**Purpose of the 2024-2025 High-Quality Curricular Materials Rubric**

To help more students gain foundational reading skills, the Indiana Department of Education will annually publish a list of high-quality core curricular materials for K-5 reading. This list is designed to help schools as they select local curriculum. All core curricula included on this list will be pre-vetted to ensure alignment with science of reading, Indiana Academic Standards, and any applicable state laws and community standards. The review process will also consider age appropriateness of materials.

To be added to this list, below is an overview of the process that vendors will follow to submit their curricular materials for review and consideration.

1. Vendor obtains an independent review by a credible **third-party research** entity.
   1. Curricular materials must satisfy all required criteria in Sections I, II, III, and IV below to be deemed high-quality.
      1. If there is a “Yes” for all required criteria, materials receive an overall “Yes” for that section.
      2. If there is a “No” for any of the required criteria, materials receive an overall “No” for that section.
2. Vendor submits curricular materials, including evidence of their completed independent review, to IDOE for further review and consideration.
3. IDOE reviews the information submitted by the vendor and completes a subsequent review of the vendor-submitted materials, alongside committee members.
   1. Details about each vendor’s rating completed by the independent **third-party research** entity must be submitted with the corresponding documentation for review in addition to evidence supporting other required criteria.
   2. Anecdotes or research beyond what the curricular organization explicitly provides will not inform ratings.
4. IDOE provides an initial determination (i.e., approved or not approved).
5. Vendors have an opportunity to provide additional evidence in support of any criterion that yields a “No” response before a final determination is made.
6. Selection of core materials are local decisions and should be vetted at the local level to assure consistency with the advisory list and alignment with community standards.

Submissions are evaluated on the extent to which they meet all criteria noted below. The term “materials” is used throughout the evaluation tool to refer to instructional materials used by the educator or provided to students, unless otherwise noted.

**Important and bolded words throughout the rubric are defined in Appendices A and B.** Review IDOE’s [High-Quality Curricular Materials Advisory Lists webpage](https://www.in.gov/doe/students/high-quality-curricular-materials-advisory-lists/) for additional information.

**Section I: K-5 Required Criteria for Alignment with State and Federal Law**

Evidence must meet all criteria noted in Section I.

| **Criteria** | **Determination: Yes/No** | **Notes/Evidence** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Curricular materials can be reproduced in large type, Braille, and audio format in accordance with Sections 612(a)(23)(A) and 674(e)(4) of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act 2004 (20 U.S.C. 1400 et seq.). | Select Ranking |  |
| The content of the material does not provide any instruction to a student in prekindergarten through grade three on human sexuality (IC 20-30-17-2). | Select Ranking |  |
| The content of the material does not contain **obscene matter or matter harmful to minors** (IC 35-49-2-1). | Select Ranking |  |
| The content of the material does not contain **matter or performance harmful to minors (**IC 35-49-2-2). | Select Ranking |  |
| The content of the material is age-appropriate. | Select Ranking |  |

**Section II: K-5 Required Criteria for Instruction**

Evidence must meet all criteria noted in Section II.

| **Criteria** | **Determination: Yes/No** | **Notes/Evidence** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Curriculum includes at least 85% **alignmen**t with [2023 Indiana Academic Standards](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1gpB1MI7wNryPqel9AOK4iasRurIbloH1ebAeI8tZAjY/export?format=pdf) aligned to science of reading. Refer to specific standard counts [here](https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/18EMbGs5UtAGPvyVrXqa2ZjLmmoA8Acbkuje7zWYGD-8/copy). | Select Ranking |  |
| At least 95% of materials are aligned with **scientifically-based** research of the developmental progression of language skills and the relationship between oral and written language skills. | Select Ranking |  |
| Materials are age-appropriate in alignment with Indiana Academic Standards based on student need for the respective grade level. | Select Ranking |  |
| Material emphasis is on the **five essential components** for reading instruction (i.e., phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension). | Select Ranking |  |
| Provides documentation that demonstrates the effectiveness of the program based on research in the **five essential components** for reading instruction.  *Note: Curriculum will be disqualified for approval if materials encourage three-cueing, MSV\* cues, or visual memory for word recognition. Reference Appendix B for more support.* | Select Ranking |  |
| Each grade level includes a clear and consistent instructional framework that is **systematic and sequential.** | Select Ranking |  |
| The framework has a comprehensive **scope and sequence**. Content includes a direct order in which skills are presented and allows for continued practice to build automaticity, skills building from the simple to more complex, and how knowledge and skills build and connect across grade levels. | Select Ranking |  |
| At least 95% of tasks include **differentiated instruction** to guide teachers with implementation to meet the needs of all students. | Select Ranking |  |
| Materials reflect content that is presented in a manner reflecting consideration of community standards. | Select Ranking |  |
| **Required Criteria for Phonological & Phonemic Awareness** | | |
| Specific lessons align to **phonological and phonemic awareness** and include instruction that provides practical application of taught skills. Lessons are provided in a **systematic, explicit**, and **teacher-directed** model. | Select Ranking |  |
| **Phonological** **and** **phonemic awareness** skills progress from simple to more complex tasks (e.g., recognizing rhyming words, clapping syllables, and blending and segmenting). | Select Ranking |  |
| **Phonological** **and** **phonemic awareness** instruction include conversations about the way sounds are made in the mouth (i.e., how the articulatory gestures of airflow, tongue and lip placement, vocal cord voicing are happening). | Select Ranking |  |
| **Required Criteria for Phonics and Word Study** | | |
| **Phonics** and **word study** lessons include **explicit, systematic, and sequential** instruction that progresses from simple to more complex sound–spelling patterns and word analysis skills. | Select Ranking |  |
| **Phonics** lessons include repeated modeling and opportunities for students to hear, say, write, and read sound and spelling patterns (e.g., sounds, words, sentences, reading within text). The emphasis is on phonic decoding versus **three-cueing** and MSV[[1]](#footnote-0) cues.  *Note: Curriculum will be disqualified for approval if materials encourage three-cueing, MSV\* cues, or visual memory for word recognition. Reference Appendix B for more support.* | Select Ranking |  |
| Letter-sound correspondences are taught from simple to complex. | Select Ranking |  |
| **Phonics** skills are practiced by applying phoneme-grapheme knowledge in decodable texts that match the phonics elements taught, securing phonic decoding. Materials do not require or encourage **three-cueing** and MSV cues.  *Note: Curriculum will be disqualified for approval if materials encourage three-cueing, MSV\* cues, or visual memory for word recognition. Reference Appendix B for more support.* | Select Ranking |  |
| **Decoding and encoding** of high-frequency words are taught by attending to sound-symbol associations and not by memorizing whole words. Phonetically irregular high-frequency words are taught by identifying the regularly-spelled part and the irregularly-spelled part explicitly taught through decoding and encoding. | Select Ranking |  |
| **Word study** instruction focuses students’ attention on the structure of the word; the sequence of advanced word studyincludes all six syllable types, morphemes, and etymological influences (i.e., word origins). | Select Ranking |  |
| **Required Criteria for Fluency** | | |
| Fluency instruction includes specific lessons that include teacher-led modeling, oral reading by students, and immediate feedback. | Select Ranking |  |
| Fluency instruction includes opportunities for students to practice reading fluently using **controlled texts**. Teachers are also provided with a variety of texts (e.g., narrative, informational, poetry, lists) to model fluent reading. | Select Ranking |  |
| Fluency instruction and assessment emphasize reading accuracy and automaticity. | Select Ranking |  |
| Fluency instruction explicitly acknowledges that automaticity with **decoding** is a necessary foundation for effective reading comprehension. | Select Ranking |  |
| **Required Criteria for Text Comprehension** | | |
| Text comprehension activities make connections between a new word or concept and other known words or concepts, relating ideas to experiences. | Select Ranking |  |
| Texts are organized around one or more topics to build students' knowledge. | Select Ranking |  |
| A progression of focused research and writing projects are included to develop knowledge and understanding of a topic, using texts and other source materials to improve comprehension. | Select Ranking |  |
| Inferencing is **explicitly** taught within text, including opportunities for metacognition and use of appropriate and accurate background knowledge. | Select Ranking |  |
| Specific lessons align to oral language development and oral language useto demonstrate knowledge through analysis and synthesis of texts, and present claims and clear information using grade-level language and conventions and draw on textual evidence to support valid inferences from a text. | Select Ranking |  |
| Instruction **explicitly** provides development of oral comprehension and oral language as a foundational skill. | Select Ranking |  |
| Oral language activities support the foundation for text comprehension built through rich read-aloud experiences (for students who are still learning to decode). | Select Ranking |  |
| Specific lessons align to textcomprehensionthat provide a foundation through rich read-aloud experiences to develop background knowledge and vocabulary in subject areas (e.g., science and history). | Select Ranking |  |
| Texts are provided that are appropriately complexfor the identified grade level according to the requirements outlined in the Indiana Academic Standards. | Select Ranking |  |
| Materials include a text analysisthat provides complexity information. Measures for determining complexity include quantitative and qualitative analysis, as well as reader and task considerations. | Select Ranking |  |
| Materials includeread-aloudtexts that allow sufficient opportunity for engagement with more complex texts than students could read themselves. | Select Ranking |  |
| Tasks are designed to build, apply, and integrate knowledge and skills in reading, writing, speaking, listening, and language through quality, grade-level complex texts. | Select Ranking |  |
| Instruction and activities include questions that are text-dependent in order to build knowledge and include opportunities for both written and spoken responses. | Select Ranking |  |
| Text comprehension lessons focus on **explicit** instruction using a variety of genre types and features tosupport comprehension and/or build content knowledge is included. | Select Ranking |  |
| **Required Criteria for Vocabulary** | | |
| Vocabulary lessons provide frequent opportunities and protocols forevidence-based discussions (e.g., small group, peer-to-peer, whole class) that encourage the modeling and use of academic vocabulary. | Select Ranking |  |
| Vocabulary activities are provided that make connections between a new word or concept and other known words or concepts, relating ideas to experiences. | Select Ranking |  |
| Vocabulary lessons are organized around a topic or topics to build students' vocabulary and support students’ ability to comprehend complex texts independently and proficiently. | Select Ranking |  |
| Vocabulary instruction is **explicit** and includes vocabulary for **Tier 2 and Tier 3 words**, as well as instruction in the context of texts (most Tier 1 words). | Select Ranking |  |
| Vocabulary instruction emphasizes robust conversations to support an understanding of literal and inferential comprehension of word knowledge within a text. | Select Ranking |  |
| **Explicit** instruction in **morphology** is provided. | Select Ranking |  |
| **Required Criteria for Writing** | | |
| Writing is taught **explicitly** through a gradual release of responsibility (i.e., I do, we do, you do) and includes sufficient time for modeling, planning, and brainstorming ideas orally before drafting. | Select Ranking |  |
| Writing instruction is structured; and includes **explicit** teaching models including graphic organizers to support composition. | Select Ranking |  |
| Writing instruction addresses grammar and language conventions specified by the standards at each grade level and builds on those standards from previous grade levels through the application and practice of those skills in the context of reading and writing about unit texts. | Select Ranking |  |
| Writing instruction and activities support students to develop composition skills across multiple text types for a variety of purposes and audiences. | Select Ranking |  |
| Writing materials include a clear **scope and sequence** for teaching conventions of print, grammar, and syntax (sentence structure) in reading and writing. | Select Ranking |  |
| **Required Criteria for Handwriting** | | |
| Handwriting includes **explicit** instruction related to handwriting (e.g., letter formation, posture, grip), and there are opportunities for **cumulative** practice. | Select Ranking |  |
| Handwriting instruction is integrated into core reading and writing and follows the **scope and sequence** of letter-sound knowledge. | Select Ranking |  |

**Section III: K-5 Required Criteria for Assessment**

Evidence must meet all criteria noted in Section III.

| **Criteria** | **Determination: Yes/No** | **Notes/Evidence** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Explicit** guidance for all assessments includes scoring guides and student work examples for teachers and administrators to evaluate student performance. | Select Ranking |  |
| Materials are age-appropriate in alignment with Indiana Academic Standards based on student need for the respective grade level. | Select Ranking |  |
| Formative assessments (e.g., classroom-based assessments, unit assessments, lesson-based summative) are included within the instructional framework to continuously monitor progress and identify the skill level and needs of each student (e.g., assessments in students’ home language when possible). | Select Ranking |  |
| Specific assessments are included that address word recognition, language comprehension, and text comprehension skills. | Select Ranking |  |
| Specific assessments are included that address **phonological and phonemic awareness** skills and are evaluated regularly according to the scope and sequence. | Select Ranking |  |
| Specific assessments are included that assess **phonics** skills using both real and nonsense wordsin the six syllable types (i.e., closed, open, vowel-consonant-e, vowel teams, vowel-r, consonant – le). | Select Ranking |  |

**Section IV: K-5 Required Criteria for Professional Development & Educator Support**

Evidence must meet all criteria noted in Section IV.

| **Criteria** | **Determination: Yes/No** | **Notes/Evidence** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Curriculum provides at least one day of professional development opportunities and **explicit** guidance for implementation, coaching, and evaluation based on theoretical frameworks, such as the Simple View of Reading and Scarborough’s Reading Rope, and the relationship to reading instruction. | Select Ranking |  |
| **Explicit** teacher language is outlined in all materials,including concise and specific teacher language to introduce, define, or explain new skills through demonstration and modeling before students are asked to practice new skills. | Select Ranking |  |
| All materials have clear and direct instructions that connect all curricular resources. All reading selections are centrally located within the materials and the center of focus. | Select Ranking |  |
| Teacher-edition materials include lesson annotations and support for engaging students in the materials, as well as support for implementing ancillary and resource materials and student progress components. | Select Ranking |  |
| All materials are available in **accessible and appropriate** **formats**. | Select Ranking |  |
| All lesson scripts are provided with **explicit** guidance to teach each concept in a **systematic, cumulative** way. | Select Ranking |  |

**Appendix A: Required Criteria for Alignment with State and Federal Law**

| **Legislation** | **Definition** |
| --- | --- |
| [IC 35-49-2-1](https://iga.in.gov/laws/2023/ic/titles/20#35-49-2-1) Obscene matter or performance | Sec. 1. A matter or performance is obscene for purposes of this article if:  (1) the average person, applying contemporary community standards, finds that the dominant theme of the matter or performance, taken as a whole, appeals to the prurient interest in sex;  (2) the matter or performance depicts or describes, in a patently offensive way, sexual conduct; and  (3) the matter or performance, taken as a whole, lacks serious literary, artistic, political, or scientific value. |
| [IC 35-49-2-2](https://iga.in.gov/laws/2023/ic/titles/20#35-49-2-2) Matter or performance harmful to minors | Sec. 2. A matter or performance is harmful to minors for purposes of this article if:  (1) it describes or represents, in any form, nudity, sexual conduct, sexual excitement, or sado-masochistic abuse;  (2) considered as a whole, it appeals to the prurient interest in sex of minors;  (3) it is patently offensive to prevailing standards in the adult community as a whole with respect to what is suitable matter for or performance before minors; and  (4) considered as a whole, it lacks serious literary, artistic, political, or scientific value for minors. |

**Appendix B: Glossary**

| **Term and/or Rubric Item** | **Definition** |
| --- | --- |
| Accessible formats | Accessible formats, sometimes called alternate formats, are ways of presenting printed, written, or visual material so that people who do not read print can access it. |
| Appropriate formats | Materials are available for the setting, objectives, and desired results of the activity. Activity formats (e.g., didactic, small group, interactive, hands-on skill labs) should be chosen based on what the provider hopes to change as a result of the education. |
| Controlled text | Text that is intentionally selected to align with the skills a student previously knows or has been explicitly taught. |
| Cumulative | A method for providing distributed practice by including practice opportunities that address both previously and newly acquired skills. |
| Decoding | The ability to translate a word from print to speech, usually by employing knowledge of sound-symbol correspondences; also the act of deciphering a new word by sounding it out. |
| Differentiated instruction | The process of matching instruction to meet the different needs of students ([511 IAC 6.2-3.1-1](https://www.in.gov/sboe/files/reading-planrule-july-2013.pdf)). |
| Direct Instruction | The teacher defines and teaches a concept, models the learning process, guides students through its application, and arranges for extended guided practice until mastery is achieved. |
| Encoding | Spelling, or the ability to translate a word from speech to print. |
| Explicit | Instruction involves direct explanation in which concepts are explained and skills are modeled, without vagueness or ambiguity. The teacher’s language is concise, specific, and related to the objective, and guided practice is provided. |
| Five essential components | Identified by the [National Reading Panel report](https://www.nichd.nih.gov/sites/default/files/publications/pubs/nrp/Documents/report.pdf) in 2000: phonological awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension. |
| Fluency | Reasonably accurate reading, at an appropriate rate, with suitable expression, that leads to accurate and deep comprehension and motivation to read. Fluency in oral reading includes: accuracy, which is reading with few errors; rate, which is the pace at which a student reads; expression, which is reading aloud with proper intonation and phrasing. |
| Morphology | The study of the forms of words and the meaningful parts (morphemes) that make up words. |
| MSV cues | Related to three-cueing, this model teaches children to rely on meaning, structure, and visual information when they attempt to read an unknown word. |
| Phonemic awareness | A subset of phonological awareness in which listeners can hear, identify, and manipulate phonemes, the smallest units of sound that can differentiate meaning. |
| Phonological Awareness | Awareness of the sound structure of words in language. This is an “umbrella” term that is used to refer to a student’s sensitivity to any aspect of phonological structure in language. It encompasses awareness of individual words in sentences, syllables, and onset-rime segments, as well as awareness of individual phonemes. |
| Phonics | The study of the relationships between letters and the sounds they represent; is also used to describe reading instruction that teaches sound-symbol correspondences. |
| Scientifically-based | The instruction or item described is based on research that applies rigorous, systematic, and objective procedures to obtain valid knowledge that is relevant to reading development, reading instruction, and reading difficulties. |
| Scope and sequence | A scope and sequence explains what content a curriculum is going to cover and when that content should be taught. It is a vital component of evidence-based instructional materials, as it ensures that skills are taught explicitly to mastery and that instruction progresses systematically from less complex to more complex content. |
| Sequential | Skills are taught according to a particular scope and sequence. The teacher follows the established order with adjustments to meet individual needs. Skills are taught based on what has been previously taught, the child’s previous knowledge, repeated structured spiraling review, and aiming for mastery. |
| Standards alignment | Alignment should primarily focus on content and cognitive complexity. |
| Systematic | A carefully planned sequence of instruction that is thought out and designed before activities and lessons are planned, maximizing the likelihood that whenever children are asked to learn something new, they already possess the appropriate prior knowledge and understanding to see its value and to learn it effectively. |
| Three-cueing | Model of reading that uses meaning drawn from the context, pictures, or syntax as the primary basis for teaching word recognition ([IC 20-31-3-2.5](https://iga.in.gov/laws/2023/ic/titles/20#20-31-3-2.5)). |
| Third-party research | An external research entity that conducts a review of materials. Research entity team members must have significant demonstrated experience in curriculum/standards alignment and evaluation and hold advanced degrees in curriculum and instruction, educational measurement, or a related field.  The third-party review must include evaluation of the criteria in the corresponding Indiana evaluation tool. |
| Tier 2 words | Academic words used in texts across multiple contexts. |
| Tier 3 words | Academic words that are specific to a domain or field of study and key to understanding a new concept within a text. |
| Word study | Analyzing words, generally for practice in decoding or encoding by applying word and structural analysis skills. |

**Appendix C: How to Recognize Three-Cueing**

| **How to Recognize Three-Cueing** | |
| --- | --- |
| **What are students asked to do when they come to a word they do not know?** | |
| Guess what the word might be. | Look at the picture to help guess what the word might be. |
| Go back to the start of the sentence and re-read it, adding the word you think might make sense. | Read to the end of the sentence and check that the word “makes sense.” |
| If the word makes sense then check if it “looks right” (could it be that word?). | Skip the unknown word. Keep reading and see if you can guess the word. |
| **Types of Cues** | |
| Syntactic cues | Does that sound right? Syntax has to do with the grammatical  structure of the language. |
| Semantic cues | Does that make sense? Semantics refers to meaning. As students read, they are asked to use context and background knowledge to identify words and figure out what the next word might be. |
| Graphophonic cues | Does that look right? The grapho-phonetic cueing system uses  letter-sounds to predict what the next word might be. Graphic cueing involves using visual clues to figure a word out. |
| **Types of Texts** | |
| Look at the scope and sequence of letters and sounds and compare this to the books that students are being asked to read. | If the students are being asked to independently read leveled texts that are considerably beyond the scope and sequence of what they have learned in phonics, they are likely using three-cueing. |

1. MSV refers to the three-cueing model of reading that uses meaning drawn from the context, pictures, or syntax as the primary basis for teaching word recognition. Reference Appendix B for more support. [↑](#footnote-ref-0)