Resource Alignment Tool for English Language Arts/Literacy (ELA Tool 1)

1. **Rate the resource against the criteria in the English Language Arts (ELA)/Literacy Resource Alignment Tool.**[1] Use the dimensions and the evidence statements in the tool to guide your ratings. Record strengths and weaknesses for each key criterion (Text Complexity, Evidence, and Knowledge).[2]

2. **Determine the high-value actions needed to fill gaps for the dimensions that make up each criterion.** Identify the high-value action(s) related to each criterion that will strengthen the alignment of the resource to your college and career readiness (CCR) standards. High-value actions are those that will bring your resource into much closer alignment to the standards. In many cases, while the actions take some effort, they can be efficiently executed.

3. **Give an overall score for the resource.** Summarize the overall strengths and weaknesses of the resource with respect to the three criteria to score the resource.

4. **Begin the lesson revision process.** Review the ratings and the high-value actions you identified and choose one lesson in the resource to begin the revision process. Use the ELA/Literacy Lesson Revision Template to catalogue your improvements to the lesson. To assist with the revisions, use your CCR standards and other support documents, such as the text complexity resources, the Checklist for Evaluating Question Quality, and Promoting Volume of Reading.

INDIVIDUAL DIMENSION RATING DESCRIPTORS	
MEETS	There is evidence in the resource to indicate that the dimension is met.
PARTIALLY MEETS	There is evidence in the resource to indicate that the dimension can be met with some revision.
DOES NOT MEET (INSUFFICIENT EVIDENCE)	There is little or no evidence in the resource to indicate that the dimension is being met. Substantial revision is needed for alignment.

---

[1] Adapted from *Publishers' Criteria for the Common Core State Standards in ELA/Literacy for Grades 3-12*. Washington, DC. Accessed January 13, 2015. http://www.corestandards.org/search/?f=all&t=Publishers%27+Criteria, and *Toolkit for Evaluating Alignment of Instructional and Assessment Materials to the Common Core State Standards*. http://achievethecore.org/content/upload/Materials-Alignment-Toolkit_Version2%20(9)[1].pdf

[2] There are other essential elements of CCR standards—and of good literacy instruction—that are not represented in the criteria below because they do not require a key shift in instruction. Foundations of Reading—represented in CCR standards—are necessary and important components of an effective, comprehensive reading program. They have long been part of literacy programs, so they tend to be well represented in existing resources and don't require attention as a "gap" in alignment.

Criterion **1** Text Complexity: Does the resource provide regular practice with complex text and its academic language?

DIMENSION 1.1	MEETS	PARTIALLY MEETS	DOES NOT MEET (INSUFFICIENT EVIDENCE)
Text Complexity and Quality: *Most* of the texts included in the resource are at the appropriate level of complexity as defined by the CCR standards; all texts are worth reading. *(Support document: Quantitative and Qualitative Text Complexity Resources)*	Guiding Questions: • Are most texts within the appropriate band of complexity for the level? • Have the texts and other stimuli been previously published or are they of publishable quality? • Are the texts content-rich? Do they exhibit exceptional craft and thought or provide useful information?		

DIMENSION 1.2	MEETS	PARTIALLY MEETS	DOES NOT MEET (INSUFFICIENT EVIDENCE)
Academic Vocabulary: The resource *regularly* focuses on understanding words and phrases, their relationships, and nuances, particularly general academic words and phrases.	Guiding Questions: • How is vocabulary handled in the resource? • Are academic vocabulary words targeted? Are they central to understanding the specific text? • Are questions asked about vocabulary and authors' word choices?		

Summary of strengths and weaknesses:

High-value actions needed to fill the gaps (check all actions that apply):
❏ Ask the publisher of the resource to provide information about the quantitative and qualitative complexity of the texts.
❏ Conduct qualitative analyses of passages to differentiate between the texts worth reading and those not worth reading.
❏ If most of the passages reviewed match a lower level of learning, recommend the resource be used for that level instead.
❏ Identify high-value academic vocabulary that should be addressed in the lesson.
❏ Other:

Criterion ② **Evidence: Does the resource provide reading, writing, and speaking activities grounded in evidence from text?**

DIMENSION 2.1	MEETS	PARTIALLY MEETS	DOES NOT MEET (INSUFFICIENT EVIDENCE)
Growth of Comprehension and Using Evidence From Texts: An *overwhelming majority (80%)* of all questions reviewed are high-quality, text-dependent, and text-specific. *(Support document: Checklist for Evaluating Question Quality)*	Guiding Questions: • Do the questions focus students on the text? Do they require readers to produce evidence from the text? • Do questions ask about central ideas of the text? • Do they gradually build understanding of the text? • Do they address level-specific standard(s)?		

DIMENSION 2.2	MEETS	PARTIALLY MEETS	DOES NOT MEET (INSUFFICIENT EVIDENCE)
Emphasis on Argumentative and Informative Writing and Speaking: An *overwhelming majority (80%)* of all writing and speaking assignments reviewed require argumentative and informative writing and speaking. They require students to draw on evidence from texts to present careful analyses and well-defended claims. *(Support document: Checklist for Evaluating Question Quality)*	Guiding Questions: • Are there regular invitations for students to speak about the reading? • Do most writing and speaking assignments require students to provide text-based evidence? Do they make up 80% of the writing and speaking assignments? • Are there regular opportunities to write arguments and informative pieces?		

Summary of strengths and weaknesses:

High-value actions needed to fill the gaps (check all actions that apply):
- ❏ Replace non-text-dependent questions with valuable text-dependent questions that target level-specific standards.
- ❏ Add a variety of text-based writing assignments, including short and longer writing assignments developed from the central ideas of the text.
- ❏ Add a culminating writing assignment developed from the central understanding of the text.
- ❏ Other:

Criterion ③ Knowledge: Does the resource build knowledge through content-rich nonfiction?

DIMENSION 3.1	MEETS	PARTIALLY MEETS	DOES NOT MEET (INSUFFICIENT EVIDENCE)
Emphasis on Reading Content-Rich Texts: The resource *accentuates* comprehending quality informational texts across disciplines.	Guiding Questions: • Are most of the texts content-rich and informational texts that promote learning and thinking? • Does the resource promote regular independent reading?		

DIMENSION 3.2	MEETS	PARTIALLY MEETS	DOES NOT MEET (INSUFFICIENT EVIDENCE)
Building Knowledge Through Reading Widely About a Topic and Research: *Most* passages reviewed are organized around a topic or line of inquiry; the resource includes regular research assignments.	Guiding Questions: • How well does the resource build knowledge on a single topic? • Are the passages carefully sequenced to increase knowledge on a topic or focus area of inquiry? • Does the resource offer regular (short) research opportunities?		

Summary of strengths and weaknesses:

High-value actions needed to fill the gaps (check all actions that apply):
❏ Create a list of supplemental texts on the same topic to promote students' volume of reading and to build knowledge.
❏ Create brief research projects for students on the same topic.
❏ Other:

4 **Overall Rating:**

TIGHT ALIGNMENT	Most (four or more) of the dimensions are rated as **Meets**, with the remainder rated as Partially Meets. There are only a few minor revisions (or none at all) needed to improve alignment of the resource with the CCR standards.	
PARTIAL ALIGNMENT	Most (four or more) of the dimensions are rated at least as **Partially Meets**. Moderate revisions are needed to improve alignment of the resource with the CCR standards.	
WEAK ALIGNMENT	Most (three or more) of the dimensions are rated as **Does Not Meet**. Substantial revisions are needed to improve alignment of the resource with the CCR standards.	

Summary of key strengths and weaknesses:

Notes: