

Purpose of the Rubric

The CURATE rubric is designed for use by CURATE panelists to evaluate corecurricular materialsfor History and Social Science, Digital Literacy and Computer Science, English Language Arts/Literacy, Mathematics, and Science and Technology/Engineering, and may also be used by educators in other contexts. Core curricular materials are comprehensive resources designed for use with *all* students to access grade-level content and standards in a given class over the course of a year or semester.

Using the rubric, CURATE aims to identify and communicate evidence of alignment and quality of curricular materials. High-quality instructional materials (HQIM)are aligned to the Massachusetts content, language development (WIDA 2020), and practice standards; exhibit a coherent sequence of target skills, instructional practices, and understandings; and empower evidence-based practices that are inclusive and culturally and linguistically sustaining. They are also accessible for all students, including multilingual learners (MLs), students with disabilities (SWDs), students working above and below grade level, and students of color. In Massachusetts, HQIM should strongly support teachers in their everyday work to be inclusive and culturally and linguistically sustaining by including content, supports, resources, and educative teacher guides that enable them to orchestrate learning experiences that are grade-appropriate and through which students feel seen, heard, and valued; engage in deeper learning that is relevant, real-world, and interactive; and are held to high expectations with targeted support. *(See* [*DESE Educational Vision.*](https://www.doe.mass.edu/commissioner/vision/default.html)*)*

The CURATE rubric evaluates the quality of the curricular materials but **does not and is not** intended to measure implementation quality. Skillful implementation of HQIM requires investment in ongoing, curriculum-aligned professional learning for administrators and teachers, to ensure the enacted curriculum supports and engages all students to reach their full potential (*See* [*Standards of Effective Practice.*](https://www.doe.mass.edu/edeffectiveness/standards/default.html))

Products that receive a rating of *Meets Expectations* in Standards Alignment and a rating of *Meets Expectations* or *Partially Meets Expectations* in Classroom Application are considered HQIM. Although a particular product may be rated “high quality,” this does not mean they are without limitations. Schools, districts, and other local education agencies (LEA) should consider their localized context and equity priorities for students when analyzing CURATE reports since the challenges reported may impact each LEA differently.

Guidelines for Review

* Review and document all evidence before deciding on ratings.
* Consider quantity as well as quality of evidence for each indicator.
* Consider evidence of high quality as well as evidence of low quality.
* Do not feel compelled to weight each indicator and criterion equally.
* Do not consider provided examples to be exhaustive or restrictive.
* If evidence is lacking for an indicator, flag it for further data collection.

Sources of Evidence

* The product itself: unit and lesson plans, teacher guides, student-facing resources, associated software, and other components
* Other credible and comprehensive reviews of materials, such as those by [EdReports](https://edreports.org/)
* Perceptual data, such as survey responses and focus group findings, from educators with experience using the product in schools
* Information—such as product specifications and videos of teachers using the product—provided by its developers or publishers
* Research findings: see criterion 5 below for guidance on how to evaluate and interpret research on a product’s efficacy

Definitions of Ratings

* **3: Meets Expectations** – Most or all evidence indicates high quality; little to none indicates low-quality. Materials may not be perfect, but Massachusetts teachers and students would be well served and strongly supported by them.
* **2: Partially Meets Expectations** – Some evidence indicates high quality, while some indicates low-quality. Teachers in Massachusetts would benefit from having these materials but need to supplement or adapt them substantively to serve their students well.
* **1: Does Not Meet Expectations** – Little to no evidence indicates high quality; most or all evidence indicates low-quality. Materials would not substantively help Massachusetts teachers and students meet the state’s expectations for teaching and learning.
* **N/A: Not Applicable** – Materials were not designed to address the criterion, and the publisher explicitly named the omission in legal submissions. This rating applies only to the Foundational Skills criterion in the K-5 ELA/Literacy rubric.
* **?: Insufficient Evidence** – More evidence is needed before a rating can be justified. If you are unsure about a rating because you lack relevant information, be sure to choose this option instead of “defaulting” to a rating of *Partially Meets Expectations*.

Rubric Structure

| ***Domains*** | Standards Alignment | Classroom Application |
| --- | --- | --- |
| ***Criteria*** | Scope and Progression | Classroom Tasks and Instruction | Accessibility for Students | Usability for Teachers | Impact on Learning |

Rubric

| **Domain: Standards Alignment** |
| --- |
| **Criterion** | **Indicator** | **Notes and Tips** | **Further Reading** |
| **1. Text Quality and Organization***Note:* This rubric was developed for CURATE, which evaluates materials that have previously been reviewed for alignment to college- and career-ready standards. If using this rubric to review materials not already screened for some degree of standards alignment, consider adding or expanding indicators to ensure a comprehensive evaluation. | 1. **Materials align to grade-level content, practice, and literacy standards.**
 | * Materials, including texts and/or graphic sources, address the breadth of grade-level content standards with an appropriate level of depth and complexity.
* Tasks regularly engage students in the breadth of the Standards for History and Social Science Practice at an appropriate level of complexity for the intended grade.
* Materials engage all students with a diversity of discipline-specific, grade-appropriate reading, writing, speaking, and listening tasks.
 | * [2018 History/Social Science Framework](https://www.doe.mass.edu/frameworks/hss/2018-12.pdf)
* [Vertical Progression of the Standards for History and Social Science Practice](https://www.doe.mass.edu/frameworks/hss/vertical-progression.docx)
 |
| 1. **Materials include coherent tasks and sequences of lessons that help students build knowledge and understanding systematically.**
 | * Knowledge of the topic, concept, or information is built in layers through repeated exposure to the same topic from different perspectives or entry points.
* Tasks require students to repeatedly engage with key concepts and vocabulary related to the topic through reading, writing, listening, and speaking.
* Lessons and/or culminating tasks ask students to integrate knowledge from multiple sources and points in the unit to demonstrate understanding.
 | * [2018 History/Social Science Framework](https://www.doe.mass.edu/frameworks/hss/2018-12.pdf)
* [Educating for American Democracy Roadmap](https://www.educatingforamericandemocracy.org/the-roadmap/)
 |
| 1. **Materials support students’ abilities to engage in history and social science practices with increasing levels of complexity.**
 | * Students are expected to apply the practice standards with greater levels of independence and/or complexity over time.
* Materials offer scaffolds to support use of the practice standards as appropriate.
* Materials provide opportunities to engage with practice standards at greater depth for students who are already performing at or above grade level.
 | * [Vertical Progression of the Standards for History and Social Science Practice](https://www.doe.mass.edu/frameworks/hss/vertical-progression.docx)
* [College, Career, & Civic Life C3 Framework](https://www.socialstudies.org/system/files/2022/c3-framework-for-social-studies-rev0617.2.pdf)
 |
| 1. **Materials center a diversity of perspectives, voices, and narratives.**
 | * This may include, e.g.:
	+ Amplifying non-dominant groups' experiences and including their voices within, or as a challenge to, mainstream narratives.
	+ Including sources and artifacts that show the diversity, fluidity, and complexity found within groups.
* Materials represent historically marginalized people and communities through their strengths, skills, and knowledge rather than perceived flaws or deficits.
 | * [Planning through an Inclusive, Critical, and Responsive Lens](https://www.doe.mass.edu/instruction/hss/gp2-qrg-questions.docx)
* [Frequently Asked Questions on Race, Racism, and Culturally Responsive Teaching in History/Social Science](https://www.doe.mass.edu/frameworks/hss/faq.pdf)
* Assessing Bias in Standards and Curricular Materials (Coomer, Skelton, Kyser, Thorius, & Warren, 2017, pp. [9-15](https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED623049.pdf#page=9))
* [Culturally Responsive Curriculum Scorecard](https://research.steinhardt.nyu.edu/scmsAdmin/media/users/atn293/ejroc/CRE-Rubric-2018-190211.pdf) (New York: Metropolitan Center for Research on Equity and the Transformation of Schools, NYU, 2019)
 |
| **2. Classroom Tasks and Instruction**The *Classroom Tasks and Instruction* criterion includes both what students are asked to do and how teachers facilitate their success | 1. **Materials engage students in grade-appropriate historical inquiry and analysis.**
 | * Units, lessons, and/or sequences of lessons are built around meaningful questions that are used to drive students’ learning forward.
* Lessons, or sequences of lessons, involve sustained investigation of sources, ideas, and/or arguments related to key disciplinary concepts.
* Tasks and texts are written at (or modified to) grade-level complexity.
* Tasks are designed in ways that will spark student interest and engagement.
 | * 2018 History/Social Science Framework, [Appendix B](https://www.doe.mass.edu/frameworks/hss/2018-12.pdf#page=194): “Designing Questions and Investigations”
* Educating for American Democracy Roadmap Pedagogy Companion, [“Inquiry as the Primary Mode for Learning”](https://www.educatingforamericandemocracy.org/pedagogy-companion/#primary-mode-for-learning)
 |
| 1. **Materials develop students’ civic skills and dispositions.**
 | Materials engage students in learning experiences that reflect the practices of citizens, e.g.:* Working effectively with others to solve problems and reach consensus collaboratively.
* Considering solutions to the problems of our current world and envisioning a better future world.
* Engaging in civil discourse with those who hold opposing positions.
* Providing opportunities to use their learning to understand and/or take authentic action on current issues

***For Grade 8 and high school****, the curriculum may include opportunities to act with meaningful agency in a real-world context as described in the* [*Civics Project Guidebook*](https://www.doe.mass.edu/instruction/hss/civics-project-guidebook/index.html) *and required by legislation.* | * [Civics Project Guidebook](https://www.doe.mass.edu/rlo/instruction/civics-project-guidebook/index.html)
* [Civics Projects Quick Reference Guide](https://www.doe.mass.edu/frameworks/hss/civics-qrg.docx)
* [Civics Project Artifact Library](https://www.doe.mass.edu/instruction/hss/civics/artifacts/)
* Educating for American Democracy Roadmap Pedagogy Companion, [“Practice of Constitutional Democracy and Student Agency”](https://www.educatingforamericandemocracy.org/pedagogy-companion/#practice-of-constitutional-democracy-and-student-agency)
 |
| 1. **Materials are designed to** **center student thinking and agency.**
 | This may include, e.g.:* Supporting students in actively making sense of ideas, drawing upon their own perspectives, experiences, and curiosity.
* Encouraging teachers to notice and leverage students’ diverse sensemaking contributions throughout the inquiry process, rather than expecting students to contribute in narrow or prescribed ways.
* Providing students choice related to the process, content, and product of their learning.
 | * [Fostering Civil Discourse: How Do We Talk About Issues That Matter?](https://www.facinghistory.org/resource-library/fostering-civil-discourse-how-do-we-talk-about-issues-matter) (Facing History)
 |
| 1. **Materials challenge students to consider how identity and social position shape people’s perceptions of events, and encourage honest and informed discussions about power, prejudice, and oppression.**
 | This may include, e.g.:* Supporting students’ and teachers’ engagement in honest and informed academic discussions about prejudice, racism, and bigotry in the past and present.
* Providing opportunities to explore and critique social norms, policies, and institutions that have created and maintained injustices in the past and present.
 | * [Fostering Civil Discourse: How Do We Talk About Issues That Matter?](https://www.facinghistory.org/resource-library/fostering-civil-discourse-how-do-we-talk-about-issues-matter) (Facing History)
 |

| **Domain: Classroom Application** |
| --- |
| **Criterion** | **Indicator** | **Notes and Tips** | **Further Reading** |
| **3. Accessibility for Students***Note:* While no one set of materials can serve all students’ needs, they should strongly support teachers tasked with doing so. Standard II of the [MA model teacher evaluation rubric](https://www.doe.mass.edu/edeval/rubrics/teacher-rubric.pdf) sets expectations for teaching all students. | 1. **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.**
 | * Consider whether materials provide differentiated strategies and/or activities to meet the diverse needs of students with disabilities and those working above or below grade level, which includes multilingual learners.
* Focus here on access to grade-level content, not intervention or remediation.
* Consider whether materials provide [multiple means of representation](http://udlguidelines.cast.org/representation) and opportunities for collaborative learning (e.g., partner work).
* Consider intentional and varied points of access as an important strategy for multilingual learners.
* Materials should include multiple entry points for learning and leverage the strengths of all learners, including multilingual learners.
 | * Guidebook for Inclusive Practice, [Example Artifact List](http://www.doe.mass.edu/edeval/guidebook/5b-exartifacts.pdf): illustrates ways in which instructional materials can support *inclusive practice*, which encompasses Universal Design for Learning (the focus of these two indicators), Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports, and Social and Emotional Learning
* [Universal Design for Learning Guidelines](http://udlguidelines.cast.org/?utm_medium=web&utm_campaign=none&utm_source=cast-about-udl) (CAST, 2018)
* 2018 History/Social Science Framework, [Appendix A](https://www.doe.mass.edu/frameworks/hss/2018-12.pdf#page=189): “Application of the Standards for Multilingual Learners and Students with Disabilities”
 |
| 1. **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.**
 | * Consider whether materials provide students the support needed to succeed on tasks and activities, helping meet the diverse needs of students with disabilities and those working above or below grade level, which includes multilingual learners.
* Focus here on demonstration of grade level learning, not intervention or remediation.
* Consider whether materials provide [multiple means of action and expression](http://udlguidelines.cast.org/action-expression) and opportunities for students to make choices.
* Materials should **include multiple modes of assessment to demonstrate learning.**
* Consider intentional means of demonstrating learning as an important strategy for multilingual learners.
 |
| 1. **Materials help teachers ensure that students at various levels of English proficiency have access to grade-level content, cognitively demanding tasks, and opportunities to develop academic language in English.**
 | * Materials should offer supports specific to multilingual learners (e.g., references to cognates as-needed scaffolding, and entry points to amplify—rather than simplify—complex language) as well as supports that benefit multilingual learners among other learners (e.g., repeated exposure to academic vocabulary and opportunities to develop academic language in English).
* Materials should support teachers to [develop MLs’ content knowledge and English proficiency simultaneously](http://www.doe.mass.edu/ele/guidance/sei/sei.docx) by using the WIDA Framework standards to identify the language expectations, forms, and features students need to communicate information, ideas, and concepts necessary for academic success in the literacy content [ELD-LA for Language Arts].
* Materials should support teachers to [differentiate language demands for MLs while maintaining cognitive demand](https://wida.wisc.edu/sites/default/files/resource/WIDA-ELD-Standards-Framework-2020.pdf).
* Supports could be language specific, language family generalized, and/or inclusive of home languages.
 | * [English Learner Blueprint for Success](https://www.doe.mass.edu/ele/blueprint/dashboard.html) (MA DESE)
* [Guidelines for Improving ELA Materials for MLs](https://assets.website-files.com/5b245df5d227e581c41b7c4b/5d0bee0995ca9218f246a98a_ELSF%20ELA%20Guidelines.pdf) (English Learners Success Forum)
* [The ELD Standards Framework](https://wida.wisc.edu/teach/standards/eld/2020), 2020 Edition (WIDA Consortium)
* [Examples of relevant resources](https://wida.wisc.edu/sites/default/files/resource/Implementation-Guide-WIDA-ELD-Standards-Framework.pdf) (WIDA Consortium, p. 8-16):
	+ Sensory supports (e.g., real-life objects, manipulatives, videos)
	+ Graphic supports (e.g., charts, tables, graphs, timelines)
	+ Interactive supports (e.g., pair and group work, software)
* 2018 History/Social Science Framework, [Appendix A](https://www.doe.mass.edu/frameworks/hss/2018-12.pdf#page=189): “Application of the Standards for Multilingual Learners and Students with Disabilities”
 |
| 1. **Materials include questions and tasks that affirm and value diverse identities, backgrounds, and perspectives.**
 | * Questions to consider:
	+ Do the materials elevate diverse backgrounds, perspectives, languages, and identities to deepen learning?
	+ Do the materials challenge existing narratives about historically marginalized and historically centered or normed cultures, including challenges rooted in systemic oppression?
	+ Do the materials promote recognition of the validity and worth of all cultures and languages?
* Consider whether the questions and tasks support students to:
	+ Actively draw upon their diverse backgrounds
	+ Make real-life connections
	+ Examine their own and others’ perspectives
	+ Help advance their thinking and actions about identity, equity, power, and oppression
 | * [Culturally and Linguistically Sustaining Practices](https://www.doe.mass.edu/instruction/culturally-sustaining/default.html): MA DESE definition of culturally and linguistically sustaining practices and tools for professional development
 |
| **4. Usability for Teachers***Note:* Materials should strongly support teachers in their everyday work. Standard I of the [MA model teacher evaluation rubric](https://www.doe.mass.edu/edeval/rubrics/teacher-rubric.pdf) defines expectations for teachers related to curriculum, planning, and assessment. | 1. **Lessons and tasks advance student learning with clear purpose.**
 | Consider whether:* The intended purpose of each lesson and task is clear, and content and language learning are interdependent.
* Lessons and tasks serve their intended purposes effectively.
 |  |
| 1. **Materials support teachers with suggested classroom routines and structures (e.g., grouping strategies).**
 | * *Routines* might involve annotating a text, responding to peer feedback, or revising and editing writing.
	+ *Routines* should encourage equitable and inclusive student participation that support the simultaneous development of language and content learning.
* *Structures* (e.g., pair work, reading stations, speaking and listening) might be designed to broaden participation and cultivate collaboration among students, including multilingual learners.
* Materials provide resources to support productive student discourse.
* Materials provide resources to group students based on students’ standards-based literacy instructional needs, not based on students’ perceived reading levels.
* Materials provide resources to actively avoid potential bias in grouping strategies.
 |  |
| 1. **Pacing is reasonable and flexible; the curriculum can be implemented effectively within a typical school year.**
 | Consider whether:* Time estimates for lessons and units are accurate.
* Required 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.
 |  |
| 1. **Materials include informal and formal assessments that help teachers measure learning and adjust instruction.**
 | Consider whether:* Assessments help identify students’ misconceptions about taught skills, topics, or concepts within and across units, and surface gaps in skills and content knowledge, including language learning.
	+ Knowledge encompasses both literary content (e.g., theme, character, setting), as well as topical content (the topic or concept explored throughout a unit)
* Materials guide teachers toward next steps based on assessment data (e.g., reteaching, reassessing, continued practice).
 | * Educating for American Democracy Roadmap Pedagogy Companion, [“Assess, Reflect, and Improve”](https://www.educatingforamericandemocracy.org/pedagogy-companion/#assess-reflect-and-improve)
 |
| 1. **Materials include rubrics, exemplars, or other resources to help teachers set clear and high expectations for students.**
 | In addition to rubrics and exemplars, relevant resources might include: * Checklists for students to use in peer or self-assessments.
* Annotated student work at various levels of achievement, including non-exemplars, or student work at different levels of English development.
* Guidance for the teacher to avoid bias in setting expectations for students
 |  |
| 1. **Materials include guidance and resources designed specifically to build teachers’ knowledge.**
 | * Relevant supports might bolster aspects of *content knowledge* (e.g., attributes of historical societies, landmark Supreme Court cases), *pedagogical content knowledge* (e.g., developing students’ ability to engage in source analysis, effective strategies for embedded writing instruction), and *inclusive and culturally and linguistically sustaining practice*.
	+ Do the materials support teachers to recognize their own pedagogical biases?
	+ Do the materials provide context for teachers to develop their sociocultural consciousness by contextualizing historical frames and providing various cultural developments for similar concepts?
	+ Do the materials provide teachers with guidance on how to approach, enhance, and customize lessons to be inclusive and responsive to the diverse identities of students, inclusive of linguistic, racial, ethnic, and gender diversity?
	+ Do the materials provide a range of supports for teachers that include both topic understanding and specific lesson/standards guidance?
* Formats might vary: consider callout boxes and annotations in lessons, videos of classroom instruction, implementation guides, and more.
 | * [Subject Matter Knowledge (SMK) Guidelines](https://www.doe.mass.edu/edprep/domains/instruction/smk-guidelines.docx) set expectations for Massachusetts educators’ content knowledge. Information about SMKs is available on DESE’s [educator preparation page](http://www.doe.mass.edu/edprep/resources/guidelines-advisories/).
 |
| **5. Impact on Learning***Note:* For CURATE reviews, DESE’s research office determines ratings for this indicator and criterion. | 1. **Research demonstrates that the materials have a positive impact on student learning.**
 | * Meets Expectations
	+ Research that meets a definition of evidence in tiers 1, 2, or 3 as [defined by ESSA,](https://www2.ed.gov/fund/grant/about/discretionary/2023-non-regulatory-guidance-evidence.pdf) on the *specific* product under review, not just pedagogical strategies the product incorporates.
* Partially Meets Expectations
	+ The curriculum demonstrates alignment to research-based practices, supported by a rating of at least Partially Meets Expectations in the other criteria assessed with the rubric.
* Does Not Meet Expectations
	+ The curriculum does not demonstrate alignment to research-based practices, evidenced by concerns raised across the other criteria assessed with the rubric.
 | * DESE’s [“How Do We Know?” Initiative](http://www.doe.mass.edu/research/howdoweknow/) helps educators gather, assess, and use evidence to make informed decisions about programs and practices.
 |