

STATE-BASED CURRICULUM REVIEW FOR ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS AND LITERACY

PARTICIPANT WORKBOOK



Standards-in-Action 2.0

This workbook was produced and funded in whole with Federal funds from the U.S. Department of Education under contract number ED-991990018C0040 with StandardsWork, Inc. Ronna Spacone serves as the Contracting Officer's Representative. The content of this workbook does not necessarily reflect the views or policies of the U.S. Department of Education nor does the mention of trade names, commercial products, or organizations imply endorsement by the U.S. Government.

2022

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Introduction

The SIA 2.0 State-Based Curriculum Review Tool for English Language Arts (ELA)/Literacy is organized by five research-based dimensions:¹

1. Close Reading of Complex Text
2. Building Academic Language
3. Volume of Reading to Build Knowledge
4. Evidence-Based Discussions
5. Evidence-Based Writing

The dimensions provide a set of specific criteria for both literacy content and for supports for English learners (ELs). Each content criterion includes a set of questions designed to guide your search for evidence in the curriculum. During this training, we will focus on the dimensions sequentially, starting with Dimension 1.

The Review Process

1. After reviewing the content criteria for a dimension, search the curriculum for evidence that each criterion is met. Following each content criterion, you will find a set of “guiding questions” that are included to help you better understand the intent of the criterion.
2. Place a checkmark next to each criterion for which you found evidence. In the appropriate section, cite the location(s) in the curriculum and provide a brief comment about the evidence that substantiates your checkmark (or lack thereof).
3. Then assign the content criteria a rating of 0, 1, or 2 points for each dimension.
4. Follow the same steps to rate the EL support criteria for each dimension.

Note some content criteria are indicated with an asterisk (*). They also are research-based EL supports. When rating for EL support, therefore, consider all the EL support criteria as well as the asterisked content criteria for the dimension.

Use this workbook to analyze the extent to which the provided model curriculum aligns to the evidence-based criteria of the curriculum review tool.

Use another copy of this workbook to assess the alignment of the curriculum from your state you have chosen to review. Your team lead will maintain a master copy of your team’s consensus ratings and summary findings. Once your consensus review is complete, decide, in conjunction with your state leadership, how and with whom to share the review materials.

¹There is a sixth dimension to use when reviewing a curriculum meant to serve beginning-level learners: *Foundational Reading Skills*. The sixth dimension, with its content criteria and EL supports, can be found in Appendix C.

Dimension 1

Close Reading of Complex Text

Review Content Criteria for Dimension 1:

- 1** — **Content Criterion.** Curriculum includes engaging anchor texts—central reading texts—that are complex according to quantitative and qualitative analyses.
- Do the anchor texts fall within the level-specific complexity range?
 - Does the curriculum spend most instructional time on these texts?

Substantiation:

- 2** — **Content Criterion.** At least 50 percent of the anchor or central reading texts included in the curriculum are nonfiction.
- Does the curriculum include a list of texts used in the curriculum so you can evaluate the balance of fiction and nonfiction?
 - Do the texts include a range of content-rich informational texts in science and history?

Substantiation:

- 3** — **Content Criterion.** Curriculum provides repeated encounters with challenging content-rich complex texts—each time with a different purpose—to promote understanding. *
- Does the curriculum require learners to engage with texts through rereading, answering sequences of text-dependent questions, and other text-based tasks?
 - Are the questions sequenced to help build an understanding of the text or only to practice a specific reading strategy?

Substantiation:

Dimension 1: Rating for Content Alignment

_____ 2 Most or all components of the content criteria are present.

_____ 1 Some components of the content criteria are present.

_____ 0 Few or no components of the content criteria are present.

Summary Comments:

Review EL Supports for Dimension 1:

- 1** — **EL Support.** Curriculum suggests that instructors read the anchor text aloud to model fluent reading while students listen and follow along in their texts.
- Are students explicitly directed to follow along in their texts as they listen?

