

# New York State Education Department K-3 Literacy Curriculum Review Guide



June 2024

# THE UNIVERSITY OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK

## Regents of The University

|   |               |
|---|---------------|
| LESTER W. YOUNG, JR., <i>Chancellor</i> , B.S., M.S., Ed.D. | Beechurst     |
| JUDITH CHIN, <i>Vice Chancellor</i> B.S., M.S. in Ed.       | Little Neck   |
| ROGER TILLES, B.A., J.D.                                    | Manhasset     |
| CHRISTINE D. CEA, B.A., M.A., Ph.D.                         | Staten Island |
| WADE S. NORWOOD, B.A.                                       | Rochester     |
| JAMES E. COTTRELL, B.S., M.D.                               | New York      |
| CATHERINE COLLINS, R.N., N.P., B.S., M.S. in Ed., Ed.D.     | Buffalo       |
| LUIS O. REYES, B.A., M.A., Ph.D.                            | New York      |
| SUSAN W. MITTLER, B.S., M.S.                                | Ithaca        |
| FRANCES G. WILLS, B.A., M.A., M.Ed., C.A.S., Ph.D.          | Ossining      |
| ARAMINA VEGA FERRER, B.A., M.S. in Ed., Ph.D.               | Bronx         |
| SHINO TANIKAWA, B.A., M.S.                                  | Manhattan     |
| ROGER P. CATANIA, B.A., M.A., M.S., C.A.S., Ph.D.           | Saranac Lake  |
| ADRIAN I. HALE, A.S., B.A.                                  | Rochester     |
| HASONI L. PRATTS, B.S., M.P.A.                              | Brooklyn      |
| PATRICK A. MANNION, B.A., M.B.A.                            | Fayetteville  |
| SEEMA RIVERA, B.A., M.S., Ph.D.                             | Slingerlands  |

The State Education Department does not discriminate on the basis of race, creed, color, national origin, religion, age, sex, military, marital status, familial status, domestic violence victim status, carrier status, disability, genetic predisposition, sexual orientation and criminal record in its recruitment, educational programs, services, and activities. NYSED has adopted a web accessibility policy, and publications designed for distribution can be made available in an accessible format upon request. Inquiries regarding this policy of nondiscrimination should be directed to the Office of Human Resources Management, Room 528 EB, Education Building, Albany, New York 12234.

## Commissioner of Education and President of The University

DR. BETTY A. ROSA

### Senior Deputy Commissioner, Education Policy

DR. JEFFREY MATTESON

### Deputy Commissioner, P-12 Instructional Support

ANGELIQUE JOHNSON-DINGLE

### Deputy Commissioner, P-12 Operational Support

JASON HARMON

### Assistant Commissioner, Office of Standards and Instructional Programs

DR. SANTOSHA OLIVER



# CONTENTS



- Acknowledgements ..... 4
- Introduction ..... 5
- Comprehensive Literacy Programs ..... 6
- The New York State ELA Learning Standards ..... 7
- Diverse Learners ..... 8
- How to Use The Guide ..... 9
- Organization of the Guide ..... 10
- Curriculum Review Domains ..... 11
  - Learning Standards and Evidence-Based Practices . 12-13
  - Culturally Responsive & Social-Emotional Learning ..... 14
  - Supporting All Learners ..... 15
  - Measuring Learning ..... 16
  - Usability ..... 17
- Key References and Resources..... 18

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS



*NYSED would also like to acknowledge the work of our colleagues in other State Departments of Education in the development of this guidance document. Resources from several states were used by the workgroup to inform the development of NYSED's K-3 Literacy Curriculum Review Guide. Links to these documents are in the Key Resources and References section of the Guide.*

*The New York State Education Department (NYSED or "the Department") would like to acknowledge and thank the following individuals of the K-3 Literacy Curriculum Review Guide Workgroup for their support and input on the development of NYSED's Literacy Curriculum Review Guide:*

**Anne Boticelli**, Chief Academic Officer, Buffalo Public Schools

**Amy Campbell**, Assistant Superintendent for Educational Services, CVES BOCES; SCDN Executive Committee

**Dr. Michael Capuana**, District Superintendent, Erie 1 BOCES

**Jaime Ciffone**, Executive Vice President, NYSUT

**Alison Conners**, Supervisor, Office of Standards and Instruction, NYSED

**Catherine Coons**, Associate, Office of Standards and Instruction, NYSED

**Dr. Donna DeSiato**, Superintendent, East Syracuse Minoa CSD; Vice President, NYSCOSS

**Dr. Ray Giamartino**, Assistant Commissioner, Office of Innovation and School Reform, NYSED

**Angelique Johnson-Dingle**, Deputy Commissioner, P-12 Instructional Support, NYSED

**Renee Klager**, Senior Director of Instruction and Implementation, Division of School Leadership, NYC Public Schools

**Helen Kwong**, Senior Special Assistant for First Deputy Chancellor, NYC Public Schools

**Dena Iagrossi**, Associate, Office of Special Education, NYSED

**Shannon Logan**, Director, Office of Standards and Instruction and Office of Educational Design & Technology, NYSED

**Laura McDaniel**, Director of Curriculum and Instructional Data, Capital Region BOCES; Co-Chair, SCDN ELA Statewide Framework

