

Appendix B: PreK–3 Reading CORE* Rubric

*Connecticut Review

The PreK–3 Reading CORE (describe Connecticut Review - CORE) Rubric is designed for use by the CSDE, in consultation with the Reading Leadership Implementation Council, to review reading curricula and programs for use by local and regional boards of education for students in PreK–3, inclusive, that are evidence-based/scientific-based and aligned to the aforementioned areas of reading. The PreK–3 Reading CORE Rubric was adapted from the CURATE project designed by the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE).

Domain: Standards Alignment		
Criterion	Indicator	Description
1. Text Quality and Organization	a. Texts exhibit grade-appropriate complexity and are worthy of students' attention.	Evidence includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Text complexity assessed against grade-level expectations, not student reading levels. All students have access to grade-appropriate text every day. • Focus is on texts used for core instruction, not independent reading or remediation.
	b. Materials include texts of varying genres and types of complexity.	Evidence includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Variation in genre at every grade, aligned to grade-level standards. • Types of complexity include levels of meaning or purpose; text structure; format and text features; use of conventions, diction, and syntax; and knowledge demands.
	c. Materials include texts representing various cultures and perspectives.	Evidence includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The determination of the extent to which students are represented and reflected in the curriculum, and the extent to which they're exposed to many identities such as, but not limited to: race, ethnicity, language, religion, family structures, ability, gender, and sexual orientation.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full representation that goes beyond tokens and stereotypes; it is nuanced and multidimensional. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ To what extent are different identities central to a story/text? ○ To what extent do the characters accurately portray the histories and experiences of their cultures? • Consideration of time period (setting, publication date), representation of authors and places, as well as representation of primary and secondary sources represent multiple perspectives. • Alignment to the expectation of the Connecticut Core Standards for English language arts that students engage with texts representing varied cultures and perspectives each year. “Diversity” should not be limited to one unit.
	<p>d. Materials include coherent sets and sequences of texts that help students build knowledge systematically.</p>	<p>Evidence includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Each unit centers on a coherent topic or theme to build knowledge systematically. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Knowledge encompasses both literary content (e.g., theme, character, setting), as well as topical content (the topic or theme explored throughout a unit). • Topics in English language arts curriculum need not align to state standards for other subject areas, though alignment is worth noting where it exists.
<p>2. Foundational Skills</p>	<p>a. Materials support direct teaching of foundational skills to contribute to the development of fluent reading, including: instruction in print concepts (PreK-K), phonological awareness (PreK-1), advanced phoneme awareness (Grades 2-3), phonics and decoding</p>	<p>Evidence includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstration of a clear and research-based progression of skills and content. • Supports for instruction in foundational skills that is both explicit (taught clearly and directly by the teacher) and systematic (taught in an ordered manner). • The provision of daily opportunities for students to practice reading. In K–2 this includes reading decodable words in isolation as well as reading decodable text and/or connected text for the purpose of providing practice with specific

	(Grades PreK-2), and fluency (Grades 1-3).	decoding skills and developing automatic word recognition.
	b. Materials include explicit instruction and regular practice in phonological awareness (Grades K-1) and advanced phoneme awareness (Grades 2-3).	<p>Evidence includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Phonological awareness activities like word and sound games and the use of poetry and rhyme that help students notice the sounds in words (alliteration, rhyme, syllables, onset and rime). • Phonemic awareness activities using hand gestures or manipulatives, like blocks, magnetic letters, or Elkonin boxes to help students notice the individual sounds in words. Students in Grades 2-3 notice and manipulate the individual sounds in words.
	c. Materials include explicit instruction and regular practice in phonics (Grades PreK-2). For Pre-Kindergarten and Kindergarten, materials should also include explicit instruction and regular practice in print concepts.	<p>Evidence includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Phonics instruction that offers a gradual release approach with active practice opportunities for students to transfer and apply the phonics they are learning. This could mean direct practice of taught letter-sound correspondences, vowel patterns, or multisyllabic word reading in text(s) selected for and aligned to the lesson purpose. • Modeling print concepts and discussing them in authentic reading contexts, such as during a teacher-led read-aloud or during teacher-child interactions in the classroom library (PreK-K).
	d. Materials include frequent opportunities for students to practice and gain automatic word recognition (Grades PreK-K) and for teachers to model fluency and for students to practice building fluency (Grades 1-3).	<p>Evidence includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Practice opportunities with taught common letter patterns such as vowel teams, prefixes, or consonant blends. • Explicit instruction of regular and irregular words that attends to sounds, spelling, and meaning to support sight-based recognition of high-frequency words. • Word recognition activities • Reading connected text • Repeated oral reading
	e. Lessons and activities allow for high-quality, daily differentiation of foundational skills, so all	<p>Evidence includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Independent or center-based activities such as hands-on phonemic awareness activities with manipulatives, applied practice with decodable text, or repeated oral reading for fluency.

	students achieve mastery of foundational skills.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Suggested formats and schedules to support small group instruction in foundational skills.
3. Classroom Tasks and Instruction	a. Materials provide for structured discussions that address grade-level speaking and listening standards.	<p>Evidence includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Classroom Tasks and Instruction criterion include both what students are asked to do and how teachers facilitate their success. • Consideration of both speaking and listening clusters: comprehension and collaboration and presentation of knowledge and ideas.
	b. Most questions, tasks, and assignments are text-based, work to support knowledge building of a topic or theme and require literary or other textual analysis.	<p>Evidence includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students engage directly with texts, not just practice isolated skills (e.g., with worksheets). Occasional discussions and writing may not center on existing texts, but the reading standards are intertwined with the other strands, and most tasks and instruction should involve text. • Though instruction and tasks center on reading, comprehending, interpreting, and analyzing the written word, other types of texts also support access, engagement, and both close and comparative analysis.
	c. Materials address grade-level language standards (conventions of standard English, knowledge of language, vocabulary acquisition and use) through both explicit instruction and authentic application.	<p>Evidence includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consideration of all language clusters: conventions of standard English, knowledge of language, and vocabulary acquisition and use. Exclude foundational skills, which are the focus of Criterion 2. • Authentic here means in context or for purposes beyond development of the target skill. For language standards, authentic application might involve analyzing a speaker’s word choice or editing an essay.
	d. Materials include a wide range of authentic writing and explicit instruction in writing skills and strategies.	<p>Evidence includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consideration of all writing clusters: text types and purposes, production and distribution of writing, research to build and present knowledge, and range of writing.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Authentic writing produces texts similar to those found outside of classrooms (e.g., brochures, editorials); accomplishes more than the demonstration of writing skills (e.g., communicates original thinking to a specific audience); and reaches audiences outside classrooms (e.g., family members, public officials).
	<p>e. Materials have students engage in a range and volume of in-class and independent reading.</p>	<p>Evidence includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Every student reads in class every day. Worksheets and activities that relate to texts do not take the place of reading. • Leveled texts may be provided but should not be the only type of text students read. • Core materials provide protocols or instructional routines to support students' independent reading (e.g., resources to support independent book choices, book talk resources). • Reading in PreK–2 include participating in teacher read-aloud by reciting patterns from frequently read books, using pictures to aid in retelling a familiar text, or reading decodable or other connected text.

Domain: Classroom Application		
Criterion	Indicator	Description
4. Accessibility for Students Note: While no one set of materials can serve all students' needs, they should strongly support teachers tasked with doing so.	a. Materials provide for varied means of accessing content, helping teachers meet the diverse needs of students with disabilities and those working above or below grade level.	Evidence includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Focus on access to grade-level content, not intervention or remediation. ● Consideration of whether materials provide multiple means of representation and opportunities for collaborative learning (e.g., partner work).
	b. Materials provide for varied means of demonstrating learning, helping teachers meet the diverse needs of students with disabilities and those working above or below grade level.	Evidence includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Focus on demonstration of grade-level learning, not intervention or remediation. ● Consideration of whether materials provide multiple means of action and expression and opportunities for students to make choices.
	c. Materials help teachers ensure that students at various levels of English Language Learner/Multilingual Learner(ELs/MLs) proficiency have access to grade-level content, cognitively demanding tasks, and opportunities to develop academic language in English.	Evidence includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Materials offer supports specific to ELs/MLs (e.g., references to cognates) as well as supports that benefit ELs/MLs among other learners (e.g., repeated exposure to academic vocabulary). ● Materials support teachers to develop ELs'/MLs' content knowledge and English proficiency simultaneously. ● Materials support teachers to differentiate language demands for ELs/MLs while maintaining cognitive demand. ● Supports are language specific, language family generalized, and/or inclusive of home languages.

	<p>d. Materials include questions and tasks that promote cultural affirmation and value diverse identities, backgrounds, and perspectives.</p>	<p>Evidence includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Materials elevate diverse backgrounds, perspectives, and identities to deepen learning. ● Materials challenge existing narratives about historically marginalized and historically centered or normed cultures including challenges rooted in systemic oppression. ● Materials promote recognition of the validity and worth of all cultures. ● Questions and tasks support students to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Actively draw upon students’ diverse backgrounds ○ Make real-life connections ○ Examine their own and others’ perspectives ○ Help advance student thinking and actions about identity, equity, power, and oppression
<p>5. Usability for Teachers</p> <p>Note: Materials should strongly support teachers in their everyday work.</p>	<p>a. Lessons and tasks advance student learning with clear purpose.</p>	<p>Evidence includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Intended purpose of each lesson and clear task. ● Lessons and tasks that serve their intended purposes effectively.
	<p>b. Materials support teachers with suggested classroom routines and structures (e.g., grouping strategies).</p>	<p>Evidence includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Routines involve annotating a text, responding to peer feedback, or revising and editing writing. ● Structures (e.g., pair work, reading stations, speaking and listening) design to broaden participation and cultivate collaboration among students. ● Resources to support productive student discourse. ● Resources to actively avoid potential bias in grouping strategies.
	<p>c. Pacing is reasonable and flexible, the curriculum can be implemented effectively within a typical school year.</p>	<p>Evidence includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Accurate time estimates for lessons and units. ● Feasible number of minutes per day and days per year are feasible. Flexible options exist for a variety of school schedules and unforeseen circumstances. ● Guidance is provided to make educated decisions for what resources and aspects of the lesson to be prioritized on a daily basis.

	<p>d. Materials include informal and formal assessments that help teachers measure learning and adjust instruction.</p>	<p>Evidence includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Assessments identify students' misconceptions about taught skills, topics, or themes within and across units, and surface gaps in skills and content knowledge. ● Knowledge encompasses both literary content (e.g., theme, character, setting), as well as topical content (the topic or theme explored throughout a unit) ● Materials guide teachers toward next steps based on assessment data (e.g., reteaching, reassessing, continued practice).
	<p>e. Materials include rubrics, exemplars, or other resources to help teachers set clear and high expectations for students.</p>	<p>In addition to rubrics and exemplars, evidence includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Checklists for students to use in peer or self-assessments. ● Annotated student work at various levels of achievement, including non-exemplars. ● Guidance for the teacher to avoid bias in setting expectations for students.

	<p>f. Materials include guidance and resources designed specifically to build teachers' knowledge.</p>	<p>Evidence includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Relevant supports bolster aspects of content knowledge (e.g., grammar, literary theory), pedagogical content knowledge (e.g., development of phonemic awareness, effective strategies for writing instruction), and inclusive and culturally responsive practice. ● Materials provide a range of supports for teachers that include both topic understanding and specific lesson/standards guidance <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Formats might vary: consider callout boxes and annotations in lessons, videos of classroom instruction, implementation guides, and more. ● Materials support teachers to recognize their own pedagogical biases. ● Materials provide context for teachers to develop their sociocultural consciousness by accurately contextualizing historical frames and providing various cultural developments for similar concepts. ● Materials provide teachers with guidance on how to approach, enhance, and customize lessons for their student populations.
<p>6. Impact on Learning</p>	<p>a. Research demonstrates that the materials have a positive impact on student learning.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Evidence includes research that meets expectations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Falls into evidence tiers 1, 2, or 3 as defined by ESSA. ○ Concerns the specific product under review, not just pedagogical strategies the product incorporates. ○ Is conducted by an independent, disinterested party.