Substantiation:

- 2** — **EL Support.** Curriculum suggests scaffolds to help learners focus on what is essential and to make sense of what they are reading.
- Are graphic organizers used to promote understanding? For example, does the curriculum offer charts for recording the main idea and details, timelines for recording sequences of events, and Venn diagrams for comparison?
 - Does the curriculum promote in-text highlighting and annotating to build understanding (e.g., underlining pros and circling cons)?

Substantiation:

- 3** — **EL Support.** Curriculum suggests how instructors can reword questions about sections of the anchor text so that they are more understandable, retaining their original intent and challenge.
- Does the curriculum suggest how to rephrase questions if students need

additional support?

- Does the curriculum amplify rather than simplify questions? For example, instead of replacing a word with a simpler word, parentheses are used to provide explanation or detail.

Substantiation:

Dimension 1: Rating for EL Supports *(include asterisked Content Criterion #3 in your rating)*

_____ 2 Most or all components of the EL supports are present.

_____ 1 Some components of the EL supports are present.

_____ 0 Few or no components of the EL supports are present.

Summary Comments:

Dimension 2

Building Academic Language

Review Content Criteria for Dimension 2:

- 1** — **Content Criterion.** Curriculum includes text-based questions and tasks that provide systematic work with high-value academic vocabulary essential to the anchor text. *
- Does the curriculum have an established routine for learning essential vocabulary?
 - Are vocabulary tasks presented in context rather than in isolation?

Substantiation:

- 2** — **Content Criterion.** Curriculum regularly highlights syntactically complex sentences from anchor texts for analysis and discussion. *
- Do text-dependent questions draw attention to difficult or key sentences that need examination?
 - Does the curriculum include an explicit routine for unpacking syntactically complex sentences when reading?

Substantiation:

- 3** — **Content Criterion.** Curriculum teaches morphology so learners can understand structure of words to discern their meanings independently. *
- Does the curriculum highlight specific words in readings for analysis?
 - Does the curriculum teach learners to use word parts first to predict an unknown word's meaning? And then use context to confirm or correct that prediction?

Substantiation:

- 4** — **Content Criterion.** Curriculum requires students to use newly learned words and phrases in their writing and discussion activities. *
- Does the curriculum show teachers how to model using academic vocabulary for students?
 - Does the curriculum offer supports (e.g., vocabulary-based discussion questions or writing starters) to assist students?

Substantiation:

Dimension 2: Rating for Content Alignment

_____ 2 Most or all components of the content criteria are present.

_____ 1 Some components of the content criteria are present.

_____ 0 Few or no components of the content criteria are present.

Summary Comments:

Review EL Supports for Dimension 2:

- 1** — **EL Support.** Curriculum guides teachers to help students capture and reflect on the meaning of new vocabulary.
- Do these strategies capture essential information, such as definitions, collocations, translations, and synonyms?
 - Are students encouraged to refer to vocabulary resources, such as word cards or word walls?

Substantiation:

- 2** — **EL Support.** Curriculum includes a glossary or encourages the use of student-friendly dictionaries for language learners.

- Are definitions written in plain language?
- Do definitions provide useful context or tie words to concrete examples?

Substantiation:

3

— **EL Support.** Curriculum connects words to home language cognates where there are common roots with English.

- Do definitions tie words to cognates when home languages and English share common roots (e.g., *actividades* and *activities*, *centro* and *center*, *investigación* and *investigation*)?

Substantiation:

Dimension 2: Rating for EL Supports (*include asterisked Content Criteria #1–4 in your rating*)

_____ 2 Most or all components of the EL supports are present.

_____ 1 Some components of the EL supports are present.

_____ 0 Few or no components of the EL supports are present.

Summary Comments:

Dimension 3
Volume of Reading to Build Knowledge

Review Content Criteria for Dimension 3:

- 1** — **Content Criterion.** Curriculum provides high-quality auxiliary resources that build knowledge about the topics of central texts and are available at a variety of complexity levels. *
 - Is there a volume of texts or visual resources to build knowledge and vocabulary on the topic of the anchor text?
 - Are these texts and resources accessible to students without teacher support?

Substantiation:

- 2** — **Content Criterion.** Curriculum provides guidance for simple ways students can show what they are learning when they engage in a volume of reading.
 - Does the curriculum promote regular independent reading?
 - Are there routines to keep students accountable to share what they are learning from the volume of reading they are doing?

Substantiation:

Dimension 3: Rating for Content Alignment

- _____ 2 Most or all components of the content criteria are present.
- _____ 1 Some components of the content criteria are present.
- _____ 0 Few or no components of the content criteria are present.

Summary Comments:

Review EL Supports for Dimension 3:

- 1** — **EL Support.** Curriculum provides supports to help students capture and reflect on new knowledge.
- Are graphic organizers used to promote understanding? For example, does the curriculum offer charts for recording the main idea and details, timelines for recording sequences of events, and Venn diagrams for comparison?

Substantiation:

- 2** — **EL Support.** Curriculum includes visual resources (e.g., illustrations, photographs, and video clips) that build knowledge and vocabulary about the topics of the central texts.
- Are these visual resources accessible to students without teacher support (including those in the students' first language)?
 - Do these additional resources help build essential background knowledge and cultural understanding for ELs?

Substantiation:

Dimension 3: Rating for EL Supports (*include asterisked Content Criterion #1 in your rating*)

_____ 2 Most or all components of the EL supports are present.

_____ 1 Some components of the EL supports are present.

_____ 0 Few or no components of the EL supports are present.

Summary Comments:

Dimension 4

Evidence-Based Discussions

Review Content Criteria for Dimension 4:

1

_____ **Content Criterion.** Curriculum provides guidance on how to engage learners in productive and sustained academic discussions to develop understanding about texts and content they are studying. *

- Does the curriculum provide guidance for students to process their thinking and evidence about texts in pairs, in small groups, and through whole-group discussions?
- Does the curriculum explicitly guide students to return to the text to cite evidence in support of their ideas or claims during discussions?
- Does the curriculum suggest ways to encourage varied and equitable participation by all members of small-group discussions?

Substantiation:

2

_____ **Content Criterion.** Curriculum provides a sequence of text-based tasks for student discussion. *

- Does the curriculum pose questions that build student understanding of the key ideas of the texts?
- Does the curriculum promote building knowledge as a communal activity, in which students are encouraged to voice, revise, and build their understanding with peers?

Substantiation:

Dimension 4: Rating for Content Alignment

_____ 2 Most or all components of the content criteria are present.

_____ 1 Some components of the content criteria are present.

_____ 0 Few or no components of the content criteria are present.

Summary Comments:

Review EL Supports for Dimension 4:

- 1** — **EL Support.** Curriculum includes guidance for heterogeneous and homogeneous language groupings for collaborative learning based on students' English language proficiency to optimize learning.
- Does the curriculum include heterogeneous language groupings to help learners hear and imitate more fluent peers?
 - Does the curriculum include homogeneous groupings to leverage bilingual resources and accelerate content and language learning?
 - Is building knowledge in the curriculum a communal activity in which ELs are encouraged to voice, revise, and develop their understanding with peers?

Substantiation:

- 2** — **EL Support.** Curriculum suggests language supports to facilitate students' participation in discussions.
- Does the curriculum integrate instruction about essential grammatical and text structures into discussion tasks?
 - Are language supports, such as sentence starters, linking words, and transitional phrases, appropriate and adapted to each discussion task?

Substantiation:

- 3** — **EL Support.** Curriculum suggests ELs use their home language in combination with English during discussions to help students process and build understanding of their readings.
- Does the curriculum refer to learners' home languages as assets for learning academic content and English simultaneously?

- Does the curriculum encourage the use of home languages and translanguaging?

