Instructional Materials Evaluation - Student Standards Review

Louisiana educators engaged in a professional review of the state's academic standards for English language arts (ELA) and mathematics to ensure they continue to maintain strong expectations for teaching and learning aligned with college and workplace demands. The new ELA and math standards will be effective beginning with the 2016-2017 school year. As part of the Louisiana Department of Education's support for a seamless transition to these new standards, the LDOE identified the major changes of the standards and their potential impact upon criteria used to review instructional materials.

Title: **TIME FOR KIDS® Nonfiction Readers: Challenging** Grade: **5**

Publisher: **Teacher Created Materials** Copyright: **2013**

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

This English Language Arts review has been examined for the following changes in alignment resulting from the Louisiana Student Standards Review:

- Materials do not contain references to specific authors and texts
- Include citing *relevant* textual evidence beginning in grade 6
- Include an *awareness of audience* when making speeches and delivering presentations

This review remains a Tier 3 rating. As a result of these changes, the following chart identifies the potential impact on specific elements in the current review. The LDOE recommends that district curriculum staff, principals, and teachers take these findings into consideration when using these instructional materials.

Criteria	Currently in the Rubric	Next Steps for Educators
Quality of Texts (Non-Negotiable)	This program currently is reviewed as "No" for this criteria because the texts do not provide rich opportunities for students to practice all English Language Arts skills because they are limited to Science and Social Studies themes. There are no literature or arts texts included in the materials submitted.	Since these materials received a "No" for this indicator, the current weakness will likely remain and should be addressed by adjusting or supplementing with stronger programs.
Text-Dependent Questions (Non-Negotiable)	This program currently is reviewed as "No" for this criteria because the questions are mainly lower-level. Many are not directly text dependent and do not require both written and spoken responses. The questions are not sequenced to support student understanding of the texts or to build knowledge of the concepts and themes presented.	Since these materials received a "No" for this indicator, the current weakness will likely remain and should be addressed by adjusting or supplementing with stronger programs.
Speaking and Listening	Not Reviewed	

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: **TIME FOR KIDS® Nonfiction Readers: Challenging** Grade: **5**

Publisher: **Teacher Created Materials** Copyright: **2013**

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

Tier I, Tier II, Tier III Elements of this review:

STRONG	WEAK
	1. Complexity of Texts (Non-Negotiable)
	2. Quality of Texts (Non-Negotiable)
	4. Foundational Skills (Non-Negotiable*)
	5. Text-Dependent Questions (Non-Negotiable)

Each set of submitted materials was evaluated for alignment with the standards beginning with a review of the indicators for the non-negotiable criteria. If those criteria were met, a review of the other criteria ensued.

Tier 1 ratings receive a "Yes" in Column 1 for Criteria 1 – 7.
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.

Click below for complete grade-level reviews:
Grade 5 (Tier 3)

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.

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	1. Complexity of Texts (Non-Negotiable)
	2. Quality of Texts (Non-Negotiable)
	4. Foundational Skills (Non-Negotiable*)
	5. Text-Dependent Questions (Non-Negotiable)

To evaluate each set of submitted materials for alignment with the standards, 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.

Tier 1 ratings receive a "Yes" in Column 1 for Criteria 1– 7.
Tier 2 ratings receive a "Yes" in Column 1 for all non-negotiable criteria (Foundational Skills, 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.

CRITERIA	INDICATORS OF SUPERIOR QUALITY	MEETS METRICS (Yes/No)	JUSTIFICATION/ COMMENTS WITH EXAMPLES
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]. ☐ Yes ☒ No	**REQUIRED** **1a)** In grades 2-12, materials provide texts that vary in complexity levels. The provided levels are appropriate for the reading level of the identified group. Measures for determining complexity include quantitative and qualitative analysis.[2] Poetry and drama are analyzed only using qualitative measures. In grades K-2, extensive read-aloud texts allow sufficient opportunity for engagement with text more complex than students could read themselves.	**No**	The kit is labeled "Challenging," however, 6 texts are below the grade band for 4th-5th grade and 5 are within the band (see examples below). The texts provided are not complex for grade 5 and will not provide the appropriate text complexity for the identified group. Since this is a small-group reading product, texts should vary in complexity levels. 4th-5th Lexile Grade-Level Band: 770L-980L Examples: Demons of the Deep 810L Danger in the Desert 770L Terror in the Tropics 810 L Race to the Moon 690 L* Mysteries of Deep Space 730L* Future of Space 760L* Bad Guys and Gals of the High Seas 860L Bad Guys and Gals of the Wild West 900L Bad Guys and Gals of the Ancient World 730L* All in a Day's Work: Police Officer 760L* All in a Day's Work: ER Doctor 790L All in a Day's Work: Animator 810L Making Money Grow 760L* Where Does Your Money Go? 860L From Rags to Riches 780L
	REQUIRED **1b)** Texts increase in complexity as materials progress. They place an emphasis on increasing student reading ability toward or beyond their grade level.	**Yes**	There is a progression, and complexity does increase. However, the progression is not to a level beyond the grade level band. The progression of text as students learn content to make the text accessible to them. For example, when students are learning about space the Lexile moves in progression from 690-760. Word Counts and Level Correlations can be found on page 28 of the Teachers Guide.

[1] Grades 3-12 Example: Texts present vocabulary, syntax, text structures, levels of meaning/purpose similar to exemplars in Appendix B.
[2] The process for determining quantitative and qualitative measures is available at http://www.louisianabelieves.com/docs/teacher-toolbox-resources/guide---how-to-determine-text-complexity-grades-k-12.pdf?sfvrsn=5 or the Supplemental Information for Appendix A.

CRITERIA	INDICATORS OF SUPERIOR QUALITY	MEETS METRICS (Yes/No)	JUSTIFICATION/ COMMENTS WITH EXAMPLES
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 provide rich opportunities for students to practice skills that will help them master the ELA standards in the particular grade; the texts are well-crafted and authentic, representing the quality of content, language, and writing that is produced by experts in various disciplines (e.g., English language arts, history/social studies, science, technical subjects, and the arts).	**No**	The texts do not provide rich opportunities for students to practice all skills because they are limited to Science and Social Studies themes. There are no literature or arts texts included in the kit submitted. Only 9 of the 19 reading standards are provided for practice and mastery. Although the title shows "Time for Kids," the texts provided are only based on articles from "Time for Kids." The texts provided are not authentic writings from Time for Kids, nor are they produced by experts in the disciplines.
	REQUIRED **2b)** Materials provide opportunities for students to build vocabulary knowledge and knowledge about concepts, themes, and topics through reading, writing, listening and speaking. In grades K-2, the inclusion of read-aloud texts in addition to what students can read themselves ensures that all students can build knowledge about the world through engagement with rich, complex text.	**No**	The five trios do not allow students to build vocabulary knowledge and knowledge about concepts, themes, and topics through reading, writing and listening and speaking as students progress through each of the trios. Although the texts are grouped by content in sets of three, there is no connection for content understanding through the trio. For example, the word work and glossaries in the Bad Guys and Gals trio do not help students build content knowledge about historical figures.
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 and included in the text of the standards (e.g., RL.2.9, RL.9-10.6, RI.7.7, or RI.11-12.9).	**REQUIRED** **3a)** In grades K-12, ELA materials include both literary and informational texts to support students in developing independent reading ability that is at or above grade level.	**Not Evaluated**	
	REQUIRED **3b)** Materials include texts of different formats (e.g., print and non-print, including film, art, music, charts, etc.).	**Not Evaluated**	
	3c) Materials include many informational texts with an informational text structure rather than a narrative structure; grades 6-12 include literary nonfiction (e.g. speeches, biographies, essays).	**Not Evaluated**	
	3d) Additional materials increase the opportunity for regular, accountable independent reading of texts that appeal to students' interests to build reading stamina,	**Not Evaluated**	

CRITERIA	INDICATORS OF SUPERIOR QUALITY	MEETS METRICS (Yes/No)	JUSTIFICATION/ COMMENTS WITH EXAMPLES
☐ Yes ☐ No	confidence, motivation, and enjoyment and build their ability to apply skills learned in small-group instruction to new texts.		
II. Foundational Skills (grades K-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	**REQUIRED *Indicator for grades K-2 only** **4a)** Materials follow a sequence of foundational skills instruction indicated by the standards and beginning on page 17 of Appendix A, while providing abundant opportunities for every student to become proficient in each of the foundational skills.	**N/A**	
	REQUIRED **4b)** In grades K-2, materials include student texts that allow for systematic, regular and frequent practice of foundational skills as they are introduced. In grades 3-5, materials demand knowledge of grade-level phonic patterns and word analysis skills.	**No**	Although all texts require a basic knowledge of foundational skills, there is no direct instruction on any phonics or word analysis. The word work has students looking in a dictionary to find the definition, but does not refer to any phonic patterns or word analysis skills.
	REQUIRED **4c)** In grades K-2, materials provide instruction and practice in word study including pronunciation, roots, prefixes, suffixes and spelling/sound patterns, as well as decoding of grade-level words by using sound-symbol knowledge and knowledge of syllabication and regular practice in encoding (spelling) the sound symbol relationships of English. In grades 3-5, 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.	**No**	There is no direct instruction for 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.
	REQUIRED **4d)** Materials encourage students to use context to confirm or self-correct word recognition and understanding, directing students to reread purposefully to acquire accurate meaning.	**No**	There is no directed rereading of text for the purpose of acquiring accurate meaning. All of the second readings of text are for a specific strategy or purpose. The materials do not encourage students to use context to confirm or self-correct word recognition and understanding, nor does

CRITERIA	INDICATORS OF SUPERIOR QUALITY	MEETS METRICS (Yes/No)	JUSTIFICATION/ COMMENTS WITH EXAMPLES
			it require students to reread for meaning. The CCSS correlation document provided lists several lessons correlated to RF.5.4a "Read on-level text with purpose and understanding." However, only three lessons (4, 9, and 14) indicate that students must establish a purpose for reading.
	REQUIRED **4e)** Opportunities are frequently built into the materials that allow for students to achieve reading fluency in oral and silent reading, that is, to read a wide variety of prose and poetry at students' reading level with accuracy, rate appropriate to the text, and expression.	**No**	An opportunity is provided once in each lesson for students to reread the text using a digital CD or using the choral reading strategy. It is found at the end of each trio and does not appear to be a substantial or frequent part of the instruction. The limited opportunities built into the materials will not allow students to achieve reading fluency in oral and silent reading.
	4f)*Indicator for grades K-2 only Materials provide opportunities for educators to monitor student progress on every aspect of the foundational skills through diagnostic assessments offered at regular intervals. Monitoring must also allow for students to receive regular feedback on their oral reading fluency in the specific areas of appropriate rate, expressiveness and accuracy.	**N/A**	
	4g) Submissions provide abundant and easily implemented materials so teachers can readily provide more time, attention and practice for those students who need it.	**No**	Submissions do not require abundant and easily implemented materials so teachers can provide students more time, attention and practice, especially those students who require it. The materials are limited with one text per lesson.
III. Questions and Tasks			
Tier 1 and 2 Non-Negotiable **5. TEXT-DEPENDENT QUESTIONS:** Text- dependent questions and tasks reflect the requirements of Reading Standard 1 by requiring use of textual	**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.	**No**	The questions are mainly lower-level. Many are not directly text dependent and do not require both written and spoken responses. About 50% of the tasks given to students are vocabulary tasks that do not require students to refer back to the text. The students are completing activities with each text but not responding directly to a question about the text. For example, a task will have students write a purpose for reading a different heading,

CRITERIA	INDICATORS OF SUPERIOR QUALITY	MEETS METRICS (Yes/No)	JUSTIFICATION/ COMMENTS WITH EXAMPLES
evidence in support of meeting other grade-specific standards. ☐ Yes ☒ No			but there is no text for students to refer to when determining their purpose for reading.
	REQUIRED **5b)** Coherent sequences of questions and tasks focus students on understanding the text and its illustrations (as applicable), expressing the knowledge students have built about concepts, themes, or ideas presented in the texts.	**No**	The questions are not sequenced to support student understanding of the texts or to build knowledge of the concepts and themes presented. Each lesson starts with vocabulary instruction, but the next form of instruction is a different skill or strategy that is not connected to previous lessons. One lesson has students asking questions and the next lesson understanding text structure with an irregular plural activity thrown in the middle of the lesson.
	REQUIRED **5c)** Questions and tasks 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.)*	**No**	The language of the standards is not used in the questions and tasks provided nor do they assess the depth and complexity required by the standards. For example, in several lessons the students are asked to identify important information that they learned in the text and then draw a picture. This does not provide a student with an opportunity to show what they have learned from the text. This is also evident in the correlation document: RI.5.8-Explain how an author uses reasons and evidence to support particular points in a text, identifying which reasons and evidence support which point(s) is correlated to Objective 7: Uses text organizers to determine the main ideas and to locate information in a text. This correlation does not address the depth and ompexity of the standard as students only determine main idea and locate information; they do not explain how the author uses reasons and evidence to support points.
	REQUIRED **5d)** Questions and tasks support students in examining the language (vocabulary, sentences, and structure) prevalent in complex texts to determine meaning from texts; questions and tasks also focus on engaging students with multiple repetitions of words in varied contexts (e.g., reading different texts, completing tasks, engaging in speaking/listening).	**No**	Questions and tasks do not support students in examining the language prevalent in complex texts. Students determine the meaning of vocabulary through specific strategies given in each lesson. Vocabulary is not applied in the texts to deepen the student's understanding or provide meaningful connections. Vocabulary is different for each text in the trio so that students do not engage with different words in texts.

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	REQUIRED **5e)** Vocabulary study emphasizes advancing depth of word knowledge through determining word meaning and relationships among words (e.g., concept- and thematically-related words, word families, etc.).	**No**	There are only specific strategies given for determining word meaning. The students are studying words but there is no emphasis on advancing depth of word knowledge, which is required by the standards, while reading. Most vocabulary instruction is directed with a dictionary or through explicit teaching of the vocabulary words. Vocabulary does not build in concept knowledge or themes across the text.
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)** Materials use varied modes of assessment, including a range of diagnostic, formative, summative and self-assessment measures for placement of students into and out of small groups and to monitor progress along the way.	**Not Evaluated**	
	REQUIRED **6b)** Measurement of progress via assessments should include gradual release of supporting scaffolds for students to measure their independent abilities.	**Not Evaluated**	
	REQUIRED **6c)** Aligned rubrics or assessment guidelines (such as scoring guides or student work exemplars) are included and provide sufficient guidance for interpreting student performance.	**Not Evaluated**	
	6d) Materials assess student proficiency using methods that are unbiased and accessible to all students.	**Not Evaluated**	
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	**REQUIRED** **7a)** Materials must have the goal of students gaining full comprehension of complex text (through read-aloud in grades K-1) and 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.	**Not Evaluated**	

CRITERIA	INDICATORS OF SUPERIOR QUALITY	MEETS METRICS (Yes/No)	JUSTIFICATION/ COMMENTS WITH EXAMPLES
comprehend grade- level complex text as required by the standards. ☐ Yes ☐ No	**REQUIRED** **7b)** 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.	**Not Evaluated**	
	REQUIRED **7c)** 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.	**Not Evaluated**	
	REQUIRED **7d)** 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.).	**Not Evaluated**	
	7e) 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.	**Not Evaluated**	

FINAL EVALUATION

Tier 1 ratings receive a "Yes" in Column 1 for Criteria 1 – 7.

Tier 2 ratings receive a "Yes" in Column 1 for all non-negotiable criteria (Foundational Skills, 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.

Compile the results for Sections I-VII to make a final decision for the material under review.

Section	Criteria	Yes/No	Final Justification/Comments
I: Text Selection	1. Complexity of Texts **(Non-Negotiable)**	**No**	The text provided are not complex for grade 5 and will not provide the appropriate text complexity for the identified group.

CRITERIA	INDICATORS OF SUPERIOR QUALITY	MEETS METRICS (Yes/No)	JUSTIFICATION/ COMMENTS WITH EXAMPLES
	2. Quality of Texts **(Non-Negotiable)**	**No**	Text provided are not authentic and do not provide for any type of literature instruction.
	3. Range and Volume of Texts	**Not Evaluated**	
II: Foundational Skills	4. Foundational Skills **(Non-Negotiable)**	**No**	There is no direct instruction of foundational skils.
III: Text-Dependent Questions and Tasks	5. Text-Dependent Questions **(Non-Negotiable)**	**No**	The questions and tasks provided are not text dependent. They do not support students understanding of the texts.
	6. Assessment	**Not Evaluated**	
IV: Scaffolding and Support	7. Scaffolding and Support	**Not Evaluated**	
FINAL DECISION FOR THIS MATERIAL: **Tier III, Not representing quality**			

Appendix I.

Publisher Response

The publisher had no response.

Appendix II.

Public Comments

There were no public comments submitted.