

2012-2013 Louisiana State Textbook Adoption Cycle

Listed below are the textbook committee votes for each submitted text. Click each link in order to review the areas of misalignment to the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) as identified by the state committee and LDE content specialists. The reviewers used rubrics that were influenced by the Revised Publishers' Criteria developed by Student Achievement Partners. Preceding both the math and ELA summaries provided below are overviews of the considerations that were given priority in order to ensure alignment to the CCSS. These priority consideration factors may also be helpful to districts when evaluating textbooks. To find Student Achievement Partners' updated textbook selection guidance, go to <http://www.achievethecore.org/steal-these-tools>.

The comments enclosed represent only part of the complete reviews conducted by the state committees and LDE content specialists. The LDE is only sharing the misalignments to the Common Core State Standards in order that districts may be sufficiently informed if they choose to purchase texts. The LDE does not recommend that districts purchase textbooks at this time, however, due to significant misalignments to the Common Core State Standards and forthcoming state assessments.

[K-2 CCSS Mathematics Priority Review Considerations](#)

K-2 CCSS Mathematics				
Publisher	Series	Copyright	Grade Levels	Committee Vote (Y-N)
Charism	DeepMath Foundation for Permanent Mathematical Learning	2012	1-2	0-12 No
Houghton Mifflin Harcourt School Publishers	Houghton Mifflin Math Expressions	2013	K-2	6-6 No
Houghton Mifflin Harcourt School Publishers	Houghton Mifflin GO Math! Louisiana	2012	K-2	7-5 Yes
McGraw-Hill School Education	McGraw-Hill My Math	2013	K-2	0-12 No
Pearson Scott Foresman	Scott Foresman-Addison Wesley enVision MATH	2012	K-2	11-1 Yes
Specialized Curriculum Group (HMH)	Math in Focus	2012/2013	K-2	K 2-10 No 1 3-9 No 2 2-10 No
TPS Publishing	Creative Core Curriculum Mathematics with Literacy and STEM	2012	K-2	0-12 No

[K-5 CCSS ELA/Literacy Priority Review Considerations](#)

K-5 CCSS ELA/Literacy				
Publisher	Series	Copyright	Grade Levels	Committee Vote (Y-N)
Benchmark Education	Benchmark Literacy	2011/2012	K-5	0-13 No
Houghton Mifflin Harcourt School Publishers	Houghton Mifflin Harcourt Journeys Common Core Louisiana	2014	K-5	K-2 6-7 No 3-5 7-6 Yes
Houghton Mifflin Harcourt School Publishers	Houghton Mifflin Harcourt Literacy by Design	2013	K-5	1-12 No
McGraw-Hill School Education	Reading Wonders	2014	K-5	9-4 Yes
Pearson Scott Foresman	Scott Foresman Reading Street	2013	K-5	K, 2-5 8-5 Yes 1 9-4 Yes

K-5 CCSS Mathematics Priority Review Considerations***I. FOCUS***

When looking at the materials overall, the intended **focus** of a grade level in the CCSSM is also the intended focus of the materials.

II. COHERENCE

The CCSS are not only designed to stress the sequence of topics and performances outlined in the mathematics standards, but also to take into consideration the students' learning progression in terms of mathematical knowledge, skill, and understanding needed over time. The materials provide **coherence** both within a grade level and across grade levels. At minimum, the teaching and learning concepts proposed are appropriately connected to one another *within* a grade.

III. MATHEMATICAL PRACTICE STANDARDS

The materials present opportunities for students to practice the **Standards for Mathematical Practice** and provide guidance to teachers such as the types of activities or student behaviors that exhibit Math Practices. While not necessarily articulated in each lesson, Math Practices should not be completely omitted.

IV. RIGOR

Materials represent a balance between conceptual understanding, procedural skill/fluency, and application as identified with the shift of **rigor**. (i.e. through the development of concepts through instructional activities and problem sets)

K-5 CCSS Mathematics Priority Review Considerations

Charism, *DeepMath Foundation for Permanent Mathematical Learning* (©2012, Grades 1-2)

I. FOCUS

- Lacks focus, too many skills covered in one lesson, range of content too broad
- Continues focus on GLES that address skills no longer required at this grade level (e.g., probability, temperature, weight, capacity, money, etc...)
- Over use of spiraling hinders opportunities for deep understanding and focused practice
- Some content is not aligned to the appropriate grade level for example first grade begins with patterning of colors, a Pre-K skill

II. COHERENCE

- Sequence of skills are not aligned with CCSS, content hard to decipher
- Lack of variety of activities and ideas for teaching and learning
- Instruction does not move from concrete to abstract mathematical concepts

III. MATHEMATICAL PRACTICE STANDARDS

- Lacks instruction that can be used to help students develop alternate ways of thinking about mathematics

IV. RIGOR

- Lacks rigor required for CCSS, scarce problem solving opportunities to explain, discuss, and demonstrate student understanding
- Reliance upon procedural skills that do not develop conceptual understanding and application
- No integration of cross-curricular activities to develop ways of thinking about mathematics