Substantiation:

Dimension 4: Rating for EL Supports *(include asterisked Content Criteria #1–2 in your rating)*

_____ 2 Most or all components of the EL supports are present.

_____ 1 Some components of the EL supports are present.

_____ 0 Few or no components of the EL supports are present.

Summary Comments:

Dimension 5

Evidence-Based Writing

Review Content Criteria for Dimension 5:

1

____ **Content Criterion.** Curriculum includes frequent writing opportunities that are focused on and anchored in the content students are learning to extend and solidify their learning. *

- Does the curriculum include writing opportunities that vary in purpose, length, and duration?
- Do most writing assignments require students to provide text-based evidence?

Substantiation:

2

____ **Content Criterion.** Curriculum includes a set of clear, concrete instructional routines to support learners as they organize their ideas for writing. *

- Do routines include using discussions to prepare for writing?
- Do routines include creating notes and graphic organizers before turning formal thoughts into sentences and paragraphs?

Substantiation:

3

____ **Content Criterion.** Curriculum provides guidance about how to provide timely and targeted feedback connected to lesson objectives. *

- Does the curriculum provide writing exemplars to highlight specific components of well-structured responses?
- Does the curriculum advise teachers to provide feedback at various points during the writing process?

Substantiation:

Dimension 5: Rating for Content Alignment

_____ 2 Most or all components of the content criteria are present.

_____ 1 Some components of the content criteria are present.

_____ 0 Few or no components of the content criteria are present.

Summary Comments:

Review EL Supports for Dimension 5:

- 1** — **EL Support.** Curriculum provides students with opportunities to orally process their ideas before they are expected to write.
- Do students have the opportunity for conversations in pairs or small groups about the writing task and process?
 - Do routines move from discussions to creating notes and graphic organizers, then to sentence and paragraph writing?

Substantiation:

- 2** — **EL Support.** Curriculum offers supports to facilitate students' developing sentences (e.g., sentence starters, linking words, and transitional phrases).
- Does the curriculum integrate instruction about essential grammatical and text structures into writing tasks, such as sentence starters, linking words, and transitional phrases?
 - Are students provided with models, rubrics, and other reflection tools to improve their writing?

Substantiation:

3

— **EL Support.** Curriculum makes suggestions (or can be easily modified to suggest) that ELs use their home languages during the writing process.

- Does the curriculum refer to learners' home languages as assets for learning academic content and English simultaneously?
- Does the curriculum encourage the use of home languages and translanguaging?

Substantiation:

Dimension 5: Rating for EL Supports (*include asterisked Content Criteria #1–3 in your rating*)

_____ 2 Most or all components of the EL supports are present.

_____ 1 Some components of the EL supports are present.

_____ 0 Few or no components of the EL supports are present.

Summary Comments:

Overall Ratings and Recommendations

Determining an Overall Rating for Content Alignment: Add up the total points assigned to each dimension's content criteria. The highest possible score would be 10 points (or 2 points per dimension).

Determining an Overall Rating for EL Supports: Add the total points assigned to each dimension's EL support criteria. The highest possible score would be 10 points (or 2 points per dimension).

Summarizing Comments and Recommendations: Summarize the key strengths and weaknesses of the curriculum you reviewed. Then document any recommendations regarding the possible or continued use of the curriculum in your program(s).

Remember, it is unlikely that any curriculum will contain every content criterion and every EL support included in this review tool. Look specifically at what is missing:

- How important are the missing criteria to your overall rating?
- Is their absence so critical that you cannot assign an overall rating of Well Aligned or Well Supported?
- Alternatively, how easily could you and your fellow adult educators fill in the gaps in the curriculum?

