning opportunities meet criteria for		
implementation.		