K-5 CCSS Mathematics Priority Review Considerations

Houghton Mifflin Harcourt School Publishers , *Houghton Mifflin Math Expressions*, ©2013, Grades K-2

I. FOCUS

- Lacks focus in the critical focus areas [e.g., K.CC 1, CC2, CC4, CC5, K.G, KG.1, KG5, OA.5 missing ten frames, and Geometry]
- Skills taught exceed the grade level
- Combines too many skills into one lesson

II. COHERENCE

- Content gaps exist between counting and cardinality
- Integration of other curriculum areas including literature and writing is weak
- SE and TE do not correlate with one another

III. MATHEMATICAL PRACTICE STANDARDS

- Relies upon inquiry approach
- Majority of exercises provide only straight computation
- Lacks adequate performance tasks
- Lacks open ended problems that require written explanation by the student
- Emphasis is on tracing numerals in grade K

IV. RIGOR

- Lacks rigor required by CCSS
- Weak use of authentic assessment
- Math concepts not developed
- Procedural skills and activities promote isolated teaching and learning
- Lessons moves too quickly through critical focus standards such as CC.1-CC.2, 4 and 5
- Scarce opportunities for writing

K-5 CCSS Mathematics Priority Review Considerations

Houghton Mifflin Harcourt School Publishers, *Houghton Mifflin GO Math! Louisiana*, ©2012, Grades K-2

I. FOCUS

- Expectations for standards as treated in these resources extends beyond what the standard actually requires which distracts from the focus of the grade:
 - K.CC.1 is meant to be rote counting by ones and tens; students should not be expected to identify sets of 10 in order to count by tens (reserved for 1st grade) and they should not be asked to count out a set of objects beyond 20.
 - Students should also not be expected to write/recognize numerals beyond 20.
 - Kindergarten students should not be expected to recognize or write the number words—only the numerals. (Chapters 1 and 7 – Word Wall)
- Materials should not include standards from future grades, even as “end of year planning. Information for teachers about how the skills learned in one grade will set the foundation for the next or future grades can be included as PD/Content Knowledge, but there should not be activities which address future grade standards in the materials.
 - Getting Ready for Grade 1: Inclusion of time information is well beyond the scope of Grade K—also the exercises included for the lesson on time (Lesson 19) do not have two hands on all clocks. This will only serve to confuse students when other clocks are presented.
- Standards are missing: K.G.5 (only addressed as a *See Also* in the correlations; there should be many opportunities to demonstrate K.G.5 throughout the work with Geometry).
- Insufficient practice with standards:
 - K.CC.1 only formally addressed in chapter 8—this standard is the foundation for all of Kindergarten; K.NBT.1 needs more practice to truly develop the foundations of place value
 - 1.NBT addressed in chapters 6-8 and connections to operations and algebraic thinking are minor (both domains are major work of the grade)
 - Grade 2—many standards are only addressed once throughout the year rather than returning to the major work of the grade repeatedly to build upon and ensure the conceptual understanding
- Each lesson is expected to be one day rather than lessons extending beyond a class period; gives the impression that something new should happen every day rather than slowing down to focus on the major work.

II. COHERENCE

- Supporting clusters/standards should be interwoven throughout the major work of the grade rather than being treated as separate topics.
 - K.MD.3 has its own chapter which identifies it as being a separate topic from the rest of the mathematics involved
 - 1.MD.4 has its own chapter as well
 - Chapter 7 in Grade 2 is devoted to Money and Time with little connections made to the major work of the grade

III. MATHEMATICAL PRACTICE STANDARDS

- Connections to the math practice standards are unclear—while descriptions are given in general prior to some lessons, the places within the lesson which are marked with math practices do not make it clear to a teacher which math practice is being addressed nor what behaviors might be exhibited by a student to indicate they are reaching that math practice. Teaching with the math practices must be purposeful—not simply a label that indicates “if I do this then I’m accomplishing a math practice.”

IV. RIGOR

- While there are opportunities for conceptual understanding and procedural skill and fluency, there are few opportunities identified for application. Also the assessments almost all consist of selected response items which only require one correct response; very few, if any, constructed response items.
- There are suggestions for portfolio assessment, although the questions asked are about how the student feels about their own learning rather than producing some work to demonstrate mastery.
- Most assessment items assess conceptual understanding or procedural skill and fluency; very few are geared toward application.

K-5 CCSS Mathematics Priority Review Considerations

McGraw-Hill School Education, ***McGraw-Hill My Math***, ©2013, Grades K-2

I. FOCUS

- There was lack of focus on developing problem-solving skills
- The pages/lessons were repetitious and would become boring
- Geometry is weak: focus was on tracing the object not drawing the object

II. COHERENCE

- Teacher pages are stronger than student pages
- There are application of skills throughout the book but they are very weak, procedural and limited understanding
- Materials do not reach the depth of understanding required in several domains
- The learning experience was dull and would not reach the different learning styles
- Procedural skills were not emphasized

III. MATHEMATICAL PRACTICE STANDARDS

- Missing abstracts for student learning
- Needs to be a higher level
- Does not show alignment with math practice
- Not enough math talk, reasoning, and explanation, problem solving was closed ended, lacking expectation to describe, mathematical understanding and does not meet the depth needed to become mathematically proficient student described by the standards for mathematical practices
- Needs more open-ended problems for students to solve and write about
- Mathematical practices are not being developed
- Students are not given enough time to explore and discover

IV. RIGOR

- Material would need to be supplemental with some higher level activities
- RTI/DI: there but not meaning work-not rigorous
- Gaps found in MD. 1, 3
- Integration and application of math concept and skills throughout the curriculum was not present
- Math Talk was missing a component in the lesson
- Lack conceptual understanding
- Problem solving skills are weak not rigorous
- Rigor needed in activities is limited along with healthy opportunities for discussion among students
- Activities did not mention real world situation or provide learning across curriculum
- Assessments need to reflect a higher standard and performance tasks are needed

K-5 CCSS Mathematics Priority Review ConsiderationsPearson Scott Foresman, *Scott Foresman-Addison Wesley enVision*, ©2012, Grades K-2***I. FOCUS***

- Inclusion of concepts/topics not in standards
 - Grade K: Ordinal numbers through fifth
 - Kindergartners should work with number paths not number lines
 - Patterns are a tool to understand operations not a topic to be taught separately
- Expectations for standards as treated in these resources extends beyond the what the standard actually requires which distracts from the focus of the grade:
 - K.CC.1 is meant to be rote counting by ones and tens; students should not be expected to identify sets of 10 in order to count by tens (reserved for 1st grade) and they should not be asked to count out a set of objects beyond 20.
 - 2.NBT.5 does not require the use of the standard algorithm for addition and subtraction within 100—the standard algorithm should only be introduced after sufficient exposure to strategies involving place value; students should “discover” the standard algorithm (which would not be mastered until grade 4).
- Each lesson is expected to be one day rather than lessons extending beyond a class period; gives the impression that something new should happen every day rather than slowing down to focus on the major work.
- Step-up lessons should NOT include future grade standards.

II. COHERENCE

- Supporting clusters/standards should be interwoven throughout the major work of the grade rather than being treated as separate topics.
 - K.MD.3 has its own topic which identifies it as being separate from the rest of the mathematics involved
 - 1.MD.4 has its own topic as well
 - 2.MD.8 has its own topic as well

III. MATHEMATICAL PRACTICE STANDARDS

- Connections to the math practice standards are unclear—the places within the lesson which are marked with math practices do not make it clear to a teacher which behaviors might be exhibited by a student to indicate they are reaching that math practice. Teaching with the math practices must be purposeful—not simply a label that indicates “if I do this then I’m accomplishing a math practice.”

IV. RIGOR

- While there are opportunities for conceptual understanding and procedural skill and fluency, there are few opportunities identified for application. Also the assessments almost all consist of selected response items which only require one correct response; very few, if any, constructed response items.
- Basic timed tests in Grade 1 Topic 1 use equations before the understanding of the equal sign is developed
- Most assessment items assess conceptual understanding or procedural skill and fluency; very few are geared toward application.
- Few opportunities for explanation/justification on assessments

K-5 CCSS Mathematics Priority Review ConsiderationsSpecialized Curriculum Group (HMH), *Math in Focus*, ©2012/ 2013, Grades K-2***I. FOCUS***

- Not fully aligned with CCSS [e.g., content gaps are evident in geometry, measurement and data, counting and cardinality]

II. COHERENCE

- Content does not build within and across grades in a logical way

III. MATHEMATICAL PRACTICE STANDARDS

- Materials do not fully develop mathematical concepts before the application of skills; skills are extended too quickly and are sometimes introduced beyond requirements of the grade level (e.g., first grade skills at grade K and early introduction to money and to rulers for measurement)
- There are limited hands-on activities, an over-reliance on teacher explanation, and few student modeling techniques/strategies found
- Connections to CCSS are not clear

IV. RIGOR

- Lacks rigor required by CCSS
- More opportunities for application/practice are needed before moving to the next skill/concept

K-5 CCSS Mathematics Priority Review ConsiderationsTPS Publishing, *Creative Core Curriculum Mathematics with Literacy and STEM*, ©2012, Grades K-2***I. FOCUS***

- The critical focus area of counting and cardinality is not adequately addressed
- The lessons are well planned but can be very confusing
- The critical focus area of operation and algebraic thinking need to have standards developed at a deeper level with more rigor and all standards fully developed
- The critical focus area of number and base ten was not fully developed
- Too broad a range of skills were introduced in one lesson

II. COHERENCE

- Student exercises move quickly to large numbers without developing depth for 1-20
- The critical areas are in the material but it is difficult to find and follow

III. MATHEMATICAL PRACTICE STANDARDS

- Teachers must use all components of the program to implement mathematical practices.
- Student practices are not age appropriate
- Limited use of variety of resources to teach standards and math practices
- No modeling (teacher) built into guided practice and or lessons initiation
- Lacking practice items

