

**Instructional Materials Evaluation Tool for Alignment in ELA Grades 3 -12 (IMET)**

The goal for ELA students is that they can read and understand grade-level texts independently, as demonstrated through writing and speaking about those texts. A strong ELA classroom is structured with the below components.



**Title:** Sample **Grade: 8**

**Publisher: Justin X. Ample Publishing Copyright: 2013**

**Overall Rating: Tier III, Not representing quality**

[Tier I, Tier II, Tier III](http://www.louisianabelieves.com/academics/2013-2014-math-and-english-language-arts-instructional-materials-review/curricular-resources-annotated-reviews) elements of this review:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **STRONG** | **WEAK** |
| [Assessment](#NN6Assessment) | [Complexity of Texts](#NN2Complexity) (Non-Negotiable) |
| [Writing to Sources](#NN8WritingtoSources) | [Quality of Texts](#NN4QualityofTexts) (Non-Negotiable) |
|  | [Range and Volume of Texts](#NN3RangeandVolumeofTexts) |
|  | [Text-­Dependent Questions](#NN5TDQuestions) (Non-Negotiable) |
|  | [Scaffolding and Support](#NN7ScaffoldingandSupport) |
|  | [Speaking and Listening](#NN9SpeakingandListening) |
|  | [Language](#NN10Language) |

To evaluate each set of submitted materials for alignment with the [standards](http://www.corestandards.org/assets/CCSSI_ELA%20Standards.pdf), begin by reviewing Column 2 for the non-negotiable criteria. If there is a “Yes” for all required indicators in Column 2, then the materials receive a “Yes” in Column 1. If there is a “No” for any required indicators in Column 2, then the materials receive a “No” in Column 1. (Note: If materials do not represent a full curricula, then some of Criteria 1-10 may not apply.)

***Tier 1 ratings*** receive a “Yes” in Column 1 for Criteria 1-10.

***Tier 2 ratings*** receive a “Yes” in Column 1 for all non-negotiable criteria (Foundational Skills (as applicable), Complexity of Texts, Quality of Texts, and Text-Dependent Questions), but at least one “No” in Column 1 for the remaining criteria.

