

Overview of the Instructional Materials Quality Evaluation Pilot Rubric English Language Arts and Reading Grades 9–12

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 9-12 Rubric

To ensure accurate, transparent, and reliable reviews, materials will be evaluated, using a Texas-specific rubric, by teams of highly trained reviewers, consisting of Texas teachers and other Texas school and district personnel who have content expertise. The DRAFT rubric below, which will evolve over the next few months, will be used by review teams to evaluate the quality of English language arts and reading (ELAR) materials for grades 9-12.

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, 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 Draft ELAR 9-12 Rubric

One goal of ELAR is for students to develop the ability to comprehend 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 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, view 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. **Supports for Diverse Learners:** How well do the materials support teachers in meeting the needs of students with diverse learning needs?
- V. **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?
- VI. **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.

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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 the extent to which instructional materials align to the TEKS. (i.e. 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 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 50% 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 that do not achieve 80% in these sections will receive one or two stars and will not be 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.

Raw Score Point Requirements:

Star Score	Description	Grades 9-12
★★★★	Materials require VERY LITTLE WORK on the part of the teacher and/or LEA to ensure the materials support rigorous grade-level instruction.	All non-negotiables met + a total score of at least X out of X points ($\geq 80\%$).
★★★	Materials require a REASONABLE AMOUNT OF WORK on the part of the teacher and/or LEA to ensure the materials support rigorous grade-level instruction.	All non-negotiables met + a total score of X or fewer points out of X points ($< 80\%$).
★★	Materials require a SIGNIFICANT AMOUNT OF WORK on the part of the teacher and/or LEA to ensure the materials support rigorous grade-level instruction.	Not all non-negotiables met.
★	Materials require a SIGNIFICANT AMOUNT OF WORK on the part of the teacher and/or LEA to ensure the materials support rigorous grade-level instruction. Materials do not include all required submission components.	Publishers have not met all submission 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. Instructional materials should meet at least 50% 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 51% or better alignment per the SBOE process to meet the expectations of three or four stars.

Indicator	
I.1 Percentage of TEKS met (as determined by SBOE process).	51- 74%: 1 point 75%-100%: 2 points
I.2 Percent of required ELPS met (as determined by SBOE process).	50-74%: 1 point 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 course.

Scoring: This section is non-negotiable. Materials must achieve 80% or more in each non-negotiable section to meet the expectations of three

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 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 representing specific cultures and [types] as indicated by specific Grade level TEKS (e.g., American, British, and world literature).
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Text types must include those outlined for specific grades by the TEKS: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Literary genres such as realistic fiction, adventure stories, historical fiction, mysteries, humor, myths, fantasy, science fiction, poetry, and drama ○ Informational texts, argumentative texts, multimodal texts, and digital texts ● 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 at an appropriate level of complexity to support students at their grade level.	0/2/4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 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.

Section III.

III. Literacy Practices and Text Interactions: Reading, Writing, Speaking, Listening, and Research

Materials include instruction and practice for the grade specific skills of reading, composition, speaking and listening. 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 X out of X points in this section.

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 or 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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Questions and tasks support students critically analyzing vocabulary, organization of texts, and meaning of texts. Questions and tasks require students to study the differences between genres and the language of materials. • Questions and tasks support students' analysis of the literary elements of texts by studying plot and character development as well as author's purpose. • Materials include some questions and activities that support students making connections to personal experiences, ideas in other texts and society.
III.a.3 Coherent sequences of questions and activities focus students on understanding the text and its illustrations (as applicable), making	0/2/4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The activities and questions with which students engage support students' analysis and understanding of language use, comprehension of details, and craft of texts grow increasingly more challenging over the course of school year.

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<p>connections among the texts in the collection, and expressing their understanding of the topics, themes, and/or ideas presented in the texts.</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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.
<p>III.a.4 Most oral and written tasks require students to communicate well-defended text-supported claims to demonstrate the knowledge gained through analysis and synthesis of texts. All tasks require the use of grade-level language and conventions.</p>	<p>0/2/4</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 practice with new vocabulary in multiple text types. • Materials provide students practice in applying newly acquired vocabulary in speaking and writing.
<p>III.a.5 Materials include a clearly defined plan to support and hold students accountable as they engage in independent reading.</p>	<p>0/1 (binary)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 text and read independently for a sustained period of time, including planning and accountability for achieving independent reading goals.
<p>III.b. Composition</p>		
<p>Indicator</p>	<p>Scoring</p>	<p>Guidance for Texas Quality</p>
<p>III.b.1 Materials provide support for students to develop composition skills across multiple text types for a variety of purposes and audiences.</p>	<p>0/2/4</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Materials facilitate students’ coherent use of the elements of the writing process (planning, drafting, revising, editing, and publishing) to compose text. • Materials provide students meaningful opportunities to write texts for multiple purposes and audiences, such as the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Literary texts such as fiction and poetry ○ Informational texts such as explanatory essays, reports, resumes, and personal essays ○ Argumentative texts ○ Correspondence in a professional or friendly structure ○ Literary analysis ○ Rhetorical analysis

<p>III.b.2 Over the course of the year, composition skills and knowledge of conventions are applied in increasingly complex contexts, with opportunities for students to publish their writing.</p>	<p>0/2/4</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Materials provide opportunities for practice and application of the conventions of academic language when speaking and writing, including punctuation, grammar, and spelling. Grammar, punctuation, and usage are taught systematically, both in and out of context, and grow in depth and complexity within and across units.
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III.c Speaking and Listening

Indicator	Scoring	Guidance for Texas Quality
<p>III.c.1 Materials support students' listening and speaking about texts and research to give organized presentations in both formal and informal settings.</p>	<p>0/2/4</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Materials provide meaningful 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 opportunities for students to give organized presentations and support them learning to speak in a clear and concise manner using the conventions of language.
<p>III.c.2 Materials engage students in productive teamwork and student-led discussions.</p>	<p>0/2/4</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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 meaningful guidance and practice in eliciting and considering suggestions from other group members, including identifying points of agreement and disagreement.
<p>III.c.3 Materials include a cohesive, year-long plan for students to interact with and build key academic vocabulary in and across texts.</p>	<p>0/2/4</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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
<p>III.d.1 Materials engage students in both short-term and sustained recursive inquiry processes to</p>	<p>0/2/4</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Materials support identification and summary of high-quality primary and secondary sources (e.g., credible reference texts, periodicals, credible online sources, and data from experts).

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<p>confront and analyze various aspects of a topic using relevant sources.</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Materials support student practice in organizing and presenting their ideas and information in accordance with the purpose of the research and the appropriate grade-level audience.
<p>III.d.2 Materials contain meaningful, interconnected tasks that build student knowledge and provide opportunities for increased independence.</p>	<p>0/2/4</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Questions and tasks are designed to help students build and apply knowledge and skills in reading, writing, speaking, listening, and language through quality, grade-level complex texts. • 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 vocabulary, syntax, and fluency, as needed; and provide opportunities for increased independence.

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Section IV.

IV. Supports for Diverse Learners

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

Scoring: Materials can receive up to X points in this section. The total number of points received will impact the material’s star classification.

Indicator	Scoring	Guidance for Texas Quality
IV.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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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.
IV.2 Materials include supports for students who demonstrate proficiency above grade level.	0/1/2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Materials provide planning and learning opportunities (including extensions and differentiation) for students who demonstrate literacy skills above that expected at the grade level. <i>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.</i>
IV.3 Materials include supports for students who perform below grade level to ensure they are meeting the grade-level literacy standards.	0/1/2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Materials provide planning and learning opportunities (including extensions and differentiation) for students who demonstrate literacy skills below that expected at the grade level. <i>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.</i>
IV.4 Materials include supports for English learners (ELs) to meet grade-level learning expectations.	0/1/2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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, glossaries, bilingual dictionaries, thesauri, and other modes of comprehensible input.

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 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.
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Section V.

V. 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 X points in this section. The total number of points received will impact the material’s star classification.

Indicator	Scoring	Guidance for Texas Quality
V.1 Materials include implementation support for teachers and administrators.	0/2/4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Materials include a school years’ worth of literacy instruction, including realistic pacing guidance and routines and support for a variety of school year configurations. Materials are accompanied by a TEKS-aligned scope and sequence outlining the essential knowledge and skills 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 <i>gauge level of fidelity of implementation</i> (e.g., “look for” guides, suggested supports for common challenges teachers face with implementation, etc.).
V.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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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.
V.3 The visual design of the student edition	0/1/2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Materials include appropriate use of white space and design that supports and does not distract from student learning.

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<p>(whether in print or digital) is not distracting nor chaotic but supports students in engaging thoughtfully with the subject.</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pictures and graphics are supportive of student learning and engagement without being visually distracting.
<p>V.4 Materials include assessment information and guidance for teachers and administrators to monitor progress including how to interpret and act on data yielded.</p>	<p>0/1/2</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 are connected to the regular content to support student learning.
<p>V.5 If present, technology components included are appropriate for grade-level students and provide support for learning.</p>	<p>NOT SCORED</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Technology, if present, supports and enhances student learning as appropriate, as opposed to detracting from it, and includes appropriate teacher guidance.

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Section VI.

VI. 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
VI. 1 Technology components are identified per the information requirement checklist.	TBD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Technology checklist is completed.
VI.2 Cost worksheet completed.	TBD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cost worksheet is completed.
VI.3 Professional learning opportunities meet criteria for implementation.	TBD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> [Professional learning indicators will be built out prior to the pilot's end.]

Research Base:

TEKS (note we are using the revised TEKS): <http://ritter.tea.state.tx.us/rules/tac/chapter110/ch110c.html#110.35>

Improving Instruction (general):

<https://www.education.nh.gov/essa/documents/instructional-core.pdf>

Writing:

https://peabody.vanderbilt.edu/departments/sped/research/special_education_research_news_-_fall_09/video_-_improving_writing_instruction/the_word_on_writing_with_steve_graham.php

Academic Vocabulary:

<https://ila.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/abs/10.1002/RRQ.011>

<https://ila.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/full/10.1002/trtr.1222>

CCR Advancement/Needs