**Dr. Keith Newvine**, Assistant Professor of Literacy, SUNY Cortland; Former President, NYSRA

**Austin Nojaim**, Associate, Office of Bilingual Education and World Languages, NYSED

**Dr. Santosha Oliver**, Assistant Commissioner, Office of Standards and Instructional Programs, NYSED

**Maria Papa**, Staff and Curriculum Development Specialist, Madison-Oneida BOCES; Co-Chair, SCDN ELA Statewide Framework

**Madison Ramnes**, Associate, Office of Early Learning, NYSED

**Dr. Nicole Reid Christopher**, Senior Director of Implementation and Instruction, Division of School Leadership, NYC Public Schools

**Dr. Danika Rux**, Deputy Chancellor of School Leadership, NYC Public Schools

**Stephanie Smyka**, Coordinator of Curriculum, Instruction and Professional Development, Monroe 2-Orleans BOCES

**Dr. Diane Wynne**, Executive Director, Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, NYSED

# INTRODUCTION

**The New York State Education Department is committed to ensuring that every student in New York has access to high-quality, culturally responsive literacy instruction aligned to evidence-based practices, also known as the Science of Reading.**

Literacy is the foundation for academic success and is essential for full participation in 21<sup>st</sup> Century life. The New York State Education Department expects that all P-12 students receive high-quality instruction through a curriculum designed to teach them to read and write on grade level, as determined by the [NYS P-12 Next Generation English Language Arts \(ELA\) Learning Standards](#).

A solid foundation in literacy by grade three is essential, not only for more complex academic study, but also for the development of the essential skills of communication, collaboration, critical thinking, and problem-solving. Foundational literacy proficiency is linked to greater success and fulfillment in education, careers, and life. It is therefore especially imperative that students in grades K-3 receive high-quality, explicit instruction in literacy, and that both instruction and curricula are grounded in evidence drawn from educational and scientific research and study.

To support districts in selecting and developing high-quality curricular materials for grades K-3, the Department, in collaboration with stakeholders, developed this K-3 Literacy Curriculum Review Guide.

This Guide is neither a curriculum nor a recommended list of curricula. NYSED does not mandate, endorse, or advise on specific curricula. In New York, all curriculum decisions are made at the local level. Rather, this Guide provides high-level



guidance, in the form of guiding questions, criteria, and indicators, to assist districts in choosing or revising K-3 curricular materials to better ensure alignment with evidence-based practices, the New York State Learning Standards, the NYS Culturally Responsive-Sustaining Education Framework, and the New York State Social-Emotional Learning Benchmarks.

The Department acknowledges that there may not be one perfect curriculum that meets all the criteria in the Guide. Likely, a district curriculum or collection of curricular materials will not be fully aligned with this Guide. The Department does not advocate the use of this Guide to holistically reject or discard entire curricula, nor does the Department require districts to purchase a new vendor-developed curriculum that can meet all expectations. Rather, districts are urged to use a tool such as this to reflect on literacy curricula, to identify aspects that need to be revised or supplemented and/or to identify materials that should be repurposed, to meet expectations.

# COMPREHENSIVE LITERACY PROGRAMS

High-quality curricular materials alone do not constitute a comprehensive literacy education program. It is possible that only revising curricula may not lead to improved outcomes for students. To address the literacy needs of all students, it is important for districts and schools to review and analyze their literacy programs for the following elements:

## High-Quality Curricula and Curricular Materials:

Curriculum and curricular materials must be culturally and linguistically-responsive, grounded in evidence-based practices, and designed to teach the NYS ELA Learning Standards. Materials should be designed to meet the needs of individual students at varying levels and with varying strengths and interests. While optional, this Guide may be of help to districts and schools as they review curricula and curricular materials.

## Instruction:

Both instructional design and instructional strategy must be student-centered, evidence-based, and grounded firmly in the NYS Culturally Responsive-Sustaining Education Framework. While instructional decisions are made at the local level, the Department supports interdisciplinary, inquiry- and project-based approaches that prioritize deep, meaningful learning.

## Assessment:

Ongoing, multi-tiered, developmentally-appropriate assessment provides critical information necessary to monitor student progress, develop learning goals, and inform decisions on instructional design and implementation. Formative assessments, including both formal and informal measures, should be utilized in addition to periodic summative assessments. K-3 literacy programs should utilize universal screeners for all students and diagnostic assessments for those students performing below benchmark. In early learning classrooms, self-directed play provides an opportunity to observe for evidence of student knowledge and skill.

## Professional Learning:

Professional learning is most effective when it is ongoing, job-embedded, tiered based on level of expertise, and incorporates educator voice and choice. Specific to literacy, districts should consider teachers' needs and interests in the following areas: research in literacy acquisition; NYS ELA Learning Standards;



designing student-centered, culturally responsive instruction and curricular materials aligned with the NYS Learning Standards; evidence-based and culturally responsive instructional practices; and implementation of the district curriculum. Districts may wish to consider ways in which they can partner with institutions of higher education and/or BOCES in the design and/or implementation of professional learning to support their literacy programs.

## Family and Community Partnerships:

Strong connections to students' families and to the school community provide support for whole-child development, build culturally responsive and sustaining environments, and promote learning both within and outside of the classroom. Family and community partnerships can assist districts and schools in reinforcing literacy development in multiple settings and identifying and addressing literacy challenges early in a student's educational journey.

## Leadership:

Strong district leadership is critical to implementing meaningful, lasting change to promote student success. Leaders set the vision and identify goals and benchmarks to realize the vision; they allocate resources based on priorities, provide targeted support and expertise where needed, advocate for students, and build environments conducive to student success.

# THE NEW YORK STATE ELA LEARNING STANDARDS

**The New York State Learning Standards set developmentally-appropriate expectations for what students should know and be able to do as a result of skilled instruction.**

The NYS Board of Regents has adopted Learning Standards in twelve content areas, including English Language Arts, which set the expectations for literacy learning. [The NYS P-12 Next Generation English Language Arts \(ELA\) Learning Standards](#) are organized into four key strands: Reading, Writing, Speaking and Listening, and Language. In grades PK-5, the Reading strand includes Reading Foundational Skills, which set expectations for explicit instruction in the essential areas of phonological awareness, phonics and word recognition, fluency, and print concepts.

The ELA Standards align with the “Big 6” skills and competencies highlighted in the Science of Reading that support effective reading and writing. For more information, please see the [Department’s series of Literacy Briefs that focus on the Science of Reading](#). These briefs were produced by Dr. Nonie K. Lesaux, Professor of Education and Human Development, Harvard Graduate School of Education, and Katie C. Carr, M.Ed. The literacy briefs may be used to strengthen knowledge of evidence-based literacy practices in PK-12 education.

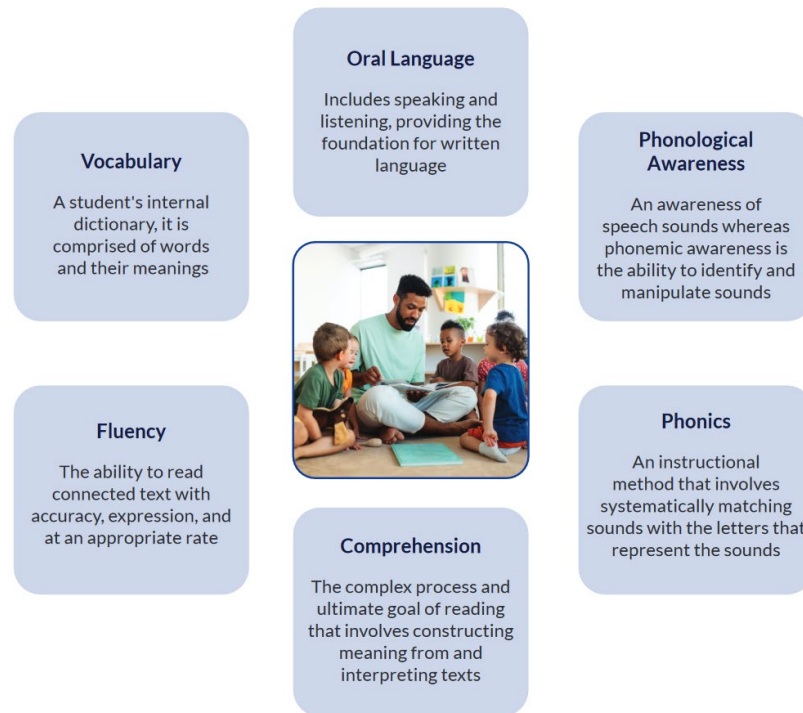
The ELA Learning Standards are not a curriculum. The New York State Education Department does not require, recommend, endorse, or advise on specific curricula. All curriculum and instructional decisions are made at the local level. Districts and schools choose and/or develop curricula, curricular materials, and instructional strategies to meet the individual needs of their students, and to support all students in gaining the skills and knowledge articulated in the NYS Learning Standards.

The Department published an [Introduction to the Early Learning ELA Standards](#), written by Dr. Zoila Morell of Mercy College on behalf of the Early Learning Task Force, which includes information on developing high-quality literacy programs for our youngest learners. The document

stresses the importance of play, which is essential to early development. In addition, the Department recognizes the importance of literacy development to other content learning. Districts continue to be encouraged to integrate content-area topics (such as from science and social studies) into the literacy programs.

The Department supports districts as they continue to develop and provide literacy programs that are designed to teach the learning standards and are culturally responsive, developmentally appropriate, personalized to individual students, and consider the needs of the whole child.

## The “Big 6” Skills and Competencies



# DIVERSE LEARNERS

**English Language Learners (ELLs)** are a sub-group of students, who, by reason of foreign birth or ancestry, speak or understand a language other than English and speak or understand little or no English. ELLs enter the school system at all grade levels, with a wide range of proficiency in English and varying degrees of academic competencies in their home language. Once properly identified, ELLs are placed in bilingual education programs such as Dual-Language Immersion (DLI), Transitional Bilingual Education (TBE), or English as a New Language (ENL).

The allocation of [required units of study and staffing](#) for bilingual education programs is contingent upon the English language proficiency levels of the students. Districts and schools are required to engage all English Language Learners (ELLs) in instruction that is grade-appropriate, academically rigorous, and aligned with the New York State Learning Standards by designing, selecting, and implementing a high-quality curriculum that meets their needs as per NYCRR Part 154. Every ELL is entitled to instructional supports, scaffolds, and services that support them to get there. These supports and scaffolds should promote academic, social, and/or cultural development while the student is learning English, in addition to his or her home language. Educators should consider factors such as age, academic development, English and home language proficiency, as well as culture and background knowledge, when designing instruction that will develop lifelong readers, writers, and speakers of English and other languages.

For a further linguistic perspective on the Next Generation Learning Standards for English Language Arts, and to help design instruction for ELLs, see the [Academic and Linguistic Demands](#) from the Office of Bilingual Education and World Languages (OBEWL).

**Students with disabilities** must have access to the general education curriculum (i.e., curriculum that is based on the New York State Learning Standards for the grade in which a student is enrolled). Access to and participation in the general education curriculum does not occur solely because a student is placed in a general education classroom, but rather when students with disabilities are actively engaged in learning the content and skills that define the general education curriculum. Meaningful access to the general education curriculum means that a student with a disability has the appropriate supports, services, and accommodations to address his or her disability in consideration of the content of the curriculum, instructional materials, how the curriculum is taught to the student, the physical environment, and how the student's learning is measured.

The phrase “**all students**” is used within the Guide to remind educators of the diversity of student experiences to be considered when selecting a literacy curriculum, and that it is our responsibility as educators to ensure all students, including ELLs and students with disabilities, have access to high-quality curricular materials to improve student learning outcomes.





# HOW TO USE THE GUIDE

## Process, Not Checklist

When using this Guide or any other tool to examine district curriculum, the focus should be on the process, rather than on simply checking boxes. Focusing on the review process underscores the dynamic and iterative nature of educational improvement, where the goal is not simply to perform a perfunctory task but also to foster understanding and promote continuous growth to support the success of all students.

District leaders should ensure that the review committee has adequate time, resources, and information to review the literacy curriculum. As appropriate, the review committee may produce recommendations for improving the literacy curriculum based on guidance and evidence-based practices. To strengthen recommendations, the curriculum review committee may also want to review disaggregated district data to identify specific areas for focus and growth.



## Curriculum Review Process Suggestions:

- Assemble a literacy curriculum review team (facilitator, district and literacy leaders, educators, special educators, specialists, parents, etc.).
- Identify the goals, timeline, and/or parameters of the process.
- Review related data, if applicable.
- Gather curricular materials (may include associated texts, teacher manuals, student materials, instructional materials).
- Use the Curriculum Review Guide to review the curricular materials.
  - Use the guiding questions to facilitate discussion.
  - Use each domain to evaluate curricular materials.
  - Identify materials that are not aligned with evidence-based practices and need to be revised, supplemented, and/or repurposed to meet expectations.
- Before adopting new curricular materials, plan small-scale pilot to gather additional information.

**Reminder:** The Department does not advocate the use of this Guide to holistically accept, reject, or discard entire curricula or sets of curricular materials.

# ORGANIZATION OF THE GUIDE






- DOMAIN:** The Guide is divided into five domains that categorize aspects of a high-quality literacy curriculum.
  - The order of the domains is not weighted by significance. All are important.*
- GUIDING QUESTION(S):** Anchor local discussion
- CRITERIA:** Essential elements of a literacy curriculum
- INDICATORS:** “Look fors” that delineate criterion
- EVIDENCE / NOTES:** Intentionally blank to provide space for thoughts, questions, and comments
- MISSING / UNALIGNED:** An additional space to record criteria that is not found and/or to identify materials not aligned to evidence-based practices (or “red flags”).

→ Supporting All Learners

| Guiding Question:  | Criteria  | Indicators  | Evidence / Notes |
|--|---|---|------------------|
| Does the curriculum give all students opportunities and support to access grade-level standards? | The curriculum provides multiple ways for students with different abilities, interests, knowledge, or skill levels to access and engage in grade-level standards. | Various modes of teaching and learning, such as play-based, hands-on, and multi-sensory are included. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Differentiated materials, texts, and activities to meet the varying student proficiency levels, interests, and experiential diversity are evidenced in the materials.</li> <li>Skill building and practice activities to meet grade-level learning standards are included.</li> <li>Multiple entry points or approaches within lessons are included.</li> <li>Multiple tiers of support to meet the needs of learners are included.</li> </ul> |                  |
|  | The curriculum provides resources to support all learners.  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Materials include reteaching opportunities to increase proficiency in targeted areas.</li> <li>Materials provide scaffolding to support student access to grade-level content.</li> <li>Materials provide extension and enrichment opportunities to deepen mastery of standards for all levels of learners.</li> </ul>   |                  |
|  | The curriculum provides support for English Language Learners (ELLs).   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Activities include linguistic support strategies (scaffolding) for ELLs during all phases of instruction.</li> <li>Sheltered language experiences promote the inclusion of ELLs in all literacy activities.</li> </ul>   |                  |
|  | The curriculum provides appropriate support for students with disabilities.   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Materials support the inclusion of multisensory and tactile learning, when possible, to reinforce literacy concepts.</li> <li>Materials allow for curricular accommodations and/or modifications consistent with students with disabilities' individualized education programs and 504 accommodation plans.</li> </ul>   |                  |
|  |   | Based on the criteria and indicators above, what is missing, and/or what is not aligned with evidence-based practices?  |                  |

# CURRICULUM REVIEW DOMAINS

The K-3 Literacy Curriculum Review Guide is organized into the following five domains\*:

|  |  |  |   |   |
|--|--|--|---|---|
|  <b>Learning Standards and Evidence-Based Practices</b>   |  <b>Culturally Responsive &amp; Social-Emotional Learning</b>   |  <b>Supporting Needs of All Learners</b>   |  <b>Measuring Learning</b>   |  <b>Usability</b>  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>•The literacy curriculum aligns to the NYS P-12 Next Generation English Language Arts Learning Standards.</li><li>•The literacy curriculum reflects evidence-based, interdisciplinary scientific research on P-12 literacy development, known as the Science of Reading.</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>•The literacy curriculum is grounded in the Culturally Responsive-Sustaining Education Framework and Social-Emotional Learning Benchmarks.</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>•The literacy curriculum supports tiers of instruction in alignment with principles of MTSS-I.</li><li>•The literacy curriculum supports accommodations and modifications for students with a disability and English Language Learners.</li><li>•The literacy curriculum incorporates the principles of Universal Design for Learning.</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>•The literacy curriculum includes assessments that are instructionally relevant, focused on essential skills, and reflect the depth and complexity presented in the learning standards and experiences.</li><li>•The literacy curriculum includes assessments that identify student strengths and areas for growth, monitor student progress, guide instruction, and are varied and supported by research and evidence.</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>•The literacy curriculum is flexible and easy for teachers to use.</li><li>•The literacy curriculum provides clear expectations and guidance for teachers.</li><li>•The literacy curriculum provides strategies or resources to engage parents, family members, and caregivers.</li></ul> |

\* The order of the domains is not weighted by significance. All are important.

# Learning Standards and Evidence-Based Practices



### Guiding Questions:

- Do students have access to grade-appropriate tasks and instruction aligned to Learning Standards?
- Does the curriculum provide systematic and explicit instruction with sufficient student practice to support reading foundational skills?
- Is the curriculum clear about what must be taught to reflect learning standards for each grade level?