***Tier 3 ratings*** receive a “No” in Column 1 for at least one of the non-negotiable criteria.



**Instructional Materials Evaluation Tool for Alignment in ELA Grades 3 -12 (IMET)**

| **CRITERIA** | **INDICATORS OF SUPERIOR QUALITY** | **MEETS METRICS (Y/N)** | **JUSTIFICATION/ COMMENTS** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **I. Text Selection** |
| **Tier 1 and 2 Non-Negotiable****1. COMPLEXITY OF TEXTS:** Materials present a progression of complex texts as stated by Reading Standard 10[[1]](#footnote-1).   Yes No | **REQUIRED****1a)** Materials provide texts that fall within grade-level complexity bands, indicating that quantitative measures and qualitative analysis[[2]](#footnote-2) were used in selection of texts. Poetry and drama are analyzed only using qualitative measures. | **Y** | Materials provide texts that fall within grade-level complexity range. Texts are labeled with available Lexile levels that indicate quantitative analysis was used in their selection. Materials also provide a qualitative rationale for selection of texts. For example, although the 850 Lexile level of “The Tell-Tale Hear” by Edgar Allan Poe is below the grade-level band, the text is labeled “Very Complex” to indicate the qualitative analysis.  |
| **REQUIRED****1b)** Texts for each grade align with the requirements outlined in the standards and with the complexity of exemplars provided in [Appendix B](http://www.corestandards.org/assets/Appendix_B.pdf). | **Y** | The texts for this grade level align with the requirements outlined in the standards and also include some of the exemplars in Appendix B. For example Appendix B texts “Eleven” by Sandra Cisneros, “Oranges” by Gary Soto, and “Letter on Thomas Jefferson” are included in the materials among many others.  |
| **REQUIRED****1c)** Texts increase in complexity as materials progress across grade bands. Read-aloud texts follow the same trend, although they may have greater variability because listening skills in elementary school generally outpace reading skills. | **N** |  For example, texts in Unit 1 indicate a dramatic increase in complexity from the text in the last unit of Grade 7, where the highest Lexile level of a text was 860 and was labeled “easy” or “readily accessible”. As the units in Grade 8 progress, the text complexity varies without stair casing from very complex to moderately complex to readily accessible. This trend continues into the Grade 9 units.  |
| **Tier 1 and 2 Non-Negotiable** **2. QUALITY OF TEXTS:** Texts are of sufficient scope and quality to provide text-centered and integrated learning that is sequenced and scaffolded to advance students toward independent reading of grade level texts and build content knowledge (ELA, social studies, science and technical subjects, and the arts). The quality of texts is high—they support multiple readings for various purposes and exhibit exceptional craft and thought and/or provide useful information. Yes No | **REQUIRED****2a)** 90% of texts are worth reading in the particular grade (i.e., serve an instructional purpose); they are content rich and well crafted, representing the quality of writing that is produced by authorities in the discipline and include texts from history/social studies, science, technical subjects, and the arts. | **Y** | At least 90% of the texts are worth reading for Grade 8 and serve an instructional purpose. Informational texts in social studies and science are included in units.  |
| **REQUIRED****2b)** Materials provide a sequence or collection of texts that build knowledge systematically through reading, writing, listening and speaking about topics or ideas under study. | **N** | The materials do not sequence texts to systematically build knowledge, but rather to practice discreet skills. For example, Units are organized by genre and focus on topics such as “Point of View” and “Characterization” rather than using text to build content knowledge. Materials encourage students to read and write about topics under study, but the listening and speaking activities are not grounded in text, but rather expression of opinions.  |
| **REQUIRED****2c)** Within a sequence or collection of texts, specific anchor texts of grade-­level complexity are selected for multiple, careful readings. | **N** | Materials do not indicate that specific anchor texts have been selected for multiple, careful readings. There are two “close reading” workshops, but the texts are not chosen anchors for the unit and are not consistent throughout the scope and sequence of the materials. |
| **2d)** Nearly all texts are previously published rather than “commissioned.” | **Y** | The majority of texts are previously published material. Although there are examples of commissioned informational text such as, “Organic Farming” in Unit 2, this does not holistically represent the intent of the materials. |
| **3. RANGE AND VOLUME OF TEXTS:** Materials reflect the distribution of text types and genres suggested by the standards: Text types and genres generally reflect the definitions provided on page 31 (grades K-5) and page 57 (grades 6-12) of the [standards](http://www.corestandards.org/assets/CCSSI_ELA%20Standards.pdf) and included in the text of the standards (e.g., [RL.2.9](http://www.corestandards.org/ELA-Literacy/RL/2/9), [RL.9-10.6](http://www.corestandards.org/ELA-Literacy/RL/9-10/6), [RI.7.7](http://www.corestandards.org/ELA-Literacy/RI/7/7), or [RI.11-12.9](http://www.corestandards.org/ELA-Literacy/RI/11-12/9)).  Yes No | **REQUIRED****3a)** In grades K-­12, ELA materials seek a balance in instructional time between 50% literature/ 50% informational texts. | **N** | Materials contain 72% literary and 28% informational texts, and do not seek a balance in instructional time between them. The organization of units by genre relegates the informational texts in their own unit, separate of the literary text, so the instructional time devoted to the study of informational texts in considerable less than 50% |
| **REQUIRED****3b)** Materials include texts of different formats (e.g., print and non-print, including film, art, music, charts, etc.) and lengths. | **Y** | Materials included texts of different formats, including print and non-print, and lengths. For example, ancillary materials included short film clips for each unit as well as a lesson on art.  |
| **3c)** Materials include many informational texts with an informational text structure rather than a narrative structure; grades 6-12 include literary nonfiction. | **Y** | Materials include informational texts with an information text structure so that students may study text features. There are examples of literary nonfiction as well. |
| **3d)** Additional materials increase the opportunity for regular, accountable independent reading of texts that appeal to students' interests to build reading stamina, confidence, motivation, and enjoyment and connect to classroom concepts or topics to develop knowledge. | **Y** | Materials offer student novels for independent reading. Although there are no separate lessons or workshops for the student novels, instructions on how to set up student notebooks or journals are provided.  |

