

## Questions to Ask When Evaluating Instructional Materials

<p><b>Are the materials explicit and systematic?</b> <i>Look fors:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Materials follow a scope and sequence for the range of skills being taught</li> <li>- Lessons follow a continuum from easy to more complex skills</li> <li>- Includes a progression of learning where concepts, knowledge, and skills advance and deepen over time</li> <li>- Materials include a review and repetition cycle to achieve mastery</li> <li>- Complex skills are segmented into smaller, manageable tasks</li> <li>- New concepts and skills modeled by the teacher first</li> <li>- Includes scaffolds to support children towards independence</li> <li>- Ample opportunities for children to engage in purposeful practice</li> <li>- Opportunities for teachers to assess children's learning and provide meaningful feedback</li> </ul>	Yes	No	Not sure
<p><b>Are the materials comprehensive and standards-aligned?</b> <i>Look fors:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Texts, materials, tasks, and questions are aligned to grade-level standards</li> <li>- Materials promote mastery of grade-level standards by the end of the year</li> <li>- Quality anchor texts at grade-level text complexity</li> <li>- Materials address all the essential components of literacy instruction (phonological awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, comprehension)</li> </ul>	Yes	No	Not sure
<p><b>Are materials developmentally appropriate and differentiated?</b> <i>Look fors:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Materials integrate supports and strategies for a range of learners</li> <li>- Materials address children's diverse developmental needs</li> <li>- Materials provide strategies and resources to support multilingual learners</li> <li>- Materials provide strategies to differentiate instruction to meet individual children's needs</li> </ul>	Yes	No	Not sure
<p><b>Are instructional materials culturally sustaining?</b> <i>Look fors:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Materials are free of bias and stereotypes</li> <li>- Materials affirm and sustain children's identities and language practices</li> <li>- Materials promote children's intellectual growth and reading success</li> <li>- Materials support children to recognize, critique, and address social inequities</li> </ul>	Yes	No	Not sure
<p><b>Do the materials support teachers to fully use the curriculum?</b> <i>Look fors:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Materials support teachers to understand the skills and concepts they are teaching</li> <li>- Materials reduce uncertainty and enhance teacher's instructional capabilities</li> <li>- Materials are easy to understand and use</li> <li>- Materials build teacher's confidence in delivering effective instruction</li> <li>- Materials are sufficient to meet the needs of the teacher and the learners</li> </ul>	Yes	No	Not sure
<p><b>Are the instructional materials supported by evidence?</b> <i>Look fors:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Studies or evaluations speak to the impact of the materials</li> <li>- Data shows improvement for children who used the program or practice compared to children who did not use it</li> </ul>	Yes	No	Not sure

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### Sources

*EdReports*. (n.d.). EdReports. <https://www.edreports.org/>

*EQIP Rubric*. 2013. [https://www.achieve.org/files/K-2ELALiteracyEQIPRubric-07-18-13\\_1.pdf](https://www.achieve.org/files/K-2ELALiteracyEQIPRubric-07-18-13_1.pdf)

Vaughn, S. (2021, June 1). *Explicit instruction as the essential tool for executing the science of reading*. PubMed Central (PMC). <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC9004595/>

**Note:** The resources provided are for informational purposes only. All resources must meet the New Jersey Department of Education's (NJDOE) accessibility guidelines. Currently, the Department aims to conform to Level AA of the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines ([WCAG 2.1](#)). However, the Department does not guarantee that linked external sites conform to Level AA of the WCAG 2.1. Neither the Department of Education nor its officers, employees or agents specifically endorse, recommend or favor these resources or the organizations that created them. Please note that the Department of Education has not reviewed or approved the materials related to the programs.