| Criteria   | Indicators   | Evidence / Notes |
|--|--|------------------|
| The curriculum aligns with the appropriate grade-level NYS ELA Learning Standards.   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All grade-level ELA standards are cited and clearly identified in scope and sequence, curriculum maps, and lesson plans.</li> </ul>   |                  |
| The curriculum reflects evidence-based, interdisciplinary scientific research on P-12 literacy development, known as the Science of Reading. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The reading process is broken down into skills that are introduced systematically and consistently in a logical sequence.</li> <li>• Lessons are organized to teach skills explicitly and directly.</li> <li>• Objectives and examples are clear and specific.</li> <li>• Learned skills are applied in an integrated manner through engagement with authentic reading and writing tasks.</li> <li>• Texts are high-quality, developmentally appropriate, and culturally responsive.</li> </ul> |                  |
| The curriculum emphasizes explicit, systematic instruction of phonological awareness, including phonemic awareness.                          | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Phonemic awareness and phonological lessons have clear objectives, are introduced systematically, and are organized to teach knowledge and skills directly and explicitly.</li> <li>• Larger phonologic units (e.g., syllable, rhyme) as well as phonemic units (e.g., consonant blends) are included.</li> <li>• Stages of simple to advanced phonemic manipulation tasks (e.g., isolating, blending, deleting, substituting) are included.</li> </ul>   |                  |
| The curriculum emphasizes explicit and systematic instruction of evidence-based phonics.   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Phonics lessons have clear objectives, are introduced systematically, and are organized to directly and explicitly teach knowledge and skills.</li> <li>• Letter-sound-symbol association is taught sequentially, from least to most complex relationships.</li> <li>• Phonetic decoding is emphasized, with attention to word structure.</li> <li>• Decodable texts match the phonics skills being taught and selected according to the needs of the student.</li> </ul>                       |                  |
| The curriculum emphasizes explicit, systematic instruction of fluency.   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fluency is a clear objective.</li> <li>• Materials provide consistent opportunities for students to hear fluent oral reading of increasingly complex texts that lead to proficiency in both oral and silent reading.</li> <li>• Oral reading is practiced at the word, sentence, and paragraph level, while being exposed to a variety of genres.</li> </ul>  |                  |



| Criteria  | Indicators   | Evidence / Notes |
|---|--|------------------|
| The curriculum emphasizes explicit, systematic instruction of comprehension.            | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Comprehension lessons have clear objectives, are introduced systematically, and are organized to teach comprehension skills directly and explicitly.</li><li>• Clear connections are made to activate background knowledge and prior experiences.</li><li>• Materials provide exposure to complex texts in a variety of genres, (including but not limited to informational, literary, and poetry) with attention to building background knowledge, focusing on text structure to increase comprehension, and boosting student enjoyment.</li></ul>  |                  |
| The curriculum emphasizes explicit, systematic instruction of vocabulary.               | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Vocabulary lessons have clear objectives, are introduced systematically, and are organized to teach the meaning of words directly and explicitly.</li><li>• Materials provide instruction in word meaning (both in isolation and within context).</li></ul>  |                  |
| The curriculum emphasizes explicit systematic instruction of oral language development. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Materials provide sufficient time for high-ordered discussions, with a focus on conventions (e.g., tone, conversational flow) and the development of topic-related ideas and complete thoughts.</li></ul>  |                  |
| The curriculum emphasizes explicit systematic instruction of writing.                   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Writing lessons have clear objectives, are introduced systematically, and are organized to teach the skills of writing directly and explicitly.</li><li>• Lessons focus on the characteristics of writing beyond physical scribing and conventions, including the development of ideas, organization, fluency, and word choice.</li><li>• Materials include a variety of paper types to help students learn print concepts, develop handwriting skills, increase writing stamina, and establish organization.</li><li>• Students write in a variety of genres and for a variety of audiences and purposes.</li></ul> |                  |

Based on the criteria and indicators above, what is missing, and/or what is not aligned with evidence-based practices?

## Culturally Responsive & Social-Emotional Learning



### Guiding Questions:

- Does the curriculum support an engaging, inclusive, and respectful learning environment for all?
- Does the curriculum provide students the opportunity to view other's experiences, reflect on their own identity, and open doors to be immersed in the text?

| Criteria  | Indicators   | Evidence / Notes |
|---|--|------------------|
| The curriculum enhances the capacity for students to view concepts, issues, events from the perspectives of diverse groups, including race/ethnicity, language, ability, etc. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All backgrounds, cultures, and identities are acknowledged, reflected, and respected.</li> <li>• Materials reflect a diversity of perspectives and voices.</li> <li>• Examples of relationship building and/or conflict resolution among people from different backgrounds are highlighted.</li> <li>• Materials provide opportunities to have conversations about differing perspectives and points of view.</li> </ul>                                      |                  |
| The curriculum includes a balance of representation of people with multiple perspectives and identities including race/ethnicity, gender, language, ability, etc.             | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Texts include a diversity of characters that span genres, affirm and broaden perspectives, and develop an inclusive community.</li> <li>• Strengths and contributions of all individuals are recognized, including those from underrepresented or historically marginalized groups.</li> <li>• Portrayals of diverse people and cultures are accurate and multi-dimensional.</li> </ul>   |                  |
| Students' languages, literacies, and cultural ways of being are authentically centered throughout the curriculum instead of being "add-ons."                                  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An asset-based approach that affirms students' backgrounds is exemplified in the materials.</li> <li>• Diverse cultural and social backgrounds of all students are integrated.</li> </ul>   |                  |
| The curriculum includes authentic opportunities for students to showcase their voices and learning experiences.   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An asset-based approach is used so that students have an opportunity for self-expression and connection to their lived experiences.</li> <li>• A wide variety of learning modalities is supported in the materials.</li> <li>• Demonstration of mastery can be expressed in multiple ways.</li> </ul>   |                  |
| The curriculum offers opportunities for students to reflect on and practice core social and emotional skills.   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Texts and materials explore a range of emotions, allowing students to analyze how characters experience and express feelings.</li> <li>• Stories feature characters who demonstrate active listening, perspective-taking, and empathetic behavior.</li> <li>• Literature depicts goal-setting and perseverance as themes or through character experiences.</li> <li>• Texts allow students to explore concepts of identity, agency, and belonging.</li> </ul> |                  |

Based on the criteria and indicators above, what is missing, and/or what is not aligned with evidence-based practices?

## Supporting All Learners



### Guiding Question:

- Does the curriculum give all students opportunities and support to access grade-level standards?

| Criteria  | Indicators   | Evidence / Notes |
|---|--|------------------|
| The curriculum provides multiple ways for students with different abilities, interests, knowledge, or skill levels to access and engage in grade-level standards. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Various modes of teaching and learning, such as play-based, hands-on, and multi-sensory are included.</li> <li>Differentiated materials, texts, and activities to meet the varying student proficiency levels, interests, and experiential diversity are evidenced in the materials.</li> <li>Skill building and practice activities to meet grade-level learning standards are included.</li> <li>Multiple entry points or approaches within lessons are included.</li> <li>Multiple tiers of support to meet the needs of learners are included.</li> </ul> |                  |
| The curriculum provides resources to support all learners.  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Materials include reteaching opportunities to increase proficiency in targeted areas.</li> <li>Materials provide scaffolding to support student access to grade-level content.</li> <li>Materials provide extension and enrichment opportunities to deepen mastery of standards for all levels of learners.</li> </ul>  |                  |
| The curriculum provides support for English Language Learners (ELLs).   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Activities include linguistic support strategies (scaffolding) for ELLs during all phases of instruction.</li> <li>Sheltered language experiences promote the inclusion of ELLs in all literacy activities.</li> </ul>  |                  |
| The curriculum provides appropriate support for students with disabilities.   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Materials support the inclusion of multisensory and tactile learning, when possible, to reinforce literacy concepts.</li> <li>Materials allow for curricular accommodations and/or modifications consistent with students with disabilities' individualized education programs and 504 accommodation plans.</li> </ul>  |                  |

Based on the criteria and indicators above, what is missing, and/or what is not aligned with evidence-based practices?

## Measuring Learning



### Guiding Questions:

- Do the curriculum-embedded assessments identify student strengths and areas for growth to guide instruction?
- Do the curriculum-embedded assessments measure student progress and achievement of standards?
- Does the curriculum include both formative assessments to provide ongoing feedback and inform instruction and summative assessments to evaluate student achievement at the end of a unit?

| Criteria   | Indicators   | Evidence / Notes |
|--|--|------------------|
| The curriculum includes methods and resources to measure student progress.   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Varied formative and summative assessments such as performance tasks and rubrics are included to assess student progress toward learning standards and to inform instruction.</li> <li>• Materials include frequent formative assessments used to identify students' misconceptions and gaps in skills and content knowledge, as well as identifying students' strengths and mastery of foundational skills.</li> <li>• Annotated exemplars of student work illustrate various performance levels at different points during the school year.</li> <li>• Guidance is provided on how to move students to the next level.</li> </ul> |                  |
| The curriculum-embedded assessments are aligned to NYS ELA Learning Standards.   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Curriculum-embedded assessments indicate the targeted Standards.</li> <li>• Materials include summative assessments used to ascertain attainment of Standards.</li> </ul>   |                  |
| Additional Consideration: Universal screening assessments are used to identify general strengths/needs and gauge overall progress relative to grade-level learning standards.  |  |                  |
| Additional Consideration: Diagnostic assessments are used to clarify and target the difficulties of individual students when the information provided by universal screening assessments is not sufficient to do so. |  |                  |
| Based on the criteria and indicators above, what is missing, and/or what is not aligned with evidence-based practices?   |  |                  |



## Usability



**Guiding Question:**

- Does the curriculum provide support and guidance for teachers to effectively plan for instruction?

| Criteria  | Indicators  | Evidence / Notes |
|---|---|------------------|
| The curriculum includes guidance and resources to build teachers' knowledge and ability to implement the curriculum.                        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Materials include rubrics, exemplars, or other resources to help teachers set clear expectations for students.</li> <li>• Materials include a range of supports for teachers to help guide students' learning progressions (e.g., teacher editions, concise teacher notes explaining learning progressions, and guidance for specific standards/lessons, including pacing).</li> </ul>   |                  |
| The curriculum provides sufficient flexibility to meet the varied needs, abilities, and interests of the students served.                   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Print and digital materials can be customized for local use and personalized learning.</li> <li>• Materials provide teachers with guidance on how to be inclusive and responsive to the diverse needs and identities of students.</li> <li>• Texts appeal to a variety of students' interests and include those for varied purposes, such as teacher read alouds, choral reading, instructional reading, and independent reading.</li> </ul>         |                  |
| The curriculum has systematic, explicit, evidence-based scope and sequence.   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Scope and sequence include foundational skills.</li> <li>• Horizontal and vertical alignment are included in the materials.</li> <li>• Pacing is reasonable and flexible, maximizing student understanding.</li> </ul>   |                  |
| The curriculum is well-written, designed, and accurate.   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Materials are well organized and easy to use.</li> <li>• The content can be completed within a regular school year.</li> <li>• Materials include citations for current, academic, and relevant research that supports the design of the resources and lessons, and guides educator understanding and instruction.</li> <li>• The materials do not contain grammatical or factual errors.</li> <li>• The visual design is not distracting.</li> </ul> |                  |
| The curriculum provides strategies and resources for teachers to inform and engage parents, family members, and caregivers of all students. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Multilingual resources are available for families and are written in family-friendly language, (e.g., unit summaries, newsletters, take-home tasks, etc.).</li> <li>• Suggestions for how families and caregivers can support student achievement at home are included.</li> </ul>   |                  |
| Digital materials are user-friendly for teachers and students.  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Materials are compatible with multiple internet browsers.</li> <li>• Materials are compatible with multiple operating systems.</li> <li>• Materials align with the guidelines for Universal Design for Learning.</li> </ul>  |                  |

Based on the criteria and indicators above, what is missing, and/or what is not aligned with evidence-based practices?

# KEY REFERENCES AND RESOURCES

---

## RESOURCES

[NYSED Academic and Linguistic Demands](#): A set of tools to help teachers identify the words, phrases, and language structures embedded in the ELA Next Generation Learning Standards

[NYSED Advanced Literacy Briefs](#): A series of briefs that provide guidance for serving linguistically diverse learners

[NYSED Blueprint for English Language Learner Success](#): A framework to ensure all students have access to high-quality instruction

[NYSED Blueprint for Improved Results for Students with Disabilities](#): A framework to ensure students with disabilities have access to high-quality instruction

[NYSED Culturally Responsive Sustaining Education Framework](#): A framework to create student-centered learning environments

[NYSED ELA Next Generation Learning Standards](#): P-12 ELA Standards

[NYSED Guide to Aligning Curricula to the ELA Next Generation Learning Standards](#): A guide to support educators implement the ELA Standards

[NYSED Multi-tiered Systems of Support-Integrated Center](#): Builds capacity in educational organizations to deliver evidence-based practices within a tiered system

[NYSED Office of Special Education Educational Partnership](#): A network of support focused on enhancing services and supports for students with disabilities

[NYSED Office of Standards and Instruction](#): Office responsible for setting learning expectations (Standards)

[NYSED Regional Bilingual Education Resource Network](#): A network designed to improve instructional practices and educational outcomes of students who are ELLS

[NYSED Resource Guides for Scaffolding Instruction of ELA](#): Provide teachers with examples of scaffolds and strategies to supplement their ELA curricula

[NYSED Resource Guides for School Success](#): A compilation of NYS Early Learning Standards

[NYSED Social Emotional Learning Benchmarks](#): A series of grade-banded benchmarks to address social-emotional learning in the classroom

[NYSED The Science of Reading Literacy Briefs](#): A series of briefs to strengthen knowledge of evidence-based literacy practices

## REFERENCES

The following state and organization tools/rubrics were referenced in the development of NYSED's K-3 Literacy Curriculum Review Guide:

Alabama Department of Education: [Alabama Literacy Implementation Guide](#)

Colorado Department of Education: [Core Instructional Programming Rubric for English Programs](#)

Connecticut Department of Education: [2022 Guidelines for Open Review Period for Grades Pre-Kindergarten to Three Reading Curricula and/or Programs](#)

EdReports: [Evidence Guide ELA K-2](#) and [Review Criteria ELA K-2](#)

Florida Department of Education: [REL Southeast: Rubric for evaluating reading/language arts instructional materials for kindergarten to grade 5](#)

North Carolina Department of Education: [NC Science of Reading Alignment Tool](#) and [NC Science of Reading Alignment Tool Guidebook](#)

Oregon Department of Education: [Instructional Materials Evaluation Tool \(Kindergarten – 2nd\)](#)

Texas Department of Education: [Texas Resource Review \(TRR\) Foundational Literacy Grades K-2 Rubric](#)

Wisconsin Department of Education: [Early Literacy Curriculum and Instructional Materials Criteria](#)

New York State Education Department

