



# Re-envisioning English Language Arts and English Language Development for English Language Learners



## ABOUT THE COUNCIL

The Council of the Great City Schools is the only national organization exclusively representing the needs of urban public schools. Composed of 68 large city school districts, its mission is to promote the cause of urban schools and to advocate for inner-city students through legislation, research, technical assistance, and media relations. The organization also provides a network for school districts sharing common problems to exchange information and to collectively address new challenges as they emerge in order to deliver the best possible education for urban youth.

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and English Language Development  
for English Language Learners

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# Acknowledgements

English Language Learners are one of America's fastest growing student groups, and their numbers are most concentrated in our Great Cities. In addition, the academic needs of these school children are complex and varied.

Fortunately, the achievement of these students is being taken seriously by urban educators across the nation. They have coalesced around a series of activities to ensure these children learn English and thrive in all content areas.

This document is continued evidence of how urban school leaders are working to ensure success for all our students. The 2014 issue of this document (*ELD. 2.0*) was the first of its kind to address two critical challenges. This revised edition does the same but builds on the work of the past three years. One, the document outlines a framework for acquiring English and attaining content mastery across the grades in an era when college- and career-ready standards require more complex reading in all subject areas. And two, it presents criteria by which school administrators and teachers can determine whether instructional materials considered for implementation are appropriate for English Language Learners and are consistent with college- and career-ready standards.

Teresa Walter, who worked on the initial document, and Debra Hopkins from the Council led the work for this revised edition, building on the intellectual horsepower that was involved in pulling together the first issue. I am most grateful to them for their dedication to this task as well as to Gabriela Uro, David Lai, and Amanda Corcoran who made sure this document was brought to completion.

We hope that school officials and teachers across the country will use this document and the theory of action and criteria outlined within to strengthen instruction for our English Language Learners and to ensure that they have high quality materials that meet their needs.

Michael Casserly  
Executive Director  
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# Preface

The [Council of the Great City Schools](#) is a membership organization of 68 of the nation’s largest urban public school districts. According to the last comprehensive survey conducted by the Council, these districts collectively enrolled over 1.2 million English Language Learners (ELLs)—about 26 percent of the nation’s total in 2010. The Council has a strong track record of initiating and working on policy, research, and programmatic efforts at the national and local levels to improve academic achievement among ELLs. Among other initiatives, the organization has produced groundbreaking reports and studies on how urban school systems improve the academic attainment of ELLs and comprehensive surveys on the status of ELLs in the nation’s urban schools. In addition, the Council works directly with its member school districts to improve and support their instructional programs for ELLs through technical assistance, professional development, on-site reviews, meetings, and a national network of practitioners.

In conducting its work, the Council has found that many urban school districts report significant difficulty finding high-quality, rigorous, and grade-level instructional materials that are written for ELLs at varying levels of English proficiency. This dearth of materials presents a substantial problem for urban districts that enroll sizable numbers of ELLs, and it is particularly acute at the secondary grade levels, where the complexity of content and text is higher. The adoption and implementation of new college- and career-readiness standards, as well as new state-level English Language Development (ELD) standards, have only made this instructional need more obvious.

New standards underscore the importance of having rigorous and explicit guidance, both for defining a re-envisioned instructional framework for ELD that can be successfully implemented in varied educational settings across the nation, and for selecting instructional materials that are complex, standards-aligned, and able to meet the specific needs of ELLs within a district’s chosen program model.

## Purpose and Audience

This document is intended to clarify and define a renewed vision for high-quality, coherent, and rigorous instruction for English Language Learners—focusing on the areas of English language arts (ELA) and English language development (ELD)—and to provide guidance in evaluating and selecting appropriate ELA/ELD instructional materials. Originally published in 2014 and dubbed “*ELD 2.0*,” this updated “*ELD 3.0*” version has been revised to make it more streamlined and aligned with the themes in the recently revised *Instructional Materials Evaluation Tool* (IMET). This document was developed to be applicable across grades K-12. The *Evaluating Instructional Materials* section is designed to work in tandem with other tools that make grade-level distinctions for selecting instructional materials, such as the *Grade-level Instructional Materials Evaluation Tool-Quality Review* (GIMET-OR) developed by the Council as well other evaluation protocols adopted or developed by districts.

The document is meant to be a useful guide for educators who teach ELA or ELD to ELLs, and for anyone who is involved in the design, development, and/or selection of curricula, materials, and resources, whether in a district’s central office or in schools. This includes administrators, principals, teachers (in general education and specialized areas), textbook evaluation committees, instructional leadership teams, resource teachers, math coaches, and content specialists.

The document is divided into three sections:

### **I. Raising Expectations and Instructional Rigor for ELLs**

- A. Overarching Goals and Expectations
- B. District Context: Diversity of ELLs and Educational Settings
- C. Aligning District Systems, Professional Learning, and Instructional Materials
- D. Articulating a Theory of Action for Instruction of ELLs

### **II. A Comprehensive Approach to ELD**

- A. Defining Re-Envisioned ELD
- B. Delivery Models for ELD
- C. District’s Instructional Approach to ELA and ELD/ESL

### **III. Evaluating Instructional Materials: A User’s Guide**

- A. Key Considerations and Process for Evaluating Materials
- B. ELL Metrics—Summary Scoring Sheet

# Raising Expectations and Instructional Rigor for ELLs

## A. Overarching Goals and Expectations

For close to a decade, new academic standards with increased expectations for students have been adopted and implemented across the nation. These college- and career-readiness standards apply to all students—including English learners, who face the challenge of learning English as they are also learning grade-level content. Districts and states must therefore develop and provide instructional programs and services that accomplish two fundamental goals for ELLs:

1. *Access to Academic Content.* Districts must ensure that ELLs across all levels of language proficiency can access, fully engage with, and achieve rigorous grade-level academic content standards.
2. *English Language Development.* Districts must ensure that ELLs are developing advanced levels of English and closing the academic language gap.

## B. District Context: Diversity of ELLs and Educational Settings

While the overarching goals of academic success and English language proficiency for ELLs are common across the nation, the paths to accomplishing these goals are not. States, districts, and schools must consider their specific contexts as they design and provide responsive and effective instructional services and programs for the distinct composition of their ELL communities. Key factors that shape the district context include:

1. *Diversity of ELLs.* English learners are a diverse group of students with varying language backgrounds, experiences, cultural contexts, academic proficiencies, and levels of English proficiency. Some may be just beginning to add English to their language proficiencies; others may be nearing advanced English proficiency or may be stalled at intermediate levels. Schools must *know who their ELLs are, capitalize on what they bring, and hone in on what they need* as they plan and provide instruction that will enable all ELLs to develop and extend English proficiency and achieve the academic standards established for their grade levels.
2. *Approach to English Language Development (ELD).* English Language Development may be named or defined differently across school districts: English Language Development (ELD), English as a Second Language (ESL), English Language Acquisition (ELA), English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL), etc. Districts, nonetheless, must develop a common language and expectations for ELD for the range and diversity of ELLs—and develop a consensus around the key components of ELD.

3. *Instructional Delivery Models.* Instructional delivery varies with regard to *how* and *by whom* English language development and/or core instruction is provided. These differences in delivery design across districts are determined by a number of factors, including state law, resource allocation, particulars specified in district compliance agreements with the Office for Civil Rights (OCR) or the Department of Justice (DOJ),<sup>1</sup> and district instructional frameworks and approaches to teaching and learning. These factors affect:
  - ◆ *Staffing.* Who provides ELD? Who provides grade-level, content-specific instruction? How do teachers work together to provide coherent learning experiences?
  - ◆ *Student placement, grouping, and instructional pathways.* How are students identified as ELLs? How are they placed? Are there coherent services and pathways as students progress in their English proficiency?
  - ◆ *Role of instruction and instructional materials.* What drives instruction? Are there curriculum maps? Instructional or curriculum frameworks? Are teachers the primary staff members responsible for instructional decisions? Is the district relying on instructional materials as the curriculum that drives instruction?
4. *Use of Native Language.* Use of native language varies among districts' instructional programs for ELLs, and may be used to support English acquisition and access to grade-level content. For programs that include the development of native language literacy as a goal (e.g., dual-language programs), rigorous academic language development should also occur in the native language, providing access to increasingly complex language.

## C. Aligning District Systems, Professional Learning, and Instructional Materials

As districts analyze their own current contexts and how they address instructional needs, clear implications emerge in three interlocking areas that require attention to ensure quality instruction for ELLs:

1. *District Systems* that support a coherent instructional program for ELLs.
  - ◆ Clear, coherent systems for ELL identification, placement and pathways, and instruction—including ELD instruction, monitoring, and assessment
  - ◆ Clearly articulated ELL program models and delivery options
  - ◆ Supportive school structures: i.e., instructional coaches, professional learning communities (PLCs), extended learning (before/after school), leadership development

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<sup>1</sup> The Office for Civil Rights acknowledges that “educators have not reached consensus about the most effective way to meet the education needs of LEP (Limited English Proficiency) students,” and thus OCR allows school districts broad discretion concerning how to ensure equal education opportunity for LEP students: “OCR does not prescribe a specific intervention strategy or type of program that a school district must adopt to serve LEP students ...” (U.S. Department of Education, 2015).

2. *Professional Learning* that is centered around developing capacity to deliver rigorous instruction.

- ◆ Professional learning that clarifies the role of instruction, curriculum maps, resources, and materials
- ◆ Professional learning that is timely, effective, sustained, and designed to build district- and school-level capacity to deliver rigorous instruction
- ◆ Professional learning that builds the capacity of teachers and leaders to provide quality instructional practices that are appropriately scaffolded, leading to mastery of grade-level academic language and content

“Regardless of their individual backgrounds and levels of English proficiency, ELs ... are able to engage in intellectually challenging and content-rich activities, with appropriate support from teachers that addresses their language and academic learning needs.”

– 2015 California ELA/ELD Framework, p.104

3. *Instructional Materials* that support rigorous instruction of grade-level content with effective scaffolds to support ELLs.

- ◆ High-quality, rigorous instructional materials aligned with the district’s program/delivery model
- ◆ High-quality, rigorous instructional materials that engage ELLs and accelerate grade-level content and language development (See *“Evaluating Instructional Materials: A User’s Guide”* on page 21.)

## D. Articulating a Theory of Action for Instruction of ELLs

Districts must establish a clear vision for how quality instruction will lead to improved outcomes for English Language Learners. The following elements comprise the Council’s vision and theory of action for raising ELL achievement by acknowledging and respecting both *the learners and the educators who serve them*.

- *High expectations.* ELLs are capable of engaging in complex thinking and engaging with complex text (reading and writing). When educators know and expect that ELLs will perform at high levels, they will work to provide ELLs with access to rigorous, grade-level instruction and materials. Given this opportunity to learn, ELLs will acquire the reasoning, language skills, and academic registers they need to be successful across the curriculum and throughout the school day.
- *Instruction that builds on student assets.* All students bring knowledge, skills, and experiences into the classroom that can be leveraged to promote learning. Students’ home cultures and languages are key resources in their own right, and can help them in developing both the social and academic registers of English. Students benefit academically when their home languages and cultures are recognized as assets.

**High expectations**—all English learners can achieve at high levels and graduate ready for college and career.

**Asset based**—students’ home languages and cultures are tremendous assets that add value.

**Shared ownership**—all educators share responsibility and take ownership for student success.

- *Support and professional development.* Teachers are professionals capable of planning effective lessons that engage ELLs and advance learning and language proficiency across the curriculum. If teachers are given the time and professional development to plan lessons aligned to the district’s academic standards; incorporate grade-level appropriate, complex texts into their classroom instruction; and ensure access for English Language Learners through appropriate scaffolds or differentiation, they will succeed in raising ELL achievement. Teachers also need support and guidance from instructional leaders who understand the important shifts needed to engage ELLs in complex thinking, talk, and tasks anchored in complex, grade-level texts.
- *Shared ownership.* In an environment where all educators share responsibility for the success of all students, teachers are supported and empowered to improve their instructional practice in order to meet the needs of ELLs in their classrooms. Understanding that all teachers are teachers of ELLs promotes improved attention to language development, as well as coordination and dissemination of the support, instructional practices, and resources necessary for teachers across the curriculum to ensure that students at varying levels of English proficiency have access to core content and effective instruction.

In sum, when we *respect all students as learners* by holding high expectations for their achievement, equipping them with the skills they need to meet these expectations, and recognizing the value of the experience and knowledge they bring into the classroom, we can improve their social and academic outcomes. Likewise, when we *respect teachers as professionals* by providing them with the support and training they need to effectively engage ELLs and building a culture of shared accountability among all educators, we improve the quality of teaching and learning not only for ELLs but for all students.

# A Comprehensive Approach to ELD

## A. Defining a Re-envisioned ELD Framework

Effective ELD ensures that ELLs acquire the reasoning, language skills, and academic registers to be successful across the curriculum and throughout the school day. So, how will this occur? What must be in place to ensure every student is receiving abundant opportunities to develop the academic and discipline-specific language needed to access and fully engage in grade-level, standards-based instruction? And how will we ensure that students are developing an understanding of how English works—in varied contexts and situations, and with varied audiences and speakers of English?

The task, though challenging, is achievable. The answers to these questions lie in a re-envisioned approach to ELD that, *by design*, provides for intentional language-learning opportunities and experiences for ELLs throughout the school day that enrich and expand students' English proficiency and support them in achieving grade-level expectations and standards. This redesigned framework, applicable to any number of contexts, includes two key elements that work together to provide a comprehensive approach to ELD:

1. *Focused Language Study (FLS)*: Dedicated time, where ELLs are strategically grouped together to concentrate on the critical language ELLs need for on-grade-level learning in English (language that their native English-speaking peers typically already know).
2. *Discipline-specific Academic Language Expansion (DALE)*: Academic language instruction throughout the day and integrated across various content areas. Teachers provide an intentional focus on the content-specific language demands and academic language that ELLs, along with their native English-speaking peers, must develop.

These two elements, together with effective and strategic instructional practices, comprise a framework for a strong and comprehensive system of ELD.

This comprehensive approach to ELD provides for contextualized learning opportunities throughout the day that support and accelerate language learning, and are respectful of learners and educators alike:

- ELLs have daily opportunities to work with other ELLs at similar levels of English proficiency to further develop, practice, and understand how English works. (FLS)
- ELLs are engaged in grade-level work with their peers, while being supported in developing and using authentic language. (DALE)

ELD is defined by the coherent integration of both FLS and DALE. Ideally, teachers coordinate services and bridge learning between FLS and DALE so that the language instruction that occurs in the content areas (DALE) is extended and deepened during FLS. Similarly, there is an expectation that language developed during FLS will be applied to content learning. Taken together, students receive coherent, rich, and comprehensive ELD every day.