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| **CRITERIA** | **INDICATORS OF SUPERIOR QUALITY** | **MEETS METRICS (Y/N)** | **JUSTIFICATION/ COMMENTS** |
| **II. Foundational Skills (grades 3-5 only)** |
| **Tier 1 and 2 Non­‐Negotiable\*****4. FOUNDATIONAL SKILLS:**Materials provide instruction and diagnostic support in concepts of print, phonics, vocabulary, development, syntax, and fluency in a logical and transparent progression. These foundational skills are necessary and central components of an effective, comprehensive reading program designed to develop proficient readers with the capacity to comprehend texts across a range of types and disciplines.  Yes No\*As applicable (e.g., when the scope of the materials is comprehensive and considered a full program) | **REQUIRED****4a)** Materials demand knowledge of grade-­level phonic patterns and word analysis skills.  | **N/A** |  |
| **REQUIRED****4b)** Materials encourage students to use context to confirm or self-correct word recognition and understanding, directing students to reread purposefully to acquire accurate meaning. | **N/A** |  |
| **REQUIRED****4c)** Materials provide instruction and practice in word study, including systematic examination of grade-level morphology, decoding of multisyllabic words by using syllabication, and automaticity with grade-level regular and irregular spelling patterns.  | **N/A** |  |
| **REQUIRED****4d)** Opportunities are frequently built into the materials that allow for students to achieve reading fluency in oral and silent reading, that is, to read on-level prose and poetry with accuracy, rate appropriate to the text, and expression. | **N/A** |  |
| **REQUIRED****4e)** Materials guide students to read grade-level text with purpose and understanding. | **N/A** |  |

| **CRITERIA** | **INDICATORS OF SUPERIOR QUALITY** | **MEETS METRICS (Y/N)** | **JUSTIFICATION/ COMMENTS** |
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| **III. Questions and Tasks** |
| **Non‐Negotiable 5. TEXT-­DEPENDENT QUESTIONS:**Text­‐dependent questions and tasks reflect the requirements of Reading Standard 1 by requiring use of textual evidence in support of meeting other grade-specific standards. Yes No | **REQUIRED****5a)** At least 80% of all questions in the materials are text-dependent questions; student ideas are expressed through both written and spoken responses. | **N** | Less than 80% of the questions in the materials are text-dependent. Although the final questions and tasks ask students to use text to support their answers, there are many pre-reading and during-reading questions that can be answered without students reading and understanding the text. For example, before reading “The Road Not Taken,” students are asked to write about a time in which they had to make a difficult decision and then after reading are asked if they think the speaker made a wise choice. |
| **REQUIRED****5b)** Coherent sequences of text-­dependent questions elicit sustained attention to the text and its illustrations (as applicable), its impact (including the building of knowledge), and its connection to other texts.  | **N** | Although questions are sequenced to elicit student attention, many of them are not text-dependent and are not often connected to other texts. |
| **REQUIRED****5c)** Questions include the language of the standards, and assess the depth and complexity required by the standards at each grade-­level over time to advance and deepen student learning. *(****Note:*** *not every standard must be assessed with every text.)* | **Y** | Final questions and tasks include the language of the standards and assess the depth and complexity required by the standards.  |
| **5d)** Questions and tasks often begin with comprehension of the text before focusing on interpretation or evaluation.  | **Y** | Students are asked comprehension-level questions first followed by a few questions focusing on analysis or evaluation. |
| **5e)** Questions support students in unpacking the academic language (vocabulary and syntax) prevalent in complex texts to determine meaning from texts and in learning new vocabulary from reading. | **N** | Questions do not support student unpacking of academic language but rather focus on predetermined vocabulary words from the text and “assessment preparation” lists. |
| **6. ASSESSMENT:**Materials offer assessment opportunities that genuinely measure progress and elicit direct, observable evidence of the degree to which students can independently demonstrate the assessed grade-specific standards with appropriately complex text(s). Yes No | **REQUIRED****6a)** Measurement of progress via assessments should include gradual release of supporting scaffolds for students to measure their independent abilities.  | **Y** | Assessments include a gradual release of supporting scaffolds for students. For example, the writing workshops begin by providing graphic organizers and strategic scaffolds, but by the last unit these scaffolds have been scaled back considerably. Reading scaffolds such as graphic organizers are gradually released as well. |
| **REQUIRED****6b)** Aligned rubrics or assessment guidelines (such as scoring guides or student work exemplars) are included and provide sufficient guidance for interpreting student performance. | **Y** | Aligned rubrics are included and provide sufficient guidance for interpreting student performance. Although no student exemplars are included, the rubrics are specific for each task and not generalized. This provides enough guidance for teachers. |
| **REQUIRED****6c)** Materials use varied modes of assessment, including a range of pre-, formative, summative and self-assessment measures. | **Y** | The materials provide various modes of assessment including a pretest for each unit and a self-check at the end of the unit. Summative assessment is provided in the form of end of unit tasks and Exam view test generator. |
| **6d)** Materials assess student proficiency using methods that are unbiased and accessible to all students. | **Y** | Materials appear to be unbiased. |