Curriculum Reviewed: _____

Content Standards Level: _____

Reviewer(s): _____

Date(s) of Review: _____

Description of the Curriculum Sample Reviewed:

Overall Rating: Content Alignment	Overall Rating: English Learner Supports
____ Well Aligned (8–10 points)	____ Well Supported (8–10 points)
____ Somewhat Aligned (5–7 points)	____ Somewhat Supported (5–7 points)
____ Not Aligned (0–4 points)	____ Not Well Supported (0–4 points)

Summary Comments and Recommendations:

Appendices A–C

Appendix A: Quantitative Analysis Chart for Determining Text Complexity

CCR Levels of Learning	ATOS	Degrees of Reading Power	Flesch-Kincaid	The Lexile Framework
Level B	2.75 – 5.14	42 – 54	1.98 – 5.34	420 – 820
Level C	4.97 – 7.03	52 – 60	4.51 – 7.73	740 – 1010
Level D	7.00 – 9.98	57 – 67	6.51 – 10.34	925 – 1185
Level E ₁	9.67 – 12.01	62 – 72	8.32 – 12.12	1050 – 1335
Level E ₂	11.20 – 14.10	67 – 74	10.34 – 14.2	1185 – 1385

Appendix B: Determine if a Well-Aligned Curriculum Is Also a Good Fit for Your Program

Consider the following indicators only if your review has resulted in a rating of Well Aligned and the curriculum will support your English learners (ELs). These additional indicators will help you determine if this curriculum is a *good fit* for your program. The more that apply, the better the fit for you.

1. ___ Has evidence of positive student outcomes.
2. ___ Is affordable.
3. ___ Includes educative features and support materials for instructors.
4. ___ Reflects research and best practices.
5. ___ Is appropriate for adult education purposes.
6. ___ Appears to be relatively easy for all instructors to learn and implement.
7. ___ Includes easily adaptable lessons for all types of adult learners, including student populations with specific needs.

Appendix C: Additional Dimension

Additional Dimension 6 Criteria Foundational Reading Skills

Review Content Criteria for Dimension 6:

- 1 — **Content Criterion.** Curriculum includes a research-based foundational reading program.
- Does the curriculum include opportunities to examine and understand how phonic patterns work to form words?
 - Does the curriculum include a scope and sequence that addresses morphology, phonemic awareness, phonics, high-frequency word recognition, and fluency?

Substantiation:

- 2 — **Content Criterion.** Curriculum includes a variety of phonics and fluency practice materials for learners to use—both for independent use and with support.
- Does the curriculum include a range of word games, puzzles, worksheets, partner practice, dictation, and listening activities?
 - Does the curriculum provide opportunities for phonics skills to be secured through reading texts and through stand-alone practice?

Substantiation:

- 3 — **Content Criterion.** Curriculum provides regular assessments to evaluate student progress in phonics, high-frequency words, and fluency. Assessments provide easy-to-follow protocols and address how to provide extra support to students who need it.
- Does the curriculum instruct teachers to collect information on each student's progress frequently?
 - Does the curriculum include targeted assessments that provide information on

each student's progress and individual needs?

- Does the curriculum offer teachers specific instructional moves to respond to assessment results to help the student progress on the learning-to-read continuum?

Substantiation:

Dimension 6: Rating for Content Alignment

_____ 2 Most or all components of the content criteria are present.

_____ 1 Some components of the content criteria are present.

_____ 0 Few or no components of the content criteria are present.

Summary Comments:

Review EL Supports for Dimension 6:

- 1 _____ **EL Support.** Curriculum encourages judicious use of modeling activities and concepts to clarify student understanding.

Substantiation:

- 2 _____ **EL Support.** Curriculum recommends continually checking for students' understanding of meaning of words used throughout teaching and learning.

Substantiation:

- 3** — **EL Support.** Curriculum includes opportunities to compare phonic patterns to home languages to draw parallels.

Substantiation:

Dimension 6: Rating for EL Supports

_____ 2 Most or all components of the EL supports are present.

_____ 1 Some components of the EL supports are present.

_____ 0 Few or no components of the EL supports are present.

Summary Comments: