

Houghton Mifflin Harcourt Grade K English Phonics Program Summary

Section 1. Phonics-Related Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) and English Language Proficiency Standards (ELPS) Alignment

Grade	TEKS Student %	TEKS Teacher %	ELPS Student %	ELPS Teacher %
Grade K	100%	100%	Not reviewed	Not reviewed
Grade 1	100%	100%	Not reviewed	Not reviewed
Grade 2	100%	100%	Not reviewed	Not reviewed

Section 2. Instructional Approach

- The materials include some year-long plans for phonics instruction.
- The materials provide direct (explicit) and systematic instruction in developing grade-level phonics skills within and across lessons.
- The materials include some guidance that supports teachers' delivery of instruction.
- The materials include frequent and distributed review of phonics skills with cumulative practice opportunities with decodable text.

Section 3. Content-Specific Skills

- The materials provide some direct (explicit) instruction, practice, and review related to alphabet knowledge.
- The materials provide systematic and direct (explicit) instruction, practice, and review related to the alphabetic principle.
- The materials provide systematic and direct (explicit) instruction, practice, and review to support the development of oral syllable awareness skills, as outlined in the TEKS.
- The materials provide systematic and direct (explicit) instruction, practice, and review to support the development of phonemic awareness skills, as outlined in the TEKS.
- The materials provide systematic and direct (explicit) instruction, practice, and review to develop students' knowledge of grade-level sound-spelling patterns, as outlined in the TEKS.
- The materials provide some direct (explicit) instruction, practice, and review related to accurately identifying, reading, and writing regular and irregular high-frequency words.
- The materials provide frequent opportunities for students to practice and develop word reading fluency, by using knowledge of grade-level phonics skills to read decodable connected texts with accuracy and automaticity.

Section 4. Progress Monitoring

- The materials include developmentally appropriate diagnostic tools (e.g., formative and summative) and guidance for teachers to measure and monitor student progress.
- The materials include integrated progress monitoring tools, with specific guidance on frequency of use.

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- The materials include guidance for teachers to analyze and respond to data from diagnostic tools.

Section 5. Supports for All Learners

- The materials include guidance, scaffolds, supports, and extensions that maximize student learning potential.
- The materials include a variety of instructional methods that appeal to a variety of learning interests and needs.
- The materials include some supports for Emergent Bilinguals to meet grade-level learning expectations.

Section 6. Additional Information: Resources

- The materials provide guidance on fostering connections between home and school.
- The materials incorporate technology into the lessons to enhance student learning.

Section 7. Additional Support

- The publisher submitted the technology, cost, professional learning, additional language support, and evidence-based information.

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Indicator 2.1

Materials include systematic, **year-long plans for phonics instruction.**

1	Materials include a cohesive, TEKS-aligned scope and sequence that outlines the essential knowledge and skills that are taught throughout the year.	PM
2	Materials clearly demonstrate vertical alignment that shows the progression of skill development from year to year.	PM
3	Lessons follow a developmentally appropriate, systematic progression from simple to more complex concepts (e.g., CVC words before CCCVCC words and single-syllable words before multisyllabic words).	PM

Partial Meets | Score 2/4

The materials partially meet the criteria for this indicator. Materials include some systematic, year-long plans for phonics instruction.

Materials include some cohesive scope and sequence that outlines the essential knowledge and skills to be taught throughout the year. Materials show some progression of skill development from year to year. Lessons follow some appropriate progression from simple to more complex concepts (e.g., CVC words before CCCVCC words and single-syllable words before multisyllabic words).

Evidence includes but is not limited to:

Materials include a cohesive, TEKS-aligned scope and sequence that outlines the essential knowledge and skills that are taught throughout the year.

- The materials do not include a TEKS alignment document, nor are the TEKS listed on the scope and sequence document or within the individual lessons. Although the TEKS are not referenced in the materials, most objectives are aligned to grade-level TEKS. For example, TEKS K.2.B.ii is “demonstrate and apply phonetic knowledge by: using letter-sound relationships to decode, including VC, CVC, CCVC, and CVCC words.” Some components of this TEKS are missing from the scope and sequence. Evidence of decoding VC words was found in the scope and sequence. A closer review of the individual lessons in the “Teacher’s Manual” reveals that some words that the materials label as VC words are in fact CVC words, such as *log*. Evidence of decoding CVC, CCVC, and CVCC words was not found in the scope and sequence, but students do read words containing consonant digraphs starting with Lesson 109.
- The materials include an overview of the phonological and phonics objectives for the year. The program has a single scope and sequence chart for the entire year, which includes the objectives for 140 lessons. The scope and sequence is divided into daily lessons and grouped by weeks. The scope and sequence includes new and reviewed concepts. The scope and sequence does not include student-required materials or page numbers to find each lesson.
- Phonological/phonemic awareness objectives are listed separately from the phonics skills on the scope and sequence. Phonological/phonemic awareness concepts are identified as either new or reviewed concepts. For example, Lesson 5 indicates the new concepts are “recognize rhyming words” and “recognize words with the same rime.” Lesson 12 indicates a review concept is

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“recognize rhyming words.” In Lesson 26, students segment sounds in words. In Lesson 65, students identify vowel sounds in words. In Lesson 110, students segment onset and rime.

- High-frequency words are listed on the scope and sequence. Sight words are listed on the scope and sequence. The full list of high-frequency words taught in Saxon, including non-decodable sight words and decodable high-frequency words, can be found in the Reading Word List. All high-frequency words (decodable and non-decodable) appear in purple text. By the end of the year, students learn to read and spell 110 high-frequency words.

Materials clearly demonstrate vertical alignment that shows the progression of skill development from year to year.

- The materials do not include a phonics continuum showing which phonics skills need to be mastered in which grade and order; there is no outline of the progression of skill development from kindergarten through grade 3. The kindergarten scope and sequence gives an overview of the phonics and phonemic awareness skills to be learned during the year.
- Although grade 1 and grade 2 materials include a phonemic awareness checklist that indicates which skills should be mastered at each grade level, this checklist is not present in the kindergarten materials. The materials do include a combined phonemic awareness pre-assessment and parent letter document. The pre-assessment enables teachers to assess students on five phonemic awareness skills: the student discriminates between two words, the student discriminates between single-syllable and multisyllabic words, the student hears rhyme in words, the student hears the difference in two sounds, and the student hears initial sounds. The parent letter provides phonemic awareness activities parents can do at home with their children and lists them in order from easy to average to challenging.
- The materials provide phonemic awareness lessons at the beginning of the year to support and develop phonological skills. In Lesson 2, students distinguish between words that are the same and words that are different. In Lesson 5, students recognize rhyming words. In Lesson 7, students develop the awareness that sentences are made of words. In Lesson 11, students blend sounds.
- The progression of skill development within kindergarten begins with basic skills and progresses to more complex skills. For example, beginning-of-the-year lessons teach letter sounds, while later in the year, lessons teach combinations and digraphs. At the beginning of the year, students recognize alliteration and later advance to identifying initial sounds and segmenting compound words. The progression of skills prepares students for grade 1.

Lessons follow a developmentally appropriate, systematic progression from simple to more complex concepts (e.g., CVC words before CCCVCC words and single syllable words before multisyllabic words).

- The materials do not contain a vertical alignment document to visually show lessons moving by grade level from simple to complex. Most lesson objectives follow a systematic progression from simple to complex concepts, building the prerequisite skills students need to read more complex words throughout the year. Lesson objectives begin with an emphasis on phonemic awareness, letter names, and letter sounds (starting with short vowel sounds), and transition to decoding and encoding VC, CVC, VC/CV words as new phoneme-grapheme correspondences are introduced. For example, the beginning-of-the-year lesson objectives are capital and lowercase

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letters, vowels and consonants, and short vowel sounds. Students are introduced to the short vowel rule in Lesson 11. Lessons progress to blending sounds beginning in Lesson 12. Segmenting words begins in Lesson 15. Lesson 42 introduces students to two-letter and three-letter blends. Lesson 105 teaches the long vowel rule V. Lesson 137 instructs students in the VCCV syllable division rule.

- Instruction on blending sounds systematically progresses. In Lesson 11, the teacher tells students to echo two sounds, and then partners blend them together. In Lesson 16, students spell the word *log* with letter tiles. The teacher helps students identify the sounds to spell the word. Then, the teacher asks for volunteers to blend the sounds. They repeat this process with the word *hog*. In Lesson 17, the teacher guides students to determine the sounds in *hot*. Students write the sounds, blend the sounds, and draw a line to the picture the word matches.

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Indicator 2.2

Materials provide **direct (explicit) and systematic instruction** in developing grade-level phonics skills within and across lessons.

1	Lessons include detailed guidance for each component of the gradual release of responsibility model.	M
2	Materials contain a teacher edition with ample and useful annotations and suggestions on how to present the content in the student materials.	M

Meets | Score 4/4

The materials meet the criteria for this indicator. Materials provide direct (explicit) and systematic instruction in developing grade-level phonics skills within and across lessons.

Lessons include detailed guidance for each component of the gradual release of responsibility model. Materials contain a teacher edition with ample and useful annotations and suggestions on how to present the content in the student materials.

Evidence includes but is not limited to:

Lessons include detailed guidance for each component of the gradual release of responsibility mode.

- Lessons include the components of the gradual release of responsibility; however, lessons do not include subtitles in the teacher guide for modeling, guided practice, working collaboratively, and working independently. Lesson section headings are “Lesson Warm-up,” “New Increment,” and “Application and Continual Review.”
- Lessons include specific and precise terms, phrasing, and statements that teachers can use during core instruction to model new phonics skills. During the New Increment portion, the teacher instructs students and models new phonics skills. For example, in Lesson 199, students learn the digraph *th*. The teacher states, “Echo these words and listen for the sound that’s the same in the beginning, or initial, position of each word: *thick, theft, thin*. What sound do you hear in the initial position? (/th/).” The teacher writes *thick, theft, and thin* on the board. “Look at these words. What letters do you see that might make the /th/ sound? (*t* and *h*) What do we call two letters that come together to make one sound? (*digraph*) How do we code digraphs? (underline them) Put your hand on your throat and say *thick*. (*thick*) Does your throat move when you say the /th/ sound in *thick*? (*no*) Try the /th/ sound we learned (Monday). Feel your throat as you say these words: *though, their, those*. Did your throat move? (*yes*) When your throat moves, it is called a ‘voiced sound’; when your throat doesn’t move, it is called an ‘unvoiced sound.’ Digraph *th* has a voiced sound and an unvoiced sound. You can try both sounds to see which one makes a word you know.”
- Lessons include specific and precise terms, phrasing, and statements that teachers can use during core instruction to guide students’ practice and application of new phonics skills. For example, the Application and Continual Review section of Lesson 25 provides a script for the teacher to guide the students to code and read words and match them to their pictures. The teacher says, “Look at the word by #5. Which letter is a vowel?” The students respond with the

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letter *a*. The teacher says, “Put your finger under the vowel. How will we code it?” The students respond with *short* and *breve*. The teacher asks, “Why?” The students say, “Followed by a consonant.” The teacher has the students code the vowel and helps them blend the sounds: /h/-/ă/-/t/. Students read the word *hat*. The teacher asks, “Do you see a picture of a hat? Draw a line from the word *hat* to the picture of a hat.” The teacher repeats the script to have the students code and read the words *pot* and *tag*.

- Lessons include detailed guidance on how students can practice and apply new phonics skills through independent practice. Lesson 38 includes specific guidance for scaffolding students’ use of workbook pages to find and circle matching words with the *short i* vowel sound. The teacher says, “Look at the word by #1. Do you see another word like it on the same line? Circle the word that looks just like it.” The word is *tin*, and the students circle the matching word on the line. The students read the word *tin*, and the teacher asks, “Can anyone use the word *tin* in a sentence?” The students repeat the steps with the words *in*, *him*, and *lit*. The teacher guide advises the teacher to work individually with any students who need help while the others work independently. In Lesson 103, students read “Fluency Reader 10” and practice reading words with the *qu* sound, which was introduced in Lesson 101. The lesson directions state students should read the text at their independent level, either independently or in groups, and may need one-on-one support. The lesson includes warm-up questions for the teacher to ask students before they begin reading, such as “What can quilts look like?” “Fluency Word List 10” corresponds with the reader. The lesson directions state for the teacher to listen to each child read the words on the list.

Materials contain a teacher edition with ample and useful annotations and suggestions on how to present the content in the student materials.

- The teacher edition contains useful annotations and suggestions for teachers on how to present the content. For example, the “Lesson Preparation” box at the top of Lesson 9 includes “Before Class” information with an explanation of how to use the “Letter Tiles” manipulatives that are introduced in this lesson and will be used throughout the year. Part of the explanation includes: “Each child gets a set of Letter Tiles that has one of four background patterns—stars, circles, squares, or triangles. That way, when children work together in a group, they can easily find the tiles that belong to them when it’s time to clean up. Place each set of Letter Tiles *l* and *o* in a separate storage container, such as a plastic tub, zip-top bag, or small box. Since children have learned only these letters, they are the only tiles the containers should hold at this point.” The manual also includes notes in the margin to support teachers during lessons. One margin note in Lesson 9 states, “Together, touch and name all the letters on the Alphabet Handwriting Strips,” to remind teachers they should be modeling the process on their own alphabet strip while students are completing the task on theirs.
- The teacher edition includes specific information for supporting multilingual learners in lessons. For example, there is an “English Learner Support” text box at the beginning of Lesson 3. The guidance for the teacher says, “Share cognates for the keyword *lion* (e.g., *léon* in Spanish, *leon* in Filipino, *lyon* in Haitian Creole). Point out that the beginning sound /l/ and end sound /n/ are the same.”
- The teacher edition also contains margin notes along either the right- or left-hand side of the lesson script. These margin notes summarize lesson content or indicate when to present the

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content and materials. For example, margin notes in Lesson 69 include “Distribute Worksheet 69 and an extra sheet of paper,” “Introduce *c* (Letter Card 18),” and “Introduce the new spelling response (*k, c*) and comma (Spelling Card 14).” In Lesson 80, the lesson script says, “Turn your worksheet over. Look at the letters in the box. Circle the capital *Y*’s.” The corresponding side annotation says, “Have children circle and count capital and lowercase *y*’s in the box. Repeat with other letters if desired.”

- The teacher edition does not include previously taught routines in the margins for teachers to reference during instruction if needed.

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Indicator 2.3

Materials include **detailed guidance** that supports teachers' **delivery of instruction**.

1	Guidance for teachers includes information about common phonics pattern misconceptions and guiding principles related to specific phonics skills.	M
2	Guidance for teachers provides detailed, specific instructional strategies with consistent routines for teaching each phonics skill.	M
3	Materials include specific guidance for providing students with immediate, corrective feedback.	PM
4	Materials provide detailed guidance for connecting previously taught phonics skills to new learning.	M
5	Materials include clear guidance on how to pace each lesson, including specific time suggestions for each component of the gradual release model.	PM

Partial Meets | Score 2/4

The materials partially meet the criteria for this indicator. Materials include some detailed guidance that supports teachers' delivery of instruction.

Guidance for teachers includes information about common phonics misconceptions and guiding principles related to specific phonics skills. Guidance provides detailed and specific instructional strategies with consistent routines for teaching each phonics skill. Materials include some guidance for providing students with feedback. Materials provide detailed guidance for connecting previously taught phonics skills to new learning. Materials include some guidance on how to pace each lesson, including specific time suggestions for each component of the gradual release model.

Evidence includes but is not limited to:

Guidance for teachers includes information about common phonics pattern misconceptions and guiding principles related to specific phonics skills.

- The materials address common misconceptions in phonics. For example, Lesson 1 includes a "Pronunciation Note" for the teacher: "When a letter appears between parallel lines, give the sound of the letter rather than the letter name. For example, for /t/, do not say *tee* or even /tüh/; instead, give the short, crisp sound of the letter." The lesson script for Lesson 1 also reminds teachers, "Make sure children give the short, crisp sound of /l/ and do not add a short *u* sound, as in /lüh/."
- The materials share guiding principles related to specific skills. Phonics instruction includes comprehension questions when reading connected text. For example, the students read "Decodable Reader 9," *Pig's Jet*, in Lesson 90. The students read the story independently, and the teacher asks the following questions when they finish: "What friends are invited to take a ride in Pig's jet?" "What does Cat say about the mud?" "Why do you think Pig asks Cat and Hen to ride in the van?"
- The materials include information for teachers related to specific phonics skills. For example, a Pronunciation Note in Lesson 69 informs teachers, "The hard sound of *c* will always be

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represented as /k/ because *c* ‘borrows’ its sounds from the letters *k* and *s*.” Phonics generalizations are explicitly taught in the lessons. For example, in Lesson 71, the teacher says, “When we spell the /k/ sound, we need to use our rule: We spell the /k/ sound with the letter *k* when the sound is followed by the letters *e*, *i*, or *y*. We spell the /k/ sound with the letter *c* when the sound is followed by the letters *a*, *o*, *u*, or any consonant.”

Guidance for teachers provides detailed, specific instructional strategies with consistent routines for teaching each phonics skill.

- The materials include a variety of instructional strategies with consistent routines for each phonics skill. For example, students practice letter recognition and letter sounds by quickly reviewing the “Letter and Picture Decks.” Students get their “Letter Tiles” and quickly review the “Spelling Deck.” The students echo the sounds, name the letter that makes the sound, and find the corresponding Letter Tile. The teacher selects words from the “Spelling Word List” that the students can spell using their Letter Tiles. In Lesson 25, the teacher instructs the students to spell the words *at*, *hat*, *tag*, and *tap*. The materials include a consistent routine of using review cards to practice previously learned phonics skills. In Lesson 93, students practice identifying the beginning, middle, and ending sounds of words. The teacher holds up a “Red Kid Card,” which has an illustration, and the students identify the sounds in the word.
- The materials provide sufficient details for teaching each strategy. For example, in Lesson 73, the lesson plan script directs the teacher to teach the following for “New Increment: The Letter *E*”: In the “Handwriting *E*” section of the lesson, the teacher says, “Echo /ĕ/. /ĕ/ is the short sound of the letter *e*.” The teacher writes *e* on the board and says, “This is letter *e*.” The teacher has the students skywrite the letter *e* a few times before they practice writing *e*’s. The students are expected to name the letter each time they write it. The teacher and students repeat the steps to write capital *E*’s. In the “New Deck Cards for *E*” section of the lesson, the teacher shows Letter Card 19 with the letter *e* on it. The teacher says, “Is *e* a vowel or a consonant? Vowel. Our new keyword for *e* begins with /ĕ/. Let’s see if you can guess it.” The teacher introduces the keyword *elephant* by saying a riddle: “This animal is big and gray. It has tusks and big ears. It also has a long nose called a trunk. What do you think it is? *Elephant*.” The teacher shows Picture Card 19 with the picture of an elephant and says, “When you see this card, say *elephant*, /ĕ/. The keyword *elephant* helps us remember the /ĕ/ sound because it begins with /ĕ/. Remember vowels have at least two sounds. The *e* on this card has a breve over it to help us remember that /ĕ/ is the short sound of *e*.” The teacher introduces /ĕ/ with Spelling Card 18. Spelling Card 18 says, “Articulation Support: Put the front part of your tongue in the middle of your mouth. Open your mouth, relax your muscles, and don’t round your lips. Put your hand under your jaw to feel it drop just a little: /ĕ/.”
- The materials include an explanation or overview of the instructional routines used consistently throughout the program. For example, “Lesson Organization” is described in the “Instructional Overview.” The lessons follow this consistent routine:
 - The “Lesson Warm-Up” begins with an alphabet activity; a daily phonological/phonemic awareness activity; and daily letter, sound, and spelling review.
 - The New Increment section of the lesson introduces students to letters, sounds, letter clusters, and sight words.
 - The students apply what they have learned in the “Application and Continual Review”

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section of the lesson.

- “Classroom Practice and Fluency Practice” is when the students practice their decoding and fluency skills and engage in independent reading.

Materials include specific guidance for providing students with immediate, corrective feedback.

- The materials occasionally include general guidance on what to do if students experience difficulty. The materials do not provide specific examples of immediate corrective feedback. For example, a “Remediation Tip” in the lesson script for Lesson 4 states, “Work with any children who have difficulty echoing sounds by giving them a mirror to help them copy the shape of your mouth as you make certain sounds.” An example of corrective feedback that directly states the shape of the mouth would be more beneficial. After teachers have read decodable readers with students, Lesson 27 indicates, “If children have trouble blending, continue practice with Decodable Reader 1 until they are more familiar with the letters and letter sounds.” The materials do not suggest specific feedback to give to students when they are experiencing difficulty blending, such as stating what the student got correct and where the error occurred or giving guidance on how the teacher can help the student improve in blending. During the handwriting section in Lesson 41, the lesson suggests that teachers “Walk around the room and assist children whose *s*’s are improperly written.” The materials do not identify how teachers should assist students (for example, should the teacher simply restate the sequence for writing the letter, or should the teacher write the letter correctly on the student’s paper?)
- The materials include examples of affirming feedback. For example, the “Fluency Instruction” booklet says, “Children develop fluency when they have opportunities to practice and when they receive clear guidance for improvement. One of the most effective ways of practicing is to have children orally reread the same passage or text several times. As they read, acknowledge their progress and identify ways they can improve.” The materials offer examples of feedback that can be provided during an echo reading lesson, including, “Good! You paused at the end of the first sentence.”

Materials provide detailed guidance for connecting previously taught phonics skills to new learning.

- The materials help teachers connect previously taught skills to new learning. Phonics concept lessons include a portion called Application and Continual Review. During this portion of the lesson, the teacher reinforces new phonics concepts with students. Students independently complete a worksheet that contains the new phonics concept but also contains a review of previously taught skills. For example, students practice the new skill of long vowels in Lesson 107. The worksheet begins with a box containing several consonants and vowels, which students have learned to identify and differentiate between previously. The teacher says, “Look at the letters in the box. Circle all of the vowels.” The worksheet continues with practice of the new concept.
- The materials include specific references in lesson plans and scripts to previous learning. For example, in Lesson 30, the teacher says, “Who remembers what a compound word is? Let’s say it together, ‘A compound word is two words that come together to form one new word.’ For example, in the compound word *doghouse*, each word became part of the new word.” The teacher introduces the concept of a syllable and says, “Other words that are not compound words have parts too. Listen to this word and think about how many times you could clap.”

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Teach...er. Let's say this word and clap together. *Teach...er.* How many parts are there? Two. Right! Each of those parts is a syllable. Can you say *syllable*? Words are made up of parts called syllables. If the word has two parts, it has two syllables. How many syllables are in *teacher*? Two."

- The materials provide guidance for connecting previously taught phonics skills to new ones. For example, in Lesson 32, students practice blending two-syllable words. The teacher says, "We've been talking about word parts, or syllables. Let's play a game with syllables. I'll say two word parts separately, then I will blend them together into one word." The teacher says a word part and simultaneously holds up one fist and does the same with the second part of the word. The students blend the word parts together. In previous lessons, students practice identifying syllables by clapping for each syllable as they say a word. Students also practice breaking compound words into two separate words.

Materials include clear guidance on how to pace each lesson, including specific time suggestions for each component of the gradual release model.

- The Instructional Overview document explains how the overall program should be paced: "Proper pacing is essential to children's success. Choose a pace that is fast enough to foster growth but slow enough for children to learn and absorb new information. Keep in mind that children are not expected to master each new concept on the day it is introduced. Mastery is achieved through practice." The document states, "Ideally, four lessons and an assessment (assessments appear at the end of the fourth lesson in each series) should be completed each week. It's usually best to teach one lesson per day, using the suggested reinforcement activities to strengthen weak areas. The fifth day of the week (assessment day) may also be used to reteach a difficult lesson, remediate, or meet special school-district objectives. You might find it necessary, however, to adjust the pace of the program." The Instructional Overview includes ideas to either slow the pace or accelerate the pace for the whole group and also discusses adjusting to individual needs. The materials do not include clear guidance on how to pace each lesson.
- The materials include an estimated length of time for each lesson. For example, the Instructional Overview says, "Teaching a lesson (which includes the Lesson Warm-Up, New Increment, and Boardwork activities) should take about 15 minutes. If you sense that a lesson has exceeded children's attention span, stop the lesson and continue it later in the day. Other lesson elements (including worksheets, decodable readers, classroom and fluency practice, assessments, and optional handwriting activities) require additional time."
- The Instructional Overview of the materials recommends that the teacher set aside 15 minutes each day for Classroom Practice and Fluency Practice. The materials do not provide specific guidance on how much time to spend on the other lesson components.

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Indicator 2.4

Materials include **frequent and distributed** review of phonics skills with **cumulative practice opportunities with decodable text**.

1	Materials include intentional cumulative review and practice activities throughout the span of the curriculum.	M
2	Practice opportunities include only phonics skills that have been explicitly taught.	M
3	Decodable texts incorporate cumulative practice of taught phonics skills.	M

Meets | Score 4/4

The materials meet the criteria for this indicator. Materials include frequent and distributed review of phonics skills with cumulative practice opportunities with decodable text.

Materials include intentional cumulative review and practice activities throughout the curriculum. Practice opportunities include only phonics skills that have been explicitly taught. Decodable texts incorporate cumulative practice of taught phonics skills.

Evidence includes but is not limited to:

Materials include intentional cumulative review and practice activities throughout the span of the curriculum.

- Lessons use consistent routines that include different modalities when introducing and reviewing phonics skills. New letters and their sounds are introduced by the teacher saying the sound of the letter and students echoing it. The teacher writes the letter on the board for students to see, and then students skywrite the letter before writing it on paper. The teacher shows the corresponding deck cards; students respond orally during the deck card introduction routine, and then the cards are added to the deck for visual and auditory review in future lessons. For example, the letter *g* is introduced in Lesson 9. The teacher says, “I’ll say a sound, and then you echo it. Echo /g/. /g/” The teacher writes the lowercase *g* on the board. Students skywrite the letter a few times before they practice writing it on the back of their worksheets. The process is repeated for capital *G*. The teacher then introduces the new deck cards for the letter *g*, including “Letter Card 3,” “Picture Card 3,” and “Spelling Card 3.” The teacher adds the cards to the review decks. The cards are then reviewed in subsequent lessons during the “Lesson Warm-up,” with the teacher displaying the cards and the students verbally naming the letter, keyword, and sound. The “Instructional Overview” document explains this consistent review process: “When reviewing the decks, keep the pace moving by showing the cards as quickly as children can identify them. This review occurs daily, so it is not necessary that every child recognize every card the first (or even the second or third) time it is shown. Children will be given enough exposure and practice throughout the year to master the concepts on each card.”
- The materials include intentional practice and review of decoding and encoding using previously learned and newly learned phonics skills throughout the year. For example, the materials include word lists that students can decode and spell as they progress through the materials.

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The introduction to the “Reading Word List” says, “The list includes sight words and other high-frequency words; all the words are arranged in the order that the letters/letter clusters, sounds, and other concepts in each word are introduced, and lesson numbers indicate the lesson during or after which individual words may be used.” The Reading Word List for Lesson 65, “The Letter Z,” includes the words *buzz*, *fuzz*, *zap*, and *zip*. The words provided on the list match the focus of the lesson and provide intentional practice with words with the taught sound. The introduction to the “Spelling Word List” materials says, “The list includes sight words and other high-frequency words; all the words are arranged in the order that the letters/letter clusters, sounds, and other concepts in each word are introduced, and lesson numbers indicate the lesson during or after which individual words may be used.” The Spelling Word List for Lesson 101, “Combination *qu*,” includes the words *quilt*, *quit*, and *quiz*.

Practice opportunities include only phonics skills that have been explicitly taught.

- Student practice opportunities include only phonics skills that have been previously taught. For example, students learn the letters *l*, *o*, *g*, *h*, and *t* in Lessons 1–20. In Lesson 21, the letter *p* is introduced. Worksheet 21 begins with a box containing four rows and four columns of randomly organized letters. The letters present are only *l*, *p*, *t*, *h*, *o*, and *g*. The teacher instructs students to “Circle all of the *p*’s in the box.” Students then find the picture of a piano. The teacher says, “What sound do you hear at the beginning of *piano*? (/p/) What letter makes the /p/ sound? (*p*) Write the lowercase letter *p* on the line beneath the picture of a piano.” The same process is repeated with pictures of a gorilla and lipstick, providing practice with the previously taught letters *g* and *l*. The next item on the worksheet is the word *top*, which provides practice with previously taught *t* and *o* as well as the new concept *p*. The teacher states, “Look at the word by #5. Which letter is a vowel? (*o*) Put your finger under the vowel. How will we code this vowel? (*short; breve*) Why? (*followed by a consonant*).” Students code the vowel and blend the sounds. The teacher asks a volunteer to read the word. Students draw a line from the word to the image of a top. To continue practice of previous skills and the new concept, the teacher says, “Let’s take a spelling test. Echo *pot*. (*pot*) Echo /p/. (/p/) Write the lowercase letter that says /p/ on the first line by #6.” The process is repeated for the *short o* and /t/ sounds. The teacher has students check their work by saying, “Let’s blend the sounds of these letters to see what word you spelled: /p/-/ō/-/t/” and asking a student to read the word aloud.
- Students apply the focus skill for the lesson and skills from previous lessons during guided practice and independent practice. For example, in the “Spelling Sound Review” section of Lesson 57, the teacher quickly reviews the “Letter and Picture Decks” with the students. During the activity, the students add and change letter tiles to create new words. The teacher says, “Let’s write the word *it* on the board. What sounds do you hear in the word *it*? (/i/, /t/) Let’s spell the word *it* with our Letter Tiles. What letter makes the /s/ sound? (*s*) Let’s see what happens when I add a letter *s* to the beginning of the word *it*. What happened when we added a letter *s* to the beginning of the word *it*? We created a new word: *sit*.” The teacher asks the students to hold up “Letter Tile *f*” and add it to the word *it*. The teacher asks, “What new word did we make when we added letter *f* to the word *it*? *fit*.” The teacher repeats the steps with the students to make the words *hit*, *pit*, and *lit*. During Lesson 125, students learn about words with the *a*-consonant-*e* pattern. At the end of the lesson, students help the teacher code and read words that follow this pattern. Then, students independently draw lines from corresponding

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pictures to the word, such as *cake*. Next, students practice independently spelling the words *gate* and *cane*, which follow the *a*-consonant-*e* pattern.

Decodable texts incorporate cumulative practice of taught phonics skills.

- Decodable texts include only taught phonics skills and incorporate cumulative practice by increasing in complexity. According to the Instructional Overview document, “Decodable Readers” are “controlled texts intended to help children practice basic reading concepts; they use only those letters/letter clusters, sounds, and sight words that children have learned. Complexity of language used in the readers increases as children learn more concepts.” The lesson plans include and refer to resources such as Decodable Readers that are specifically connected to the phonics objective. In Lesson 35, the materials refer to Decodable Reader 2, *Hop on the Mop*. The text includes previously taught phonics skills, such as CVC words with the *short a* or the *short o* vowel sound. For example, the decodable reader says, “Tom got a mop. Tom got a mat.” Later in the year, decodable texts feature more advanced phonics concepts. In Lesson 59, the materials refer to Decodable Reader 5, *The Big Trip*. The text includes phonics skills that have been taught, such as words with the *short a*, *i*, or *o* vowel sounds, “floss rule” words, words with two-letter blends, and words with added suffixes. For example, the text includes, “Big Babs is last. Big Babs fills it.” Decodable Reader 14, *Three Rich Sheep*, is introduced in Lesson 131, which teaches the digraph *ee*. The decodable reader includes the digraph *ee* and other phonics skills, including digraph *ch*, which was taught in Lessons 129 and 130. Objectives taught earlier in the scope and sequence are also included in the reader, such as CVC words, CCVC words, and VCe words.
- Decodable texts provide cumulative practice with irregular words that have been taught. The word *the* is introduced in Lesson 27, *to* in Lesson 39, and *from* in Lesson 55. In Lesson 39, students read Fluency Reader 2. The Level A version contains the word *to* while Levels B and C contain *the* and *to*. Decodable Reader 3, used with all students in Lesson 43, contains both *the* and *to*. In Lesson 55, students read “Fluency Reader 4.” All three levels of Fluency Reader 4 contain the previously taught *the* and the newly taught *from*.

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Indicator 3.A.1

Materials provide systematic and direct (explicit) instruction, practice, and review related to **alphabet knowledge**.

1	Materials provide a research-based, systematic sequence for introducing letter names and their corresponding sounds.	PM
2	Materials provide scripted direct (explicit) instruction for teaching the identification of all 26 letters (upper and lowercase) and their corresponding sounds.	M
3	Materials provide direct (explicit) instruction on forming the 26 letters (upper and lowercase).	M
4	Materials incorporate a variety of activities and resources for students to develop, practice, and reinforce (through cumulative review) alphabet knowledge in isolation and in context of meaningful print.	M

Partial Meets | Score 2/4

The materials partially meet the criteria for this indicator. Materials provide some systematic and direct (explicit) instruction, practice, and review related to alphabet knowledge.

Materials provide some research-based, systematic sequence for introducing letter names and their corresponding sounds. Materials provide scripted, direct (explicit) instruction for teaching identification of all 26 letters (uppercase and lowercase) and their corresponding sounds, as well as letter formation for all 26 letters. Materials provide a variety of activities and resources for students to develop, practice, and reinforce (through cumulative review) alphabet knowledge in both isolation and in context of meaningful print.

Evidence includes but is not limited to:

Materials provide a research-based, systematic sequence for introducing letter names and their corresponding sounds.

- The materials include a strategic sequence for strategically introducing letter names and sounds. Visually similar letters are not taught in proximity. For example, Lessons 21–24 focus on the letter *p*, while Lessons 101–104 feature the letter *q*. Lessons 57–60 introduce *b*, and Lessons 81–84 teach *d*.
- The materials provide a research-based, systematic sequence for introducing letter names and their corresponding sounds. The “Research Foundations” document states, “Letters are chosen based on how frequently they appear in English and how easy it is to make short words with them.” According to the Scope and Sequence, letters are presented in an order that starts with the high-utility letters *l*, *o*, *g*, *h*, and *t*. After learning these letters, students can use them right away to decode and spell CVC words such as *log*, *hot*, and *got*. The final letter lessons teach less frequently used letters *v*, *j*, *x*, *w*, and *q*.
- The materials do not use an appropriate pace to introduce letters. Each letter is taught over four lessons before progressing to a new letter. For example, Lessons 1–4 focus on naming capital and lowercase letter *l*, forming (writing) capital and lowercase *l*, and connecting the letter *l* to

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the sound /l/. Lessons 5–8 review the letter / name and sound and teach students to identify capital and lowercase letter *o*, properly form uppercase and lowercase *o*, and connect the letter *o* to the sound /ō/. Therefore, the materials introduce one to two letters per week. There is also no variation in time spent on some letters due to the difficulty of those letters.

Materials provide scripted direct (explicit) instruction for teaching the identification of all 26 letters (upper and lowercase) and their corresponding sounds.

- Lessons identify the alphabet knowledge skills to be learned and communicate the objectives clearly. For example, the objective of Lesson 9 is to “practice connecting letter sounds with their spellings” by reviewing previously taught letters and sounds. The teacher states, “Today, we’re going to begin working with our letter tiles. Look inside your container. Each of you has two tiles. Take them out and lay them down in front of you.” The teacher continues by saying, “These are called ‘letter tiles.’ Each tile has a letter on it. Find the tile with the letter / on it, and pick it up. Look at your / letter tile. One side has a green capital *L*, and the other side has a purple lowercase *l*.” After the teacher has students practice manipulating the tiles, the teacher says, “Today, as we review our spelling deck, echo each sound as usual. Then, instead of writing the letter that makes that sound, move that letter tile to a new row.”
- The materials provide a teacher script and clear, precise directions for using the gradual release method for introducing each letter and its sound. In Lesson 17, the teacher says, “I’ll say a sound, and then you echo it. Echo /t/.” The “Teacher’s Manual” reminds teachers: “Make sure children give the short, crisp sound of /t/ and do not add a short *u* sound, as in /tu h/.” The teacher states, “/t/ is the sound the letter *t* makes,” writes a lowercase *t* on the board, and says, “This is a lowercase letter *t*.” The teacher shows “Letter Card 5 (*t*)” and asks, “Is *t* a vowel or a consonant? (*consonant*) How do you know?” The lesson instructions continue with a script for introducing both the “Picture Card” for *t* with the keyword *tent* and “Spelling Card 5 (*t*).”
- Lessons revisit previously taught letters. Each letter is taught for four days, then reviewed in later lessons. The materials include Letter Cards and Picture Cards. As new letters and keywords are introduced, they are added to the stack. The teacher holds the cards up for students to practice as a review at the beginning of lessons. For example, during “Letter and Sound Review” in Lesson 9, the teacher holds up Letter Cards 1 (*l*) and 2 (*o*). Children name each letter. The teacher then holds up Picture Cards 1 (*l*) and 2 (*o*). Students respond *lion* /l/ and *octopus* /ō/.
- Instruction includes connecting new learning to previous learning. For example, in Lesson 5, the teacher shows Letter Card 2 for the letter *o*. The teacher asks, “Is *o* a vowel or a consonant?” (*vowel*) How do you know? (*vowels are a, e, i, o, and u; printed in red on alphabet handwriting strip*).” The teacher connects information students learned about vowels, consonants, and the “Alphabet Writing Strip” in previous lessons when introducing the letter *o*.

Materials provide direct (explicit) instruction on forming the 26 letters (upper and lowercase).

- The initial lesson provides direct instruction on letter formation routines that students will follow for the rest of the school year. For Lesson 1, the teacher is instructed: “Seat small groups of children where they can write comfortably. Point to the Wriley Poster.” The teacher says, “Wriley is a raccoon who loves to write. Notice how Wriley sits up straight with her feet flat on the floor. Notice how Wriley holds her pencil. Let’s try to hold our pencils like Wriley.” The teacher circulates throughout the room while modeling the correct way to hold a pencil and

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assisting students as needed. The teacher reminds left-handed students to refer to the poster showing Wriley holding a pencil in her left hand.

- Letter formation is taught at the same time the letter name and sound are taught. For example, in Lesson 9, the teacher says, “I’ll say a sound, and then you echo it. Echo /g/.” The teacher checks to make sure the students give the short, crisp sound of /g/ and do not add a short *u* sound, as in /gŭh/. The teacher says, “/G/ is one of the sounds the letter *g* makes.” The teacher writes a lowercase *g* on the board and says, “This is a lowercase letter *g*.” The students skywrite the letter *g* a few times, then practice writing *g*’s on the back of their worksheets. The teacher reminds the students to name the letter each time they write it. The teacher writes a capital *G* on the board, and the students practice skywriting and writing capital *G*’s.
- The lessons employ the gradual release of responsibility model. For example, in Lesson 21, the teacher says, “I’ll say a sound, and then you echo it. Echo /p/. /P/ is the sound the letter *p* makes.” The teacher writes the lowercase *p* on the board. Specific handwriting strokes for letter *p* are described in the “Handwriting Instruction” booklet. The “Letter Talk Through” for lowercase letter *p* says, “Pull straight down, stop; push up, stop; circle right, touch.” The teacher models the strokes and says, “This is a lowercase letter *p*.” The students skywrite the letter *p* a few times, then practice writing *p*’s on the back of their worksheets. The teacher walks around the room to assist students whose *p*’s are improperly written. During the “Application and Continual Review” section of the lesson, students write the lowercase letter *p* on the line beneath the picture of a piano on “Worksheet 21.”
- Materials provide clear, precise instructions for introducing the formation of each letter. However, the instructions for the formation of each letter are not printed in the Teacher’s Manual. Instead, these Letter Talk Throughs are located in the Handwriting Instruction booklet. For example, Lesson 89 introduces the letter *j*. In the Teacher’s Manual, the instructions for introducing the formation for lowercase *j* are: “Write a lowercase *j* on the board in the handwriting you want children to learn. (Specific handwriting strokes are described in the Handwriting Instruction booklet).” Therefore, teachers must refer to both their Teacher’s Manual and the Handwriting Instruction booklet when introducing the letter formation portion of the lesson.

Materials incorporate a variety of activities and resources for students to develop, practice, and reinforce (through cumulative review) alphabet knowledge in isolation and in context of meaningful print.

- Materials include Alphabet Handwriting Strips to help reinforce alphabet knowledge. Each child is given a laminated Alphabet Handwriting Strip. According to the “Instructional Overview” document, the strips feature “the alphabet in both Saxon block-style and continuous stroke-style lettering as on the Alphabet Wall Cards, vowels appear in red and consonants in black to help children distinguish between the two. The strips feature the keyword illustration that corresponds to the most common sound of each letter. They also display illustrations of a right hand and a left hand for orientation.”
- Materials include “Alphabet Wall Cards” with uppercase and lowercase letters along with pictures of keywords, Letter Cards with lowercase letters, and Picture Cards with pictures of keywords for the teacher to use in a variety of ways. For example, Lesson 17 introduces the letter *t*. The teacher covers the letter *Tt* Alphabet Wall Card up before the lesson. The teacher

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says, “Our new keyword for *t* begins with /t/. See if you can guess it. Raise your hand when you know what it is, but please don’t say it out loud. This is something that you sleep in when you go camping. It has a flap for a door. It is helped up by poles. What do you think it is? (*tent*).” The teacher shows Picture Card 5 and uncovers the Wall Card. The teacher says, “When you see this card, say *tent*, /t/. The keyword *tent* helps us remember the /t/ sound because it begins with /t/.” The keyword on the Picture and Alphabet Wall Cards for *Ee* is *elephant*. This is generally not a recommended keyword for the letter *e* because the beginning of the words sounds like the name of the letter *l*, which may confuse some students.

- Materials include a variety of activities to practice and reinforce forming letters in isolation. Lessons frequently include skywriting (tracing a letter in the air.) According to the “Research Foundations” document: “This activity requires students to use the larger muscles of their upper arms, which helps form muscle-brain interactions that connect the physical motions of skywriting a letter with the impression of those motions on the brain. The large motion can then be mimicked by the smaller muscles in the hand that are used for handwriting.” The “Resources for Differentiation” booklet provides suggestions and directions for multisensory activities to reinforce forming letters in isolation. For example, the “Construct Letters” activity uses various classroom manipulatives to build capital and lowercase versions of letters, while “Letter Yoga” leads students in forming letter shapes with their bodies. The “Handwriting Masters” include letter formation practice pages for each letter that show the uppercase and lowercase letters, as well as mascots to guide the formation of letters in the correct sequence of steps. For example, the handwriting page for the letter *Ee* has mascots and prompts to support the students in writing the letter *Ee*. To write the letter *E*, the materials say, “Pull straight down, stop; go back to Max, go right, stop; go to Leo, go right, stop; go to Wriley, go right, stop.” To write the letter *e*, the materials say, “Go right, stop; circle left, stop.”
- Each letter lesson includes an “Options for Differentiation” section with three levels of instruction. After teaching a new letter, the “Support” column in this section includes activities to review letters and sounds. For example, at the bottom of Lesson 101, the Support section gives directions to review the letter *q* with students, beginning with a discussion of the shape of the letter, then using kinesthetic body poses to model the shape of the uppercase and lowercase *q*.
- The materials include opportunities to practice identifying, naming, forming, and saying the sounds of letters in isolation. For example, in Lesson 29, the students circle all the *n*’s on Worksheet 29. The teacher says, “Look at the letters in the box on your worksheet. Do you see any *n*’s? Circle all of the *n*’s. Turn your paper over. Look at the pictures at the top of the page. What is the first picture? (Nest) What sound do you hear at the beginning of *nest*? (/n/) What letter makes the /n/ sound? (*n*) Write the lowercase letter *n* on the line beneath the picture of a nest.”

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Indicator 3.A.2

Materials provide systematic and direct (explicit) instruction, practice, and review related to the **alphabetic principle**.

1	Materials systematically introduce letter-sound relationships in an order that quickly allows for application to basic decoding and encoding	M
2	Materials provide scripted direct (explicit) instruction for connecting phonemes to letters within words.	M
3	Materials incorporate a variety of activities and resources for students to develop, practice, and reinforce (through cumulative review) their understanding of applying letter-sound correspondence to decode simple words both in isolation and in decodable connected text.	M

Meets | Score 4/4

The materials meet the criteria for this indicator. Materials provide systematic, direct (explicit) instruction, practice, and review of the alphabetic principle.

Materials systematically introduce letter-sound relationships, which quickly allows for application to basic decoding and encoding. Materials provide scripted, direct (explicit) instruction for connecting phonemes to letters within words. Materials incorporate a variety of activities and resources for students to develop, practice, and reinforce (through cumulative review) their understanding of applying letter-sound correspondence to decode simple words both in isolation and in decodable connected text.

Evidence includes but is not limited to:

Materials systematically introduce letter-sound relationships in an order that quickly allows for application to basic decoding and encoding.

- The materials focus on one letter for four lessons before moving to a new letter. Instruction begins with high-utility letters, which enables students to quickly encode and decode basic words. For example, the letters *l* and *o* are taught in Lessons 1–8, followed by *g*, *h*, *t*, *p*, and *a* in Lessons 9–28. This sequence allows students to spell and decode words such as *hot* and *pat*. Lessons 29–44 introduce *n*, *m*, *i*, and *s*, followed by *f*, *r*, *k*, *b*, and *u* in Lessons 45–64. Lessons 65–80 teach letters *z*, *c*, *e*, and *y*, followed by *d*, *v*, *j*, and *x* in Lessons 81–96. The remaining letters, *w* and *q* (taught with *qu*), are introduced in Lessons 97–104.
- Once students have mastered letter-sound correspondences for several consonants and the *short o* vowel sound, the materials begin to introduce blending and segmenting strategies to decode words. For example, in Lesson 11, the teacher directly teaches students to blend and segment words, such as *he* and *so*. The teacher says, “I’ll give each of you a sound. Echo your sounds, then we’ll practice blending them, which means we’ll put the sounds together.” The teacher chooses two students to say the two different sounds. The lesson says, “Instruct Child 1 to say /l/, tap Child 2’s shoulder, and then stop saying /l/ as Child 2 says /o/. Help them blend their sounds.” Then the teacher asks, “What do your two sounds make when they’re blended?”

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- The order in which letter-sound relationships are introduced permits students to quickly apply encoding skills. In Lesson 12, the teacher gives students “Letter Tile” containers with *l*, *o*, and *g* tiles. The teacher states, “Let’s take our first spelling test.” Students echo the sounds in the word *log*. The teacher then states, “Let’s figure out how many sounds are in this word.” The teacher holds up a finger for each sound and asks students how many sounds are in the word. After students respond, the teacher tells them, “Spelling the sounds in words is the same as spelling the sounds in our Spelling Deck,” then guides students to echo sounds and move the letter tiles to spell each sound. The teacher finishes by asking, “What word did you spell?”

Materials provide scripted direct (explicit) instruction for connecting phonemes to letters within words.

- The materials provide scripted direct instruction that connects phonemes to letters within words. In Lesson 31, the teacher instructs students on how to blend sounds. A teacher script is included for the direct instruction portion. The teacher says, “Turn your paper over. Look at the words by #1. Circle the word *pan*.” The teacher then asks, “Which letter is a vowel in the word *pan*?” After students respond, the teacher tells students, “Put your finger under the vowel. How would we code it?” Later, the teacher asks, “What sound does short *a* make? Let’s blend the sounds together and say the word: /p/ /ă/ /n/, *pan*.” The teacher asks, “Did something happen to the sound of the letter *a* when we blended it with /n/?” After students respond, the teacher models making the /n/ sound and explains why it changes after a *short a* sound.
- The lessons communicate the objective at the beginning of instruction. A lesson script for phonological awareness includes “OBJECTIVE: To distinguish between sounds that are the same and those that are different.” The teacher script states, “Each day, we will do some activities to learn about letters and sounds and the words they make.”
- Lessons spiral back and revisit previously introduced concepts regularly. Part of the daily “Lesson Warm-Up” includes a quick review of the letter, picture, and sight word decks. In Lesson 50, the teacher writes the word *fill* on the board and then asks students what the vowel is in the word and what letters students see after the vowel. The teacher script indicates teachers should refer back to previous learning by then asking, “What do we call two like consonants that are next to each other?”
- Lessons include steps for gradual release of responsibility. For example, in Lesson 42, the teacher writes several blends on the board. The teacher points to *sp* and asks, “How many letters are in this blend?” Students respond, “three; *s, p, l*.” The teacher states, “Let’s sound them out slowly to see what blend they make.” Students respond, “/s/-/p/-/l/, /spl/.” Then the teacher says, “Let’s practice with some different blends. I’ll say a word. Raise your hand if you can tell me the blend in the word. This first word is *space*. Who thinks they know the blend in *space*?” Students respond, and then the teacher states, “Right! The letters *s* and *p* form the blend /sp/ in *space*. When we see blends, we won’t code them because we don’t need to know any special sounds to read them. Let’s try reading some words with our new blends.” The teacher writes the words *slam*, *last*, and *split* on the board and points to *slam*. “Which letter is a vowel? (*a*) How will we code it? (*short; breve*) Why? (*followed by a consonant*).” Then, students independently complete the corresponding portion of “Worksheet 42.”

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Materials incorporate a variety of activities and resources for students to develop, practice, and reinforce (through cumulative review) their understanding of applying letter-sound correspondence to decode simple words both in isolation and in decodable connected text.

- The materials provide opportunities to decode in isolation. For example, in Lesson 53, the students learned the name, sound, and written form of the letter *r*. They practice blending and reading recently introduced words on the “Reading Practice 7” page. Students independently read the words *rim*, *trim*, *rot*, *trot*, *rip*, and *grip*.
- The materials include decodable texts. For example, “Fluency Reader 3,” *Sam’s Fast Fan* from Lesson 47, includes practice opportunities to read words with the letter *f* and decodable high-frequency words *fast* and *off*.
- Lessons use various resources, including letter tiles, letter cards, picture cards, spelling cards, handwriting strips, and alphabet strips, to support letter-sound acquisition. For example, in Lesson 72, the teacher utilizes the spelling deck, and students use letter tiles. Each student lays their tiles in a row. The “Teacher’s Manual” guides the teacher to quickly review the spelling deck with students. Children should echo the sounds, name the letters that make them, and move the appropriate tiles to another row. The teacher makes sure children move the correct tiles. The manual then indicates the teacher should select words from the spelling word list that children can spell using their tiles. The teacher is reminded to choose from the list only previously taught words and words that do not require duplicate letter tiles.

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Indicator 3.B.1

Materials provide systematic and direct (explicit) instruction, practice, and review to support the development of **oral syllable awareness** skills, as outlined in the TEKS.

1	Materials provide a systematic sequence for introducing oral syllable awareness activities that begins with simple skills (detecting, blending, and segmenting syllables) and gradually transitions to more complex skills such as adding, deleting, and substituting syllables.	M
2	Materials include scripted direct (explicit) instruction for teaching oral syllable awareness skills.	M
3	Materials incorporate a variety of activities and resources for students to develop, practice, and reinforce skills (through cumulative review).	M

Meets | Score 4/4

The materials meet the criteria for this indicator. Materials provide systematic and direct (explicit) instruction, practice, and review to support the development of oral syllable awareness skills, as outlined in the TEKS.

Materials provide a systematic sequence for introducing oral syllable awareness activities that begins with simple skills (detecting, blending, and segmenting syllables) and gradually transitions to more complex skills such as adding, deleting, and substituting syllables. Materials include scripted direct (explicit) instruction for teaching oral syllable awareness skills. Materials incorporate a variety of activities and resources for students to develop, practice, and reinforce skills (through cumulative review).

Evidence includes but is not limited to:

Materials provide a systematic sequence for introducing oral syllable awareness activities that begins with simple skills (detecting, blending, and segmenting syllables) and gradually transition to more complex skills such as adding, deleting, and substituting syllables.

- The materials provide a systematic sequence for introducing oral syllable awareness activities. The scope and sequence includes a column labeled “Phonemic/Phonological Awareness,” which indicates a systematic sequence of oral syllable awareness throughout the year. For example, the scope and sequence indicates that Lesson 9 introduces the concept of segmenting compound words. In Lesson 30, students develop the awareness that words are made of syllables and also count syllables. In Lesson 32, students progress to blending syllables. Lesson 63 introduces segmenting syllables. In Lesson 91, students learn to identify which syllable is accented in a word. The phonological awareness objective of Lesson 132 is to substitute words in compound words.
- The Scope and Sequence also shows lessons that review previously taught oral syllable awareness skills. Lesson 49 reviews segmenting compound words, while Lesson 85 reviews that words are made up of syllables, counting syllables, and segmenting syllables.

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- The materials contain lessons that start with simple syllable awareness activities and gradually transition to more complex activities. In Lesson 9, students segment compound words such as *doghouse*, *homework*, and *baseball*. In Lesson 13, the teacher asks, “How many words are in *football*? (*two*) What are they? (*foot*, *ball*) Say it without *foot*. (*ball*).” The teacher repeats the process, omitting the first part of words such as *raincoat* and *railroad*. In Lesson 19, the teacher states, “Say *airplane*. (*airplane*) Say it without *plane*. (*air*).” The teacher continues by omitting the last part of words, such as *dugout* and *treetop*. In Lesson 30, the teacher introduces the concept of a syllable: “Other words that are not compound words have parts too. Listen to this word and think about how many times you could clap.” The teacher models how to clap and count the two parts in the word *teacher* and says, “Each of those parts is a syllable.” The teacher says, “Words are made up of parts called syllables. If the word has two parts, it has two syllables.” In Lesson 32, the students learn to blend two syllables together into one word. The teacher shows the students how to use their fists as a visual aid when blending two-syllable words. The teacher holds up one fist while saying /pā/ and holds up the other fist while saying /per/. The teacher says each syllable again a little faster while bringing their fists together. The teacher holds their fists together as they blend the syllables to say *paper*. In Lesson 132, the students learn to substitute words in compound words. The teacher says, “Echo *snowshoes*. Now change *shoes* to *man*.” The students say the new word *snowman*.

Materials include scripted direct (explicit) instruction for teaching oral syllable awareness skills.

- The materials include scripted direct (explicit) instruction for teaching oral syllable awareness skills. The teacher script in Lesson 91 introduces the objective: “Let’s learn about something called an *accent*.” The teacher says, “Every word has an accent on one of its syllables. The accent is the part of the word that is louder, higher, and has a punch. I’ll say a word. Echo the word and tell me whether the first or second syllable is accented.” The teacher models by punching with their arm on the accented syllable while saying, “Echo *wá-ter*.” The teacher decides whether or not to let children punch on the accented syllable, cautioning them about hitting one another if needed, and asks, “What part of the word is accented? (*first part, or first syllable*).” The manual suggests, “If children do not answer correctly, restate the word and place even more emphasis on the accented syllable.” The lesson continues with guided practice, with the teacher and students repeating the process for words such as *sugar*, *happy*, and *doughnut*.
- The materials connect new learning to previous learning. For example, in Lesson 9, the teacher script says, “I’ll say some compound words. Listen for the two words in each compound word. *Doghouse*. What are the two words?” In Lesson 30, the teacher script says, “Who remembers what a compound word is? Let’s say it together. A compound word is two words that come together to form one new word. For example, in the compound word *doghouse*, each word became part of the new word. Let’s clap that new word. *Dog* (clap)...*house* (clap). How many parts are there? Two. Other words that are not compound words have parts too. Listen to this word and think about how many times you could clap. *Teach...er*. Let’s say this word and clap together. *Teach...er*. How many parts are there? Two. Right! Each of those parts is a syllable. Can you say *syllable*? Words are made up of parts called syllables. If the word has two parts, it has two syllables. How many syllables are in *teacher*? Two.”
- The materials provide clear, precise directions and instructions using academic language. For example, the Lesson 32 script reads: “We’ve been talking about word parts, or syllables. Let’s

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play a game with syllables. I'll say two word parts separately, then I will blend them together into one word." The teacher says /pā/ and holds up one fist and then says /per/ while holding up the other fist. The teacher says these word parts again a little faster, hopping their fists closer together as they say each part. The teacher blends the syllables to say the word *paper*, hopping their fists together as they say each word part. The teacher says, "What word did we blend? Yes, *paper*. Good work! Let's try some more words. Say the word parts and move your hands along with me as we blend the syllables." Students use their fists while blending syllables in words such as *window*, *twenty*, and *market*.

- The materials provide opportunities for students to engage in an ongoing practice of oral syllabication. For example, the objective of Lesson 51 is to develop awareness that words are made of syllables and to determine the number of syllables in words. The teacher says, "Let's play a game. Every time we hear a syllable in a word, we'll jump. Ready? Echo and jump for this word: *la...bel*." The students jump two times as they echo the word. The teacher asks, "How many syllables are there? Two." The teacher repeats the game with the following words: *gum*, *nine-teen*, *five*, *pur-ple*, *pup-pet*, *or-ange*, *six*, *hun-gry*, and *stu-dent*.

Materials incorporate a variety of activities and resources for students to develop, practice, and reinforce skills (through cumulative review).

- The materials include a variety of whole group lessons with multimodal activities for strategically supporting syllabication development in multisyllabic words. For example, in Lesson 27, the teacher says, "A compound word is two words that come together to form one new word. Let's clap as we say each word in these compound words. Say *baseball*. *Base* (clap) *ball* (clap)." In Lesson 32, the students use their fists as visual aids when blending two-syllable words. In Lesson 51, students listen to a word and jump each time they hear a syllable. In Lesson 59, the teacher states, "I'll say some compound words, and then you clap the syllables in them. For each word, hold up your fingers to show how many syllables it has." The teacher claps the syllables along with the children while saying the word *houseboat*. Students hold up two fingers. The process continues with words including *moonlight*, *redhead*, *highway*, and *crossbar*. In Lesson 85, the students play a game alternating squatting and standing while segmenting and pronouncing each syllable in a word and counting the syllables. The teacher says, "Let's play a game. We'll say some words. We'll squat when we say the first syllable in each word. When we say the next syllable, we'll stand up straight. If the word has a third syllable, we'll squat again." The teacher demonstrates with the word *wonder*.
- The materials provide a variety of activities for ongoing review and practice. For example, the students play a game in Lesson 63 to determine the number of syllables in their names and sit near that number's sign. The teacher says, "On the floor are some signs with numbers on them. Say your first name to yourself and count the syllables. Then go to that number and sit near it." When all the students are seated, each student says his or her name, and the group members decide whether each child is sitting by the correct number.

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Indicator 3.B.2

Materials provide systematic and direct (explicit) instruction, practice, and review to support the development of **phonemic awareness** skills, as outlined in the TEKS.

1	Materials provide a systematic sequence for introducing phonemic awareness activities that begins with identifying, blending, and segmenting phonemes (the smallest unit of sound) and gradually transitions to more complex manipulation practices such as adding, deleting, and substituting phonemes.	M
2	Materials include scripted direct (explicit) instruction for teaching phonemic awareness.	M
3	Materials include direct (explicit) detailed guidance for connecting phonemic awareness skills to the alphabetic principle, helping to transition students from oral language activities to basic decoding and encoding.	M
4	Materials incorporate a variety of activities and resources for students to develop, practice, and reinforce skills (through cumulative review).	M

Meets | Score 4/4

The materials meet the criteria for this indicator. Materials provide systematic and direct (explicit) instruction, practice, and review to support the development of phonemic awareness skills, as outlined in the TEKS.

Materials provide a systematic sequence for introducing phonemic awareness activities that begins with identifying, blending, and segmenting phonemes (the smallest unit of sound) and gradually transitions to more complex manipulation practices such as adding, deleting, and substituting phonemes. Materials include scripted direct (explicit) instruction for teaching phonemic awareness. Materials include direct (explicit) detailed guidance for connecting phonemic awareness skills to the alphabetic principle, helping to transition students from oral language activities to basic decoding and encoding. Materials incorporate a variety of activities and resources for students to develop, practice, and reinforce skills (through cumulative review).

Evidence includes but is not limited to:

Materials provide a systematic sequence for introducing phonemic awareness activities that begins with identifying, blending, and segmenting phonemes (the smallest unit of sound) and gradually transitions to more complex manipulation practices such as adding, deleting, and substituting phonemes.

- The materials contain lessons that start with simple syllable awareness activities and gradually transition to more complex activities. In Lesson 10, students learn to recognize spoken alliteration in lists such as *lips, legs, logs* and *hat, honk, and hill*. Students begin to blend sounds starting with two-letter words in Lesson 11. In Lesson 17, students isolate and pronounce the initial sounds in words. The teacher states, "I'll say a word. Tell me the sound you hear at the beginning of the word. *Lot.*" In Lesson 20, students learn to unblend and segment two-letter consonant sounds; in Lesson 26, students segment sounds in words. In Lesson 28, students

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identify final sounds in words such as *rug*, *mill*, and *nap*. Students segment and count the sounds in words starting with one-letter and two-letter words before practicing with three-letter words in Lesson 35. In Lesson 60, students learn to identify the initial, medial, and final positions of sounds in words. The word list includes *bell*, *about*, and *tub*. In Lesson 97, students blend onsets and rimes. Students learn to add phonemes in Lesson 107 and delete phonemes in Lesson 109. In Lesson 131, students learn to substitute phonemes.

- The sequence follows the phonemic awareness continuum. Lessons cover isolating and blending phonemes before segmenting phonemes. For example, lessons cover isolating initial phonemes in Lesson 10 before blending two phonemes to make words in Lesson 11; Lesson 20 covers segmenting two-letter blends.

Materials include scripted direct (explicit) instruction for teaching phonemic awareness.

- Lessons identify the skills to be learned and communicate the objectives clearly to students. For example, the phonological/phonemic awareness objective of Lesson 11 is to develop the ability to blend sounds. The teacher begins the lesson by selecting two students for demonstration and says, “I’ll give each of you a sound. Echo your sounds. Then we’ll practice blending them, which means we’ll put the sounds together.” In Lesson 42, the teacher states, “Let’s play a sound blending game. Listen as I say each sound in a word. Then you put the sounds together and say the word.” In Lesson 44, the teacher says, “I’ll say a word. Tell me the sound at the end of the word.”
- The materials provide clear, precise instructions and phrasing for teaching with minimal pairs during phonemic awareness instruction. For example, in Lesson 135, the teacher says, “Echo *mar*. (*mar*) Say *mar*, but change the /m/ to /f/. (*far*).” The process is repeated with minimal pairs, including *more* (*for*), *house* (*mouse*), *pie* (*my*), *feet* (*meet*), and *table* (*fable*).
- Lesson plans include specific and precise terms, phrasing, and statements for teachers to use during instruction. For example, the students identify alliteration in groups of words in Lesson 10. The teacher says, “Listen closely to the sounds at the beginning of these words: *Gary goose gets gum*. What do you notice about these words? All the words start with /g/. When you hear two or more words in a row that start with the same sound, it is called alliteration. I’m going to say some groups of words. You tell me if the words are alliteration or not. Remember, only words that start with the same sounds are alliteration. *Lips, legs, logs*. Alliteration or not? (*Alliteration*) Why? (*All the words start with the same sound /l/.*) *Lamb, goat, hog*. Alliteration or not? (*Not*) Why? (*The words start with different sounds*).”
- Some phonemic awareness activities employ the gradual release of responsibility model. For example, the “Teacher’s Manual” indicates the phonemic awareness objective of Lesson 35 is to “unblend sounds in words in order to determine the number of sounds in those words.” The teacher says, “I’ll say some words. Echo each word and decide how many sounds are in the word. Then hold up that many fingers. The first word is *at*.” The teacher models how to unblend and count the sounds and holds up two fingers. The teacher helps the students unblend to count the sounds in the following words: *a* (1), *no* (2), *go* (2), *pay* (2), *hog* (3), *pan* (3), *sat* (3), *not* (3), and *hop* (3). Other brief phonemic awareness lessons contain a teacher script solely for guided practice. For example, Lesson 20 introduces the skill of segmenting consonant sounds. To begin the activity, the teacher says, “I’ll blend two consonants. Tell me the two sounds you hear.” The list includes /b/, /p/, /s/, /k/, /f/, and /g/. A note to the teacher states, “If this

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activity is too difficult, have children name only the beginning sound.”

- Materials provide clear, precise instructions and directions for reinforcing the correct articulation of phonemes. For example, the “English Learner Support” text box in Lesson 89 describes how to support articulation: “Model the sound /j/ while showing Spelling Card 22 and describing the mouth position. Then have the children practice making the sound /j/ using a mirror to check their own mouth position.” “Spelling Card 22” contains a photograph of the mouth position on one side. On the other side, Spelling Card 22 says, “Articulation Support: Touch the tip of your tongue to the roof of your mouth, about halfway back. Start the air and then drop your tongue down and blow out air to say /j/.”

Materials include direct (explicit) detailed guidance for connecting phonemic awareness skills to the alphabetic principle, helping to transition students from oral language activities to basic decoding and encoding.

- Materials include direct (explicit) detailed guidance for connecting phonemic awareness skills to the alphabetic principle. In Lesson 57, the teacher says, Let’s write the word *it* on the board. What sounds do you hear in the word *it*? (/i/, /t/).” The teacher asks students to tell how to spell the first sound in the word *it*, writes the letter *i* on the board, and repeats for /t/. The teacher says, “Let’s spell the word *it* with our Letter Tiles.” After students spell the word, the teacher asks, “What letter makes the /s/ sound? (s) Let’s see what happens when I add a letter *s* to the beginning of the word *it*?” The teacher writes an *s* on the board in front of the word *it* to make *sit* and then helps children blend the new word. “What happened when we added the letter *s* to the word *it*? (We created a new word: *sit*).”
- Materials identify the skills to be learned and communicate clear objectives. For example, in Lesson 23, the phonological/phonemic awareness objective is to recognize letter sounds. The teacher says, “Let’s play a game. I’ll say some words. Listen for the /l/ sound in each word. If you hear /l/ anywhere in the word, skywrite the letter *l*. If you don’t hear that sound, leave your hand in your lap.”
- Materials provide specific and precise terms, phrasing, and statements that teachers can use during core instruction for connecting phonemic awareness skills to the alphabetic principle. For example, the objective of Lesson 104 is to recognize combination sounds and to say combination names. The teacher distributes a “Letter Tile” *q* and *u* to each student and says, “Let’s play a game. I’ll say some words. If you hear the /kw/ sound, hold your tile high in the air. The first word is *quill*. Can the letter *q* make the sound /kw/ by itself? (No) Can the letter *u* make the sound /kw/ by itself? (No) If the letter *q* cannot make the /kw/ sound by itself and the letter *u* cannot make the /kw/ sound by itself, what should we do? Maybe we should combine our letter tiles. Let’s try this!” The teacher pairs students holding the Letter Tile *q* with children holding the Letter Tile *u*. The teacher says, “Now when I say a word that has the /kw/ sound, you and your partner should hold up your letter tiles together. Let’s try the word *queen*. Good job. Let’s try another word. *Clown*.” The teacher repeats the script with the following words: *quaint*, *bump*, *question*, *quick*, *munch*, *quit*, *number*, *quiver*, and *reason*.
- Materials use the gradual release of responsibility model for instruction for connecting phonemic awareness skills to the alphabetic principle. For example, in Lesson 96, the students cross their arms in an *x* when they hear a /ks/ sound. The teacher says, “I’ll say some words. If you hear the /ks/ sound, raise your arms and cross them like an *x*. The teacher demonstrates for

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the children. The students practice the following words: *duck, fax, six, morning, wax, monkey, tax, mix, ax, Saturday, fox,* and *window*. Later in the lesson, students read words with the letter *x*. The teacher says, “Look at the word by #1. Which letter is a vowel? (*o*) Put your finger under the vowel. How will we code it? (*short; breve*) Why? (*followed by a consonant*).” The teacher tells children to code the vowel and asks a volunteer to read the word (*box*). The teacher helps children blend the sounds as needed. Instruction continues with words including *fox* and *six*.

Materials incorporate a variety of activities and resources for students to develop, practice, and reinforce skills (through cumulative review).

- The materials incorporate a variety of activities for students to practice and reinforce phonemic awareness skills through cumulative review. For example, in Lesson 18, the students practice identifying, isolating, and pronouncing beginning sounds in words while rolling a ball. The teacher says, “I’ll say a word and roll this ball to someone. After you catch the ball, tell me the beginning sound in the word. *Lid*.” The teacher rolls the ball to a student who responds with /l/. The teacher says, “Now roll the ball back to me.” The teacher repeats with the following words: *gum, hat, log, ten, list, ox, game, ostrich, hen, hair, top,* and *tale*. The teacher ensures every student has a turn and only uses words that begin with /l/, /ö/, /h/, or /t/. In Lesson 26, the teacher states, “I’ll show you a picture. Tell me how many sounds are in the word that names this picture.” The teacher shows the children “Red Kid Card 1” (*hog*). “What is this picture? (*hog*) What is the first sound? (/h/) What is the second sound? (/ö/) What is the last sound? (/g/) How many sounds are in *hog*? (*three*).” The teacher continues with Cards 2–11 as time permits. In Lesson 58, the teacher says, “Raise your hand if you can tell me a word that begins or ends with the /k/ sound. For each word, I’ll put a mark on the board. Let’s see how many words we can think of.” The teacher tallies the marks on the board.
- The materials suggest or provide resources, including manipulatives, to practice and reinforce students’ phonemic awareness skills. For example, in the English Learner Support text box in Lesson 93, there are tips to support the articulation of the phoneme /ks/: “Model the sound /ks/ while showing Spelling Card 23 and describing the mouth position. Then have children practice making the sound /ks/ using a mirror to check their own mouth position.” Spelling Card 23 says, “Articulation Support: When you say /k/, the back of your tongue touches the roof of your mouth. Drop your tongue down, blow out air and say /k/. Then put the front part of your tongue near the back of your top teeth. Blow air out to make the sound /s/. Put the sounds together to say /ks/.”
- Materials provide a variety of activities and resources for connecting phonemic awareness skills to the alphabetic principle. For example, in Lesson 16, students will raise “Letter Tiles” *g, h,* or *l* to identify the /g/, /h/, or /l/ sounds in words. The teacher says, “Take out the *g, h,* and *l* letter tiles. Turn them to the purple lowercase letter side, and lay them in a row. Let’s play a game. I’ll say some words, and you listen for the /l/ sound. If you hear the /l/ sound anywhere in the word, hold your *l* letter tile up high in the air. If you don’t hear that sound, leave your tile down. The first word is *ill*.” The students raise their letter *l* tile. The teacher says the next word *tree*, and the students keep their letter *l* tile down. The teacher repeats the script with the following words: *smell, smart, list,* and *lamb*. The teacher continues with words containing the /g/ sound: *gum, goat, leg,* and *bad*. The teacher then continues the game with words that have the /h/ sound: *horse, hair,* and *henhouse*.

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Indicator 3.C.1

Materials provide systematic and direct (explicit) instruction, practice, and review to develop students' knowledge of **grade-level sound-spelling patterns**, as outlined in the TEKS.

1	Materials provide a systematic sequence for introducing grade-level sound-spelling patterns, as outlined in the TEKS.	M
2	Materials provide scripted direct (explicit) instruction for grade-level sound-spelling patterns.	M
3	Materials incorporate a variety of activities and resources for students to develop, practice, and reinforce skills (through cumulative review).	M
4	Materials provide a variety of activities and resources to decode and encode words that include taught sound-spelling patterns in isolation (e.g., word lists) and in decodable connected text that builds on previous instruction (e.g., within sentences or decodable texts).	M

Meets | Score 4/4

The materials meet the criteria for this indicator. Materials provide systematic and direct (explicit) instruction, practice, and review to develop students' knowledge of grade-level sound-spelling patterns, as outlined in the TEKS.

Materials provide a systematic sequence for introducing grade-level sound-spelling patterns, as outlined in the TEKS. Materials provide scripted direct (explicit) instruction for grade-level sound-spelling patterns. Materials incorporate a variety of activities and resources for students to develop, practice, and reinforce skills (through cumulative review). Materials provide a variety of activities and resources to decode and encode words that include taught sound-spelling patterns in isolation (e.g., word lists) and in decodable connected text that builds on previous instruction (e.g., within sentences or decodable texts).

Evidence includes but is not limited to:

Materials provide a systematic sequence for introducing grade-level sound-spelling patterns, as outlined in the TEKS.

- The “Teacher’s Manual” includes a scope and sequence that outlines the progressive teaching of sound-spelling patterns throughout 140 lessons. The lesson objectives progress from less to more complex phonics skills. In Lessons 1–100, students learn individual letters and their sounds and begin blending VC, CVC, CCVC, and CVCC words. Lesson 105 teaches the long vowels as a new concept, and in Lesson 109, students begin learning digraphs, starting with *ck*. Starting with Lesson 125, students start learning the concept of vowel-consonant-*e*. However, neither the scope and sequence nor other materials refer to the TEKS.
- The objectives are aligned to the grade-level TEKS sound-spelling patterns. For example, kindergarten students spell words with digraphs. In Lesson 120, students spell the words *thin*, *math*, and *with*.

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Materials provide scripted direct (explicit) instruction for grade-level sound-spelling patterns.

- The materials include specific and precise terms that teachers can use during core instruction. For example, in Lesson 117, the teacher holds up a can with a rubber band stretched over the open end and walks around the room, plucking the rubber band. “What do you notice about the rubber band? (*it moves (or vibrates)*) That’s what your vocal cords do when you make some sounds.” The teacher instructs students to put their fingertips on the front of their throat and say /th/. The teacher queries, “Did your throat vibrate? (*yes*) When a letter sound makes your vocal cords move, or vibrate, it is called a ‘voiced’ sound. Let’s try a sound that is not voiced so you can feel the difference. Say /s/. Do you feel any vibration? (*no*).” The teacher states, “/s/ is a sound that is not voiced. Since /th/ makes our vocal cords move, or vibrate, it is a voiced sound. Let’s draw a line through the *th*’s in these words to show that they are voiced. We’ll call this line a ‘voice line.’”
- Lessons spiral back and connect the new pattern to previous sound-spelling patterns. For example, in Lesson 109, the lesson connects the letter sounds for *c* and *k* for students to learn that when *ck* are together, they make one sound /k/.
- The lesson sequence follows the gradual release of responsibility model. For example, in Lesson 114, the teacher writes the word *wish* on the board and asks, “Do you see a vowel in this word? (*yes, i*) Is the vowel followed by a consonant? How do we code a vowel that is followed by a consonant?” The teacher then codes the vowel with a breve and asks, “Do you see any digraphs? How do we code digraphs?” The teacher underlines the digraph and asks a volunteer to read the word. The teacher helps students blend the sounds if needed. Next, the teacher states, “Look at the letters in the box on your worksheet. Underline all the digraph *sh*’s.” When children finish, the teacher tells them to count the digraph *sh*. The teacher says, “Turn your paper over. Look at the word by #1. Code this word.” Students underline the digraph *sh*. The teacher asks a volunteer to read the word *fish* and helps children blend the sounds as needed. The teacher tells students, “Draw a line from the word *fish* to the picture of a fish.” This routine is repeated with the words *brush, shelf, shed, dish, and ship*.
- The materials clearly communicate the objectives. For example, in Lesson 113, the “New Increment” section introduces digraph *sh*. The teacher tells students to echo the words *shut, shin, and shop*. Students listen for the sound that’s the same in the beginning, or initial, position. The teacher asks, “What sound do you hear in the initial position?” (/sh/) The teacher then writes the words on the board and says, “Look at these words. What letters do you see that might make the /sh/ sound?” After students identify the letters, the teacher asks, “What do we call two letters that come together to make one sound? (*digraph*).” The teacher repeats the digraph definition using hand signals that students have learned previously, and then the students repeat the definition with the teacher. Last, the teacher points to the *sh* in *shut* and states, “This is digraph *sh*.”

Materials incorporate a variety of activities and resources for students to develop, practice, and reinforce skills (through cumulative review).

- A variety of resources are incorporated into instruction, including “Letter,” “Picture,” and “Spelling Decks,” which are used both to develop new skills and to provide practice and reinforcement of learned skills. In Lesson 129, the teacher uses Letter Card 37 and Picture Card

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43 to introduce digraph *ch*. Once students have learned a letter or digraph, it is included in the review deck and reviewed during the “Daily Letter and Sound Review” routine. Spelling Card 36 is also used in Lesson 129. One side of the card shows a photograph of a child forming the sound /ch/ with their mouth. The other side of the card contains the following information: “Teacher gives sound: /ch/. Children echo same: /ch/ Articulation Support: Put your tongue in the middle of your mouth, blocking the air. Then blow air out quickly to say /ch/. After Lesson 129, they say: ‘digraph *ch*’ while they write: *ch* Keyword: *cheese*.” The teacher then adds Spelling Card 36 to the review deck and displays it in subsequent lessons as part of the “Spelling Sound Review” routine.

- The materials include 16 decodable readers appropriate for students to practice new sound-spelling patterns while reading as well as previously taught patterns. Materials also include “Fluency Readers.” In Lesson 140, teachers distribute the appropriate level of Fluency Reader 15. Students practice fluency with texts that are at their independent reading level. Students practice fluently reading words with short vowels, long vowels, digraphs, and words with the VCCV syllable division pattern.

Materials provide a variety of activities and resources to decode and encode words that include taught sound-spelling patterns in isolation (e.g., word lists) and in decodable connected text that builds on previous instruction (e.g., within sentences or decodable texts).

- The materials include opportunities to encode words in isolation. In Lesson 119, students lay their letter tiles in a row. The teacher quickly reviews the spelling deck. Children echo the sounds, name the letters that make them, and move the appropriate tiles to another row. The Spelling Deck includes letters and digraphs students learned previously. The teacher chooses previously taught words from the spelling word list, and students use their letter tiles to spell the words. During Lesson 119, a teacher could choose words from Lesson 117 (digraph voiced *th*), such as *bath* or *this*, or List 113 (digraph *sh*), such as *ash*, *fish*, or *shed*.
- The materials provide a variety of activities and resources to decode words in isolation. In Lesson 116, the teacher says, “Turn your paper over. Look at the word by #1. Which letter is a vowel? (*o*) How will we code it? (*short; breve*) Why? (*followed by a consonant*).” The teacher tells children to code the vowel and asks, “Does this word need any other coding? (*yes, underline digraph ck*).” The teacher tells students to underline the digraph and asks a volunteer to read the word (*sock*). The teacher states, “Draw a line from the word *sock* to the picture of a sock.” At the end of the lesson, the teacher adds words such as *mesh*, *ship*, and *shock* to the “Caterpillar Word Wall.” Students read the words and initial the words they can read. Also, in Lesson 116, the “Options for Differentiation” section includes a suggestion to support students who are struggling to read digraph *sh*. The teacher uses the *sh* “Wall Card” to review the digraph *sh* and the /sh/ sound. The teacher then writes each grapheme of the word *shop* on the board several times, points to each digraph or letter one by one, and guides students to chorally say the sound or letter the digraph makes. The teacher also writes *shōp* on the board three times, has students blend, and writes *shōp*. The teacher supports students in blending the sounds on the last line into one word.
- The materials provide a variety of activities and resources to decode and encode words in decodable connected text. For example, in Lesson 140, teachers distribute the appropriate level of Fluency Reader 15. Students practice reading texts that are at their independent reading

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level, independently or in groups. Students practice fluently reading words with short vowels, long vowels, digraphs, and words with the VCCV syllable division pattern.

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Indicator 3.C.2

Materials provide systematic and direct (explicit) instruction, practice, and review related to accurately identifying, reading, and writing **regular and irregular high-frequency words**.

1	Materials provide a systematic sequence for introducing regular and irregular high-frequency words.	PM
2	Materials provide scripted direct (explicit) instruction for decoding and encoding regular and irregular high-frequency words.	PM
3	Materials incorporate a variety of activities and resources for students to develop, practice, and reinforce skills (through cumulative review).	M
4	Materials provide a variety of activities and resources for students to recognize, read, and write high-frequency words in isolation (e.g., word lists) and in connected text (e.g., within sentences or decodable texts).	M

Partially Meets | Score 4/4

The materials partially meet the criteria for this indicator. Materials provide some systematic and direct (explicit) instruction, practice, and review related to accurate identification, reading, and writing of regular and irregular high-frequency words.

Materials provide some sequence for introducing regular and irregular high-frequency words. Materials provide some scripted direct (explicit) instruction for decoding and encoding regular and irregular high-frequency words. Materials incorporate a variety of activities and resources for students to develop, practice, and reinforce skills (through cumulative review). Materials provide a variety of activities and resources for students to recognize, read, and write high-frequency words in isolation (e.g., word lists) and in connected text (e.g., within sentences or decodable texts).

Evidence includes but is not limited to:

Materials provide a systematic sequence for introducing regular and irregular high-frequency words.

- The materials provide a systematic sequence for introducing high-frequency words. 110 high-frequency words are introduced in the kindergarten program, including 23 irregular high-frequency words (referred to in the materials as “sight words”). Sight word instruction begins in Lesson 27 after students have learned letter-sound relationships for the letters *l, o, g, h, t, p,* and *a* as well as blending of VC and CVC words. Students first learn *the* in Lesson 27, *to* in Lesson 39, and *of* in Lesson 47. The next group of words learned is *from, four, into, one,* and *you*. Students next learn *said, have, do, love, was, what,* and *my*. Finally, students are introduced to the words *two, when, they, who, come, where, are,* and *eight*.
- Regular high-frequency words are at times introduced as decodable words and are aligned to the phonics lessons. The materials do not refer to these words as high-frequency words during lessons. At other times, the regular high-frequency words are not included in the decoding or encoding portions of the phonics lessons, but instead, they appear in the “High-Frequency Word Box” on worksheets and homework sheets. The “Resource Foundations” document indicates the high-frequency words selected are “informed by the Dolch high-frequency word list.”

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- The program does not teach students to read irregular sight words by focusing on the decodable and non-decodable parts of the word. Students are taught to memorize sight words in the program. For example, the teacher introduces the sight word *of* in Lesson 47. The teacher writes the word *of* on the board and says, “This word is *of*. It does not follow our rules, so we must memorize it. What do we call words that don’t follow our rules? (*sight words*).” The teacher says, “Who can use the word *of* in a sentence? You’ll see this sight word often, so you must be able to recognize it. This word will be in your reader today.”
- The introductory lesson plans address the decodable parts of regular high-frequency words. For example, in Lesson 41, the teacher introduces the word *has* and points out the /z/ sound of *s*. The teacher writes the word *has* on the board and points to the *a*. The teacher asks, “How do we code this vowel? Why?” The teacher codes the vowel *a* short with a breve. The teacher says, “This is the word *has*. Did you notice that the letter *s* sounds like /z/? The letter *s* can sound like /s/ or /z/. You might need to try both sounds to see which one makes a word you know.”

Materials provide scripted direct (explicit) instruction for decoding and encoding regular and irregular high-frequency words.

- The materials provide scripted instruction for teaching students how to decode regular high-frequency words. For example, in Lesson 105, the teacher introduces the \bar{e} rule with the word *he*. The teacher says, “Echo these words and listen for the sound in the final position of each word: *he*, *be*, *we*. What sound do you hear in the final position? / \bar{e} /” The teacher writes the words on the board: *he*, *be*, and *we*. The teacher says, “Look at these words. What letter do you see that might make the / \bar{e} / sound? Is there a consonant after the *e*? When a vowel is not followed by a consonant, it is long. The / \bar{e} / sound is the long sound of the vowel *e*. A long vowel has the same sound as the vowel’s name. When a vowel has a long sound, we code it by putting a straight line over the vowel. We call this mark a macron.” The teacher demonstrates by coding *he* with a macron. The teacher asks, “How do we code this *e*? Why?” The teacher repeats coding, reading, and discussing with words *be* and *we*. The lesson script does not refer to the word *he* as a high-frequency word.
- The materials do not provide scripted direct (explicit) instruction for decoding irregular high-frequency words. For example, the teacher introduces the word *one* in Lesson 74. The teacher says, “This word is *one*. This sight word does not follow our rules, so we must memorize it. Who can use the word *one* in a sentence? You’ll see this sight word often, so you must be able to recognize it. This word will be in your reader today.” The teacher then shows the students “Sight Word Card 7.” The teacher also helps students find the word *one* on the “Numbers Poster.”
- The materials provide scripted instruction for teaching students how to encode regular high-frequency words. For example, Lesson 131 introduces the vowel digraph *ee*. The students spell the word *see* on Worksheet 131. The teacher says, “Find #6. Let’s spell words with digraph *ee*. The first word is *see*.” The teacher pronounces each sound slowly and reminds the students to use *ee* for the / \bar{e} / sound.
- The materials do not provide scripted instruction to teach students how to encode irregular high-frequency words. In Lesson 41, the teacher says, “Let’s try something new with our letter tiles. Sometimes we use words before we know about all of their sounds, or we use words that don’t follow our rules. What do we call these words? (*sight words*) Right! We call them ‘sight words’ because we must learn to recognize them by sight instead of sounding them out.” “What

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new sight word did we learn the other day? (*to*) Let's spell *to* with our letter tiles. If you can't remember how to spell *to*, look at the caterpillar word wall."

Materials incorporate a variety of activities and resources for students to develop, practice, and reinforce skills (through cumulative review).

- The materials include activities and resources that provide cumulative review in decoding high-frequency words. The materials include a "Sight Word Deck," which the teacher uses as part of the "Lesson Warm-Up," starting with Lesson 28. In Lesson 28, the teacher and students quickly review the "Letter" and "Picture" decks first. Then the teacher shows Sight Word Card 1 (*the*), and children read the word.
- The materials include activities and resources that provide cumulative review in encoding high-frequency words. In Lesson 55, the teacher tells students to spell the previously-learned sight words *of* and *to* with their "Letter Tiles." The teacher reminds students to refer to the "Caterpillar Word Wall" if needed for help.
- The materials include "Fluency Readers," which include high-frequency words. According to the "Fluency Instruction" document: "All readers feature fully controlled text rich in high-frequency words. High-frequency words are those words found most often in print and include both decodable words (words that follow phonics rules taught) and sight words (words that do not follow the phonics rules taught). The number of high-frequency words increases in each grade, with 110 high-frequency words introduced by the end of the year in grade K."

Materials provide a variety of activities and resources for students to recognize, read, and write high-frequency words in isolation (e.g., word lists) and in connected text (e.g., within sentences or decodable texts).

- The materials include a variety of activities and resources for recognizing, reading, and spelling high-frequency words in isolation. For example, in Lesson 20, the materials introduce the Caterpillar Word Wall—a word wall built in the form of a caterpillar. The teacher creates the Caterpillar Word Wall by using 4-inch circles of colored construction paper. The circles overlap slightly. The teacher draws a face and attaches antennae on the first circle for the head. The teacher writes each new word on a circle. The teacher writes sight words in a different color marker or circles the sight words to distinguish the sight words from the phonetic words. For example, in Lesson 48, the teacher adds words to the Caterpillar Word Wall: *fan*, *film*, *flip*, *loft*, and *stiff*. The teacher adds the sight word *of* using a different color marker or circling the word. The students can initial the word circles they can read. The students read the words whenever time permits.
- The materials include a variety of activities and resources for recognizing and reading high-frequency words in connected text. For example, Lesson 51 introduces "Decodable Reader 4," *Frog Ran*. The text includes both regular and irregular high-frequency words such as *ran*, *to*, and *the*. Lesson 55 introduces "Fluency Reader 4." All three levels of Fluency Reader 4 include the decodable high-frequency word *ask* and the irregular high-frequency word *from*.
- The materials include "Spelling and Reading Word Lists." According to the introductory paragraphs for the lists, "The list includes sight words and other high-frequency words; all the words are arranged in the order that the letters/letter clusters, sounds, and other concepts in each word are introduced, and lesson numbers indicate the lesson during or after which

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individual words may be used.” The lists include sight words, regular high-frequency words, and decodable words, and are color-coded, so the teacher can easily differentiate between high-frequency and sight words. Words in purple text are high-frequency words, and bolded words are sight words.

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Indicator 3.D.1

Materials provide frequent opportunities for students to practice and develop **word reading fluency**, by using knowledge of grade-level phonics skills to read **decodable connected texts** with accuracy and automaticity.

1	Materials include embedded modeling and practice with word lists, decodable phrases/sentences, and decodable connected texts in the lesson.	M
2	Materials provide practice activities for word reading fluency in a variety of settings (e.g., independently, in partners, in guided small groups, etc.).	M
3	Materials provide a variety of grade-level decodable connected texts that are aligned to the phonics scope and sequence.	M

Meets | Score 4/4

The materials meet the criteria for this indicator. Materials provide frequent opportunities for students to practice and develop word reading fluency, by using knowledge of grade-level phonics skills to read decodable connected texts with accuracy and automaticity.

Materials include embedded modeling and practice with word lists, decodable sentences, and decodable connected texts in the lesson. Materials provide activities to practice word reading fluency in a variety of settings. Materials provide a variety of grade-level decodable connected texts aligned to the phonics scope and sequence.

Evidence includes but is not limited to:

Materials include embedded modeling and practice with word lists, decodable phrases/sentences, and decodable connected texts in the lesson.

- The materials include embedded modeling, guided practice, and independent practice with word lists and decodable connected texts to develop word reading fluency. For example, in Lesson 128, the teacher introduces *u*-consonant-*e* and *e*-consonant-*e* words. The teacher references the “sneaky *e*” rule and the vowel rule wall card. The teacher models reading the words *cube* and *fume* by first coding them with the *long u* symbol and crossing out the *silent e*. The teacher does the same with *e*-consonant-*e* words such as *here* and *these*. The teacher shows students “Letter Card 35,” has students say “*u*-consonant-*e*” when they see the card, then introduces the corresponding keyword, *cube*. Students practice saying the word and the *long u* sound. The teacher tells students to code the word *cube* on their worksheets. The teacher asks a volunteer to read it aloud. Students independently code and read the words *fume*, *mule*, *here*, and *theme*. Students match the words *fume*, *mule*, and *cube* to the appropriate picture on the page. Either independently or in groups, students read “Fluency Reader 13” at their independent reading level (Level A, B, or C). Each level of the fluency reader includes words with the previously taught vowel-consonant-*e* pattern, including the *u*-consonant-*e* pattern taught in the lesson. The Level B reader, *Here at the Zoo*, contains words like *these* and *use*. Students independently read words on “Fluency Word List 13” for additional practice, and the teacher also listens to each student read words from the list.

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- The lesson plans include explicit modeling and demonstration of skills with word lists. For example, in Lesson 33, the teacher guides students to code and read word lists on their worksheets. The teacher says, “Look at the word by #5. Which letter is a vowel? Put your finger under the vowel. How will we code it?” The students code the vowel *o* short with a breve. Then the teacher helps them blend the sounds: /m/-/ö/-/p/. The students repeat the steps to decode the other words on the list, which are *ham* and *mat*.
- The lesson plans include guided practice with word lists. For example, in Lesson 33, the teacher and students read a reading practice page with two-letter and three-letter words to decode: *an*, *pan*, *on*, *hot*, *nap*, and *lag*. Lesson 61 has a reading practice page with twin consonants and blends: *big*, *toss*, *brass*, *risk*, *grab*, and *blast*.
- The lesson plans include independent practice with decodable texts. For example, Lessons 57–60 focus on the letter *b*. Lesson 59 introduces “Decodable Reader 5,” *The Big Trip*, which includes the words *big*, *Bob*, *Bill*, *Babs*, and *bam*, for practice with the phonics concept. After the teacher has read the book aloud, students read the story independently.

Materials provide practice activities for word reading fluency in a variety of settings (e.g., independently, in partners, in guided small groups, etc.).

- The materials provide practice activities for word reading fluency in a variety of settings. The materials include Fluency Word Lists for teachers to use during one-on-one or group instruction. Students can practice their lists during partner or independent reading. Fifteen Fluency Word Lists are included in the materials. For example, in Lesson 39, the teacher distributes Fluency Word List 2. The teacher listens to each child read some or all of the words on the paper. Fluency Word List 2 includes the words *him*, *an*, *got*, *at*, and *am*.
- The materials guide teachers to provide practice with word reading fluency in small groups. The materials include an “Option for Differentiation” section at the end of each lesson. According to the “Instructional Overview” document, these are intended as “small-group activities to support children...to review and/or build on the focus skill of the lesson.” For example, in Lesson 66, the materials provide three leveled activities about distinguishing the /ar/ sound in a word. In the “Support” activity, students listen to words, identify the sound, and circle the letters in the word that make the sound. In addition, the “Fluency Instruction” booklet provides directions for both echo reading and choral reading during either individual or small group instruction, as well as readers’ theater with small groups. The booklet also provides directions for “Recording-Assisted Reading,” which can take place with small groups in a listening center: “Record yourself or another fluent reader (such as a parent volunteer) modeling the reading of a reader. Then have children listen to the recording, following along silently in their books and tracking the print as they read. After they become familiar with the text, have children then read aloud with the recording several times until they can read the book independently.” The materials also include small group games in the “Differentiation Guide.” For example, in the game “Word Blend,” two to five players practice reading single words off of cards, removing a token from the card they read. The materials state that the concept being reinforced is blending words. In the game “Word Find,” four to six players take turns listening to the teacher read a word, finding a card with the word written on it, then reading the word aloud.
- The materials guide teachers to have students work with partners to practice word reading fluency. The materials include “Fluency Readers.” The directions in the materials state to review

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a new fluency reader with the class first, then have students read it with a partner or independently throughout the week. In Lesson 119, the teacher introduces “Fluency Reader 12” to the whole class. Students then read the text with a partner or independently. The “Fluency Instruction” booklet also provides directions for “Partner Reading”: “The stronger reader should read first to provide a model; then the less fluent reader should read the same text while the partner guides and encourages. When pairing children, you should model the initial reading of a book. Always monitor children’s reading for word recognition, expression, and fluency. If appropriate, have partners offer positive comments on each other’s reading improvements, such as pausing after periods and reading with expression. As partners work together, walk around the room and provide guidance as needed.”

- The materials include independent practice for word reading fluency. For example, lesson plans include independent practice with fluency readers. Students have opportunities to practice fluency with books at their independent reading level. In Lesson 39, the teacher distributes the appropriate level of Fluency Reader 2. The lesson plans recommend the teacher spend some time listening to each child read part of their fluency reader. Fluency Reader 2 (Level B) *The Hill* allows students to independently practice word reading fluency, including the recently taught phonics skill *ī* with words such as *in*, *it*, and *hill*. The materials also include “Fluency Passages,” which are short excerpts from the Fluency Readers. The materials include a worksheet that corresponds to each lesson. The worksheet contains words for students to read either to themselves or to the teacher.

Materials provide a variety of grade-level decodable connected texts that are aligned to the phonics scope and sequence.

- The materials provide a variety of grade-level connected decodable texts. The materials provide fiction and nonfiction texts separated into two categories: Decodable Readers and Fluency Readers. There are 16 decodable readers. They consist of fiction and nonfiction stories. The decodable readers are introduced once every other week, beginning in Lesson 27. The Fluency Readers are at three different independent reading levels. There are 15 fluency readers per level. The materials also include fluency word lists that correspond to the Fluency Readers and reading word lists that correspond to each lesson. Each lesson has a corresponding worksheet that contains lists of words that students code and read as practice with the phonics skills taught in the lesson.
- The decodable texts are aligned to the phonics scope and sequence for word-reading fluency. Word lists, decodable readers, and fluency readers emphasize specific patterns that have been taught. In Lesson 73, students practice reading and spelling words with the letter *e /ĕ/*, including *beg*, *belt*, *crept*, *help*, *mess*, *press*, *sent*, and *smell*. Corresponding Worksheet 73 contains the words *net*, *bell*, and *leg* for students to decode. In Lesson 74, students read the decodable reader *Ben is Ten!*, which reviews the phonics concept of *short e* taught in the previous lesson.

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Indicator 4.1

Materials include developmentally appropriate **diagnostic tools** (e.g., formative and summative) and guidance for teachers to measure and monitor student progress.

1	Materials include a variety of diagnostic tools that are developmentally appropriate.	M
2	Materials provide clear, consistent directions for accurate administration of diagnostic tools.	M
3	Materials include data management tools for tracking individual and whole class student progress.	M

Meets | Score 2/2

The materials meet the criteria for this indicator. Materials include developmentally appropriate diagnostic tools (e.g., formative and summative) and guidance for teachers to measure and monitor student progress.

Materials contain a variety of developmentally appropriate diagnostic tools. Materials provide clear, consistent directions for accurate administration of diagnostic tools. Materials include data management tools for tracking both individual and whole class student progress.

Evidence includes but is not limited to:

Materials include a variety of diagnostic tools that are developmentally appropriate.

- The Saxon Phonics and Spelling materials include a diagnostic tool for measuring phonological awareness skills. The “Instructional Overview” booklet indicates: “The Phonological/Phonemic Awareness Pre-Assessment is provided to help you determine children’s existing levels of phonological and phonemic awareness. The pre-assessment consists of a checklist of simple activities and indicates the grade level at which most children should achieve competency in each exercise. With kindergartners, it is recommended that you assess the entire class before you begin phonics instruction.” The preassessment assists teachers in determining students’ ability to discriminate between words, distinguish between single-syllable and multisyllabic words, identify rhyming words, discriminate between phonemes, and identify initial sounds. The pre-assessment does not reflect the full continuum of phonological awareness as explained in the grade-level TEKS. It directly correlates with two of the grade-level TEKS for phonological awareness: K.2A.i (identify and produce rhyming words) and K.2A.ii (recognize groups of words that begin with the same spoken initial sound).
- The Amira Learning materials include a variety of diagnostic tools for measuring phonological awareness and phonics skills. For example, Amira “Benchmark Assessments” are administered three times a year. The Benchmark Assessment is given in the fall (BOY), winter (MOY), and spring (EOY). The “Benchmark Report” provides data on foundational skills mastery, such as phonological and phonemic awareness skills, decoding, and sight word recognition. During the benchmark assessment, students read a passage out loud to Amira for four minutes or until they complete the text, whichever comes first. According to the document “Amira Learning + Saxon Phonics and Spelling Prepared for the 2022 TRR Phonics Review,” the complete digital

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assessment will take five to nine minutes. The assessment includes a “range of item types, providing data on phonological and phonemic awareness, sight recognition, vocabulary, and comprehension.” The document also states, “Amira provides a diagnosis at the individual student level of which skills, including which phonics skills a student has already likely mastered, is ready to learn next, or is not yet ready to learn. Educators can use this information, alongside Saxon Phonics and Spelling resources linked to this progression of skills, to make instructional decisions in the classroom.”

Materials provide clear, consistent directions for accurate administration of diagnostic tools.

- The Saxon Spelling and Phonics materials include guidance to help the teacher efficiently administer the assessment. For example, the “Phonological/Phonemic Awareness Pre-Assessment” includes a “Teacher’s Instructions” column, which contains a script for the teacher to follow for each item. For Item 2, the Teacher’s Instructions indicate the teacher should say, “*Cat* and *cat* are the same word. *Snake* and *bird* are different words. Are *dog* and *fig* the same word, or are they different?” The pre-assessment document also includes space for the teacher to record the child’s responses for each item.
- The Saxon materials include embedded reminders or tips to support the observation of students during the assessment as well as space for recording comments and anecdotal notes. For example, the Phonological/Phonemic Awareness Pre-Assessment instructions say, “If child has difficulty with any portion of this pre-assessment, follow the suggestions provided on the back of this form.” If a student needs support on the ability to discriminate between words, the materials offer this suggestion: “Say two words repeatedly and ask whether they are the same or different.” The preassessment offers a space for the teacher to record the student’s responses and other observations.
- The Amira Benchmark Assessment is completed online. The article “What are the components of the Benchmark Assessment?” in the “Teacher Support” section of www.amiralearning.com advises teachers to explain the following to students prior to beginning the assessment so that students are prepared for what to expect and how to ensure they do their best: “1. Amira will explain what to do before they begin reading. 2. They will be using their computer/iPad and headset/microphone to read aloud a story to Amira, and the story will appear on their screen. 3. After they say a word, the text will turn from black to gray. 4. While they read aloud, Amira will be listening to them read—they should read quickly and avoid taking long pauses (note: long pauses or distractions will negatively impact scoring). 5. When they are ready to move on to the next page, they will click the green arrow at the bottom of the page—they should not click this arrow until they give that page their best effort. 6. When they are finished reading, Amira will explain to them that their reading is being saved and that Amira will take care of logging them out.”

Materials include data-management tools for tracking individual and whole-class student progress.

- The Saxon materials include data management tools to enable teachers to document individual and whole class data regarding phonological awareness skills. For example, the teacher uses one Phonological/Phonemic Awareness Pre-Assessment document per student to record the child’s responses to each assessment item. The materials also contain a hard copy recording form to record class results. There are rows for up to 32 student names and columns for each of the five

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skills assessed: “Discriminates between two words, Discriminates between single-syllable and multi-syllable words, Hears rhyme in words, Hears the difference in two sounds, and Hears initial sounds.”

- The Amira Learning data management tools help teachers understand the data and how to use it to track student progress. For example, Amira digital reports track the skills the student has mastered and their interactions as they practice the skills. The skills are color-coded on a continuum that shows grade-level progress in phonological awareness, decoding, and sight word recognition. For example, the Amira platform includes class summary reports. The Benchmark Report displays the scores of each student in the class and “compares student’s fluency against national, state, and local norms.” The report can be generated for the following areas: “Oral Reading Fluency, Reading Mastery, Sight Recognition, Phonological Awareness, Vocabulary Size.” The report is presented in the form of a horizontal bar graph, with lines to visually indicate the 25th, 50th, and 75th percentile ranks.

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Indicator 4.2

Materials include integrated **progress monitoring** tools, with specific guidance on frequency of use.

1	Materials include progress monitoring tools that systematically and accurately measure students' acquisition of grade-level skills.	M
2	Materials include specific guidance on determining frequency of progress monitoring based on students' strengths and needs.	M

Meets| Score 2/2

The materials meet the criteria for this indicator. Materials include integrated progress monitoring tools, with specific guidance on frequency of use.

Materials include progress monitoring tools that systematically and accurately measure students' acquisition of grade-level skills. Materials include specific guidance on frequency of progress monitoring based on students' strengths and needs.

Evidence includes but is not limited to:

Materials include progress monitoring tools that systematically and accurately measure student's acquisition of grade-level skills.

- The Saxon materials include progress monitoring tools that routinely and systematically assess students' acquisition of grade-level skills. For example, "Oral Assessments and Sight Word Evaluations" begin at Lesson 12 and continue throughout the year at four-lesson intervals. The "Instructional Overview" booklet explains: "Designed to meet screening, diagnostic, instructional, and evaluative objectives, assessments provide an effective means to gauge how well children are learning and retaining concepts and will help you determine weekly whether to adjust the pacing of instruction. Assessments should be considered diagnostic tools rather than grading tools; complete them promptly to identify areas for remediation." The materials include recording forms for both individual and whole class results on each assessment. A portion of each Oral Assessment addresses phonological awareness skills. For example, during Oral Assessment 3, the teacher says, "Echo this word: *bluebird*. What are the two words in *bluebird*?" The teacher also says, "Echo these words: *lamp—lost*. What sound do you hear at the beginning of these words?" "Echo /i/. Echo /t/. Blend these two sounds together."
- The Saxon materials include progress monitoring tools that accurately measure students' knowledge of taught phonics skills. For example, Oral Assessment 3 is given after Lesson 20. Several questions focus on the letter *g*, which was introduced in Lessons 9–12 and included in daily review activities after those lessons. On Oral Assessment 3, the teacher points to the *G* on the assessment and asks, "What is the name of this letter?" The teacher says, "Circle the lowercase *g*. What sound does the letter *g* make?" The teacher also instructs the student: "Echo /g/. Write the lowercase letter that makes this sound."
- The Saxon materials recommend embedded systematic observations of students' everyday activities and interactions to track progress and assess skills in authentic situations. For example, the materials include an "Informal Fluency Assessment Recording Form" on which teachers use

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a rubric to rate students on the following “Goals for Fluency”: “Attempts to read smoothly by grouping words into meaningful phrases; Attempts to read expressively; Attempts to use end punctuation as phrasing cues; Attempts to read at an even pace; Understands that text conveys meaning.” The form also contains a column for “Comments.” The rating scale for Goals for Fluency is “1 for Never, 2 for Seldom, 3 for Usually, and 4 for Always.”

- The Amira materials include progress monitoring tools that routinely and systematically assess students’ acquisition of grade-level skills. For example, Amira Learning allows teachers to administer a “Progress Monitoring” passage up to 20 times per year per student. The program listens to the student read and assesses reading mastery, phonemic awareness, sight recognition, vocabulary, and comprehension. The article “What is progress monitoring?” in the “Teacher Support” section of the online platform states, “We start from the premise that a Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS) or Response to Intervention (RTI) plan is followed using multiple data points. Once students are screened with the Benchmark Assessment, Progress Monitoring can then be utilized to show their progress toward mastering standards. In order to view student progress over time, teachers can access the Progress Report. Hovering over the trend line in the Progress Report will show the student’s projected level of proficiency throughout the year.” The “Progress Report” is color-coded based on percentile rank from national norms: green indicates above 75th percentile rank, yellow is between 25th and 75th percentile, and red indicates below 25th percentile rank. The report provides a “Predicted Ability” by the end of the school year. When the user hovers over the question mark icon by Predicted Ability, the resulting pop-up explains that the Predicted Ability progress line “reflects the improvement Amira is documenting in the student’s reading” and “can show significant growth, very gradual growth or even rarely, a slide in the student’s fluency.” The report output can be adjusted to display one of five different metrics: “Oral Reading Fluency, Reading Mastery, Sight Recognition, Phonological Awareness, Vocabulary Size.” This report, as well as other Amira reports, does not list the TEKS.
- Amira Learning monitors students’ reading in real time on three levels: “Word Level, Phrase Level, Story Level.” The program monitors students’ reading and uses the data to implement “micro-interventions.” For example, the online program monitors students’ progress in the area of phonological awareness while reading. The online program determines errors in specific areas of phonological awareness and provides corresponding micro-interventions in the following categories: “Fast Sound Out (Word), Phonemic Sound Out (Sentence), Rhyming Word (Word), Rhyming Word (Sentence), Gives the Word with Graphemes Displayed, Elkonin Box.”

Materials include specific guidance on determining frequency of progress monitoring based on students’ strengths and needs.

- The Saxon materials include specific suggestions for how often to progress monitor different groups of students or individuals. The “Instructional Overview” document states, “The weekly assessment does not need to be given to every child each week. However, every fifth assessment is cumulative and is the one that all children should take. The in-between lessons may be used to check the level of success of children who are struggling.”
- The Saxon materials guide teachers to monitor progress at a frequency appropriate for age and skill development. For example, the materials encourage teachers to conduct informal assessments on a regular basis. The materials suggest that the teacher observe students while

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they complete worksheets in class or by having students read their decodable readers aloud to the teacher. The “Fluency Instruction” booklet states, “remember that the goal for kindergartners is simply to read as accurately and smoothly as possible. You can help children achieve this by performing ongoing, informal assessments of their skills and giving them regular feedback and encouragement. In kindergarten, informal assessment consists of frequently listening to children read aloud at their independent reading level. This should be part of the daily routine.” The materials also include “Fluency Readers Tracking Charts” to track children’s progress on reading fluency readers. The chart includes spaces to note if the child “requires further work in fluency, decodability, or comprehension.”

- The Amira Learning materials include a progress monitoring feature that allows teachers to administer a progress monitoring passage up to 20 times per year. The materials do not include suggested timelines for checking progress that align to the TEKS and the scope and sequence of the materials. The progress monitoring takes place in between the formal Amira benchmark measures, which are given at BOY, MOY, and EOY.

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Indicator 4.3

Materials include guidance for teachers to **analyze and respond to data** from diagnostic tools.

1	Materials support teachers' analysis of diagnostic data to inform response to individual students' strengths and needs.	M
2	Diagnostic tools provide teachers with guidance on how to plan and differentiate instruction based on student data.	M
3	Materials include a variety of resources that align to data, allowing teachers to plan different activities in response to student data.	M

Meets | Score 2/2

The materials meet the criteria for this indicator. Materials include guidance for teachers to analyze and respond to data from diagnostic tools.

Materials support teachers' analysis of diagnostic data to inform response to individual students' strengths and needs. Diagnostic tools guide teachers on how to use student data to plan and differentiate instruction. Materials include a variety of resources that align to data, which allows teachers to plan different activities in response to student data.

Evidence includes but is not limited to:

Materials support teachers' analysis of diagnostic data to inform response to individual students' strengths and needs.

- The Saxon Phonics and Spelling materials guide the teacher's interpretation of the data. For example, the materials provide suggested steps for teachers to follow when interpreting student data. The "Research Foundations" booklet indicates: "There are Oral and Written Phonics and Spelling Assessments to evaluate mastery of concepts and skills that have been practiced. Students are considered successful if they answer at least 80 percent of the questions correctly. If children do not achieve 80 percent accuracy on any given assessment, teachers can identify the concepts that students found difficult and spend extra time reinforcing them. Each assessment lesson provides recommendations for practice and remediation activities to address specific issues. Directions for these activities, as well as additional information, are located in the Resources for Differentiation booklet." The "Instructional Overview" booklet also states, "Children should never fail an assessment. If results suggest a less-than-desired outcome, always remediate and then retest when the child has had more practice."
- The Amira Learning materials also guide the teacher's interpretation of the data. For example, Amira Learning provides a "Help" function that links to the "Support" section of the online platform, which includes "Teacher Support" and "Technical Support." Articles responding to questions frequently asked by teachers about Amira are displayed, and teachers can also type in search terms to find assistance on how to view the data, which includes images of sample students and class data reports that help teachers understand what the scores indicate about student knowledge and skills. For example, the article "What are the components of the Benchmark Assessment?" contains a response that includes information about which reports

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are populated with data from the benchmark assessment, the purpose of each report, and the metrics that are displayed on each report. The article “How do I use the benchmark report?” includes links to a slide deck and video with guiding questions that can be answered by the report, navigation such as how to change the metrics shown on the report, data analysis scenarios, and next steps for teachers.

- The assessment tools result in data that is easily analyzed and interpreted. For example, on the Amira Learning “Benchmark Report,” student scores are displayed in a color-coded bar graph. Scores above the 50th percentile rank for word count per minute are shaded green. Scores between the 25th percentile rank and the 50th percentile rank are shaded yellow. Scores below the 25th percentile rank are shaded red. Student performance over time is shown in a line graph on the “Progress Report” for the metrics of “Oral Reading Fluency, Reading Mastery, Sight Recognition, Phonological Awareness, Vocabulary Size.” The area under the line graph contains regions shaded in color. Green represents above the 75th percentile rank. Yellow represents between the 25th and 75th percentile rank. Red represents below the 25th percentile rank. At the bottom of the report, the students’ “Predicted Ability by end of school year” is listed for the chosen metric. The “Skills Status” report shows whole class data on skill mastery; it indicates the progress of each student in the class for the Fall, Winter, and Spring portions of the year. Each student’s results are color-coded to correspond with their results. When hovering the mouse over a box, a pop-up states the learning objective, the number of times it was observed for the student, and the number of errors the student made. Scores are color-coded on the student’s “Skills Diagnostic” to show levels of mastery, such as green for mastered, yellow for developing, and pink for not developed. This report provides progress reports for students by skill and grade-level mastery and suggests lessons for instruction and/or reteaching.

Materials tools provide teachers with guidance on how to plan and differentiate instruction based on student data.

- The Saxon Phonics and Spelling materials guide teachers in using assessment data to inform their core phonics instruction. For example, the “Phonological/Phonemic Awareness Pre-Assessment” informs teachers: “Children who correctly answer the questions in Parts A–E possess a high level of phonemic awareness and are ready to begin the program. You may slightly accelerate the pace for these children. Children who correctly answer the questions in Parts A–C possess sufficient phonemic awareness to begin the program. Proceed at a normal pace, paying special attention to activities involving the concepts in Parts D and E. Children who cannot correctly answer the questions in Parts A–C do not possess the requisite level of phonemic awareness for phonics instruction to be of benefit. However, most children can be brought to this level if given time to practice. When they seem to be able to hear the sounds, they are ready to begin the program.” The “Fluency Instruction” booklet details how to “identify the appropriate leveled reader for each child” before distributing fluency readers to students for the first time. The Fluency Instruction booklet guides teachers to have each student read two short passages to assess their accuracy. The teacher marks the student’s errors and calculates the percentage of words correct to determine the student’s reading level. Based on the accuracy percentage, the directions guide the teacher to choose either Level A, Level B, or Level C fluency readers. If the child is not reading on the independent level with the grade-level text, the

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materials state, “these children might need more one-on-one instruction in decoding and word recognition, which you can provide with fluency masters.”

- The Amira Learning materials also guide teachers in using assessment data to inform their core phonics instruction. For example, within Amira’s Skills Diagnostic report, skills are linked directly to the materials’ scope and sequence, allowing teachers to view which skills need to be taught next, as well as access lesson plans, worksheets, and other resources for instruction. The report does not allow teachers to reorganize the data to differentiate phonics instruction and easily group students according to assessment results, but teachers can use the color coding from the report to help guide their student grouping.
- The data-management tools display color-coded student data. For example, the Amira Skills Status digital report is a whole-class report color-coded by each student’s mastery level. The report includes the current achievement level of each student in the areas of “Phonological Awareness, Decoding, Sight Recognition, Background Knowledge, Vocabulary, Structures & Reasoning.” The “Teacher Support” section states that the report can be used to group students and plan for individualized instruction. It explains: “The Skills Status Report allows teachers to visually see the status of their entire class in every reading skill. You read that correctly: your entire class and all the skills (not just their grade level skills). Skills are mapped across the report, and each student has a color-coded box for each skill (red-yellow-green) depending on their mastery level. If a teacher toggles over the skill box, there is a description of the skill and a count of the number of times a student has encountered the skill and the number of errors they’ve made.” The report allows the teacher to drag and drop students into a different order to see student data in comparison with “their reading group or intervention team peers.” The color-coded Benchmark Report lists each student and provides data on “Oral Reading Fluency, Reading Mastery, Sight Recognition, Phonological Awareness, Vocabulary Size.”

Materials include a variety of resources that align to data, allowing teachers to plan different activities in response to student data.

- The Saxon Spelling and Phonics materials provide a variety of resources that teachers can choose from to respond to student data. For example, once teachers have completed the Phonological/Phonemic Awareness Pre-Assessment, the Phonological Awareness document includes activities to “practice with children one-on-one or in small groups to help improve their phonological and phonemic awareness.” The activities are listed in order of difficulty, starting with the easiest. The Research Foundations document states, “If an assessment indicates a deficiency in concept knowledge, teachers can follow the recommended remediation activities that accompany the assessment.” For example, on “Oral Assessment Answer Form 5,” the teacher gives the following instructions: “Tell me a word that begins with /t/.” “Circle the lowercase t.” “Circle the word pop.” “Code and read this word. (*got*)” On the bottom of Oral Assessment Answer Form 5, it says, “Games and activities that reinforce specific concepts on this assessment are listed below.” The answer form lists the activities “Play the Kid Card game Sound Solutions,” “Play the Kid Card game Letter/Sound Identification,” and “Play the Kid Card game Word Blend.”
- The Amira Learning materials also provide a variety of research-based student resources that teachers can choose from to respond to student data. The Amira “Instructional Recommendations” report provides appropriately challenging skills that should be emphasized

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during individual or small group instruction. For example, it recommends the following words as appropriately challenging for a kindergarten student in the 22nd percentile for “Sight Recognition”: *do*, *old*, and *set*. For a kindergarten student at the 40th percentile for decoding, the report lists “Likely Mastered Skills,” such as “Identify and Name Consonants.” “Appropriately Challenging Skills” include “Spelling Words with VC, CVC, and CCVC Patterns” and “Manipulate Syllables in Multi-Syllabic Words.”

- The Amira Learning materials respond immediately to student data by delivering micro-interventions directly to the student while they are using the program. For example, if a student misreads a word, Amira analyzes the student’s misread word and instructional needs and immediately delivers a relevant micro-intervention to the student. Micro-interventions address areas including decoding, phonological awareness, and sight word recognition. If a student has difficulty pronouncing sounds in a word, the program selects an appropriate micro-intervention, such as showing a person correctly pronouncing the sounds in a word.

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Indicator 5.1

Materials include **guidance, scaffolds, supports, and extensions** that maximize student learning potential.

1	Materials provide targeted instruction and activities to scaffold learning for students who have not yet mastered grade-level foundational phonics skills.	M
2	Materials provide targeted instruction and activities to accelerate learning for students who have achieved grade-level mastery of foundational phonics skills.	M
3	Materials provide enrichment activities for all levels of learners.	M

Meets | Score 2/2

The materials meet the criteria for this indicator. Materials include guidance, scaffolds, supports, and extensions that maximize student learning potential.

Materials provide targeted instruction and activities which scaffold learning for students who have not yet mastered grade-level foundational phonics skills. Materials provide targeted instruction and activities that accelerate learning for students who show mastery of grade-level foundational phonics skills. Materials provide enrichment activities for learners at all levels.

Evidence includes but is not limited to:

Materials provide targeted instruction and activities to scaffold learning for students who have not yet mastered grade-level foundational phonics skills.

- The materials provide suggested additional lessons and activities to support students who have not mastered phonics concepts. The “Options for Differentiation” at the end of each phonics lesson include options at the “Support” level, which are designed for students who are struggling to learn the most recently taught concept. The activities may be “multisensory activities that address different types of learners, including those who show signs of dyslexia,” as well as additional instruction or structured practice. For example, students learn about the letter *m* in Lesson 34. The corresponding Support activity states, “For children who struggle to read and write capital *M* and lowercase *m*, including children who show signs of dyslexia, have them practice forming and tracing the letter using different materials.” The teacher creates three practice areas and provides the *m/M* “Letter Tile” in each area for students to reference. In one area, students form the capital and lowercase *M* using items such as pipe cleaners or wax sticks. In the second area, students use their first two fingers to trace the letter shape on bubble wrap or carpet. In the last area, students use their first two fingers to trace the letter shape on a rough surface, such as a plastic grid or sandpaper letters. In Lesson 36, students continue studying the letter *m*. The Support activity is for “children who struggle to connect the /m/ sound with letter *m*” and provides practice with differentiating between words that start with /m/ or /n/. The teacher prepares a list of 15 to 30 words that begin with *m* or *n*. The teacher gives each child the Letter Tiles *m* and *n* and guides students to practice holding up the correct letter tile when they hear the /m/ or /n/ sound in isolation. The teacher then reads one word at a time from the prepared list, and students hold up the correct letter tile when they hear a word

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that starts with the related sound.

- The materials ensure that teachers are able to identify and provide opportunities for students to develop precursor skills necessary to access grade-level content. For example, in Lesson 24, the students code and read the words *top*, *hop*, and *pot* and then match them to their pictures. The materials provide a “Remediation Tip” that says, “Allow children who are successfully blending to read the words to you. Children who are not ready to blend may locate various letters and tell you their sounds. Blend the sounds with these children, and let them match each word to its picture.”
- The materials include connected texts at different levels for independent or guided small group instruction. “Fluency Readers” are included in three levels (Levels A, B, and C), with Level A being most appropriate for students who have not yet mastered grade-level skills. According to the “Fluency Instruction” booklet, Level A readers have the high-frequency words found in the other levels, but they have simpler sentences and fewer words per page. For example, within Lesson 104, Fluency Reader 10 is introduced with Level A, *Sal’s Red Quilt*, Level B, *The Not Big Quilt*, and Level C, *What a Soft Quilt*. The readers include words with *qu*, which was the focus of the lesson. The Level A book has 43 words. In comparison, the Level B book has 124 words.

Materials provide targeted instruction and activities to accelerate learning for students who have achieved grade-level mastery of foundational phonics skills.

- Lessons include recommendations on upward scaffolding to support the extension and application of learning. For example, in Lesson 25, the plans include an extension activity for students who have mastered reading and writing words with /ă/. The extension plan provides the following activity to extend their learning by having them spell words with /ă/. The teacher says, “Today, we’re going to use this grid to spell words. Let’s start with our names.” The teacher demonstrates by hopping from letter to letter. Then the children take turns spelling their names on the grid. Next, the students spell words with /ă/, using only letters and sounds students have already learned, such as *hat*, *tag*, *gap*, *lap*, and *pal*. The teacher says a word with /ă/ for each student, and they echo the word. The teacher asks, “What sounds do you hear in the word?” The students spell the word by hopping or stepping on the correct letters on the grid.
- Lessons provide additional activities and resources to extend and explore new learning in collaborative groups or independently. The teacher generally selects the activities rather than providing students with choices. The “Resources for Differentiation” booklet has suggestions for providing additional guided practice in small groups. For example, the materials provide directions to play a game called “Sound Solutions.” The objective of the game is to identify the initial, medial, and/or final sounds in words. The materials provide variations of the game; the option to extend learning has the student identify the sounds in all three positions of the word. The objective of the activity “Rhyme It” is to think of rhyming words. The activity includes an extension option, in which students look at a picture card and think of a rhyming word. Students must rhyme only real words, but students at the “Support” and “Reinforce” levels can rhyme using nonsense words.
- The materials include connected texts at different levels for independent or guided small group instruction. Fluency Readers are included in three levels (Levels A, B, and C). The Fluency Instruction booklet guides teachers on how to determine a student’s fluency level

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and pick the appropriate level of reader. The booklet states that Level C readers are designed for advanced readers and “contain more challenging text: longer sentences, significantly higher word counts, and more complex syntax.”

Materials provide enrichment activities for all levels of learners.

- The lesson plans include suggestions for extending learning for students at all levels. The Options for Differentiation section includes “Support,” “Reinforce,” and “Extend” activities to reach students at various levels of phonics mastery. For example, students learn the letter z in Lesson 65. The Support activity states, “For children who struggle to recognize and form letter z, including children who show signs of dyslexia, have them practice the letter shape with kinesthetic movements.” The teacher models capital and lowercase z yoga poses, and the students replicate the poses several times. The Reinforce activity instructions indicate, “For children who are learning to connect letter z with the sound /z/, have them practice identifying the /z/ sound in a rhyme.” The teacher uses the Zz “Wall Card” to review capital and lowercase z, the /z/ sound, and the keyword *zebra*. Students then hold up “Letter Tile” z every time they hear the /z/ sound as the teacher reads a poem containing rhyming lines. In the Extend activity, intended for students who have mastered connecting letters to their corresponding sounds, students play “Review Deck Select” to practice each letter’s name, keyword, and sound.
- The Saxon Phonics and Spelling materials provide enrichment activities for all levels of learners. For example, the Fluency Instruction booklet includes suggestions and instructions for reading activities that will benefit all readers, such as “Partner Reading” and “Readers’ Theater.” The booklet also describes “Recording-Assisted Reading,” used individually or in small groups. A student listens to a recording of a text while following along in their book. Then, the student reads aloud with the book several times until they can read the book independently. The teacher directions include the option of also having the student read the book aloud to the class. “Kid Card Games” are found in the “Resources for Differentiation” booklet and contain instructions for games of varying difficulty levels that children can play in small groups. These games use the “Kid Card Decks” to review letter names, sounds, keywords, blending, rhyming, and spelling. The game instructions include variations to make the game easier or more difficult, depending on the needs of the students.
- The Amira Learning materials provide enrichment activities for all levels of learners in foundational phonics skills. The Amira Learning online program gives students the option to read a story. The stories offered to the students contain text relevant to the student’s mastery of phonics skills based on their reading data. Five stories are offered for the student to choose from.

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Indicator 5.2

Materials include a variety of **instructional methods** that appeal to a variety of learning interests and needs.

1	Materials include a variety of developmentally appropriate instructional approaches to engage students in mastery of the content.	M
2	Materials support a variety of instructional settings (e.g., whole group, small group, one-on-one).	M

Meets | Score 2/2

The materials meet the criteria for this indicator. Materials include a variety of instructional methods that appeal to a variety of learning interests and needs.

Materials include a variety of developmentally appropriate instructional approaches that engage students in mastery of the phonics content. Materials support a variety of instructional settings.

Evidence includes but is not limited to:

Materials include a variety of developmentally appropriate instructional approaches to engage students in mastery of the content.

- The materials engage students in content mastery through developmentally appropriate instructional approaches. For example, lessons include teacher modeling of a new concept. In Lesson 45, the students are learning to write the letter *f*. The lesson plan provides the following option to reinforce student mastery of the skill: The teacher writes lowercase *f*'s in two or three colors all over a piece of butcher paper. Then the teacher tapes butcher paper to the wall or board and reviews the /f/ sound and keyword *fish* with the students. The students trace the letter *f* with different colors of paint using medium-sized paintbrushes.
- The materials engage students through kinesthetic movement and tactile elements. For example, during the "Alphabet Activity" portion of Lesson 38, the teacher asks, "What two kinds of letters make up the alphabet? (*vowels and consonants*) Name the vowels. (*a, e, i, o, u*)." Then the teacher says, "Let's touch and name the vowels," and students touch and name each vowel on their individual "Alphabet Handwriting Strips." The teacher asks, "What are all of the other letters called? (*consonants*) Put your pointer finger on *A*, and point to each letter as we say the alphabet." Students point to each letter on their Alphabet Handwriting Strips and say the alphabet. In Lesson 12, the teacher divides the class into five groups and assigns each group a different vowel tile. The teacher states, "Look at your group's vowel tile. Each vowel has at least two sounds, a short sound and a long sound. Remember, the long sound of a vowel is simply the vowel's name." Students say their assigned vowel's long and short sounds, and the teacher instructs, "I'll say a word. If you hear your group's vowel sound, hold up your Letter Tile and say that sound. *Sun*." The group holding the *u* tile raises the tile and makes the /ü/ sound. The process repeats with the words *tap, net, fit, and mop*. If groups are successful, the activity continues with *tape, weed, cube, most, and hive*. According to the "Handwriting Instruction" booklet, the teacher introduces writing individual letters using "talk throughs," scripted letter

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formation steps to repeat to students. Upon learning a new letter, students practice making the letter with skywriting (using their hands to practice the letter formation in the air). Later, students practice writing the letter on paper with a pencil. Handwriting instruction begins with learning how to write individual letters and later transitions to writing sight words.

- The materials include collaborative activities such as games. In Lesson 111, students play a game to review alphabet order. In teams, students practice the order of the alphabet by rolling a beach ball and finding the next letter in the alphabet.
- The program supports phonological awareness skills with pictorial support. The “Letter Cards” have illustrations for keywords that correspond to letter sounds. For example, “Picture Card” *r* has a picture of a rabbit. The “Spelling Deck” has cards with spelling sounds that were taught in the lessons, along with directions for how to properly produce the sound. The cards also have a photograph of a person’s mouth making the sound correctly.

Materials support a variety of instructional settings (e.g., whole group, small group, one-on-one).

- Materials support a variety of instructional settings. The core instruction is delivered in a whole group setting; it includes the “Lesson Warm-Up,” “New Increment” of learning, and the “Application and Continual Review.” The “Classroom Practice” and “Fluency Practice” portions of the lesson allow time for the teacher to meet the individual needs of the students in a one-on-one setting and/or small groups. Suggestions are provided in the “Instructional Overview” for working with small groups, such as: “Work with small groups on the Options for Differentiation activities to support and/or enhance their comprehension and skill development.” “Place children in small groups in which they can take turns reading aloud. Reading aloud in a small-group atmosphere is less intimidating to struggling readers than reading to the entire classroom.” “For a smaller-group activity, pair children and have them take turns reading to each other.” One-on-one activities are provided within Fluency Practice. The “Fluency Instruction” booklet states that students should practice fluency daily. One option suggested is the teacher listening to students read their “Fluency Reader” book.
- The Amira Learning online materials also include independent learning. Students log in to the online program and read into a microphone. The online virtual tutor coaches the student while they read independently.

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Indicator 5.3

Materials include supports for **Emergent Bilinguals** to meet grade-level learning expectations.

1	Materials include linguistic accommodations (communicated, sequenced, and scaffolded) commensurate with various levels of English language proficiency as defined by the English Language Proficiency Standards (ELPS).	PM
2	Materials encourage strategic use of students' first language as a means to linguistic, affective, cognitive, and academic development in English.	M

Partial Meets | Score 1/2

The materials partially meet the criteria for this indicator. Materials include some supports for Emergent Bilinguals to meet grade-level learning expectations.

Materials include some linguistic accommodations for Emergent Bilinguals. Materials do not level these accommodations commensurate with levels of English language proficiency as defined by the English Language Proficiency Standards (ELPS). Materials encourage strategic use of students' first language as a means to academic, cognitive, linguistic, and affective development in English.

Evidence includes but is not limited to:

Materials include linguistic accommodations (communicated, sequenced, and scaffolded) commensurate with various levels of English language proficiency as defined by the English Language Proficiency Standards (ELPS).

- The materials include accommodations and scaffolding for students at various stages of English language acquisition; these are not differentiated according to the levels of English language proficiency as defined by the ELPS. At the beginning of each phonics lesson, there is an “English Learner Support” box, which includes the type of support provided, the level of support, and the information or suggestion. For example, students learn about the letter *n* in Lesson 29. The text in the English Learner Support box advises, “CONTRAST LANGUAGE, Substantial: Speakers of Cantonese and Mandarin may substitute the /l/ sound for the /n/ sound. Provide extra support by describing the tongue position for each sound. Give additional opportunities for children to practice pronouncing words that begin with the /n/ sound chorally and with partners.” As students continue working with the letter *n* in subsequent lessons, the English Learner Support box in Lesson 30 reads, “REINFORCE VOCABULARY, Light: If children are unable to come up with sentences for a word, consider including response frames: ‘One food I do not like is....’” The box for Lesson 32 states, “MODEL EXAMPLES, Moderate: During the Oral Assessment, model an example for each task before asking children to complete it, ‘Echo this word: *notebook*... Now let’s say *notebook* without *book*: *note*.”
- The materials include a “Resources to Support English Learners” booklet. The booklet includes a “Best Practices for Teaching English Learners” page, which includes accommodations for teachers to select, such as “Use pictures, visual aids, and gestures paired with words whenever possible, especially when giving directions and teaching new content.” “Demonstrate or act out procedures, vocabulary, and stories as a class to help English learners access information.” The

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document suggests taking opportunities to point out “differences in pronunciation, meaning, and spelling of words,” like minimal pairs, multiple-meaning words, and homophones. The booklet also includes “Articulation Support” on the “Spelling Deck” page, which describes the “Spelling Cards” component of the materials. The cards “teach and review sound-spelling correspondences.” Spelling Cards include a picture of a child’s mouth articulating the sound on one side and a written description for the teacher to describe how to pronounce the sound on the other side. The cards can be used “to support English Learners with articulating challenging sounds.”

Materials encourage strategic use of students’ first language as a means to linguistic, affective, cognitive, and academic development in English.

- The materials encourage strategic use of students’ first language as a means to linguistic, affective, cognitive, and academic development in English. For example, the English Learner Support box in Lesson 51 says, “Some English Learners may have difficulty perceiving and pronouncing the differences between the vowel sounds /ă/ and /ǒ/ in similarly spelled words, such as *rot* and *rat*. Model the sounds /ă/ and /ǒ/ while describing the mouth positions. Then have children practice saying the words *rot* and *rat* using a mirror to check their own mouth position.” The English Learner Support box for Lesson 66 states, “LEVERAGE LANGUAGE, Moderate: Share cognates for the keyword *zebra* (e.g., *cebra* in Spanish, *zebra* in Portuguese, *zèb* in Haitian Creole). Point out that the words are very similar and ask children to point out the differences between the English *zebra* and the word in their home languages.”
- The materials include a Resources to Support English Learners booklet. The booklet explains how knowledge of the other language(s) spoken by children can help the teacher “tailor [their] instruction to meet children’s individual needs.” The document includes information about language similarities and differences, an overview of the top ten languages spoken by English learners in the United States, a description of the alphabet of these languages, phonological features of the language, and grammatical features of the language. The languages discussed in the overview are Spanish, Arabic, Chinese Dialects: Cantonese and Mandarin, Vietnamese, Somali, Russian, Portuguese, Haitian Creole, Hmong, and Korean. The “Alphabet Knowledge” section explains the writing system of each language and the similarities and differences with the English writing system. The “Sound-Symbol Correspondence” section contains a chart that lists letters and sounds. Check marks on the chart shows whether letters and sounds correspond between the language and English. The “Phonological Features” section includes a chart that notes if a sound found in English is found in other languages. The “Grammatical Features” chart lists features of the language that “may present challenges for English learners” and provides recommended instruction.

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Indicator 6.1

Materials provide guidance on fostering **connections between home and school**.

1	Materials inform families about the program and provide suggestions for how they can help support student progress and achievement.	Yes
2	Materials provide specific strategies and activities for families to use at home to support students' learning and development	Yes
3	Materials contain resources to help teachers communicate with families in an ongoing manner regarding students' progress.	Yes

Not Scored

Materials provide guidance on fostering connections between home and school.

Materials inform families about the program and provide suggestions for how to help support student progress and achievement. Materials provide specific strategies and activities families can use at home to support student learning and development. Materials contain resources that help teachers communicate with families in an ongoing manner regarding student progress.

Evidence includes but is not limited to:

Materials inform families about the program and provide suggestions for how they can help support student progress and achievement.

- The materials include information about how families can support student progress and achievement. Each letter is available in English and Spanish.
 - The “Parent Letter Masters” document contains three parent letters for teachers to send home to parents. One side of the Parent Letter includes an overview of the Saxon program, including skills that will be learned, instructional methods, ways to help the students, research about teaching reading, and the materials’ introductory phonemic assessment. The other side of the Parent Letter contains charts with some of the sounds and coding students will learn throughout the year. The chart has a brief note to parents that says, “Parent/Guardian: These charts demonstrate some of the sounds and phonetic coding your child will be learning throughout the year.”
 - The “Fluency Letter” explains how parents can work with their child on fluency, including reading aloud to the child daily and working with the student on “Fluency Word Lists” that will be sent home throughout the year.
 - The “Handwriting Parent Letter” advises parents that handwriting instruction is a key part of learning to read and spell. The letter describes the skywriting and talk-through components of the handwriting program. The letter includes the verbal directions teachers and parents should say when guiding children through the steps for forming each capital and lowercase letter.
- Decodable readers are sent home to reinforce phonics skills learned in previous lessons at various points in the year. In Lesson 27, the decodable text *Hot, Hot, Hot* includes words that

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reinforce the short vowel sound /*ō*/. Lesson 59 introduces “Decodable Reader 5,” *The Big Trip*, which includes words to practice the *short i* vowel sound. The “Teacher’s Manual” indicates teachers should “Keep the decodable readers at school for practice. Send them home when children can read them easily.”

Materials provide specific strategies and activities for families to use at home to support students’ learning and development.

- The materials include information about specific strategies and activities for families to use at home to support students’ learning and development. For example, the “Phonological Awareness” document includes a parent letter with “Easy, Average, and Challenging” phonological and phonemic awareness activities parents can practice with their child. The letter explains: “The activities in each group are presented in order of difficulty, starting with the easiest. Always begin practicing with the easy activities, and proceed to more difficult exercises as your child masters each skill. For your convenience, examples are provided; continue each exercise with as many of your own examples as possible.” Easy activities begin with rhyme identification and progress to listening for initial sounds. Average activities start with rhyme production and continue through word manipulation. Challenging activities include blending phonemes into words, counting phonemes in words, and segmenting phonemes in words.
- The “School/Home Reinforcement” section at the end of each lesson provides a list of materials that can be sent home at the end of the day. The students take homework to finish, read, or review with their parents. For example, the School/Home Reinforcement section of Lesson 73 directs the teacher to send home the following materials with the students at the end of the day: “Worksheet 73, Reading Practice 12, and Handwriting Masters 13 and 66.” Worksheet 73 includes a brief note to parents: “Dear Parent/Guardian: The words in the box are some of the words that occur most frequently in print. To help your child become a more fluent reader, have him/her practice reading these words to you.” The words in the “High-Frequency Word Box” include *into*, *can*, *big*, *four*, and *but*. Reading Practice 12 includes the following brief note to parents: “Dear Parents/Guardian: Your child has learned the name, /k/ sound, and written form of the letter *c* and some new blends containing *c*. Remember that blends are especially challenging for beginning readers and may warrant extra help. Try to help your child practice the words on this list as often as possible. Once mastery occurs, please send the list back to school.” Reading Practice 12 provides parents with a list of the other letters learned, the new sight word *into*, and tells the parents, “Sight words are circled and should be memorized.”
- The Amira online program includes a “Parent Report.” The report includes “Tips for Helping (Student Name) Right Now” based on the student’s assessment results. An information box for teachers says, “These are suggestions for how the parent can pitch in. They are meant just to be a good basis for teacher-parent dialogue.” For example, one parent suggestion on a report for a sample student is “Work on the *R* phoneme with words like *red*.” The purpose of the report is listed at the top: “This report is being provided so that you can keep track of (Student Name’s) progress and help (Student Name) work on fundamental reading skills.”
- The “Instructional Overview” booklet, found in the teacher materials, has a section titled School/Home Reinforcement, which states, “Provided at the end of each lesson is a list of materials that may be sent home at the end of the day. Use this list to ensure that children are taking home the necessary work to finish, read, or review with their parents.”

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Materials contain resources to help teachers communicate with families in an ongoing manner regarding students' progress.

- The materials include information about how to communicate with families in an ongoing manner regarding student progress on formal and informal assessments. For example, the Instructional Overview indicates that “Individual and classroom recording forms are included to help you track children’s progress, identify their weaknesses, and share information with their parents.” The “Teacher Directions” included at the top of “Oral Assessment Answer Form 9” informs teachers: “Many teachers keep the assessments for use at parent conferences. If desired, you may also copy this answer form and the assessment and send them home for the child’s parents to review.”
- The materials include a letter to families explaining the developmental continuum of phonological awareness so that parents can see where their child falls on the continuum by completing activities with them at home. The “Practice Activities Parent Version” letter is found in the “Phonological/Phonemic Awareness” document. The letter explains: “Parent/Guardian: Below are three sets of activities, arranged from easy to challenging, that you can practice with your child to help improve his/her phonological and phonemic awareness. Phonemic awareness, a subcategory of phonological awareness, is both an awareness that words consist of separate sounds and the ability to hear and manipulate those sounds. The activities in each group are presented in order of difficulty, starting with the easiest. Always begin practicing with the easy activities, and proceed to more difficult exercises as your child masters each skill. For your convenience, examples are provided; continue each exercise with as many of your own examples as possible.”
- Parent Reports can be generated on Amira Learning. The statement at the top of the report reads, “This report is being provided so that you can keep track of (Student Name’s) progress and help (Student Name) work on fundamental reading skills.” The following are measured on the Parent Report on Amira assessments given at the beginning, middle, and end of year: oral reading fluency, reading mastery, sight recognition, phonological awareness, and vocabulary size. A section of the report is titled “Understanding (Student Name’s) Scores” and explains how to interpret some of the results. The data is also visually represented on a line graph that color-codes the score ranges “Excellent, Average, and Below Expectations.”

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Indicator 6.2

Materials incorporate **technology** into the lessons to **enhance student learning**.

1	Digital materials are accessible and compatible with multiple operating systems and devices.	Yes
2	Digital materials support and enhance virtual and in-person instruction.	Yes
3	Digital materials enhance student learning and are not distracting or chaotic.	Yes

Not Scored

Materials incorporate technology into the online tutoring and assessment components to enhance student learning.

Digital materials are accessible and compatible with multiple operating systems and devices. Digital materials support and enhance virtual and in-person instruction. Digital materials enhance student learning and are not distracting or chaotic.

Evidence includes but is not limited to:

Digital materials are accessible and compatible with multiple operating systems and devices.

- The Amira Learning digital materials are accessible and compatible with multiple operating systems and devices, as they are web-based. According to the Amira public website, Amira is accessible over the internet and can be used with PCs, iPads, and Chromebooks.
- Texas Resource Review reviewers were given access to the report area for Amira for three sample students. The sample Amira Learning student completed assessment and reports were able to be accessed on multiple devices with internet access, including PCs, iPads, and smartphones.
- There are no digital materials connected to the core instructional program. The “Read Me First” document provided to reviewers states it is a print-only program.

Digital materials support and enhance virtual and in-person instruction.

- The Amira Learning digital materials support and enhance virtual and in-person instruction through online assessment and tutoring components. Amira Learning uses students’ assessment data to place them into practice that is personalized and tailored to their needs. During practice (tutoring), Amira Learning provides micro-interventions customized to the student’s learning needs. For example, the “Early Reader Skills Scaffold” provides explicit letter/sound instruction and the opportunity for the student to echo-read words and connected text with sound. Amira Learning listens to the student read and detects if the student makes any errors while reading. The program provides immediate feedback and quick intervention. In one sample micro-intervention, a student who drops the -s ending when reading aloud the word *calls* is immediately presented with a word that rhymes with *calls* to help the student notice the correct ending; the student is then asked to try reading the word from the text again. In another sample micro-intervention scenario, a student misreads the word *wake* as *walk*. The on-screen tutor

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says, “Watch my friend’s lips say *wake*.” A video with a close-up of a person’s face appears. The woman in the video says, “/w/ /ā/ /k/, *wake*,” and then the tutor says, “Now you say the word.”

- Amira Learning is a web-based tutoring and assessment program that can be used for both virtual and in-person learning. Saxon Phonics and Spelling, the core phonics instructional program, is print-only. As such, there are no digital materials provided to be used in either in-person or virtual learning.

Digital materials enhance student learning and are not distracting or chaotic.

- The digital materials for the assessment component of Amira Learning enhance student learning without being distracting or chaotic. For example, the Amira Learning online reading assessment is on an off-white background with black font. The screen has the text that the student will read or the activity the student needs to complete, along with an image of a virtual teacher. There are no distracting images or graphics on the screen.
- The digital materials for the tutoring component of Amira Learning enhance student learning without being distracting or chaotic. When students are presented with a text to read during tutoring, the word students need to read is underlined. Once students read a word, the underline moves to the next word. Graphics support student learning and engagement and do not visually distract. Amira Learning uses age-appropriate illustrations and real photographs in the micro-intervention lessons. The virtual tutor is present in the top right-hand corner of the screen, but when students are reading aloud from the screen, she only moves or speaks when students make a reading error. When she does speak, the voice has a human-like tone to it. Images demonstrate balanced racial and ethnic representation. For example, certain micro-interventions include brief videos of words read correctly or sounded out. These videos feature close-ups of faces and appear to be of people of various ages and races/ethnicities.