| **CRITERIA** | **INDICATORS OF SUPERIOR QUALITY** | **MEETS METRICS (Y/N)** | **JUSTIFICATION/ COMMENTS** |
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| **IV. Scaffolding and Support** |
| **7. SCAFFOLDING AND SUPPORT:** Materials provide all students, including those who read below grade level, with extensive opportunities and support to encounter and comprehend grade‐level complex text as required by the standards. Yes No | **REQUIRED****7a)** Pre-­reading activities and suggested approaches to teacher scaffolding are focused and engage students with understanding the text itself. Pre-­reading activities should be no more than 10% of time devoted to any reading instruction. | **N** | Pre-reading activities and suggested approaches are focused on students making real world connections to text, not understanding the text itself. Pre-reading activities appear to be more than 10% of the time devoted to reading instruction. |
| **REQUIRED****7b)** Materials do not confuse or substitute mastery of strategies for full comprehension of text; reading strategies support comprehension of specific texts and focus on building knowledge and insight. Texts must not serve as platforms to practice discrete strategies.  | **N** | The organization of units confuses the mastery of strategies for full comprehension of text. Texts serve as a platform to practice discrete strategies. For example, all the poetry in the materials are contained in one unit, and it is organized by 1) types of poetry and 2) elements of poetry. The texts are not the focus, but rather serve to introduce strategies for comprehension of different types of poems. |
| **REQUIRED****7c)** Materials regularly direct teachers to return to focused parts of the text to guide students through rereading, discussion and writing about the ideas, events, and information found there. | **N** | Other than two “close reading” workshops teachers are not directed to return to focused parts of the text to guide students through rereading. |
| **REQUIRED****7d)** The materials are easy to use and cleanly laid out for students and teachers. Each page of the submission adds to student learning rather than distracts from it. The reading selections are centrally located within the materials and obviously the center of focus. | **Y** | Materials are easy to use and cleanly laid out for both students and teachers. The reading materials are centrally located within the materials and ancillary materials are easy to navigate as well as labeled for use within the main text. |
| **7e)** Appropriate suggestions and materials are provided for supporting varying student needs at the unit and lesson level (e.g., alternate teaching approaches, pacing, instructional delivery options, suggestions for addressing common student difficulties to meet standards, remediation strategies or suggestions for supporting texts, suggestions for more advanced texts for extension, etc.). | **Y** | There are appropriate alternative teacher approaches and pacing suggestions in the ancillary materials. |
| **7f)** The content can be reasonably completed within a regular school year and the pacing of content allows for maximum student understanding. The materials provide guidance about the amount of time a task might reasonably take. | **N** | The main text book along with independent novels represent content that cannot be reasonably completed within a regular school year. Although materials provide pacing guidance, they do not included allotted time for independent reading. |