IV. RIGOR

- Not rigorous
- Need more in-depth activities
- Need to include conceptual understanding
- Need more balance between procedures and conceptual
- Lack of authentic formative assessment
- Lacking relationship between addition and subtractions
- Need more consistency with developing of fluency
- Only rote procedures were modeled for adding three-digit numbers. No concrete representations for regrouping 10's and 1's in 3 digits add/subtract problems

K-5 CCSS ELA/Literacy Priority Review Considerations

At the heart of the Common Core Standards is a substantial shift in literacy instruction that demands a focus on high quality texts, high-quality text-dependent and text-specific questions, and writing to sources. The three shifts in K-5 literacy instruction include:

1. Building knowledge through content-rich non-fiction
2. Reading, writing, and speaking grounded in evidence from text, both literary and informational
3. Regular practice with complex text and its academic language

A high quality literacy curriculum aligned with the Common Core State Standards will not be a set of repackaged mediocre materials, but will reflect a rich and diverse instructional approach fully aligned with these shifts.

I. QUALITY OF TEXT

1. ***RANGE OF TEXT:*** 50% of reading selections in the submission are high quality non-fiction/informational texts and instructional time is divided equally between literary and informational text.
2. ***COMPLEXITY OF TEXT:*** The submission exhibits concrete evidence that research-based *quantitative* and *qualitative* measures have been used in selection of complex texts that align to the standards. Further, submissions will include a demonstrable staircase of text complexity as materials progress across grade bands.
As materials progress within and across grades, topics or themes are included that systematically develop the knowledge base of students.
3. ***SUFFICIENT PRACTICE IN READING COMPLEX TEXTS:*** The submission provides all students, including those who are below grade level, with extensive opportunities to encounter and comprehend grade-level complex text as required by the standards. Materials direct teachers to return to focused parts of the text to guide students through rereading, discussion and writing about the ideas and events and information found there. This opportunity is offered regularly and systematically through all K-5 materials.

II. QUALITY OF QUESTIONS & TASKS

4. ***FOCUS ON THE TEXT IS THE CENTER OF ALL LESSONS:*** Significant pre-reading activities and suggested approaches to teacher scaffolding are highly focused and begin with the text itself. Pre-reading activities should be no more than 10% of time devoted to any reading instruction.
5. ***INCLUSION OF TEXT DEPENDENT AND TEXT SPECIFIC QUESTIONS:*** 80% of all questions in the submission are high-quality sequences of text-dependent & text-specific questions. The overwhelming majority of questions are text-specific and draw student attention to the particulars in the text.

III. WRITING

6. ***WRITING TO SOURCES:*** Written and oral tasks at all grade levels require students to confront the text directly, to draw on textual evidence, and to support valid inferences from the text. Writing tasks should be 30% argumentative, 35% explanatory, 35% convey real or imaginary experiences.

IV. FOUNDATIONAL READING

7. ***INCLUSION OF EFFECTIVE INSTRUCTION FOR ALL ASPECTS OF FOUNDATIONAL READING:*** Materials provide explicit and systematic instruction and diagnostic support in concepts of print, phonological awareness, phonics, vocabulary, development, syntax, and fluency. These foundational skills are necessary and central components of an effective, comprehensive reading program designed to develop proficient readers with the capacity to comprehend texts across a range of types and disciplines.

K-5 CCSS ELA/Literacy Priority Review ConsiderationsBenchmark Education, *Benchmark Literacy*, © 2011/ 2012, Grades K-5**I. QUALITY OF TEXT****1. RANGE OF TEXT:**

- Only leveled readers; no anchor text
- No text collections
- Non-fiction (informational text) heavily relied upon; not 50/50
- Texts are not authentic (no permissioned texts).
- 95% of texts in Grade 3 are commissioned (not authentic)
- Not enough exposure to literary texts (Grade 4)
- Not enough exposure to literary elements such as figurative language, poetry (Grade 5)

2. COMPLEXITY OF TEXT:

- Does not include complex text during whole group
- Not all students may get to the complex texts
- Previous grade levels do not show progression of fluency skills which may cause problems in 3rd grade.
- The anchor text and supporting charts, leveled readers, readers theater do not correlate to build a body of knowledge.
- Short anchor texts have no common theme or content area
- No anchor or paired selections (Grade 5)
- Very little research mentioned
- Many titles below complexity range and only a few at the high end

3. SUFFICIENT PRACTICE IN READING COMPLEX TEXTS:

- Does not provide enough practice with complex text
- Focus is on leveled readers which means some students (including low-level students) will not encounter enough grade-level complex texts.
- Anchor text is very short, while the focus of instruction is on the leveled readers.
- One half of main selections are not grade-level; not all students are reading on-level

II. QUALITY OF QUESTIONS & TASKS**4. FOCUS ON THE TEXT IS THE CENTER OF ALL LESSONS:**

- Should be more grounded in the text and not just metacognitive strategies
- Focus is on the strategies and not the standards or text
- Not enough opportunity for students to closely read text to independently define vocabulary, etc.

5. INCLUSION OF TEXT DEPENDENT AND TEXT SPECIFIC QUESTIONS:

- Very low percentage of teacher questions that were text-dependent
- Not enough text-dependent questioning/activities.
- Not evident; too marginal

III. WRITING**6. WRITING TO SOURCES:**

- Writing prompts/topics are not evidence-based
- Writing was addressed at minimally; writing instruction very vague
- Writing too modeled; no evidence of a genuine research task
- Writing seems to come from a totally different text instead of the main text

IV. FOUNDATIONAL READING**7. INCLUSION OF EFFECTIVE INSTRUCTION FOR ALL ASPECTS OF FOUNDATIONAL READING:**

- Very sporadic skills; difficult to see the sequence in foundational skills
- Fluency practice is weak
- Vocabulary acquisition not a focus
- No systematic approach to language, letter recognition, or naming
- Not a systematic approach for reading acquisition skills

K-5 CCSS ELA/Literacy Priority Review Considerations

Houghton Mifflin Harcourt School Publishers, *Houghton Mifflin Harcourt Journeys Common Core Louisiana*, ©2014, Grades K-5

I. QUALITY OF TEXT**1. RANGE OF TEXT:**

While there appears to be a balance of text selection, the texts within a unit are not related to each other in a meaningful way and do not build students' knowledge. Additionally, there are very few extended texts included; a majority of the texts are shorter. There should be more variety in text lengths.

2. COMPLEXITY OF TEXT:

The texts appear to be appropriately complex, but there is not consistent building of knowledge. This directly contradicts Tool #2, Item 2a (*Several collections of complex texts, each composed of an extended anchor text and several shorter, related texts, for reading in ELA and other content areas; texts collections create opportunities for students to gain a sense of bodies of literature and/or build and refine a body of knowledge through texts read within and across grade levels.*). For example in Grade 4, the first unit consists of texts that focus on: Helping Others, Civil Rights, Media, Raising Money, and Traditional Tales. This is not a collection.

In K-1, the included texts in the student edition appear to be written to the students' word knowledge level, which is appropriate for reading foundational skills instruction. However, the focus in the student edition is on analyzing these texts for meaning. The "analysis" of texts that lack substance and deep meaning is inappropriate. There should be more work with complex texts through read aloud, so students can develop their ability to think deeply about texts that are worth reading and rereading.

3. SUFFICIENT PRACTICE IN READING COMPLEX TEXTS:

There is a "Dig Deeper" section which directs students to reread the main selection. There are no explicit directions to reread the second text in each lesson. The focus of most rereading is on understanding a skill, rather than being about understanding the text. The rereading is fragmented, rather than encouraging analysis through a coherent series of questions and tasks designed to build deep understanding of the text.

II. QUALITY OF QUESTIONS & TASKS**4. FOCUS ON THE TEXT IS THE CENTER OF ALL LESSONS:**

There is still quite a bit of prereading included with the texts. For example, there is a "Preview of the Topic," which gives away most of what should be learned by the students as they read the text. Additionally, all the vocabulary is provided up front (instead of in the context of the text) and there is a "Meet the Author" section and a skill focus. Instead of focusing on asking quality questions to demonstrate understanding of the text, the focus of reading the text appears to be on understanding the skill. This directly contradicts Tool #2, Item 2b (*Reading strategies work in service of reading comprehension, rather than being the organizational focus*).

5. INCLUSION OF TEXT DEPENDENT AND TEXT SPECIFIC QUESTIONS:

While there are a few text-dependent questions, the questions that get a majority of the instructional time are not text-dependent. For example, the essential questions that begin each reading in Grade 4 are about broad issues that are unrelated to the texts, such as, "What does it take to be a great performer?" for the story "Jose! Born to Dance." This type of question could be about any text. It is not text dependent. The assignment following each text comes back to this question, which keeps students focus off the text, even when asked to provide evidence. The included questions are generally lower level questions and do not invite analysis of the text. Each lesson includes two texts. The heading for the tasks with the second text is "Comparing Texts." This structure is superficially aligned to the CCSS, but the comparison is focused on "making connections" outside of the texts, rather than actually understanding texts and allowing the texts to "talk to each other." Some of the superficiality of these tasks in each lesson is likely due to the fact that the selected texts have very little to do with each other and the comparison between the texts is being forced to fit. Making connections to self and the world take students' focus away from the text, which is not aligned to the expectations of the CCSS.

III. WRITING**6. WRITING TO SOURCES:**

There is very little purposeful writing instruction related to writing about texts. There are frequent references to providing evidence in writing, but there is very little support for students to do this. While there are a variety of writing assignments provided to students, very few of them actually ask students to write to sources. In most cases, the longer writing assignments are only loosely connected to the reading selections, despite being included under the heading “Write About Reading.” The writing tasks tend to ask students to focus on personal knowledge and experience, rather than demonstrating understanding of the texts being read. For example, in Grade 4, the writing topic following “Sacagawea” asks students to “Suppose that you had been invited to go on Lewis and Clark’s expedition. Think about the qualities or skills that you would bring to the team. Also decide what you would have enjoyed most about the trip and what you would have found most difficult.”

IV. FOUNDATIONAL READING**7. INCLUSION OF EFFECTIVE INSTRUCTION FOR ALL ASPECTS OF FOUNDATIONAL READING:**

Foundational skills are well addressed in the primary grades. Many skills are introduced in K-2. Will there be enough time to adequately reinforce these skills and work with complex text?

K-5 CCSS ELA/Literacy Priority Review Considerations

Houghton Mifflin Harcourt School Publishers, *Houghton Mifflin Harcourt Literacy by Design*, ©2013, Grades K-5

I. QUALITY OF TEXT

1. RANGE OF TEXT:

- Two weeks dedicated to a text that is lacking in meaning
- Text not adequate or complex enough for in-depth analysis (5 pages or less)
- Too few authentic texts – 0% in small group titles (Grade 2)
- No extended anchor text (Grade 3)
- There is a variety of texts but they don't meet the CCSS
- More authentic texts needed (compare/contrast themes, settings, and plots)
- Only 20% authentic texts (Grade 3)
- Need more authentic texts; 40% Lit. / 60% Inf. text (Grade 4)
- 100% commissioned texts for leveled library (Grade 5)

2. COMPLEXITY OF TEXT:

- No clear themes
- Complex text is not provided—only recommended
- Missing complexity
- Very little to no complex text (Grade 2)
- Text not organized around bodies of literature or topics. No central focus on complex text. (Grade 3)
- No focus on complex text within the theme
- Anchor texts are shorter with related texts being the main focus. Some leveled texts are lower leveled than anchor.

3. SUFFICIENT PRACTICE IN READING COMPLEX TEXTS:

- Low-level students will not encounter enough grade-level text; not encountering them regularly
- Texts are not complex enough to develop comprehension questioning
- Not systematic
- Concern that students are not “pushed” to read on-level decodable text but will stay in leveled readers
- Reading time 45 min for whole group and 45 min for small group but only using emergent readers in small group, not complex text. Whole group does not have enough text comprehension for small group to focus on teaching reading.
- Anchor texts are short and more time is spent on leveled readers. This may keep students who are behind from working with grade-level texts as needed.

II. QUALITY OF QUESTIONS & TASKS

4. FOCUS ON THE TEXT IS THE CENTER OF ALL LESSONS:

- Focus is on the comprehension strategy rather than a close read of the text.
- Focuses on the 6 steps rather than determining meaning through context
- Overall, the materials did not address the CCSS adequately. Where there was alignment, there was very little evidence of sufficient opportunities for students to work with the CCSS. The organization by comprehension strategy and the overemphasis on metacognition to the detriment of close readings of the text and text-dependent questions were important factors in deciding to reject the series.
- Suggestions for scaffolding not clearly stated
- In-depth reading is not a focus
- Scaffolding found only in the strategies
- Too much focus on and relation to “our own lives” rather than the text itself
- Close reading is not always seen
- Too much pre-reading (Grade 4)

5. INCLUSION OF TEXT DEPENDENT AND TEXT SPECIFIC QUESTIONS:

- There are fewer than the claimed 60% text-dependent questions.
- Not enough text-dependent questions
- Many metacognitive questions; texts do not lend themselves to text-dependent questions
- Stronger text-dependent questions needed

- For K-2, over one-third questions not text-dependent. Questions focus on self and background knowledge.
- Low (30-35%) text-dependent questions (Grade 3-4)
- Less than 20% text-dependent questions (Grade 5)

III. WRITING

6. WRITING TO SOURCES:

- Evidence-based writing is not modeled
- Writing was weak
- Not a representation of all writing types (what's present is a good modeling writing)
- No good examples of opinions narratives or providing evidence
- Research process not addressed
- Research tasks are not connected to text (Grade 3)
- Writing is not text-dependent at all (Grade 3-5)
- Need more extended writings
- Research process very lightly touched upon (Grade 4)
- More opportunities needed to write and cite evidence from texts—more than just a short response (Grade 4)
- Writing includes long and short assignments with some requiring outside research, but none are connected to text.
- Lack of formal opinion writing (Grade 5)

IV. FOUNDATIONAL READING

7. INCLUSION OF EFFECTIVE INSTRUCTION FOR ALL ASPECTS OF FOUNDATIONAL READING:

- More opportunities needed for phonics application
- Phonological awareness is lacking
- Language is weak
- Many fluency standards are missing/marginal
- Foundational skills are weak; many gaps
- Vocabulary not integrated with text; decontextualized and front-loaded
- Phonics is not grounded in each text
- Different vocabulary within leveled readers
- Not a clear systematic approach to teaching foundational skills
- Reading acquisition skills not adequately addressed in whole or small group.
- Only 50% of reading foundational skills/standards are taught (Grade 2)
- Extensive vocabulary instruction but not related to text (Grade 3)
- Defines vocabulary that students could figure out with the text (Grade 4)

K-5 CCSS ELA/Literacy Priority Review Considerations

McGraw-Hill School Education, *Reading Wonders*, ©2014, Grades K-5

I. QUALITY OF TEXT**1. RANGE OF TEXT:**

The texts appear to be sufficiently complex and there is a varied selection of fiction and nonfiction texts, shorter and longer texts. However, some of the texts, while complex enough, lack instructional value. These texts are often used in the program to teach or “try out” a skill or strategy. The texts included in the series and the time used to read those texts should be for students to gain deep understanding of those texts, not to serve teaching a skill or strategy, as described on Tool 2, item 2b: “*Reading strategies work in service of reading comprehension, rather than being the organizational focus.*”

2. COMPLEXITY OF TEXT:

Selections have a clear topic, but the topics are often abstract and likely difficult for students to gain knowledge about. For example, in Grade 4, two of the topics are “Clever Ideas” and “Take Action.” The texts for each of those topics are only loosely connected. There is no meaningful or systematic knowledge building.

3. SUFFICIENT PRACTICE IN READING COMPLEX TEXTS:

Opportunity for rereading is mentioned for all students to engage with complex text, and some supports are provided to help students access the text. One of the nice features of this series is that it provides a section called ACT (Access Complex Text) that highlights for teachers the specific qualitative features of the text that make it more complex and provide questions to help focus students attention on those difficult features. The ACT section is likely to be very useful to teachers; however, this series has way too much crammed into a week. Many activities from previous iterations of this program remain and there are CCSS pieces added in. As such, there is 2-3 years worth of material into one grade-level set. For example, in the first week of Grade 4, students are asked to read 3 shorter texts and 1 extended text, conduct research, write an essay, work on building vocabulary within context and separately, have a lesson in spelling and grammar, engage in partner discussion around the unit topic, work on reading foundations, and go into small groups for intervention. There is also the suggestion that students read a novel for the unit to accompany the rest of the activities! There is no focus and no clear way for a teacher to determine what is most important for student learning to meet the CCSS expectations. While students are guided to reread, discuss and write about the text, the guided analysis of a given story seems fragmented, rather than presenting a series of questions and activities designed to build deep comprehension. There is very little connection between the designed activities and the CCSS. It is not clear in any of it how students are being prepared to meet the CCSS expectations. Following this program in the current order and time frame would not create an environment conducive for implementing the CCSS. It needs editing and paring down.

II. QUALITY OF QUESTIONS & TASKS**4. FOCUS ON THE TEXT IS THE CENTER OF ALL LESSONS:**

There is a significant amount of prereading for some selections, and the unit focus pieces don’t add any value to student understanding of the texts being read or their ability to meet CCSS expectations. The teacher think alouds and questions are leading in that they give away much of what students should be gaining from reading the texts multiple times. The texts often lack value in reading, so the prereading piece attempts to address motivation, but if the texts had more valuable, some of those questions would be unnecessary. Students are often asked to make connections before they have read and understood the texts. Students are forced to apply strategies that don’t help their understanding of a text.

5. INCLUSION OF TEXT DEPENDENT AND TEXT SPECIFIC QUESTIONS:

A significant amount of time in research, writing, and discussions is spent answering questions that are loosely related to the texts being read, rather than being about the texts themselves. While there is room in a classroom for some questions to be related, not text-dependent, many of the included questions lack value in answering, as they do not deepen student understanding or propel them to meet the CCSS expectations. A large proportion of the questions are low level, factual questions that seem designed to address basic skills rather than unlock meaning. The reading of the texts has the feel of a survey, rather than a deep analysis of text. However, there are some excellent, text-dependent questions included throughout, but there is no consistency. Students will need support and time to work on answering those questions, and neither of those is provided students in this series. The structure of “trying out” a strategy on a text and then “applying” that

strategy to another text is contrived and not likely to produce much student success, as the texts are radically different and the goal of using a strategy should be to understand the text. Structuring the teaching in this way focuses students on learning the strategy, not understanding the texts being read.

III. WRITING

6. WRITING TO SOURCES:

The writing assignments appear to address genre in the correct proportions. There are many opportunities for students to engage in writing about texts in short, constructed responses, but there is very little time or support given to students to show them how to answer these questions well, and there is even less support to teachers to show them what an exemplar student response that demonstrates meeting the CCSS would look like. This lack of focus on student learning is problematic. The majority of the lengthy writing assignments do not require students to respond to texts. The writing assignments are only loosely connected to the reading selections (if at all), and are designed to be based on personal knowledge and experience. Student models are provided for the longer writing assignments, but the discussion around those models is not about connections to the standards or an aligned rubric.

IV. FOUNDATIONAL READING

7. INCLUSION OF EFFECTIVE INSTRUCTION FOR ALL ASPECTS OF FOUNDATIONAL READING:

Foundational skills are well addressed in the primary grades and sufficiently extended and supported in the upper elementary program. However, will there even be time to address all of this?

K-5 CCSS ELA/Literacy Priority Review ConsiderationsPearson Scott Foresman, *Scott Foresman Reading Street*, ©2013, Grades K-5**I. QUALITY OF TEXT****1. RANGE OF TEXT:**

The main selections in each unit appear to be sufficiently complex and there is a varied selection of fiction and nonfiction texts. The pairings appear to be more useful and authentic than other series. However, there are many texts used to teach a strategy or skill, rather than being used to teach understanding. This is problematic. The texts included in the series and the time used to read those texts should be for students to gain deep understanding of those texts, not to serve teaching a skill or strategy, as described on Tool 2, item 2b: “*Reading strategies work in service of reading comprehension, rather than being the organizational focus.*” Additionally, there is little to no mention of extended texts or novels, so the series could use more variety in the lengths of texts.

2. COMPLEXITY OF TEXT:

The units are organized around texts, but then they quickly jump to focus questions/topics that are not concrete enough for students to build knowledge. For example, the first focus question in grade 4 is “What experiences bring diverse people together?” Focusing on this will not likely lead to meaningful knowledge building, as the texts that are included are very loosely related.

3. SUFFICIENT PRACTICE IN READING COMPLEX TEXTS:

Students are directed to reread texts, but there is a lack of a big picture: What will students get out of reading these texts and engaging in these activities? The supports provided to students are not actually helpful for getting at the meaning of the texts. For example, there is an exemplar graphic organizer provided for Week 1 (page 45f). The information included in the organizer did not come from the texts read or the activities in the week. It is not clear where students will gain the knowledge required to complete the organizer.

There is a wide variety of activities and assignments provided and there is very little focus or support given to teachers to identify what is most important for preparing students to meet CCSS expectations, and there is no way for it all to be important, as there is not enough time to do it all and ensure students learn it. For example, Day 1 of Unit 1 in Grade 4 asks students to read 3 texts, work on spelling, writing, vocabulary, research, conventions, and handwriting! There is very little connection between the designed activities and the CCSS. It is not clear in any of it how students are being prepared to meet the CCSS expectations. Following this program in the current order and time frame would not create an environment conducive for implementing the CCSS. It needs editing and paring down.

II. QUALITY OF QUESTIONS & TASKS**4. FOCUS ON THE TEXT IS THE CENTER OF ALL LESSONS:**

There is too much up front work done before students read a text for understanding. Students are asked to talk and think about concepts in texts before they read the text. Additionally, there are multiple “think alouds” and places of teacher modeling where the teacher tells the students what they should be gaining from the texts, such as themes, main ideas for texts, and the connections between the texts they are reading. The language in the think alouds is not transferable to other texts and tasks, so it is not building student ability. Rather, it is giving away the learning and meaning so students remain passive. This is likely due to the abstract nature of the unit topics. Since students are not likely to get the topic on their own, the teacher has to provide those connections for the students. A more effective structure would be to focus on a topic or organization that is systematic in the way it builds knowledge so that students are gaining the information through their reading rather than relying on the teacher to provide the information through explanation.

5. INCLUSION OF TEXT DEPENDENT AND TEXT SPECIFIC QUESTIONS:

The Close Reading portion of the series has some quality questions that focus on key parts of the text. However, additional “support” surrounding the texts in the student editions and the teacher modeling pieces give away some of the answers and provide information that students should be gaining on their own. The work with texts leading up to the close reading serves very little purpose and does not clearly support students’ abilities to read the main selection closely. More time should be given to the main selection, working through the questions, and then providing instruction to students in how to write and speak about the text using academic language. This type of integration could be present in this series, but it is not due to the amount of “stuff” that accompanies each day’s lesson. Like the other series, a significant amount of time

in research, writing, and discussions is spent answering questions that are loosely related to the texts being read, rather than being about the texts themselves. While there is room in a classroom for some questions to be related, not text-dependent, many of the included questions lack value in answering, as they do not deepen student understanding or propel them to meet the CCSS expectations. The unit focus pieces at the beginning and woven throughout take students away from the texts and do not deepen their understanding of the texts.

III. WRITING

6. WRITING TO SOURCES:

The assessment pieces are stronger in this series than others, in that they provide teachers with some direction for what student results/responses might indicate about student learning, but there is not a clear connection to the CCSS expectations. There are some quality questions about the main selections throughout the series, but there is very little time or support given to students to show them how to answer these questions well, and there is even less support to teachers to show them what an exemplar student response that demonstrates meeting the CCSS would look like. The majority of the lengthy writing assignments do not require students to respond to texts, but there is acknowledgement for these to use models of student writing to support students in determining how to organize their writing. Students also need support in developing the content of their writing assignments as well.

IV. FOUNDATIONAL READING

7. INCLUSION OF EFFECTIVE INSTRUCTION FOR ALL ASPECTS OF FOUNDATIONAL READING:

Could not adequately be reviewed.