**Comprehensive ELD requires  
FLS plus DALE**



### ***What is Focused Language Study (FLS)?***

FLS is a dedicated time for targeted English language development. Instruction focuses on the English language and how it works—those elements that are already typically known to native English speakers but must be learned and developed by ELLs (Wong Fillmore & Fillmore, 2012).

- ELD/ESL standards serve as the focus for instruction. The emphasis is on functional/purposeful use of language in all four language domains, and students develop and practice language for a variety of registers, purposes, and audiences.
- Instruction is differentiated by students' levels of English language proficiency and intentionally targeting development to higher levels of proficiency.
- It is a companion to, not a replacement for, quality standards-aligned English language arts instruction, and teachers bridge the learning from FLS to subject matter instruction in DALE (and vice versa).

### **Notes to FLS Teachers:**

FLS is intended to increase students' English language proficiency and assist them in using English with increasing competence, flexibility, and fluency. To promote this:

- Provide instruction at a level slightly above students' independent level.
  - ◆ Stretch students' language by continually assisting them in finding additional ways to express ideas and expand, amplify, and extend language.
  - ◆ Demonstrate high expectations and hold students accountable for using and applying the language they are developing, with the goal of student independence.
- Identify and expand on HOW English works in various contexts. Explore and clarify linguistic demands of complex text, talk, and discourse in varied settings, audiences, and purposes.
- Explicitly bridge learning between FLS and subject matter curricula encountered throughout the day, encouraging students to extend and apply language developed during FLS to DALE (and vice versa). Students can then see the connectedness between various contexts and learn to use English with greater flexibility and fluency. (For example, "Look in your language log. Remember we discussed how we write a sequence? First/next/finally... Use this to explain how you solved the math problem.")

## So What Does FLS Look Like in a Classroom?

- FLS instruction focuses on how the English language works in all four domains—listening, speaking, reading, and writing.
- Teachers explicitly teach elements that might be typically known to native English speakers and provide opportunities for students to practice English to develop an understanding of its sentence structures, grammatical conventions, and vocabulary.
- *Student Grouping:* Students may be grouped by similar English proficiency levels. However, rather than being isolated in a single level of proficiency, it is best when students are grouped with others within a limited range of levels.
- *Designated Time:* A specified number of minutes (e.g., 30-60) may be allotted daily in elementary grades. At the secondary level, one or more class periods may be allotted either as stand-alone courses or in combination with ELA, depending upon students' English proficiency levels, instructional needs, and/or state guidelines.
- *Designated Instructional Focus:*
  - ◆ At the **elementary** level, instruction is best provided by a classroom teacher who knows the students and can provide a bridge between FLS and DALE, or by teachers providing FLS and DALE who collaborate and co-plan to bridge grade-level work with development and use of academic language throughout the day.
  - ◆ At the **secondary** level, instruction may be in designated ELD/ESL courses, or in self-contained or co-taught ELD/ESL and ELA courses that align to grade-level ELA content.
- *FLS Teacher:* Instruction may be provided by a qualified ESL teacher (push-in, pull-out), classroom teacher (as a small group or ELA/ELD course), or co-teachers (each with a small group at similar language levels).

### ***What is Discipline-specific Academic Language Expansion (DALE)?***

DALE is language instruction in the context of grade-level content; it focuses on deliberate language development and expansion through complex thought, texts, talk, and tasks (Wong Fillmore & Cucchiara, 2012). Discipline-specific language is used in distinct ways, not only because each content area deals with different subjects, but also because each subject describes and engages in different processes, concepts, and argumentation (Fang & Schleppegrell, 2010; Shanahan & Shanahan, 2008). DALE occurs in the content area class, can be extended and reinforced in FLS, and supports and benefits all students.

- Grade-level content standards serve as the focus for instruction. ELD standards support the academic language demands of the content, which ELLs—along with their native English-speaking peers—must develop.
- Language development takes place in an integrated manner within appropriate grade-level learning. The content lessons' language demands, challenges, and opportunities are analyzed and intentional instruction is provided to address the demands. High-utility, cross-disciplinary academic language is leveraged and developed.
- DALE attends to language usage and terminology in each field. Instruction attends to academic registers and ways of thinking and expressing ideas in different fields, which may be different than general usage.

### **Notes to DALE Teachers:**

*Use every opportunity to extend and develop the language of your subject area.* DALE is a rich opportunity for language development and contributes directly to students' accelerated language development and academic success.

- **Strategically collaborate with the ELD/ESL/ESOL teacher to create lessons and opportunities that lead to language development.**
- **Preview and analyze tasks and identify the language demands and potential challenges.** Use these as opportunities to teach and support the language students need to fully engage in the academic learning.
- **Build bridges between FLS and DALE.** Encourage students to extend and apply language developed during FLS to DALE. Students can then see the connectedness between various contexts and learn to use English with greater flexibility and fluency.

### So What Does DALE Look Like in a Classroom?

- Language development is integrated seamlessly into content-area instruction.
- Instruction may be provided by a content-area teacher with specialized training to support language development or by a content-area teacher and ESL teacher planning and teaching together.
- Teachers explicitly teach and develop the language of the subject area. This may include vocabulary and/or the specific patterns, forms, or overall structures of language required for the task or expectations of the discipline.
- Teachers model academic, high-level English, and encourage students to respond and communicate their own thinking using discipline-specific language.
- Students participate in structured activities and tasks that require interaction with others and the use of increasingly complex language.
- Students extend and apply language skills and knowledge developed during Focused Language Study.

## B. Delivery Models for ELD

The *Re-envisioned ELD Framework* clearly articulates and attends to the development of full and robust English proficiency across all language domains and all subject areas. It lives within—not apart from—overall efforts to raise the rigor of language and content instruction, ensuring that all students achieve college and career readiness.

There are many ways in which ELD (both FLS and DALE) can be implemented. Any structure or model must support the key principles of FLS and DALE, but generally speaking, this best occurs when the school-level structure and schedule facilitate collaboration and co-planning among teachers who deliver FLS and/or DALE. Teachers are thus empowered to provide connections that bridge grade-level work and hold students accountable for using and applying academic language throughout the day.

***Elementary-level Models:*** ELLs may be clustered in groups with similar English proficiency and placed in grade-level classes that include other, more-proficient peers. They are taught in English by teachers who have special ELL training and appropriate certification. The instruction might also include the use of the home language of ELLs, if delivered through a bilingual education program. Below are some examples:

- *Within a classroom taught by a general education teacher:* Classroom teachers with ELL-related credentials provide DALE and daily FLS in their respective classrooms.

- *Team teaching*: Two grade-level teachers team up to provide FLS during a designated time. Each provides instruction to a small group of students at a similar English proficiency level. Teachers co-plan and collaborate to coordinate learning and hold students accountable for using and applying language in both settings.
- *Cross grade-span team teaching*: Similar to team-teaching, teachers across a grade level or span (i.e., primary grades) provide FLS at a designated time to a small group of ELLs with similar English proficiency. Teachers collaborate and coordinate to bridge learning.
- *FLS provided by designated ELD teacher*: Designated ELD or ESL teachers provide FLS in either a push-in or pull-out model. General education teachers provide DALE. ELD/ESL/ESOL and general education teachers collaborate and coordinate to bridge learning.

***Secondary-level Models***: ELLs receive DALE through content courses by teachers who have special ELL training and appropriate certification. Content teachers collaborate and co-plan with FLS teachers to coordinate learning and to prepare students to use academic language in both settings.

- *Designated ELD courses*: Students receive FLS through designated ELD or ESL courses targeting specific English proficiency levels. These courses align and build on ELA standards and may be two-period blocks providing intensive language-learning opportunities. These courses are most appropriate for students at earlier levels of English proficiency.
- *ELD and ELA co-courses*: ELLs are enrolled in a designated ESL or ELD course by English proficiency level, as well as a grade-level ELA course. The two courses are aligned, with the ELD course providing additional, targeted opportunities for students to develop the language and literacy needed for success in the grade-level ELA course.
- *A specialized form of instruction* for ELA/ELD may also be implemented to address the need for accelerated language development for particular groups of ELLs, such as students with interrupted formal schooling, newcomers at secondary level who are entirely new to English, or long-term ELLs.

### ***Implementing the Framework: A District Example***

The following is one example of how a large urban district has implemented the Framework within their overall instructional program model.

**District X** has utilized the *Framework* to examine how to better address the inherent language demands of college- and career-readiness standards and Next Generation Science Standards. The Council’s framework delineating Focused Language Study (FLS) and Discipline-specific Academic Language Expansion (DALE) has been formative in the district’s reconceptualization of ELD.

Recognizing that language and content are essential components in both ELD instruction and content instruction, and in alignment with its state ELA/ELD Framework, District X has determined that students at every grade level across the language proficiency continuum will receive both:

*Designated ELD (FLS):* A protected time where ELD teachers can zoom in on focused language study connected to core content.

- Instruction is targeted to the three proficiency levels of the state ELD standards (emerging, expanding, bridging).
- Language is in the foreground. The focus is on ELD standards and on how English works.

*Integrated ELD (DALE):* English Language Development that is embedded in core content instruction across the day and delivered by general education teachers with ELD training.

- Content is in the foreground. The focus is on interacting in meaningful ways and developing and using disciplinary language in service of accessing grade-level content.

**At the Elementary Level**, schools in District X will cluster groups of six to eight ELLs with similar English proficiency and place them in grade-level classes. ELLs will receive DALE from classroom teachers (with special ELL training and certification). Wherever possible, each classroom teacher will also provide FLS to their small group (cluster) of ELLs. Where not feasible, teachers will team up during a designated FLS time, each taking one group of ELLs with similar English proficiency. In either case, FLS and DALE instruction will be coordinated and build off of each other. FLS is also provided daily for ELLs enrolled in dual language and biliteracy programs, as is DALE (in both English and the target language.)

**At the Secondary Level**, schools in District X will identify and place ELLs by English proficiency in designated ELD courses that also align to and build on ELA standards (FLS). ELLs will also be enrolled in grade-appropriate ELA and other content courses supported by teachers who have special ELL training and certification (DALE). A newcomer program is also designed for students at the earliest level of English proficiency, including Students with Interrupted Formal Education (SIFE). For one to two semesters, Newcomer ELLs receive an intensive program of ELD, content-based electives, and orientation to the United States. ELLs are also enrolled in other more easily accessible elective courses (e.g., art, photography) that might have fewer language demands, with the general school population.

## C. A District’s Instructional Approach to ELA and ELD/ESL

In addition to identifying the ELD/ESL delivery model, it is critically important that districts clearly articulate the content and pedagogical connection between ELD/ESL and its broader English Language Arts (ELA) program *before* determining what instructional materials are needed. It is only *after* establishing and articulating the district approach to ELA and ELD/ESL—the instructional context in which the materials will be used—that a district can effectively evaluate instructional materials, determining those that best suit their specific context. Answering questions such as these for both ELA and ELD/ESL could help clarify a district’s instructional approach, and therefore the type (or types) of materials best suited to their needs.

## 1. District Created Curriculum:

- ◆ *Is the district creating standards-aligned units of study, curriculum maps, or frameworks for ELA?*
- ◆ *Is the district incorporating ELD/ESL into any district created units, maps, or frameworks?*
- ◆ *Do the ELD/ESL standards or program objectives clearly align to ELA standards?*

## 2. Approach to Literacy Instruction:

- ◆ *What is the district’s overarching approach to ELA and literacy at various grade levels?*
- ◆ *Is the approach to ELD/ESL consistent with the approach to ELA, and does it provide opportunities to build on and extend language?*

## 3. Professional Development:

- ◆ *Are there systems in place for strong and sustained professional development for ELA and literacy?*
- ◆ *Do these systems also provide for strong, sustained, and aligned professional development for ELD/ESL (including FLS and DALE)?*

## 4. Role of Instructional Materials:

- ◆ *Does the district take the stance that instructional materials are used **in support of** quality teaching—or are they intended **to closely guide** quality teaching?*
- ◆ *Is the district stance on the role of instructional materials for ELD/ESL consistent with ELA?*

## 5. Role of Native Language/Biliteracy and Dual Language Programs:

- ◆ *How is native language used to support literacy, content knowledge, and English acquisition?*
- ◆ *Is the goal of dual language or biliteracy programs to develop language proficiency and literacy in two languages?*
- ◆ *Is the role of native language instruction for ELD/ESL consistent with ELA (including dual language and biliteracy programs)?*

## 6. ELD/ESL Delivery:

- ◆ *When and in what class(es) is ELD/ESL instruction provided (FLS and DALE)? Which instructional staff members are responsible for providing ELD/ESL instruction or support? (See “Delivery Models for ELD” on page 17.)*

The answers to these questions could point to a comprehensive, more structured set of ELA program materials that integrate specific ELD/ESL components within a given materials package, or a more flexible ELA and ELD/ESL program comprised of carefully chosen materials, text sets, and resources that together support the district-created curriculum (with curriculum maps, units, etc.).

Once a district has defined and articulated its 1. *ELL theory of action*, 2. *Delivery model for ELD/ESL*, and 3. *Instructional approach to ELA and ELD/ESL* (which then determines the type of instructional materials needed to design and deliver effective instruction for both ELA and ELD/ESL within the district context), a district is informed and prepared for the next step—evaluating and selecting instructional materials.

# Evaluating Instructional Materials: A User's Guide

Effective instructional practices that promote accelerated language and literacy development, including the complex ways of thinking, reading, writing, listening, and speaking called for in both ELA *and* ESL/ELD standards, are best supported by materials that align to both grade-level college- and career-readiness standards *and* ESL/ELD standards. In this section, we describe a general process and key features for evaluating, and ultimately selecting, quality ELA/ELD instructional materials for ELLs.

The materials review/selection process typically begins with the convening of a committee that is representative of multiple perspectives, including staff with experience and expertise in standards-aligned ELA and ELD/ESL as well as those who understand the specialized needs of the district's diverse ELLs.

This section provides information and tools designed to help members of this committee hone in on the specific features of materials that will provide accelerated language and literacy opportunities for ELLs. Ideally, this tool should be used alongside other review or evaluation tools such as the *Grade-level Instructional Materials Evaluation Tool (GIMET-OR)*, developed by the Council of the Great City Schools, or tools developed by state departments of education or local districts.

## A. A Process and Key Considerations for Evaluating Materials

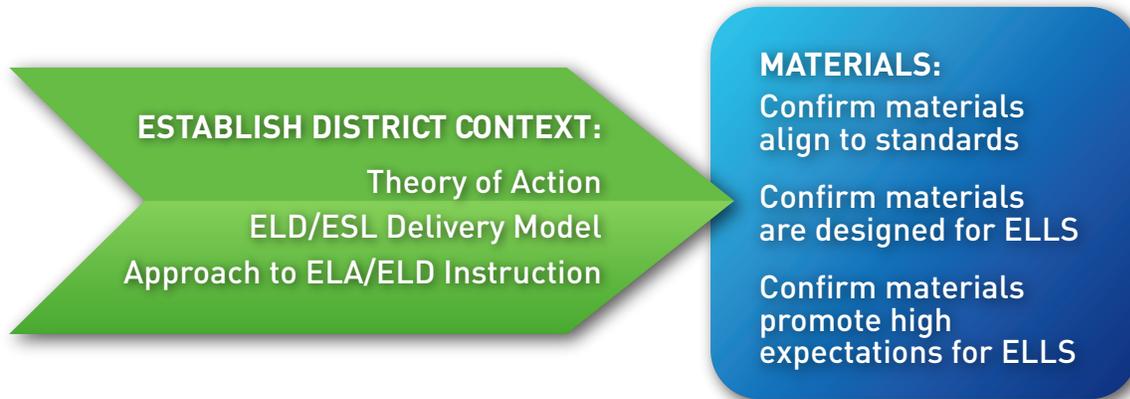
Through a collaboration with ELL experts, linguists, and practitioners from 15 urban school districts, the following step-by-step process was developed to guide the evaluation and selection of effective instructional materials that specifically attend to the needs of ELLs. This process of reviewing materials entails three general levels of review:



Each step of the process may be considered a gateway through which the perhaps daunting number of submissions to consider can be gradually and efficiently winnowed down to the instructional materials that best meet the specific needs of your students and of your program model.

## Level One: Overarching Considerations

The process of reviewing ELA/ELD materials begins with an evaluation based upon general concerns, assumptions, and expectations that serve as a unifying foundation.



1. **Establish district context.** As described in the preceding section, before the process of evaluating materials can begin, each district must determine what materials are needed for its specific context. Districts review only those materials that are consistent with their:
  - ◆ *ELL theory of action*
  - ◆ *Delivery model for ELD/ESL*
  - ◆ *Instructional approach to ELA and ELD/ESL*
2. **Confirm an explicit and substantive alignment of materials to grade-level standards.** Correspondence to new standards does not necessarily mean that there is an alignment of rigor and expectations. Publishers should show exactly where and how their materials align with grade-level standards and where they do not, making use of correlation matrices and point-of-use references in their teacher's guide. Districts, then, should seek to determine whether there is true alignment, or just a correlation to standards. The Council's [GIMET-OR](#) would be a helpful tool to help determine this alignment.
3. **Confirm that materials have been designed and validated for use with ELLs.** Publishers often indicate that their materials have been developed with ELLs in mind or for specific use in programs for ELLs. A series of writers and/or researchers may be mentioned as collaborators or developers. However, in order for schools and districts to confidently rely on these claims, there is a need for greater transparency on the following:
  - ◆ Which researchers were included in the design phase of the materials, and what was their level of involvement (authors, commissioned papers, research)?
  - ◆ Who are the writers and reviewers of the instruction, and what is their level of expertise with second language development?
  - ◆ What is the evidence that the publisher's materials have been validated for use with ELLs? Was research conducted to confirm the instructional design? Were ELLs included in pilots conducted during the course of development? In what districts? Is the typology of the ELLs specified?

4. ***Confirm that the philosophy and pedagogy related to English language acquisition establish high expectations.*** To promote the development of sophisticated grade-level language and content knowledge for ELLs, instructional materials must incorporate rich and complex text, chosen through both quantitative measures (readability) and qualitative measures (levels of meaning, structure, language conventionality and clarity, knowledge demands, and age-appropriateness). Districts should therefore pay particular attention to the criteria or considerations that were used for including specific texts. Materials must not be oversimplified; rather, they must attend to the role of language development in furthering conceptual understanding of content.

### To address ELL needs, materials need to:

Provide **full access to grade-level content**

Provide the necessary **rigor in language development**

Integrate **scaffolding without compromising rigor** or content

Provide access to **text that increases in complexity**, intentionally connecting ELA and ELD/ESL instruction

Present a **cohesive and coherent approach** to developing and expanding concepts, content, thinking, and language through texts, tasks, and talk

## Level Two: Key Considerations for ELLs—Materials Evaluation Matrix

The table below provides a set of considerations that can serve as ELL-specific metrics for reviewing materials through the lens of ELL needs. These considerations are aligned to grade-level college and career-readiness standards, and are designed to be used as a companion or “overlay” to other grade-by-grade tools the district is using for the evaluation of instructional materials.

### Instructional Materials for ELLs: Evaluation Matrix

Scoring Key: 1 = no evidence, 2 = some evidence, 3 = sufficient evidence, 4 = extensive evidence

1. READING: RANGE, QUALITY, AND COMPLEXITY OF TEXTS <i>Texts have the appropriate level of complexity for the grade, according to both quantitative measures and qualitative analysis of text complexity. Texts are not over-simplified; rather, they are worthy of student time and attention.</i>	1	2	3	4
<p>1a) Materials include a range of grade-level and age-appropriate <b>instructional texts</b> (e.g., small group, guided) <b>and independent reading texts</b> along a staircase of reading and linguistic complexity.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Text sets are consistent with <b>grade-appropriate content, themes, and topics</b>, and promote the development of <b>grade-level academic language and content</b>.</li> </ul> <p>1b) Text sets are connected by an essential question or overarching theme; they include <b>complex and compelling (“juicy”) texts</b> across a variety of genres.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To the extent practicable, texts should reflect a range of content areas (e.g., math, science, social studies), in support of district curricula.</li> </ul> <p>1c) Text sets address and support ELA/ELD standards and language progressions in a spiraling and reciprocal manner <b>without sacrificing content or rigor</b>, providing abundant opportunities for students to hear, read, and experience the rhythms and patterns of English.</p> <p>1d) Materials provide <b>sustained time on the themes</b>, with opportunities (texts, tasks, talk) to reinforce conceptual development and extend the academic language that frames those concepts.</p> <p>1e) Materials include “just-right” pre-reading activities that offer <b>visuals and other types of supports and scaffolds</b> for building essential and pertinent background knowledge on new or unfamiliar themes/topics.</p> <p>1f) Materials include instruction in which <b>text complexity is called out</b> or highlighted, with specific emphasis on linguistic or structural complexity.</p> <p>1g) Materials integrate high quality, <b>culturally responsive</b> texts that tap into student assets to deepen understanding and expand knowledge.</p> <p>1h) Text provided in Spanish (or any other language) is <b>authentic, high quality, and at a level of complexity</b> that mirrors the language and content demands of grade-level standards.</p>				
2. QUALITY TEXT-DEPENDENT QUESTIONS THAT SUPPORT STUDENT LEARNING <i>The majority of questions in the submission are high-quality text-dependent questions that build and extend students’ thinking and discourse.</i>	1	2	3	4
<p>2a) Materials support students in <b>recognizing phrases and linguistic constructs</b> that point to critical information in a passage, allowing them to identify and cite textual evidence for responses to text-dependent questions.</p> <p>2b) Materials provide <b>multiple opportunities for extended academic discourse</b> as students explore and respond to richly developed text-dependent questions.</p>				

<p><b>3. FOUNDATIONAL SKILLS</b></p> <p><i>Materials provide explicit and systematic instruction and diagnostic support for challenges ELLs face as they acquire concepts of print, phonological awareness, word awareness, phonics and vocabulary, syntax, and fluency in a new language.</i></p>	<p><b>1 2 3 4</b></p>
<p>3a) Materials are <b>connected to grade-level (not watered-down) content</b>; they incorporate a contextualized approach to teaching such foundational skills as phonemic awareness, phonics, and vocabulary/syntax/fluency development.</p> <p>3b) Materials build foundational skills by attending to comparative linguistics, <b>highlighting similarities and differences</b> (phonological, orthographic, and syntactic) between English and the native language(s), and <b>promoting transfer</b> between native language skills and English.</p> <p>3c) Materials <b>avoid nonsense words</b> and phrases, but rather use English phrases, patterns, and resources that make sense and carry meaning (to reinforce developing English proficiency and meaning making).</p>	
<p><b>4. LANGUAGE</b></p> <p><i>Materials accelerate acquisition of rich academic language. Instruction may focus on how English works, and may be nested within grade-level content and concepts.</i></p>	<p><b>1 2 3 4</b></p>
<p>4a) Materials pay explicit attention to, and engage students with, academic language—its features, functions, and grammar—<b>for varied purposes and in varied contexts</b> in service of effective communication and meaningful academic work.</p> <p>4b) Materials accommodate students at varying levels of English proficiency. They <b>avoid tagging specific instructional practices for specific proficiency levels</b>, as this can hinder access to more advanced language and opportunities.</p> <p>4c) Materials <b>regularly identify areas of potential challenge</b> within the texts (e.g., linguistically complex passages and constructs), and offer teachers support and guidance for determining appropriate instructional scaffolds for ELLs.</p> <p>4d) Materials include <b>annotated deconstruction of text</b>, unpacking the linguistic complexity and richness of language with regard to syntax, and attending to the use of literary devices across genres, registers, and content.</p> <p>4e) Materials consider how <b>control of language conventions develops along a non-linear progression</b>, attending to the conventions, patterns, and usage errors typical of language learners.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teachers are supported in modeling, providing examples, and <b>promoting development of language awareness</b>, so ELLs gain the ability to recognize and self-correct their errors.</li> </ul> <p>4f) Materials attend to the language that frames the concepts/ideas; they <b>provide linguistic frames</b>, templates, and other recommendations to <b>scaffold the academic language demands</b> required for extended discourse.</p> <p>4g) Materials provide opportunities for students to <b>examine language and text structures associated with each genre</b>, and use that knowledge to achieve deeper comprehension (e.g., How did you identify the text as persuasive? What was your first clue as to the author’s intent? Cite phrases or constructs the author used in an attempt to persuade the reader.)</p> <p>4h) Materials provide regular opportunities for students to <b>constantly expand their command of academic language</b> as they read across connected texts of various genres, grapple with essential questions, express opinions (with reasoning and rationale), and explore and discuss diverse points of view on important themes.</p>	

<p><b>5. SPEAKING AND LISTENING</b></p> <p><i>Speaking and listening are integrated into lessons, questions, and tasks; they reflect the progression of increasingly sophisticated communication skills required for college and career readiness.</i></p>	<p><b>1 2 3 4</b></p>
<p>5a) Questions and tasks are <b>grade-level appropriate</b>; they promote and support expansion of students' spoken English proficiency.</p> <p>5b) Materials offer <b>progressively complex linguistic frames</b> or models that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• support students in <b>adapting language use according to task</b>, purpose, audience, text type, and discipline-specific academic registers, and</li> <li>• <b>facilitate academic conversations</b> that encourage students to “go deeper” in their thinking, sharing and expanding ideas and concepts with their peers (e.g., through description, clarification, elaboration, rationale, building consensus).</li> </ul> <p>5c) Materials include multiple opportunities for students to listen to <b>authentic models of academic English across genres and registers</b>; they provide insight into disciplinary demands and features across genres, and call attention to cultural differences in thought and writing patterns.</p> <p>5d) Materials provide abundant and varied opportunities for teachers to <b>read rich and compelling texts aloud</b> to students. These read-alouds expose students to rich language, new ideas, and content knowledge they may not be able to access through independent reading.</p> <p>5e) Materials provide opportunities for students to <b>develop receptive listening skills</b>, through note-taking and other active listening techniques, and support teachers in assessing comprehension of texts read aloud.</p>	
<p><b>6. WRITING</b></p> <p><i>Students are regularly required to communicate in writing, for a variety of purposes and in a variety of contexts, using increasingly complex language that reflects their growing English proficiency.</i></p>	<p><b>1 2 3 4</b></p>
<p>6a) Materials include routine and systematic practice and opportunities for guided/shared and independent writing events to develop proficiency in structuring cohesive texts—<b>shifting language use based on task, purpose, audience, and text types</b>.</p> <p>6b) Materials offer ELLs at all proficiency levels <b>regular opportunities to engage in writing tasks</b> that gradually build the content, language, and skills required to produce increasingly complex, extended writings (argument, informative/expository, narrative).</p> <p>6c) <b>Mentor texts</b> across writing genres and registers are routinely used as vehicles for instruction and models for students, as they learn to <b>determine the appropriate register for each writing task</b> (e.g., formal, casual, content-specific).</p> <p>6d) Materials provide frequent opportunities for text-connected writing tasks, through which students learn to cite text-based evidence to support their thesis.</p>	

<b>7. SCAFFOLDING AND DIFFERENTIATION</b> <i>Materials provide thoughtful supports/scaffolds to support all students in accessing college-and career-readiness standards.</i>	<b>1 2 3 4</b>
<p>7a) Materials incorporate <b>carefully chosen, age-appropriate visuals and graphic supports</b> to activate prior knowledge and scaffold conceptual development. These graphics are used to clarify concepts and relationships within the text that are critical to comprehension.</p> <p>7b) Materials/texts emphasize or repeat selected <b>contextualized linguistic/grammatical structures that are central to meaning</b> and concept development so that students can access content and gain control over the academic language that frames them.</p> <p>7c) Materials offer support for assessment, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Guidance or recommendations for <i>expert noticing</i> for <b>formative assessment</b> of both productive (speaking and writing) and receptive (listening and reading) dimensions of language and literacy, with a goal of informing instruction.</li> <li>• Tools (e.g., diagnostic, performance, summative, unit, etc.) to assist in <b>monitoring student progress</b> in literacy and language development.</li> <li>• Resources to support the <b>use of assessment data</b> for understanding student learning and responding with effective next step for student learning.</li> </ul> <p>7d) Teacher materials incorporate evidence-based approaches, strategies, and resources so that all ELLs (e.g., <b>SIFE, literate in native language, long-term ELLs</b>, etc.) may access and attain grade-level standards.</p> <p>7e) Teacher resources provide guidance to <b>distinguish between simply “meeting ELD standards” and achieving full comprehension</b> of complex text, including guidance on building background knowledge presupposed by text.</p> <p>7f) Teacher resources provide instructional suggestions and recommendations for scaffolding for ELLs with diverse needs that <b>incorporate cultural, linguistic, and background experiences</b> students bring to the classroom.</p> <p>7g) Teacher resources provide guidance for <b>differentiating between student needs related to language development and those related to developing and controlling reading behaviors</b>, and for responding via targeted support or intervention.</p> <p>7h) Teacher resources provide examples of student work, <b>highlighting potential areas of linguistic challenge</b> and offering related instructional guidance.</p> <p>7i) Teacher resources provide teachers with <b>recommendations and/or links to access additional resources, materials, and texts</b> for diverse student needs.</p>	

<p><b>8. Cultural Relevance and Respect</b></p> <p><i>Instructional materials must be respectful and inclusive of all students' backgrounds, language, culture, ethnicity, race, gender, and refugee or immigration experience; and must pay special attention to cultural implications for ELLs, providing appropriate supports for teachers.</i></p>	<p>1 2 3 4</p>
<p>8a) Text sets offer a <b>range of views and perspectives</b> and are deliberately structured in a sensitive manner to provide opportunities for all learners to engage meaningfully with each text.</p> <p>8b) Texts take special care to <b>address sensitive subjects with respect</b>, including—where appropriate—carefully chosen images and videos to build background and context.</p> <p>8c) ELLs' <b>backgrounds are valued as assets and built upon</b>, as they bring rich experience to the learning environment.</p> <p>8d) Texts <b>acknowledge students' life experiences</b> and social and emotional development.</p> <p>8e) Texts are <b>free of negative misconceptions or stereotypes</b>, encouraging students to acknowledge multiple perspectives.</p> <p>8f) Teachers' resources include <b>explicit guidance for identifying culturally distinct discourse patterns and linguistic features</b> within texts, highlighting similarities and/or contrasting differences. This guidance should include tasks and questions that are culturally respectful and that draw upon students' metalinguistic awareness and life experiences to guide intellectual exploration and discourse.</p>	
<p><b>9. Additional Considerations for Teacher's Editions, Resources, and Professional Development</b></p> <p><i>Teacher materials support—rather than usurp—the district's curriculum or professional development initiatives, and position teachers as the professionals who select materials and design lessons to accelerate student learning. In addition to teacher guidance and recommendations referenced in each section of this matrix, the following are additional general considerations for reviewing teacher's editions, resources, and related professional development.</i></p>	<p>1 2 3 4</p>
<p>9a) Materials provide <b>reflection/coaching suggestions rather than a script</b> to follow.</p> <p>9b) Materials support teachers in <b>scaffolding up rather than watering down</b>, encouraging students to strive upwards, and ensuring that ELLs are instructed with rigorous grade-level content.</p> <p>9c) Materials include <b>samples of more structured units as guides for teachers, as well as others that are less structured</b>, to allow teachers to take greater command of designing their units as they feel more comfortable with the instructional shifts.</p> <p>9d) The materials' design includes <b>spaces for collaborative conversations</b> among students and with teachers, and supports teachers who need to learn how to do this.</p> <p>9e) Digital tools <b>support a virtual learning community</b> for teaching and reflection. This may include teaching videos.</p> <p>9f) When offered, publisher indicates a <b>willingness to collaborate with districts to design customized professional development</b> rather than relying on a generic "one-size-fits-all" training framework.</p> <p>9g) Professional development takes an <b>active stance on reinforcing high-expectations and opportunities for ELLs</b> to engage with and achieve grade-level content standards along with increased language proficiency.</p>	

### **Level Three: Additional Considerations**

When selecting high-quality instructional materials for ELLs, schools and districts must consider additional factors that are critical for supporting high-quality, cohesive, and coherent instructional programs for ELLs. This section describes these additional factors in order to aid districts in their final selection of materials.

#### ***Aligned Professional Development***

Instruction matters. A well-designed ELL instructional program has a clearly articulated theory of action and delivery model for ELD/ESL, along with a coherent approach to instruction, supported by carefully selected, quality instructional materials.

Building the capacity of a system, its leaders, and its teachers through professional development is therefore critical to student success. Professional development must be well-targeted; responsive to specific student, educator, and system needs; and provide for sustained educator learning to ensure the academic success of

ELLs. Effective professional development for meeting the needs of ELLs would do the following:

- Clearly position the teacher (rather than instructional materials) as the key driver in lesson design and delivery.
- Take an active stance in reinforcing high expectations and opportunities for ELLs to engage with and achieve grade-level content standards along with increased language proficiency.
- Provide for coherent and systemic support throughout the organization to ensure that principals and other leaders understand, are supportive of, and can lead effective instructional practices for serving ELLs.
- Align to and support the district context, including the ELL theory of action, delivery models, and instructional approaches and initiatives.
- Build expertise in connecting, developing, and extending language and literacy across the school day—strengthening both FLS and DALE.
- Provide differentiated options for educators in varying settings, with varying levels of expertise, and in varied formats and time-frames, such as job-embedded with coaches or teams, professional learning communities, targeted workshops, series, or institutes.
- Align publisher-provided professional learning to district needs, demonstrating a willingness on the part of publishers to collaborate with districts to design customized professional development rather than relying on a generic “one-size-fits-all” training framework.

### **High-leverage Additional Considerations**

Aligned **Professional Development**

Appropriate **Support and Intervention**

Strategic Use of **Instructional Technology**

### ***Appropriate Support and Intervention***

Additional support and intervention occurs only after students have first had opportunities for quality instruction with differentiated support and demonstrate that they require additional targeted instruction to accelerate learning. Appropriate materials for support and intervention are selected to support specific diagnosed needs, usually within a framework of a Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS) or Response to Interventions (RTI). For ELLs, ELD/ESL is an integral part of this initial opportunity to receive quality instruction (also known as Tier I), and thus the ELD materials would not be considered intervention materials. Support and intervention strategies and materials will vary according to purpose, age, and grade level and should be used flexibly—only until students have closed a specific learning gap. Effective interventions and materials for meeting the needs of ELLs would do the following:

- Accelerate—rather than remediate—content learning and language development, presenting a cohesive and coherent approach to building and developing concepts, content, thinking, and language that lead to grade-level standards.
- Link to the core ELA materials and curriculum, and include abundant grade-level content (e.g., texts, tasks, talk, topics/themes).
- Provide progressions, student practice, and scaffolds that result in student access to grade-level content.
- Provide guidance and suggestions for adapting and extending tasks to support and expand academic language development.
- Provide for many entry and exit points to customize support to specific student needs, and to monitor attainment of specific learning.

### ***Strategic Use of Instructional Technology***

New technologies can be a valuable tool for promoting academic literacy for ELLs. The use of computers and the Internet can provide support for extensive and independent reading and writing, assist with language scaffolding, and provide opportunities for authentic research and publication (Warschauer, Grant, Del Real, & Rousseau, 2004). Moreover, the Internet can be an important source for instructional materials in a range of native languages and can afford educators substantially greater alternatives for fostering language learning with contextual and cultural depth. Technology can also play an important role in the construction of productive learning environments for young English learners (Castek, 2007).

The effectiveness of projects that use technology, however, does not lie in the technology itself, but in the purposeful use of technology to meet the needs of students (Durán, 2007). When selecting digital or technology-based modalities of instructional materials for ELLs, districts must consider how these fit into a larger vision of instruction for ELLs, and how teachers will use technology to extend literacy development and enhance access to rigorous content, while ensuring student engagement and interaction with peers.

### **Design and Focus**

High-quality materials have design features that make them focused and easy to use:

- Student resources provide clear directions and explanations, and labeling of reference aids
- Materials are clearly laid out for students and teachers
- The focus is on maximum student understanding and the pacing allows for completion within the regular school year
- Materials contain clear statements and explanations of purpose, goals, and expected outcomes

Digital materials and resources can play a strategic role in enhancing and extending literacy development when they:

- Are high-quality, and are used as instructional tools to increase student engagement and augment and support—not replace—teacher instruction.
- Are not considered a stand-alone resource. Rather, they are integrated with teacher tools and delivery methods to create a technology-mediated learning environment (Rueda, 2007).
- Are used to support students in their development of academic literacy. Specifically, digital materials and resources may:
  - ◆ Promote independent reading, offering support for language scaffolding.
  - ◆ Provide contextual vocabulary instruction to facilitate reading comprehension and academic language proficiency.
  - ◆ Extend beyond basic reading skills to higher-level literacy and communication skills.
- Facilitate involvement in cognitively engaging projects, e.g., student analysis and creation of purposeful texts in a variety of media and genres (Warschauer et al., 2004).
- Simulate different contexts of language use, providing ELLs practice with vocabulary and literary devices across content areas and registers, and helping to create virtual settings in which students can see how language transforms depending on the particular context (like the playground and the classroom), social institution (like school and home), and practice (like games and lessons), countering language instructional practices that are abstract and decontextualized (Gee, 2004).
- Provide for—
  - ◆ high quality language input,
  - ◆ ample communicative opportunities for practice in various social, cultural, and academic contexts (registers),
  - ◆ feedback that is timely, meaningful, and of high quality, and
  - ◆ content that is individualized for the student’s unique needs (Zhao & Lai, 2007).
- Include teacher resources that provide supports and models that demonstrate how to effectively integrate technology to meet the needs of students in the classroom.

## B. ELL Metrics—Summary Scoring Sheet

ELL Metric	Score Point
Scoring Key: 1 = no evidence, 2 = some evidence, 3 = sufficient evidence, 4 = extensive evidence	
<b>1. Reading: Range, Quality, and Complexity of Texts</b>	<b>1 2 3 4</b>
1a) Materials include a range of grade-level and age-appropriate instructional texts...	
1b) Text sets are connected by an essential question... complex and compelling texts...	
1c) Text sets address and support ELA/ELD standards and language progressions in a spiraling...	
1d) Materials provide sustained time on the theme...	
1e) Materials include “just-right” pre-reading activities...	
1f) Materials include instruction in which text complexity is called out or highlighted...	
1g) Materials integrate high quality, culturally responsive texts...	
1h) Text provided in Spanish (or any other language) is authentic, high quality... a level of complexity...	
<b>2. Quality Text-Dependent Questions That Support Student Learning</b>	<b>1 2 3 4</b>
2a) Materials support students in recognizing phrases and linguistic constructs...	
2b) Materials provide multiple opportunities for extended academic discourse...	
<b>3. Foundational Skills</b>	<b>1 2 3 4</b>
3a) Materials are connected to grade-level (not watered-down) content...	
3b) Materials for building foundational skills by attending to comparative linguistics...	
3c) Materials avoid nonsense words and phrases, but rather use English phrases, patterns, and resources...	
<b>4. Language</b>	<b>1 2 3 4</b>
4a) Materials pay explicit attention to, and engage students with, academic language...	
4b) Materials accommodate students at varying levels of English proficiency...	
4c) Materials regularly identify areas of potential challenge within the texts...	
4d) Materials include annotated deconstruction of text, unpacking the linguistic complexity...	
4e) Materials consider how control of language conventions develops along a non-linear progression...	
4f) Materials attend to the language that frames the concepts/ideas; they provide linguistic frames...	
4g) Materials provide opportunities for students to examine language and text structures...	
4h) Materials provide regular opportunities for students to constantly expand their command of academic...	
<b>5. Speaking and Listening</b>	<b>1 2 3 4</b>
5a) Questions and tasks are grade-level appropriate; they promote and support expansion of students’...	
5b) Materials offer progressively complex linguistic frames or models that...	
5c) Materials include multiple opportunities for students to listen to authentic models of academic English...	
5d) Materials provide abundant and varied opportunities for teachers to read rich and compelling texts...	
5e) Materials provide opportunities for students to develop receptive listening skills, through note-taking...	

<b>6. Writing</b>	<b>1 2 3 4</b>
<p>6a) Instruction offers routine and systematic practice and opportunities for guided/shared and independent...</p> <p>6b) Materials offer ELLs at all proficiency levels regular opportunities to engage in writing tasks...</p> <p>6c) Mentor texts across writing genres and registers are routinely used as vehicles for instruction...</p> <p>6d) Materials provide frequent opportunities for text-connected writing tasks...</p>	
<b>7. Scaffolding and Differentiation</b>	<b>1 2 3 4</b>
<p>7a) Materials incorporate <b>carefully chosen, age-appropriate visuals and graphic supports</b> to activate prior...</p> <p>7b) Materials/texts emphasize or repeat selected <b>contextualized linguistic/grammatical structures</b>...</p> <p>7c) Materials offer support for assessment, including...</p> <p>7d) Teacher materials incorporate evidence-based approaches, strategies, and resources so that all ELLs...</p> <p>7e) Teacher resources provide guidance to <b>distinguish between simply “meeting ELD standards” and</b>...</p> <p>7f) Teacher resources provide instructional suggestions and recommendations for scaffolding for ELLs...</p> <p>7g) Teacher resources provide guidance for <b>differentiating between student needs related to language</b>...</p> <p>7h) Teacher resources provide examples of student work, <b>highlighting potential areas of linguistic</b>...</p> <p>7i) Teacher resources provide teachers with <b>recommendations and/or links to access additional resources</b>...</p>	
<b>8. Cultural Relevance and Respect</b>	<b>1 2 3 4</b>
<p>8a) Text sets offer a range of views and perspectives and are deliberately structured in a sensitive manner...</p> <p>8b) Texts take special care to address sensitive subjects with respect...</p> <p>8c) ELLs’ backgrounds are valued as assets and built upon, as they bring rich experience to the learning...</p> <p>8d) Texts acknowledge students’ life experiences, and social and emotional development...</p> <p>8e) Texts are free of negative misconceptions or stereotypes, encouraging students to acknowledge...</p> <p>8f) Teachers’ resources include explicit guidance for identifying culturally distinct discourse patterns...</p>	
<b>9. Additional Considerations for Teacher’s Editions, Resources, and Professional Development</b>	<b>1 2 3 4</b>
<p>9a) Materials provide reflection/coaching suggestions rather than a script to follow...</p> <p>9b) Materials support teachers in scaffolding up rather than watering down...</p> <p>9c) Materials include samples of more structured units as guides for teachers, as well as others that...</p> <p>9d) The materials’ design includes spaces for collaborative conversations among students and with teachers...</p> <p>9e) Digital tools support a virtual learning community for teaching and reflection...</p> <p>9f) When offered, publisher indicates a willingness to collaborate with districts to design customized...</p> <p>9g) Professional development takes an active stance reinforcing high-expectations and opportunities...</p>	
<b>Total Score</b>	

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