| **CRITERIA** | **INDICATORS OF SUPERIOR QUALITY** | **MEETS METRICS (Y/N)** | **JUSTIFICATION/ COMMENTS** |
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| **V. Writing to Sources and Research** |
| **8. WRITING TO SOURCES:**The majority of written tasks are text-dependent and reflect the writing genres named in the standards.  Yes No | **REQUIRED****8a)** A vast majority of written tasks at all grade levels require students to analyze and synthesize sources, as well as to present careful analysis, well-­defended claims and clear information, drawing on textual evidence and to support valid inferences from text. | **Y** | The end-of-unit written tasks require students to analyze and synthesize sources. Although not all of the units require students to defend claims, all concluding writing tasks require students to draw on textual evidence to support their writing. |
| **REQUIRED****8b)** Materials include multiple writing tasks aligned to the three modes of writing (opinion/argumentative, informative, narrative) as well as blended modes (i.e., analytical writing); narrative prompts decrease in number and increase in being based on text(s) as student progress through the grades, e.g., narrative description (text-based, chronological writing) rather than imaginative narratives. | **Y** | Materials include writing tasks aligned to all three modes of writing. For example, the concluding writing task for Unit 2 is argumentative while the concluding writing task for Unit 4 is expository.  |
| **REQUIRED****8c)** Writing opportunities for students are prominent and varied in length and time demands (e.g., notes, summaries, short-answer responses, formal essays, on-demand and process writing, etc.). | **Y** | Students are given ample opportunities to express understanding of text in writing. Independent reading journals, notes, summaries, short constructed responses and longer writing task essays are provided in the materials. |
| **REQUIRED****8d)** Materials build in opportunities for connections and alignment between writing, speaking and listening, reading, and the language standards. For example, students read a text, work collaboratively to develop a plan for analyzing or emulating the text, write a response, and then share their writing with a peer who reviews the writing against using a peer review checklist. | **y** | There are opportunities for connections between writing, speaking and listening, reading and the language standards during the Writing and Close Reading Workshops. Although the inclusion of speaking and listening and language standards is not as integrated as the others, these workshops offer connections between all the standards. |
| **8e)** Materials engage students in many short research projects annually to develop the expertise needed to conduct research independently. | **N** | There is one unit that that focuses primarily on research, and the skill is not developed over the course of the materials. |

| **CRITERIA** | **INDICATORS OF SUPERIOR QUALITY** | **MEETS METRICS (Y/N)** | **JUSTIFICATION/ COMMENTS** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **VI. Speaking and Listening**  |  |  |  |
| **9. SPEAKING AND LISTENING:**Oral tasks must be text-dependent and materials for speaking and listening must reflect true communication skills required for college and career readiness.   Yes No | **REQUIRED****9a)** Texts used in speaking and listening questions and tasks must meet the criteria for complexity, range, and quality of texts (Criteria 1, 2, and 3). | **N** | Texts used in speaking and listening questions do not meet the criteria for complexity, range or quality. |
| **REQUIRED****9b)** Materials demand that students engage effectively in a range of conversations and collaborations by expressing well-supported ideas clearly and probing ideas under discussion by building on others’ ideas.  | **Y** | Materials do provide for collaboration and expression of ideas between students. They are encouraged to build on others’ ideas, but mostly to express opinions and not necessarily grounded by textual evidence. |
| **REQUIRED****9c)** Materials build in frequent opportunities for connections and alignment between speaking and listening, reading, writing, and the language standards. Examples: Materials build in frequent opportunities for discussion about texts and, through directions and modeling, encourage students to use academic language and grade-appropriate oral language conventions; materials require students to gather and use evidence to orally present findings from research. | **N** | The majority of speaking and listening activities are not grounded in text, but rather expression of opinions. The exception would be in the Writing and Close Reading Workshops. |
| **9d)** Materials develop active listening skills, such as taking notes on main ideas, asking relevant questions, and elaborating on remarks of others. | **Y** | Materials so develop listening skill through note taking and asking of relevant questions, but support for elaborating on remarks of others is minimal. |

| **CRITERIA** | **INDICATORS OF SUPERIOR QUALITY** | **MEETS METRICS (Y/N)** | **JUSTIFICATION/ COMMENTS** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **VII. Language** |  |  |  |
| **10. LANGUAGE:**Materials must adequately address the Language standards for the grade, including through unpacking the vocabulary and syntax of text(s) (indicator 5e) as models of language use.  Yes No | **REQUIRED****10a)** Materials address the grammar and language conventions specified by the Language standards at each grade level and build on those standards that build from previous grade levels, as indicated by pages 30 and 56 of the  [standards](http://www.corestandards.org/assets/CCSSI_ELA%20Standards.pdf). | **Y** | The Language Manual addresses the grammar and language conventions specified for 8th grade by the Language standards. For example, most of the manual focuses on verbs, verb tense, voice, and the function of verbals.  |
| **REQUIRED****10b)** Materials expect students to confront their own error patterns in usage and conventions (oral and written) and correct them. | **Y** | The Writing Workshops include peer editing and revising sections which expect students to confront their own error patterns in usage and conventions. |
| **REQUIRED****10c)** Materials encourage students to examine the language of texts (vocabulary, sentences, structure) and model their own writing after texts they are listening to or reading as a way to develop more complex sentence structure and language usage. | **N** | The Language standards are addressed outside of the regular text though the Language Manual and not integrated with the text within the units of study. Students are not asked to model their own writing after texts they are reading, but are provided student samples in the Writing Workshops. |
| **REQUIRED****10d)** Materials build in frequent opportunities for connections and alignment between the language standards, writing, reading, and speaking and listening. For example, through directions and modeling, materials encourage students to use grade-appropriate language conventions when speaking and writing about texts. | **N** | The study of the Language standards are not grounded in text, but only address though the Language Manual and the editing process of the Writing Workshops. |
| **10e)** Materials provide real‐world activities for student practice with natural language (e.g. mock interviews, presentations). | **N** | There are very few real-world activities provided for students to practice with natural language. |

***Tier 1 ratings*** receive a “Yes” in Column 1 for Criteria 1-10.

***Tier 2 ratings*** receive a “Yes” in Column 1 for all non-negotiable criteria (Foundational Skills (as applicable), Complexity of Texts, Quality of Texts, and Text-Dependent Questions), but at least one “No” in Column 1 for the remaining criteria.

***Tier 3 ratings*** receive a “No” in Column 1 for at least one of the non-negotiable criteria.

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| **FINAL EVALUATION** |
| **Compile the results for Sections I-VII to make a final decision for the material under review.** |
| **Section** | **Criteria** | **Y/N** | **Final Justification/Comments** |
| I: Text Selection | 1. Complexity of Texts **(Non-Negotiable)** | **N** | Although most texts fall within the grade-level complexity bands, texts do not increase in complexity as materials progress across grade bands. |
| 2. Quality of Texts **(Non-Negotiable)** | **N** | The materials do not sequence texts to systematically build knowledge, but rather to practice discreet skills.  |
| 3. Range and Volume of Texts | **N** | Materials do not seek a 50%/50% balance between instruction time for informational and literary texts. |
| II: Foundational Skills | 4. Foundational Skills **(Non-Negotiable\*)** | **N/A** |  |
| III: Text-Dependent Questions and Tasks | 5. Text-Dependent Questions **(Non-Negotiable)** | **N** | Less than 80% of the questions are text-dependent with too many pre-reading questions that do not require support from text to answer. |
| 6. Assessment | **Y** | Assessments are gradually released, contain rubrics to guide teachers, and include various forms. |
| IV: Scaffolding and Support | 7. Scaffolding and Support | **N** | Materials confuse the mastery of strategies for full comprehension of text.  |
| V: Writing to Sources and Research | 8. Writing to Sources | **Y** | End of Unit Writing Tasks provide opportunity to practice all three modes of writing. |
| VI: Speaking and Listening | 9. Speaking and Listening | **N** | Speaking and listening activities are not grounded in text, but rather expression of opinions. |
| VII: Language | 10. Language | **N** | Language standards instruction is not integrated with the study of text, but separated in a Language Manual. |
| **FINAL DECISION FOR THIS MATERIAL: Tier III, Not representing quality** |

\*As applicable (e.g., when the scope of the materials is comprehensive and considered a full program)

1. Grades 3-12 Example: Texts present vocabulary, syntax, text structures, levels of meaning/purpose similar to exemplars in [Appendix B](http://www.corestandards.org/assets/Appendix_B.pdf). [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. The process for determining quantitative and qualitative measures is described in the [Supplement to Appendix A](http://www.corestandards.org/assets/E0813_Appendix_A_New_Research_on_Text_Complexity.pdf). Grade band conversions for quantitative measures are determined using the chart on page 4 of the document. A description of the criteria for analyzing the qualitative features of the text is located on pages 4-6 of the document. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)