

November
2020

Robert-Leslie Prekindergarten Program Summary

Section 1. Texas Prekindergarten Guidelines Alignment

- [Proclamation 2021 List of Materials Adopted by the State Board of Education](#)

Domain	Student	Teacher
Social & Emotional	100.00%	100.00%
Language & Development	100.00%	100.00%
Emergent Literacy Reading	100.00%	100.00%
Emergent Literacy Writing	100.00%	100.00%
Math	100.00%	100.00%
Science	100.00%	100.00%
Social Studies	100.00%	100.00%
Fine Arts	100.00%	100.00%
Physical Development	100.00%	100.00%
Tech Apps	100.00%	100.00%

Section 2. Integration of Content and Skills

- Materials include specific, intentional, and purposeful cross-curricular connections integrated in an authentic way to support students' unified experience throughout the day.
- Materials utilize high-quality texts as a core component of content and skill integration and support developmentally appropriate practice across all content domains.
- Materials fit within a developmentally appropriate programmatic structure and include detailed guidance that supports the teacher's delivery of instruction to three- and four-year-old children.
- Materials are supported by child development research within and across all domains.

Section 3. Health and Wellness Associated Domains

- Materials include direct social skill instruction and explicit teaching of skills. Students repeatedly practice social skills throughout the day.
- Materials include guidance for teachers on classroom arrangements that promotes positive social interactions.
- Materials include activities to develop physical skills, fine motor skills, and safe and healthy habits.

Section 4. Language and Communication Domain

- Materials provide guidance on developing students' listening and speaking skills as well as expanding student vocabulary.
- Materials include strategies for supporting English Learners (ELs) in their development of English language skills and developmentally appropriate content knowledge.

Section 5. Emergent Literacy: Reading Domain

- Materials provide opportunities for students to develop oral language skills, including through authentic text conversations.
- Materials provide explicit instruction and opportunities for student practice in phonological awareness skills, alphabetic knowledge skills, and print knowledge and concepts.
- Materials include a variety of text types and genres across contents that are high quality and at an appropriate level of complexity; materials use a variety of approaches to develop student comprehension of texts.
- Materials include strategies to support ELs with their reading skills and guide teachers to use the child's primary language as a means to support learning English.

Section 6. Emergent Literacy: Writing Domain

- Materials include a variety of experiences through which students can engage with writing, and teachers instruct students along the developmental stages of writing.
- Materials provide support for fine motor development alongside and through writing.

Section 7. Mathematics Domain

- Materials follow a logical mathematical continuum of concrete, pictorial, then abstract representations.
- Materials promote instruction that builds on students' informal knowledge about mathematics.
- Materials intentionally develop young children's ability to problem solve, use number sense, and build academic math vocabulary.

Section 8. Science, Social Studies, Fine Arts, and Technology Domains

- Materials build science knowledge through inquiry-based instruction and exploration of the natural world.
- Materials build social studies knowledge through the study of culture and community.
- Materials expose children to fine arts through exploration.
- Materials provide opportunities to link technology into the classroom experience and allow students to explore and use various digital tools.

Section 9. Progress Monitoring

- Materials include developmentally appropriate diagnostic tools and guidance for teachers and students; materials include tools for students to track their own progress and growth.
- Materials include guidance for teachers and administrators to analyze and respond to data from diagnostic tools.
- Materials include frequent and integrated progress monitoring opportunities.

Section 10. Supports for All Learners

- Materials include guidance, scaffolds, supports, and extensions intended to maximize student learning potential.
- Materials provide a variety of instructional methods that appeal to different student learning interests and needs.
- Materials include accommodations for linguistics commensurate with various levels of English language proficiency.

Section 11. Implementation

- Materials include a year-long plan with practice and review opportunities that support instruction.
- Materials include implementation support for teachers and administrators; implementation guidance meets variability in programmatic design and scheduling considerations.
- The materials include a Texas Prekindergarten Guidelines-aligned scope and sequence.
- Materials provide guidance on fostering connections between home and school.
- The visual design of student and teacher materials is neither distracting nor chaotic.

Section 12. Additional Information: Technology, Cost, Professional Learning, and Additional Language Supports

- The publisher submitted the technology, cost, and professional learning support worksheets.

2.1 Materials are cross-curricular and integrated in an authentic way to support students' unified experience throughout the day.

- Materials include specific, intentional, and purposeful cross-curricular connections to create a unified experience for students.
- Materials name which domains are purposefully developed or reinforced in each learning activity.

Meets 4/4

The materials are cross-curricular and integrated in an authentic way to support students' unified experience throughout the day. The materials include specific, intentional, and purposeful cross-curricular connections to create a unified experience for students. The materials name which domains are purposefully developed or reinforced in each learning activity.

Evidence includes but is not limited to:

The “Let’s Investigate” Investigation Kit is introduced with “Gone Investigating” flapboards and “Investigation Stations.” The teacher uses the Dilly puppet to explain how investigators like to make discoveries, solve problems, find answers, and learn new things; meanwhile, the teacher asks questions that allow children to share their experiences about their investigations. The teacher reads the story *Gone Investigating*, which is about Dilly and her little brother JT. Dilly must explore and find answers to her questions to solve a problem. After telling the story, the teacher guides children to the Investigation Station to discuss how Dilly finds information, Dilly and her friends, caring for yourself and for others, and school. In one Investigation Station, the teacher sets out the “seeing materials” and describes them while modeling their safe use, such as using the magnifying glass; later in the Investigation Station, there are objects to smell, touch, hear, and taste. Students are encouraged to ask themselves, “What am I finding out?” Extensions to the stations include slowly moving the magnifying glass closer or farther away as students look at an object and touching different objects and describing how they feel. After children have investigated all the materials, they name some things they saw, smelled, touched, heard, and tasted and connect them to their world by drawing the most interesting thing they investigated.

The “Under Construction” Investigation Kit includes an ongoing activity that integrates writing, science, and social studies: Students draw a building plan and create the building they have

drawn. The teacher guides students to change their plans if the building doesn't stand or to try a new plan if they are successful. As an extension, the teacher reads books surrounding the theme, such as *Goodnight, Goodnight, Construction Site; Build a Doghouse!*; and *The Shape of Things*. Students' writing experiences revolve around the kit themes: They create a shared writing chart about their constructions; later, they write about what they would build with blocks. During learning centers, students participate in activities such as building a pattern in "Math," drawing and coloring building plans in "Social Studies," building with boxes in "Art," and creating a hardware store in the "Dramatic Play" center.

In the "Splash and Dig" Investigation Kit, students draw blueprints for a boat that they will build to see if it will float. The teacher provides materials for students to create their boat; students test whether it will float and how many pennies it will hold before it sinks. The kit also includes a rhyming activity with the objective to recognize and understand rhymes. The teacher passes around a ship and tells the students it is filled with rugs; students come up with real or nonsense words that rhyme with *rug*. The teacher reads books surrounding the theme, such as *Commotion in the Ocean, One-Dog Canoe, and Mud Pies*. Students' writing experiences revolve around the kit themes: They create a class book about what they learned about water and about animals they would take on a canoe trip. During learning centers, students participate in activities such as writing about their experiences with water, counting fish in a pond, recording objects that sink or float in water, and creating with watercolors.

2.2 Materials utilize high-quality texts as a core component of content and skill integration.

- Texts are strategically chosen to support content and skill development in multiple domains.

Meets 4/4

The materials utilize high-quality texts as a core component of content and skill integration. The texts are strategically chosen to support content and skill development in multiple domains.

Evidence includes but is not limited to:

The “Literacy Framework” provides teachers with each book title, a brief summary of the text, and a guide to reading, which includes questions for teachers to ask students that relate to the text to support content and skill development in multiple domains. Materials include both fiction and nonfiction supplemental texts; for instance, they include the nonfiction text *Dump Trucks* by Nicola Deschamps as well as the fiction text *The Three Little Pigs* by James Marshall. The “STEAM and Literacy Challenge” guide includes a variety of resources to adapt instruction for multiple languages and to further individualized learning experiences. These resources include leveled readers in English and Spanish, reading and writing resources in multiple languages, a variety of trusted and approved technology tools, websites and applications, and hands-on science, engineering, and math manipulatives.

In the “Let’s Investigate” Investigation Kit, students are introduced to all of the characters in the program’s *Dilly and Friends* lapbooks and read-along CD. New characters are introduced each week using the corresponding lapbook. In a small group literacy lesson, “Favorite Books,” students bring a favorite book from the classroom library to the group; together, they find the title, talk about the characters, and discuss why they like their book.

In the “Under Construction” Investigation Kit, texts support content and skill development in multiple domains. Texts include the fiction text *Goodnight, Goodnight, Construction Site*; the nonfiction text *Build a Doghouse!* used in science to discuss tools; and the rhyming book *The Shape of Things*, used in math as students discuss the shapes they see all around them.

In the “Splash and Dig” Investigation Kit, the materials create a unified experience for students surrounding the theme of water and dirt. Titles include the poetry book *Commotion in the Ocean*, where students repeat the rhymes in the poems; the fiction text *One-Dog Canoe*, which students use to learn about “adding one more” in math; and the nonfiction text *Mud Pies*, used in science.

The “Weather Watchers” Investigation Kit includes Bruno’s Buzz Nonfiction Reader: *What’s the Weather?*; *The Snowy Day*; Dilly and Friends Lapbook and Read-Along CD: *The Silly Dilly Dance*, and *SNOW*. Students also perform a poem titled “The Storm.” They read the poem and think about how it is like storms they have experienced. During a second reading, the teacher distributes props and invites children to perform the poem.

2.3 Materials support developmentally appropriate practice across all content domains.

- Materials include a variety of opportunities for purposeful play that promotes student choice.
- Materials provide guidance to teachers on how to connect all domains to play.
- Materials provide guidance to teachers on setting up and facilitating activities to meet, reinforce, or practice learning objectives.
- Materials have an intentional balance of direct (explicit) instruction and student choice, including purposefully planned learning centers, as appropriate for the content and skill development.

Meets 4/4

The materials support developmentally appropriate practice across all content domains. The materials include a variety of opportunities for purposeful play that promotes student choice, and they provide guidance to teachers on how to connect all domains to play. Also, the materials provide guidance to teachers on setting up and facilitating activities to meet, reinforce, or practice learning objectives. Materials have an intentional balance of direct (explicit) instruction and student choice, including purposefully planned learning centers, as appropriate for the content and skill development.

Evidence includes but is not limited to:

The “Research and Professional Guide” contains sample schedules with full-day and half-day options to include direct and indirect instruction as well as large and small group activities matched to children’s attention spans. “Reading,” “Writing,” “Math,” “Science,” “Social Studies,” “Art,” “Technology,” “Sand and Water,” “Blocks,” and “Dramatic Play” learning centers provide playful lessons based on the kit’s theme. Students apply what they are learning in whole groups through independent learning in centers. The materials guide the teacher on how to connect all domains of play; materials discuss various types of play, such as make-believe, constructive play, sensory play, large motor play, fine motor play, artistic play, language play, and rough-and-tumble play. The guide states, “With the ongoing professional development, teacher guides, and resources that are used throughout the InvestiGator Club®, teachers become intentional in their use of a variety of approaches and strategies to support children’s ‘playful learning,’ interest and ability in each learning domain.” A list of features in the provided material defines and clarifies purposeful play in the classroom: learning centers provide free exploration

and personal choice; open-ended activities spark students' imagination and curiosity; "Investigation Stations" let children explore, experiment, and apply knowledge. In the table of contents for each of the "Investigation Kits," the materials clearly delineate which lessons and activities are meant for whole, small, or independent instruction.

In the "Let's Investigate" Investigation Kit, durations for large group activities are matched to children's attention spans, as demonstrated in the large group activity "Hello Around the World." Students sing the song "The More We Get Together" and greet each other in a circle. The teacher introduces students to the Block center by establishing rules for the center, such as sharing, taking turns, block care, and proper cleanup. Throughout the unit, the teacher adds items (e.g., plastic animals, artificial plants for children to create settings, cars, or people) for children to freely explore. As an extension, after reading the book *Adventures in Circle Forest*, the teacher adds the center card "Build a Tree House" to the Block center, so students can build and pretend with the treehouse and toy people. In a small group math lesson, the teacher engages children in pairing objects one-to-one; children work together to sort all the blocks into color groups. In a science activity, the teacher talks about how each item is made of a different material (e.g., metal, plastic, wood, cloth, and paper). After singing a finger rhyme to introduce magnets, children predict which items are magnetic and sort them into two groups.

In the "Under Construction" Investigation Kit, in the activity "Mega-Block Houses," students make blocks by filling brown paper bags with newspaper, paint the paper blocks, and place them in the Block center for construction play. The teacher also provides flat cardboard for the base, a variety of different boxes, glue, and paintbrushes for students to build different structures out of the materials. In the activity "Act Out a Story," the teacher reads the flapboard book *Building Plans*; children act out the story with props and puppets. The materials are then placed in the Reading center for children to continue creating and acting out stories. In the Science center, students have the opportunity to play a matching game using various construction materials, such as sandpaper, a plastic hammer, PVC pipe, a rubber ball, and a feather duster; they use a "feely box," taking turns to pull these items out and match them to the pictures. The Writing center provides students an opportunity to pretend and write using phones, writing tablets, and utensils; students write, "While you were out" notes for different characters. Other activities allow students to act out stories from a read-aloud, use magnetic letters to build their name, build a pattern with pegs, draw building plans, construct a structure with boxes, listen to an interactive story on a CD, build sand structures, use blocks to create a small town, and role-play in a hardware store. The gradual-release model is also implemented during a small group math lesson, where the teacher writes a numeral on the board and has the students say it and hold up the correct number of fingers. The teacher models how to form the numeral; students practice writing it in the air and on their palms.

In the "Splash and Dig" Investigation Kit, an activity in the Block center allows students to expand their learning about building boats. Students look at pictures of passenger boats and then build boats using a variety of materials large enough to hold figurines or even students. In the Science center, the teacher provides a tub of water and different objects for students to

predict and graph which items sink or float. In center activities, students “go fishing” for letters, write about water experiences, count fish in the “water,” sequence cause-and-effect cards, create artwork with watercolors, listen to a book on CD, play with water and talk about its properties, build a water maze, and act out water animals. The materials provide guidance to teachers on setting up and facilitating activities to meet, reinforce, or practice learning objectives.

During the “Weather Watchers” Investigation Kit, in the science lesson called “Make a Rainbow,” the teacher shows a picture of a rainbow on “Oral Language Card 64.” Students make a rainbow: They place a pan of water in a sunny spot opposite a white wall and hold a mirror at the end of the pan so that the sunlight hits it. In another activity, children go for a walk outside to observe the weather and to look for signs of the season. The teacher observes children’s conversations about what they see and extends the activity by asking students to think about what the weather might be like in a different region of the country. The lesson is extended by asking children to compare the weather data for a city in a different climate with the weather where they live.

2.4 Materials fit within a developmentally appropriate programmatic structure.

- Materials specify whether they are for three or four-year-old children.
- If intended for use for both three and four-year-old children, materials include a variety of options that clearly differentiate instruction for level of development.
- Materials provide differentiated use recommendations for half day and full day prekindergarten programs.

Meets 4/4

The materials fit within a developmentally appropriate programmatic structure. The materials specify that they are for three- or four-year-old children and include a variety of options that clearly differentiate instruction for level of development. The materials also provide differentiated use recommendations for half-day and full-day prekindergarten programs.

Evidence includes but is not limited to:

The “Research and Professional Guide” provides a clearly defined schedule for both full-day and half-day programs. The half-day schedule includes “Opening Circle Time,” “Literacy,” “Learning Centers,” “Small Group,” and “Closing Circle.” The proposed full-day programs have the same components as half-day but include additional learning activities, such as an extra small group, whole group, and learning center activity. Flexibility and choice are incorporated into each “Investigation Kit,” allowing teachers to choose the lessons and activities that best fit their schedule. The program overview offers a “Year at a Glance” for four-year-olds, which is organized into seven inquiry-based investigations for 32 weeks of instruction, and a Year at a Glance for three-year-olds, consisting of 30 weeks of creative, integrated instruction. The curriculum begins with “Get Ready,” where children learn about feelings, families, school, and their bodies. At the end of the year, children celebrate being “InvestiGators” and the learning that has taken place. The “Just for Threes Learning System” is a play-based curriculum for three-year-olds, helping children develop important readiness skills in all ten learning domains while nurturing the child and encouraging cognitive, physical, and emotional growth.

In the “Let’s Investigate” Investigation Kit, during the Opening Circle Time oral language lesson, the teacher introduces the Dilly puppet and greets children by saying, “Hi! My name is Cordelia

Gator, but you can call me Dilly! What's your name?" The teacher goes around the circle, asking each child to respond with, "Hi Dilly, my name is...." A side note for three-year-olds guides the teacher to explain that Dilly is a puppet and that you are helping her talk as she is a puppet and cannot talk on her own. The teacher uses "Dilly's Alphabet Song" for letter recognition; students learn the song and use a chart and alphabet cards. Then, they march around the room and talk about what letter each student has. The lesson is modified for three-year-olds, with students simply singing and dancing to the song.

In the "Under Construction" Investigation Kit, during whole group time, a sidebar states, "Read the book aloud from beginning to end without pausing for discussion. Then let each child turn to his or her favorite truck and talk about it." Another side note supporting modifications for three-year-olds' use of technology states, "You may wish to have an adult assist children with computers and other equipment." Another guides the teacher to provide additional assistance to support three-year-old dramatic play: "Some young children do not know how to join an ongoing dramatic play situation without help. Find a role for them that taps into their strengths."

The "Watch it Grow" Investigation Kit includes the activity "From Farm to Market"; four-year-olds sit at a table together and build a city on one end of the table and a farm on the other end. Using trucks, students move the produce from the farm to the city along a road they built on the table. The differentiation for three-year-old students includes having them only build the farm and have a truck, fruits, and vegetables to move. In another activity, "From the Forest," the teacher provides four-year-olds materials including a wooden block, apple, pencil, walnuts, notebook paper, magazine, rubber ball, bar of soap, bottle of shampoo, chewing gum, toothpaste, and an empty ice cream container. The teacher asks students which items come from trees; students discuss their answers. For three-year-old students, the teacher breaks the discussion into single exchanges, talking only about walnuts or apples and how they come from trees.

2.5 Materials include detailed guidance that supports teacher's delivery of instruction

- Guidance for teachers is evident and provides explicit instructional strategies for teaching prekindergarten skills.
- Materials include detailed and explicit guidance for teacher and student actions that support student development and proficiency of content and skills.
- Materials provide detailed guidance for connecting students' prior content knowledge and experiences to new learning.

Meets 4/4

The materials include detailed guidance that supports the teacher's delivery of instruction. Guidance for teachers is evident and provides explicit instructional strategies for teaching prekindergarten skills. Materials also include detailed and explicit guidance for teacher and student actions that support student development and proficiency of content and skills. Additionally, materials provide detailed guidance for connecting students' prior content knowledge and experiences to new learning.

Evidence includes but is not limited to:

The materials' "InvestiGator Club Prekindergarten Assessment and Intervention" system helps teachers in determining a child's progress and guides instruction. It helps teachers measure and record the development of skills, abilities, knowledge, and behaviors identified and includes assessment side notes, where teachers note if children are able to perform certain tasks.

The "Let's Investigate" Investigation Kit includes explicit strategies in the lesson for the read-aloud *Adventure in Circle Forest*. Before the read-aloud, the teacher asks open-ended questions, such as "What do you like to write?" After reading the story, students draw a reflection using personal experience, and the teacher looks for knowledge of early print concepts and whether the child needs more time with the concepts. In an opening activity, the teacher reads the lapbook about Chuck Wood and asks children to make predictions based on what they know. After reading, the teacher uses the puppet to prompt children to retell parts of the story and connect Chuck's ability to be both a make-believe superhero and a real hero with what children know. Students contribute personal experiences and prior knowledge during the

story reading and discussion. The teacher records observations as anecdotal notes. Students use picture clues to retell the story in their own words.

In the “Under Construction” Investigation Kit, during a whole group lesson, students play a math version of “Musical Chairs.” The teacher sets chairs in groups of one, two, or three, and then plays music as children move quietly from one group to another; when the music stops, students find a seat. The teacher then goes from group to group and asks, “How many people are in your group?” In another activity, the materials connect prior knowledge and experiences to new learning. In the “Social Studies” center, the teacher draws roads for a small town on a large piece of butcher paper. The teacher talks about the map and asks students what buildings they might find in their community. Students build their community with blocks, placing the “buildings” along the roads on the “map.” During a “Math” center activity, a sidebar explains appropriate instructional strategies for differentiation through auditory and kinesthetic learning opportunities. Students listen to a recording of the book *One-Dog Canoe* and use small blocks in a shoebox to keep track of characters and discuss what “one more” animal to the canoe would mean for the total number of animals.

In the “Splash and Dig” Investigation Kit, the teacher’s guide provides a textbox of tips with suggested instructional strategies. For instance, in the activity “The letter L,” the teacher shows the alphabet card with the letter *L* on it, uses masking tape to form a giant *L* on the floor, and has students walk on the letter while chanting. A “Kinesthetic” textbox provides a suggestion to use pipe cleaners or craft sticks to form the letter *L* and say the letter name. A “Research” textbox gives current information from *Scientific American* that states, “Children’s oral language, phonological awareness, and alphabet knowledge are predictive of reading ability in the elementary grades, and both phonological awareness and alphabet knowledge can be increased through explicit instruction.”

2.6 Materials are supported by child development research on children’s development within and across all domains.

- Materials include a clear description of how the curriculum is supported by child development research.
- Materials provide research-based guidance for instruction that enriches educator understanding of early childhood development and the validity of the recommended approach.
- Cited research is current, academic, relevant to early childhood development, and applicable to Texas-specific context and demographics.
- A bibliography is present.

Meets 4/4

The materials are supported by child development research on children’s development within and across all domains. The materials include a clear description of how the curriculum is supported by child development research. They also provide research-based guidance for instruction that enriches educator understanding of early childhood development and the validity of the recommended approach. The materials cite research that is current, academic, relevant to early childhood development, and applicable to Texas-specific context and demographics. A bibliography is present.

Evidence includes but is not limited to:

The “Research and Professional Guide” provides the program overview, the program philosophy, and research that clearly outlines for teachers the child development research that the materials use to support and scaffold student learning. Beyond this, sidebars present throughout the materials provide explanations and information to teachers about the child development research that aligns with instruction. The guide provides research relevant to Texas and the diversity of languages spoken by many families and children in the state. The research cited includes sources from experts in the field of diversity and English Learners. The research gives guidance for supporting students’ home language with strategies that are used to enhance and support the curriculum. Additionally, a chapter titled “Research-Based Instruction” refers to the research and suggestions from the NAEYC, including on the development of the

whole child; extensive language and literacy development; and explicit curricular goals in science, social studies, art, music, dramatic play, health and safety, social and emotional development, physical development, and technology. The planned learning experiences include a mix of whole group, small group, and individual interaction with teachers. These learning experiences are conducted through investigations, problem-solving, play, and teacher-directed instruction. There is a balance between child-initiated, free-choice learning, and intentional, teacher-directed instruction. The “Foundations for Early Learning: The Investigator Club Research Base” guide contains a bibliography that cites the research presented throughout the materials.

In the “Let’s Investigate” Investigation Kit, the materials include early childhood research-based guidance for instruction that guides the teacher in planning and implementing the lessons. For instance, in the small group activity “Share a Toy Day,” students bring one toy to share with others. The teacher reads the story *Dilly and Chuck Wood*, and the students discuss what the characters share in the story. A “Social Coaching” textbox says, “Frequently model the skill while explaining what you are doing. For example, as you hand a paintbrush to a child, say, look, I am sharing my paintbrush.” In the “Opening Circle Time,” the teacher reads the book *Building Plans* and encourages children to talk about what they might see on the way to school. A “Research” textbox says, “Children who are exposed to more words in conversations with adults, and more unusual words tend to develop larger vocabularies.”

In the “Under Construction” Investigation Kit, a side note supports the use of inquiry in science instruction, stating, “Current research states that young children in every domain of science should have the opportunity to use scientific inquiry and develop the ability to think and act in ways associated with inquiry.” Supported by this research, in the activity “Gather Water Data,” the teacher asks children how and where water is used in their homes and records their responses. The materials suggest reminding students that the information they write down is called *data*, encouraging children to gather and collect data at home for one week, and then having them share their data with the class. Phonological awareness research is included in a side note to a lesson supporting the importance and relevance of phonological awareness instruction: “Two decades of research have shown that the presence of phonological awareness is a hallmark characteristic of good readers.” Additional guidance in this kit refers to the National Reading Panel and states that “effective reading instruction should include asking questions and looking back at pictures to help children understand what is read or heard.”

In the “Splash and Dig” Investigation Kit, a math lesson is supported by a side note referring to the joint position statement by NAEYC and NCTM: “Problem solving and reasoning are the heart of mathematics.... While content represents the what of early childhood mathematics education, the processes—problem solving, reasoning, communication, connections, and representation—make it possible for children to acquire content knowledge.” For instance, in the activity “Make Connections,” the teacher tosses beanbags to the students as they count out loud. The teacher documents how high the student can count and records the answers. A Research sidebar states, “Research shows that preschool children are developing the ability to

ask and answer questions. They begin with yes or no questions and move on to questions that begin with what, where, and who. Finally, they begin to understand and use when, how, and why questions.”

3.1 Materials include direct social skill instruction and explicit teaching of skills.

- Full lessons on Self Concept Skills, Self-Regulation Skills, Relationships with Others, and Social Awareness Skills, as laid out in the Texas Prekindergarten Guidelines.
- Materials provide guidance on teacher modeling of these skills.
- Materials include appropriate texts used to support the development of social competencies.
- Materials include appropriate texts used to support the development of competencies to understand and respond to emotions.

Meets 4/4

The materials include full lessons on self-concept skills, self-regulation skills, relationships with others, and social awareness skills, as laid out in the Texas Prekindergarten Guidelines. These are supported by developmentally appropriate texts that teach understanding, identifying, and responding to feelings. The materials provide for explicit teaching of skills and guidance on teacher modeling of these skills. The materials also include appropriate texts used to support the development of social competencies to understand and respond to emotions.

Evidence includes but is not limited to:

In the “Let’s Investigate” Investigation Kit, the teacher’s guide provides ways to establish classroom routines, such as transitions, toileting, handwashing, and clean-up time. Lessons include modeling and demonstrating skills through direct instruction. During read-alouds, teachers model the proper way of handling books and expected student behaviors. The lessons provide activities that promote respect for diversity. For example, in a social studies lesson, students select a paper cut-out person for each member of their family and discuss family members, what they do at home and any traditions or celebrations they have. In the “Make Connections” section, the book *JT’s Spooky Creepy Room* provides opportunities for students to discuss how JT knows about other countries; the teacher provides objects and pictures from a variety of countries. Students use puppets to interact with classmates to practice saying “hello” in different languages. In small group lessons, students learn social skills such as personal space by performing motions without touching their neighbor.

In the “Under Construction” Investigation Kit, during small group instruction, students play a game focused on expressing feelings, needs, and opinions. Students use paper plate puppets, Mr. Polite, and Mr. Rude to recognize good manners in different scenarios. Specific directions and guidance help the teacher lead and facilitate conversations, such as asking students how the materials can be shared in more than one way. This kit also includes the text *Dilly and Friends: Superheroes to the Rescue*. Before reading the text, the teacher asks discussion questions, such as “Do you and your friends share too?” and “What are some things you share?” After reading the text, the teacher asks follow-up questions, such as “How did I solve the problem?” “What did I use?” and “What did Dilly and I share at the end of the story?” Students share their experiences, and the teacher models resolving conflict through puppet play. After rereading a text, students act out a scene as the teacher narrates positive ways to solve the conflict. Students discuss what they would do in the situation to resolve the conflict.

In the “Finny Feathery Furry Friends” Investigation Kit, the teacher reads “Flapboard 1: To Be a Bee.” In the story, the bee feels sad because he thinks no one likes him, and then his friends help him feel better. The teacher asks students about a time they felt sad and who helped them. With a partner, students role-play different scenarios about how they would feel in situations and what they could do to feel better. The text *JT’s Spooky Creepy Room* supports directly teaching empathy, sympathy, and identifying feelings. Later they return to the lesson as a group and discuss and write about things they are afraid of.

In the “Splash and Dig” Investigator Kit, the lessons use books and puppets to model social and emotional skills. The lessons provide the text *Dilly and Friends: Trouble at Triangle Beach*. The teacher asks questions before reading the book, such as “What do you think listening means?” and “What do we use to listen?” After reading, the teacher focuses on listening to the materials and asks follow-up questions, such as “What do you think would have happened if Dilly chose not to listen to my story?” A follow-up activity includes creating a chart as a class on ways to be a good listener.

The “Research and Professional Guide” includes recommendations for modeling and demonstrating social and emotional skills in directly taught lessons. At the beginning of the year, lessons from the guide provide opportunities for the teacher to model instructional practices that support child self-concept, self-regulation, relationships with others, and social awareness. The guide also provides teachers with information and texts on cultural and ability differences to enhance child development of certain skills. For example, the guide outlines, recognizes, and appreciates cultural backgrounds.

The “Social and Emotional Development Kit” includes additional books to reinforce or extend learning. The materials include texts to support emotional literacy and control. The “Social and Emotional Skills Activity Guide” contains multiple cross-curricular connections and can be used to support the development of emotional literacy. Texts include examples of characters with varying emotions and responses to strong emotions, and they are relevant to children’s linguistic and cultural backgrounds. The social and emotional texts are designed to incorporate

cultural and ethnic activities. The Social and Emotional Skills Activity Guide includes a list of additional developmentally appropriate texts containing multiple cross-curricular connections with social and emotional themes to support child development of competencies. For example, the materials for “Opening Circle Time” contain interactive songs and movement activities that help children sustain attention on tasks and remain focused during group activities for increasing amounts of time.

The Social and Emotional Skills Activity Guide has lessons to directly model social skills. For example, in the lesson “What Do You Want?” the teacher models being frustrated because she cannot reach something. The students think about how she feels and then problem solve how to use words or ask when you need help. The guide includes social lessons to be taught both in the classroom and outside on the playground. The lessons are about identifying feelings, self-regulation, teaching empathy, and working with others.

3.2 Materials include repeated opportunities for students to practice social skills throughout the day.

- Materials provide opportunities to learn, practice, and apply these skills throughout the day.
- Practice opportunities are authentically integrated throughout all other content domains.

Meets 4/4

The materials include repeated opportunities for students to learn, practice, and apply social skills throughout the day. There are multiple day-to-day opportunities in a variety of settings and integrated throughout all content domains to help children develop social and emotional skills through peer and teacher relationships.

Evidence includes but is not limited to:

The materials include activities that support children in modulating levels of emotion. They include activities that can be used during transition time and gross motor games that include fast and slow movements and loud and soft sounds. After a read-aloud focused on emotions, the teacher models and encourages children to express and act out different feelings in the dramatic play area through role-playing. The materials make recommendations of structures that support children's abilities to practice social skills. The materials provide guidance to support the teacher in understanding how to authentically embed social and emotional skill development across content areas. Each "Investigation Kit" includes a section on daily routines to start the day, including ideas on supporting students in the area of social development. The activities vary throughout the curriculum to reflect the needs of the students based on the unit and time of year. The materials contain practice opportunities that are integrated throughout all other content domains, and they provide guidance to support the teacher in understanding how to embed social and emotional skill development across content.

The "Let's Investigate" Investigation Kit includes social and emotional activities teaching students to respect themselves and others. Students practice creating personal bubble space and inviting a friend to work with them at a center. The materials include opportunities to practice directly taught skills in a variety of different settings and ways. For example, during a

“Closing Circle Time” activity called “Back to School: Mirror Me,” children take turns watching their partner and make their body movements and facial expressions match. Then the teacher talks with children about different emotions. If children have difficulty thinking of something to share, they use a picture chart for ideas. The teacher describes situations and demonstrates using facial expressions and tone of voice when saying, “I’m sorry,” “Excuse me,” “Thank you!” and “You’re my friend.” Students are given the opportunity to practice with peers. Additionally, during a phonological awareness activity called “Listen for Words in a Sentence,” the teacher holds up fingers to show how many words are in the sentence. As they continue practicing, the teacher invites students to take turns holding the Great Auntie Lu puppet and offer a sentence. Students take turns listening to others’ responses. This interaction supports the development of social and emotional competence within a lesson focused on a different domain area.

In the “Healthy You” Investigation Kit, the materials provide an opportunity for students to graph their preference in response to an assigned question. This activity, focusing on data collection, supports children in recognizing that people have different perspectives and preferences.

In the “Finny Feathery Furry Friends” Investigation Kit, the lessons provide opportunities to practice new skills in a variety of ways and settings. For example, the teacher reads *JT’s Spooky Creepy Room*, and students discuss fears as a group. After teacher modeling, students engage in a writing activity about their fears. Students can write their names next to a picture of their fear, or they can write the word itself. Next, as a group, the class discusses what they can do about their fears, and students problem-solve with each other.

The “Splash and Dig” Investigation Kit has content domain lessons with embedded practice for social and emotional skills. Lessons focus on taking turns and following rules and routines. Opportunities to practice these skills are integrated into all subjects throughout the day, including small group games, class discussion from read-alouds, learning centers, and the “Closing Circle,” where students practice taking turns while sharing about their day.

In the “Watch It Grow” Investigation Kit lesson “Plant a Tree,” students work together to plant a tree and care for it over time. This lesson promotes opportunities for community building and turn-taking, embedded in a science setting. The materials also include “Outdoor Creative Play and Learning” cards that integrate teaching social and emotional skills in the outdoor setting.

The “Research and Professional Guide” includes guidance to support the teacher in building responsive interpersonal relationships with children to support their learning and emerging abilities. In the “Building Social and Emotional Skills Activity Guide,” the introduction, under “Developing Social and Emotional Skills,” explains that many of the activities are taught using puppets and suggests teachers incorporate the skills in other settings. For example, the teacher models role-playing skills and then encourages students to independently practice role-playing problem-solving situations with classmates.

3.3 Materials include ideal classroom arrangements that support positive social interactions.

- Classroom arrangement supports daily opportunities for practice of social skills, including in daily learning centers.
- Materials give teacher guidance on classroom arrangement to support teacher-student and student-student interactions.
- Materials consider a variety of factors and components of the physical space and their impact on students' social development.
- Materials can be implemented easily and effectively within a classroom arrangement that supports positive social interactions.
- Materials provide suggestions for how to engage students in classroom arrangement in order to promote student ownership of the space.

Meets 4/4

The materials reviewed include classroom arrangements that support daily opportunities for practice of social skills, including in daily learning centers. Materials give teacher guidance on classroom arrangement and support for teacher-student and student-student interactions, as well as support for positive social interactions in the class as a whole. The materials consider factors such as the physical space and its impact on students' social development. The materials can be implemented easily and effectively within a classroom arrangement that supports positive social interactions. The materials provide suggestions on how to engage students in the classroom arrangement in order to promote student ownership of the space.

Evidence includes but is not limited to:

The materials provide guidance to support the teacher in setting up the physical space to allow for social skill development in learning centers. For example, the "Research and Professional Guide" (RPG) includes the "Early Childhood Environmental Rating" scale and sample floor plan to support classroom arrangement. It includes coordinated placement of centers and allows for small group and whole group areas. The materials provide recommendations and guidance for organizing and labeling materials to support increased independence and the development of self-concept skills. Teachers are encouraged to modify the layout of the classroom throughout the year based on the unique needs of their students. The RPG includes information that supports teachers in arranging the classroom to support the practice of social skills. The

materials advise teachers to sketch a room layout, including the location of each learning center, and to use signs with pictures to label areas of the classroom. In the RPG, under “Classroom Management,” teachers find resources to help create a classroom where young children can thrive on consistency and routine. The “Let’s Investigate” Investigation Kit includes a suggested daily schedule. This provides guidance on what materials to have available in each learning center, as well as examples of a whole-day and half-day schedule. The materials outline how a teacher can find a balance between consistency and flexibility by providing students with a wide variety of tools and materials from which they can choose to play, explore, discover, and learn.

The RPG includes information about classroom arrangements to support classroom interactions, including strong teacher-student and student-student interactions. The materials advise, “When arranging your classroom, think about the traffic patterns and how specific areas of the room will be used.” Suggestions include making a sketch of the classroom floor plan, including physical features (e.g., doors, windows, electrical outlets, sinks, permanent cabinets, storage closets), and designating the location of each learning center based on the needs of each center. Furniture should be considered in terms of play, learning, and routines. For example, tables and chairs should be in areas where students will be working with manipulatives or writing. Cabinets, bookshelves, and easels are used as center boundaries. The goals of the environment should be student safety and the specific needs of students with special needs (e.g., wheelchair) as well as separating naturally noisy areas from the quieter learning centers. The RPG includes suggestions on the teacher’s role during center time, such as extending learning and modeling language. The “Resources” section lists magazines, journals, and websites to which the teacher can refer.

The materials support teachers with suggestions and guidance on arranging the physical classroom space. The RPG recommends “Create an environment that is comfortable, bright and stimulating.” The guide provides guidance on how the classroom space is arranged so that children can choose a variety of activities that are for a wide range of developmental levels and abilities. The “Healthy You Teacher Guide” gives suggestions and examples for physical space that provides children ways to practice social and emotional skills. For example, the materials provide specific steps to set up the whole group area. The guidance suggests finding a comfortable place in the room that is considerably large. Included in this kit is the opportunity for children to create “Me Books” in the “Writing” center. The materials support the importance of students to share and display their work: “Displaying children’s work delivers a clear message to children, parents, and other staff that you are proud of the accomplishments taking place in your classroom. It also plays a significant role in extending children’s learning and encouraging their creativity.”

The RPG includes information on how to create a classroom arrangement that supports positive social interactions. One element mentioned in the materials is the whole group meeting area: “Include a large open space in your floor plan for a circle time rug and a play area. If a large rug is not available, provide a small carpet square for each child.” The materials provide signs to label different areas of the classroom and suggestions on how to teach students

self-management when working in different areas of the classroom during center activities. The materials and resources are appropriate for use in whole group and small group instruction. Each Investigation Kit includes a “Daily Routines” component that can be integrated daily to develop children’s social skills. For example, the Daily Routine posters provide children with a visual aid for learning and guide the teacher’s plans for classroom routines. Suggestions for routines are taking attendance, discussing weather, playing outdoors, hand washing, and using the bathroom. “Quick Minutes” contain other routines for when students transition from one area of the room to another. Additionally, the whole group lessons encourage community building. For example, in the Let’s Investigate Investigation Kit, students pass a ball of yarn until each student is holding it, creating a web; the teacher explains that we are all connected in the classroom community. Another example, in the “Weather Watchers” Investigation Kit, asks riddles about the weather, such as “I fall from clouds. I help plants grow. What am I?” Teachers could use this type of activity when students transition from a whole group activity to learning centers. The materials include resources to help children self-regulate and independently make choices during the day.

The RPG includes information on how to involve students in the shared classroom space. Children are encouraged to share ownership of the classroom by participating in decision-making discussions and helping to establish rules and routines. For example, teachers are guided to ask students to share their ideas on visual displays, books to add to the “Reading” center, or new and different activities relating to their interests. The materials provide guidance on classroom arrangement before children arrive, emphasizing that the unique needs of the teacher’s students should be considered to evaluate the layout of the classroom throughout the year. The materials and lessons provide opportunities for children to be involved in creating classroom rules. The teacher guides the children to brainstorm rules that are important to the classroom. Children do this through discussion, role-play, and nonverbal cues. Materials include sample learning center lessons. In the Let’s Investigate Investigation Kit, teachers and students establish rules for sand table manners, taking turns, keeping sand in the table, organization of materials, and clean-up. This allows students to take part in the learning center while also being a part of establishing expected behaviors.

3.4 Materials include activities to develop physical skill and refine motor development through movement.

- Materials provide numerous daily opportunities for students to develop their gross motor skills through movement.
- Materials provide daily opportunities for students to develop their fine motor skills through tasks that do not require writing.

Meets 4/4

The materials include numerous daily activities to develop gross motor skills and refine fine motor development through movement. Materials also provide daily opportunities for students to develop their fine motor skills through tasks that do not require writing.

Evidence includes but is not limited to:

The materials provide activities involving movement to develop fine motor skills, gross motor skills, coordination, and balance that can be integrated throughout the day. Additionally, the materials give suggestions for balancing facilitated play and free play, both in the classroom and outdoors. The materials suggest that children have access to a variety of tools and other materials that can be used in learning centers to support cutting, tracing, squeezing, zipping, and lacing. The materials include *Dilly's Music and Movement CD*, which includes the song "This Is the Way" to teach skills during transitions; for example, students practice how to pull up their boots, zip their coats, put on their gloves, tie their scarves, and put on their hats. The "Outdoor Creative Play and Learning Activity Guide" includes twenty activity cards of varying difficulty for developing gross motor skills.

The "Under Construction" Investigation Kit incorporates opportunities for students to develop fine motor skills. While engaging in "Math" learning centers, students hammer colorful pegs into foam blocks to continue a pattern, which develops their strength, dexterity, and control using tools. Additionally, students develop hand-eye coordination during learning centers as they build with blocks. The materials in this kit incorporate gross motor skills during transition time through an activity called "Giant Steps," where students move from one activity to another using giant dinosaur steps, tiny baby steps, or slow turtle steps.

In the “Finny Feathery Furry Friends” Investigation Kit, students bunny hop, dance, and wiggle while interacting with books and technology. Also in this kit, students cut, draw, and write to create animal riddle books. During a center activity called “Clay Animals,” students look at pictures of animals and choose one to mold out of clay.

The “Splash and Dig” Investigation Kit incorporates opportunities for students to develop fine motor skills. While creating a beach mural, students develop their pincer control as they contribute ocean, sand, and sea life to the mural. Additionally, students develop hand-eye coordination during Math centers as they work to construct puzzles. This kit focuses on the gross motor skills of control and balance when moving as well as coordinated movements when playing. Students use jump ropes and practice jumping over the “river bed” so they don’t get wet.

In the “Watch It Grow” Investigation Kit, students glue together craft sticks and other plant-like materials to create different structures in an activity in the “Block” center called “Building with Plants.” In another activity in the “Science” center, students use yarn to measure the growth of their plants and then cut and tape it into their science journal. The kit contains a game called “Nest in a Tree,” in which children take turns balancing a plastic disk on their head as they walk, being careful not to let the nest fall from the tree.

In the “Weather Watchers” Investigation Kit, students build fine motor skills, developing strength and dexterity as they create a mobile using items representing the four seasons. Children look over the materials and choose an item to attach to a branch of the tree representing one of the seasons. Students use scissors, glue, and writing materials to build muscles in their hands.

3.5 Materials include activities that develop safe and healthy habits in students.

- Materials provide teacher guidance on modeling safe and healthy habits for students.
- Materials provide a variety of opportunities and activities for students to practice safe and reflect on safe and healthy habits.
- Materials communicate for both teachers and students the connection between physical and mental health.

Meets 4/4

The materials include activities that develop safe and healthy habits in students. They provide teachers guidance on modeling safe and healthy habits for students throughout the day. The kits include resources that the teacher can use to support children in developing and practicing safe and healthy habits. The materials communicate some information for both students and the teacher to connect between physical and mental health.

Evidence includes but is not limited to:

Each “Investigation Kit” includes a section on daily routines to start the day, including ideas on supporting students in the area of personal health and safety as it relates to the Investigation Kit’s theme. The activities vary to reflect the needs of the students based on the unit and time of year. The materials include posters, songs, chants, and lessons that support the teacher with modeling safe and healthy habits. Lessons provide opportunities for children to create materials, such as drawings, posters, and class books, that support safe and healthy habits based on the topic of the Investigation Kit.

In the “Let’s Investigate” Investigation Kit, students record and discuss a health-related safety tip, such as “Wash your hands before you eat,” “Keep sand inside the table,” “Wear smocks when painting,” or “Announce a safety drill and put it on the schedule.” The objective of the lesson is to show awareness of print as well as practice safety habits in school. In the “Daily Routine” “Health” component, teachers choose from activities to reinforce hygiene, personal care, safety, and nutritional practices. Examples include health lessons such as establishing toilet routines, hand washing, and tooth care. Students establish school routines such as set-up/clean-up and good table manners for snack time. Another lesson in this Investigation Kit

is personal safety, teaching children when they should and should not give out their addresses and the importance of learning their phone number.

The “Under Construction” Investigation Kit offers several activities to support students in learning proper health and safety routines. The teacher introduces, models, and practices the meaning and purpose of the stop sign during the kit’s Daily Routine. The teacher also discusses healthy snacks and choices as students prepare their own snacks. Safety activities include tips about always wearing a helmet when riding a bike and not running in front of the swings on the playground. A sidebar in the materials states the importance of reinforcing learning by teaching concepts through music and movement.

In the “Healthy You” Investigation Kit, health and safety topics include “Body and Senses,” “Food and Exercise,” “I Can Do It!” and “Safety and Health.” This kit provides a lesson on safety and following routines with sample dialogue for teachers to use to model safe and healthy habits. For example, in the “Dramatic Play” center, children go shopping for healthy and unhealthy foods and sort them into grocery bags.

In the “Finny Feathery Furry Friends” Investigation Kit, students discuss animal senses in comparison with human senses. The activity explains how students use their senses to safely cross the street. Another activity discusses how raccoons wash their food and why it is important for us to do the same. In centers, students have the opportunity to practice the activity by washing plastic food items.

In the “Splash and Dig” Investigation Kit, lessons on proper health and safety include the necessity of cleaning your house; students practice cleaning in the Dramatic Play center. The kit contains class discussions about the importance of drinking water and choosing healthy food and snacks. One activity is to graph how much water each student drinks throughout the day. The kit includes explanations about pool safety, such as following a lifeguard’s instructions, not running in a pool area, and always swimming with a friend or grown-up.

The “Weather Watchers” Investigation Kit includes recommendations on supporting children in making healthy choices. One activity has children prepare a healthy snack—rainbow salad or trail mix. This kit also covers examples of weather safety: always wear sunscreen, stay out of the sun when it is strongest, and drink plenty of water on hot days.

The “Research and Professional Guide” (RPG) contains information regarding the program philosophy of play as well as research regarding outdoor space and how it contributes to children’s growth and multisensory learning. This supports teachers in understanding the importance of modeling and guiding purposeful physical development to support students’ mental health. The RPG also provides websites and articles that communicate the importance of outdoor play and planning unstructured play as a time to encourage healthy social and emotional behaviors.

4.1 Materials provide guidance on developing students' listening skills.

- Materials provide teacher guidance on modeling active listening for understanding.
- Materials support and scaffold daily opportunities for students to listen for understanding.
- Materials provide opportunities for students to hear sounds, appropriate sentence structure, and grammar in a variety of contexts.
- Materials provide opportunities for students to hear conversations that follow conversation norms.

Meets 4/4

The materials support the development of listening skills and provide teacher guidance on modeling active listening for understanding. The lessons support and scaffold daily opportunities for students to listen for understanding. The materials provide opportunities for students to hear sounds, sentence structure, and grammar in a variety of contexts. The lessons provide opportunities for students to hear conversations that follow conversation norms.

Evidence includes but is not limited to:

The “Literacy Framework” resource provides guidance to develop listening skills through reading-related items in a number of strategic places and times throughout the day. For example, the Literacy Framework chart provides teachers with lessons planned around themes that are connected to independent play. The materials provide various opportunities for students to hear sounds, appropriate sentence structure, and grammar in a variety of contexts.

The “Let’s Investigate” Investigation Kit includes a phonological awareness active-listening activity. The teacher hides a toy that makes a sound, and students listen to find the toy in the classroom. Then, as a whole group, students listen to the *Listen to Your World* CD; picture supports help students listen and identify different sounds. The “Investigation Launch” in Let’s Investigate contains a research icon with information on what publications by the National Association for the Education of Young Children say regarding active listening; they state, “Listening well is an active process.” During the “Set the Stage” for any read-aloud activity, the teacher is provided with examples of how to model active listening to students. For example, the teacher tells students that investigators like to listen, explore, make discoveries, and learn

new things. Then the teacher tells students that they will hear a story called *Gone Investigating*. The story is about Dilly and her little brother JT; Dilly must explore and find answers to her questions to solve a problem. The teacher guides children to the “Investigation Station” and models what they will learn about. The teacher uses visual supports to promote the modeling of active listening behaviors.

The “Under Construction” Investigation Kit includes lessons that regularly engage children in theme-related conversations in which they take turns listening and responding to learn conversational norms with guidance from the teacher. For example, in the Investigation Station in this kit, the students build a structure. The materials include specific language for the teacher to use to guide conversations. Questions to ask include “What did you build?” “Does your structure look like your plan? Why or why not?” “What was hard about building? What was easy?” “What do you want us to know about using tools?” Students listen to a CD to identify the sounds that they know and “tell what vehicle, tool, or other object on the construction site made each sound.” Afterward, students learn that a factory whistle tells the workers when it’s time for lunch or time to go home. Students imitate the sound of the factory whistle, “Toot! Toot!” The materials in this kit also provide an opportunity for modeled conversations through the use of the “Chuck Wood” puppet during “Opening Circle Time.” The puppet begins the listening activity, leading the class through the following conversation: “Hi everyone! I’m Chuck Wood. I love toolboxes! A toolbox holds tools. Do you want to see what’s inside my toolbox?” Later, students listen to the sounds inside Chuck’s toolbox to try and identify what can be inside.

In the “Healthy You” Investigation Kit, students practice listening for understanding using multisensory materials in small groups and whole groups. For example, children act out the picture depicted on the “Oral Language Cards.” “Quick Minutes” support the practice of listening skills through songs that require children to act out the directions. The materials provide guidance for the teacher to model play behavior and conversations by setting up a doctor’s office in the “Dramatic Play” learning center.

The “Splash and Dig” Investigation Kit includes the text *Dilly and Friends: Trouble at Triangle Beach*. Students listen and respond during the following before-reading conversation: “I like to listen to stories. Do you? If I want to hear and think about what happens in the story, I must listen quietly. What do you think listening means? What do we use to listen?” As a follow-up activity, the class creates a chart on how to be a good listener. Students pick a partner and listen to and act out a rhyme, such as “Take two steps forward and two steps back.” Afterward, students discuss how they knew what to do in order to play the game.

In the “Weather Watchers” Investigation Kit, through an “Investigation Launch,” students use content vocabulary to answer questions such as “What is the weather like today?” and “What do you wear in this kind of weather?” The materials also include four flapboards with pictures to engage students in discussions surrounding the weather. The flapboard invites students with limited speaking vocabulary to point to scenes, pictures, and photos to indicate the weather word they want to say. During the “Weather Report” activity, the teacher displays a picture of a

warm, calm sunny day. Then, the teacher grabs a microphone and invites children to listen as the teacher gives the following report: "Good evening! This is Wanda Weatherbee reporting to you live. As you can see, storm clouds are rolling on this cold, winter night. The wind is blowing, and it is beginning to rain, so don't forget your umbrellas!" The teacher asks students to discuss the weather report, and children identify where Wanda went wrong. Children take turns being in Wanda's place and give a more accurate weather report using pictures to depict other weather conditions. The materials provide grammatically correct scripts to support the teacher in giving directions or supporting lesson content. Materials also provide digital stories that support listening, understanding, and comprehension.

The "STEAM and Literacy Challenge Activity Guide" includes open-ended questions that model active listening. Students listen to the story *Dilly and Great Auntie Lu*. After reading, the teacher discusses the story and asks students how they can tell Dilly is listening to Auntie Lu. Then, the class creates their own story; as students add details to their story, the teacher models listening skills. The teacher uses a think-aloud and a previously read fictional narrative to help children in identifying elements in their story. The teacher asks questions such as "Who are the people in the story?" and "Where does the story take place?" The materials provide lessons, scripts, and activities for teachers to model active listening and appropriate sentence structure. They also provide opportunities for students to hear sounds, appropriate sentence structure, and grammar in a variety of contexts.

The "Research and Professional Guide" (RPG) provides teacher recommendations on incorporating visual supports, such as labeled pictures, to instruct children about the classroom rules. The materials contain a guide and daily routine posters that support teacher modeling of active listening behaviors. The RPG also provides recommendations to model conversations in a variety of settings. The teacher models conversations through role-play, the use of puppets, and adult-child interactions. For example, the Appendix suggests lessons for conversation participation, using increasingly complex sentences through the use of puppets, and opportunities for students to hear conversations that follow conversation norms.

4.2 Materials provide guidance on developing students' speaking skills.

- Materials provide opportunities for students to practice producing sounds and use appropriate sentence structure and grammar in a variety of contexts.
- Materials provide teacher guidance on corrective feedback of students' speech production, sentence structure, and grammar.
- Materials provide teacher guidance on setting up and facilitating activities that allow students to practice production of a variety of sounds, appropriate sentence structure, and grammar.
- Materials provide support and guidance for students to work collaboratively to engage in discussion using conversation norms.

Meets 4/4

The materials reviewed provide opportunities for students to practice sounds and use appropriate sentence structure and grammar in a variety of contexts. The materials provide teacher support on setting up and facilitating activities that allow students to practice producing a variety of sounds, appropriate sentence structure, and grammar. The materials support guidance for students to work collaboratively to engage in discussion using conversation norms.

Evidence includes but is not limited to:

The organization of the “Investigation Kits” through themes and settings allows children to “naturally practice their language skills, participate in playtime to model interactions, and demonstrate how to resolve conflicts, listen attentively, and act appropriately in a variety of settings.” The materials utilize both small and large group settings to facilitate oral language activities; the materials use all parts of the daily routine to facilitate conversations. There are recommendations for setting up the varied learning centers at the beginning of each Investigation Kit based on the kit’s theme. The materials include clear guidance for teachers on appropriate ways to support developmentally appropriate speech production, sentence structure, and grammar. The use of music, chants, and rhymes is evident throughout each Investigation Kit and engages students in discussion and conversation throughout the lessons. Puppets are utilized throughout the lessons to “encourage children to develop both listening and speaking skills.” For example, after a read-aloud, Dilly the puppet asks students questions about his emotions during the story, such as “Why was I sad at the park?” The materials guide teachers in encouraging students to take turns when they share their answers. During “Closing

“Circle Time,” students gather around a “Sharing Chair” and talk about what they learned. The teacher invites children to take turns sitting in the chair to share a specific song, project, artwork, or reflection. Children tell what they liked best about the day, sing a song they learned during the week, name new words they learned during the week, recite the alphabet, show how to make a shadow, or say “hello” in another language.

The “Let’s Investigate” Investigation Kit includes lessons where students are asked open-ended questions to respond to read-alouds, supporting critical thinking and expressive language. In the “Match Sounds” activity, teachers name three objects and ask students to identify the words that have the same matching sounds. The teacher encourages students to use a mirror and to listen and watch themselves as they repeat the words.

In the “Healthy You” Investigation Kit, the teacher uses music to practice increasing speaking skills and speech production. For example, students engage in action songs with simple repetition, such as the “Hokey Pokey.” Students sing a familiar song as they play a game to find and say letter sounds.

The “Finny Feathery Furry Friends” Investigation Kit incorporates oral language practice into the learning centers. Students recite rhymes, look at pet photos and describe what they see, and listen to a CD, identifying various animal sounds. The materials include “Assessment and Intervention” cards, which guide teachers to evaluate and support students’ development of speaking skills. Prompts for the teacher include “Do children use appropriate language and style when telling about their experiences with pets? Record your observations as anecdotal notes.” As students play, the materials prompt the teacher to ask questions about the toys students use and the games they play; this prompts students to use new vocabulary and sentence patterns to answer, such as “I’m playing with blocks. I’ll build a wall. Do you want to work at my construction site?” Grammar intervention strategies include modeling different verb tenses for children (e.g., “instead of saying, ‘He throwed it,’ say, ‘He threw it.’”)

In the “Splash and Dig” Investigation Kit, the teacher reads the poem “Water, Water, Everywhere!” several times, and the students recite the repetitive parts. With the support of oral language cards to scaffold ideas, the class discusses where they see water and what it is used for. The teacher and students write a poem about the different stages of water and act out water as solid, liquid, and gas. The poem utilizes repetition and rhyme to develop students’ oral language skills. The “Dramatic Play” center includes a beach, and students are encouraged to talk about times they have gone to the beach. Students use props to role-play as family members, lifeguards, or boat operators, thus facilitating the practice of speaking skills and conversation.

In the “Watch It Grow” Investigation Kit, the “Trucking Time” transition activity provides practice of expressive language and speaking skills. The teacher provides a toy truck and models the language: “I’m driving to market with corn in my truck.” The students orally share their ideas

of farm products they would put in the truck. To scaffold struggling students, the teacher uses oral language cards.

In the “Weather Watchers” Investigation Kit, the teacher sings the poem “We Find Water” to the tune of “Twinkle Twinkle Little Star.” The materials guide the teacher to sing it several times until the students can join in and sing along. In another activity, students perform the poem “The Storm.” First, the teacher recites the poem and the children think about how the poem is like storms they have experienced. During the second reading, the teacher uses props and invites children to act out the poem using new vocabulary. In the “Scepter Pass” activity, the teacher holds a scepter and acts as the “King/Queen of Spring” (or another season). The class then passes the scepter around, and each student says something about a season or answers a specific question prompt, such as “How many seasons are there?” “What season comes after winter?” “When are the days the longest?” The teacher utilizes different levels of questioning to support children’s differing oral language and speaking abilities in a fun way.

The “Research and Professional Guide” includes four sections: “Let’s Talk,” “Word Play,” “Play Time,” and “Read It Again and Again.” In Read It Again and Again, students learn vocabulary through repetition and opportunities to discuss a story they are already familiar with. The guide also supports organizing the classroom environment to provide opportunities to practice and use oral language for authentic purposes when setting up the physical space. During learning centers, teachers participate in play to model interactions, demonstrate how to resolve conflicts, listen attentively, and act appropriately in a variety of settings. The Dramatic Play center encourages children to pretend and role-play. Children enjoy meaningful play while developing social, verbal, and organizational skills. The guide includes suggestions for corrective feedback of students’ speech production and oral language; children practice words they already know, and materials continue to add new words in learning activities.

In the “STEAM and Literacy Challenge Guide,” the materials include instructional strategies to set up theme-related centers that support conversations. The guide includes lessons such as modeling turn-taking and role-playing conversations during play. For example, the materials for “Tools and Helpers” include theme-related dramatic play. The materials include lessons for students to work collaboratively to engage in discussion using conversational norms.

4.3 Materials support expanding student vocabulary.

- Materials follow a progression of vocabulary development that is age and sequentially appropriate.
- Materials include a variety of strategies for strategically supporting vocabulary development that are integrated and authentically embedded in content-based learning.

Meets 4/4

The materials reviewed include lessons that follow a progression of vocabulary development that is age and sequentially appropriate. The materials include a variety of strategies for supporting vocabulary development that are integrated and authentically embedded in content-based learning.

Evidence includes but is not limited to:

The materials include meaningful ways for children to interact with and use new vocabulary in daily activities. Every “Investigation Kit” has its own “Flapboard” with vocabulary words that students use throughout the kits. The “Literacy Framework” provides a summary, highlights, and a guide to reading that includes a vocabulary routine to support children in learning new words with picture support. The guide provides theme-related questions to support the book, such as “What tools are in the toolbox?” and “What does the father do with the wrench?” Suggestions include taking a picture walk to talk about tools and toolboxes. The materials follow an age-appropriate progression of vocabulary development and are sequentially appropriate.

In the “Let’s Investigate” Investigation Kit, in an activity called “Literacy: The Curiosity in You,” the teacher provides a child-friendly definition: “Curious is a word that means always wanting to know more and more about something.” The teacher introduces the new vocabulary during a read-aloud, using words in context and providing clear examples. The teacher activates students’ prior knowledge to recall that the character Dilly Gator is curious about “this big wide world,” which is why she starts the InvestiGator Club so she and her friends can investigate and learn all about it. These strategies and activities support learning and applying new vocabulary.

In the “Under Construction” Investigation Kit, the teacher directly teaches vocabulary with picture supports using the provided oral language cards. Students line up their chairs as if they are on an imaginary bus, and the teacher explains that they are going to drive by a construction site. Students use the pictures on the oral language cards to describe what they see. The cards provide key vocabulary words for the teacher to mention, such as *bus*, *construction site*, *concrete mixer*, *sign*, and *truck*. Students are encouraged to use the words during the activity.

In the “Healthy You” Investigator Kit, students practice relevant vocabulary in context. Students are taught the vocabulary terms *brush*, *floss*, *problem*, *dentist*, *hero*, and *vegetables*. Later in the lesson, students are introduced to these words through a Flapboard discussion and apply these new words in their “Investigation Stations.”

In the “Splash and Dig” Investigation Kit, the materials provide vocabulary words of the week such as *ocean*, *lake*, *mountain*, *dig*, *swim*, and *splash*. Students act out the action words to help gain a better understanding of the new words.

In the “Weather Watchers” Investigation Kit, oral language picture cards reinforce storm-related vocabulary. Then, in a whole group discussion, students share their experiences with storms. This allows the teacher to help children connect what they may already know to the new vocabulary. The materials offer guidance for teaching and reinforcing vocabulary throughout a variety of settings and activities and include language instruction that is age-appropriate.

The “STEAM and Literacy Activity Guide” explores ways for children to interact with and use new vocabulary words in context. The materials support vocabulary development that is integrated and embedded in content-based learning, including lessons and activities that allow children to learn through play. Lessons encourage children to act out familiar stories such as “The Three Little Pigs.” An activity called “Literacy: Antonyms and Synonyms” (which corresponds with a social and emotional lesson) reminds children of the vocabulary words they learned in the story *The Silly Dilly Dance* (e.g., *confused*, *embarrassed*, *mad*, *sad*, *silly*, and *upset*). The teacher asks students to think of a word that means the opposite of *sad* (*happy*) and leads them to discuss other words that mean the same as *happy* (e.g., *cheerful*, *jolly*, *merry*, *thrilled*, and *glad*). Next, students use their new words in a sentence.

The “Research and Professional Guide” includes research-based strategies for supporting vocabulary development. The guide states, “Vocabulary is intentionally taught and stressed in each InvestiGator Club lesson. Useful, everyday words and content-related vocabulary are woven into the program through a variety of methods, including discussion and conversation, explorative play, songs, stories, and purposeful inquiry.” Flapboard stories are used to build critical background for investigation content in the kits while intentionally tapping into children’s prior knowledge and experiences. Throughout the thematic Investigation Kits, robust vocabulary is introduced in an interactive and fun way both directly and indirectly, starting with concrete objects and common experiences. Activities support vocabulary development that is

organized around a strong theme to provide repeated opportunities to hear and practice language within a relevant context. The materials also provide a variety of strategies to support teachers' modeling of vocabulary development, such as labeling objects in the classroom and showing the words in English and also the child's home language. The materials further suggest that increasing the use of nonverbal communication strategies by using vocal expression, pointing, gesturing, and body language allows for all students to communicate.

4.4 Materials include appropriate strategies for supporting English Learners (ELs) in their development of English language skills and developmentally appropriate content knowledge.

- Materials include a variety of strategies for supporting English Learners.
- Strategies include how to use the child's first language as a foundation for learning English.
- Materials develop students' vocabulary in both English and the home language.

Meets 4/4

The materials include a variety of strategies for supporting English Learners (ELs) in their development of English language skills and developmentally appropriate content knowledge. Strategies include how to use the child's first language as a foundation for learning English and encourage the development of vocabulary in both the student's native language as well as English.

Evidence includes but is not limited to:

Each “Investigation Kit” includes a sidebar with suggestions to support ELs. The materials support the teacher’s understanding of the process of transfer from the first language to English; materials encourage the teacher to build connections with the students’ prior knowledge in their native language and use that knowledge to help them gain literacy skills and new vocabulary words in English. For example, teachers pair native English speakers with ELs during learning centers, as children learn language effectively through natural conversation and play. Additionally, *Dilly and Friends* lapbooks and little books are available in English and Spanish. Each story is read aloud in English and Spanish on the *Dilly and Friends Read Along CD*. Vocabulary words in English and Spanish are provided throughout the program, including in the “Teacher Guides,” “Flapboards,” and “Art Prints.” Flapboard stories are translated into Spanish in the “Research and Professional Guide” (RPG). The “Rosalita Word Poster” and corresponding teacher guide activities show relationships between Spanish and English words and phrases. During read-aloud instruction, teachers invite ELs to point to the objects shown in the pictures and allow children to answer using their receptive knowledge even if they are unable to express themselves orally. The materials include research and pedagogical support for understanding the importance of developing children’s first language.

In the “Let’s Investigate” Investigation Kit, the teacher observes children while they interact with books and materials in the “Reading” learning center. The teacher points to and names print materials and invites the student to repeat the words. For example, the teacher says, “This is a book. Say ‘book.’” The teacher encourages the students to make connections to their home language. Specific strategies like these can be found throughout the teacher guide; they encompass activities throughout the day.

In the “Healthy You” Investigation Kit, activity cards contain strategies for teachers to use with ELs. Materials support ELs in making connections to new words by including photographs of real objects related to specific vocabulary and themes. For example, students look at pictures on “Oral Language Cards” to learn about safety and things not to put in their mouth.

In the “Finny Feathery Furry Friends” Investigation Kit, the materials guide teachers to build on students’ first language. For example, as students engage in a discussion and song surrounding animals, an EL sidebar notes “Animals might sound the same around the world, but languages express the sound differently. Invite children to tell what they might say instead of ‘cheep cheep,’ ‘quack quack,’ ‘moo moo,’ and so on in their home languages.”

In the “Weather Watchers” Investigation Kit, the materials offer teacher guidance for EL support. During the thematic unit on weather, students engage in an assortment of centers, and the teacher works with ELs to extend simple sentences. In the “Science” center, students practice sequencing, and the teacher repeats and extends a child’s simple phrase or sentence to amplify what he or she is saying: “Yes, that is snow. Snow is white and cold.”

The RPG guides teachers to identify the importance of developing students’ vocabulary in both English and their home language, and then to develop it. For example, the materials include current research on the importance of developing first language skills and offer strategies for teachers.

“Spanish Instructional Materials” are provided to help the teacher provide an appropriate level of support in the students’ home language. The materials provide teacher guidance and a variety of activities that support ELs. Sample lessons within these materials include new vocabulary and cognates, such as on vocabulary picture cards, which have words in Spanish and in English. The materials provide strategies to intentionally use a child’s first language as a foundation for learning English.

5.1 Materials provide opportunities for students to develop oral language skills, including through authentic text conversations.

- Materials provide opportunities for students to listen actively and to ask questions and engage in discussion to understand information in texts.
- Materials provide consistent opportunities for students to engage in discussions that require students to share information and ideas about the texts.
- Materials provide support and guidance for students to work collaboratively to engage in discussion.

Meets 4/4

The materials include lessons that provide opportunities for students to listen actively, ask questions, and engage in discussion to understand information in texts. Throughout the “Investigation Kits,” the materials provide consistent opportunities for students to engage in discussions that require them to share information and ideas about the texts. The materials also provide support and guidance for students to work collaboratively to engage in discussion.

Evidence includes but is not limited to:

The “Social and Emotional Skills Activity Guide” supports student practice of listening and speaking skills through authentic conversations. The materials provide support and guidance for students to work collaboratively to engage in discussions through play. For example, in the “Share a Toy Day” lesson, each child brings one toy from home that they would like to share with others. Students show their toy, place it in the center of the circle, and discuss and share anything new about the toys.

After reading a “Flapboard,” students go to an “Investigation Station,” where they learn about how investigators like Dilly find information; students discuss the station’s materials and how to use the materials. After students investigate, the teacher asks questions such as “What are some things you saw, smelled, touched, listened to, or tasted?” and records information on chart paper. This activity provides the opportunity for students to engage in authentic conversation around a topic and share their thinking orally. Students have the opportunity to independently visit the Investigation Station throughout the day within each “Investigation Kit.”

In the “Let’s Investigate” Investigation Kit, the teacher reads the story *Gone Investigating*, which is about Dilly and her little brother JT. In the story, Dilly must explore and find answers to her questions to solve a problem. The teacher displays the Flapboard and tells children that, as they listen to this story, they will meet Dilly’s friends and see where they live. The teacher asks questions that allow children to use prior knowledge and share their experiences, such as “Have you tried to solve a problem or explored a new place? When?” While reading the story, the teacher tells students, “This place is Triangle Beach, where Dilly lives with her family, including her little brother JT. This is the Gators’ houseboat. Dilly’s Great Auntie Lu lives in this beach house. She is an artist.” Students are guided to actively listen to find out where the characters live and to identify new words.

In the “Under Construction” Investigation Kit, the materials provide support and guidance for students to work and engage in discussions. Students actively listen to a re-read of *Dilly and Friends: Superhero to the Rescue*. The teacher uses the Chuck Wood puppet to engage students in a discussion through questions such as “Why couldn’t I ride with Dilly?” and “What did Dilly and I share at the end of the story?” While wrapping up the discussion, the teacher poses the question, “Have you shared with anyone today? Has anyone shared with you? How does it make you feel when someone will not share with you?” A sidebar provides support for teachers, suggesting that pictures can be utilized for students having difficulty answering questions.

In the “Healthy You” Investigation Kit, students practice their listening and speaking skills through conversations with their peers. During the “Opening Circle Time” oral language section, the teacher shows a picture of an emotion and talks about the feelings depicted on the card. The teacher asks, “How do you look when you feel happy?” Students participate in a “Turn and Talk” related to the emotion they are feeling and work collaboratively to engage in discussions. Guidance is provided for the teacher to model open-ended questions and to expand language. For example, a “Whole Group Literacy” card guides the teacher to display the book *Good Thing You’re Not an Octopus!* After reading the title, the teacher asks, “What is the octopus doing? How does the octopus feel? Why?” The teacher shows children a chart with the names of the animals they would like to be. Students draw pictures of themselves practicing a healthy habit and then share their ideas with others.

In the “Watch It Grow” Investigation Kit, students are provided opportunities to engage in discussions around texts. The teacher presents the text *Growing Vegetable Soup* and explains that the text is about a father and son who make a big pot of vegetable soup. Students engage in pre-reading questions such as “What do you think they will do with the tomato?” “What other vegetables do you think they will put in their soup?” “Where do you think they will get their vegetables?” These questions support active listening to engage in discussions during and after reading. Following the lesson, the students collaboratively discuss the text and share their ideas as they connect to their learning.

5.2 Materials provide direct (explicit) instruction and opportunities for student practice in phonological awareness skills.

- Materials follow the research-based developmental continuum of how children acquire phonological awareness.
- Materials include a variety of types of activities that engage students in identifying, synthesizing, and analyzing sounds.
- Materials allow for student practice of phonological awareness skills both in isolation and connected to alphabetic knowledge skills.

Meets 4/4

The materials provide direct (explicit) instruction and opportunities for students to practice phonological awareness skills. Throughout the “Investigation Kits,” the materials follow the research-based developmental continuum of how children acquire phonological awareness. The materials also include a variety of activity types that engage students in identifying, synthesizing, and analyzing sounds and allow for student practice of phonological awareness skills both in isolation and connected to alphabetic knowledge skills.

Evidence Includes but is not limited to:

The “InvestiGator Club” provides explicit instruction in the development of phonological awareness skills, which increase in difficulty throughout the school year and are reinforced in the “Quick Minutes” section of each Investigation Kit. A list of varied phonological awareness activities can be found in the “Daily Routines” section of the teacher’s guide, under “Phonological Awareness.”

The “Let’s Investigate” Investigation Kit introduces phonological awareness by having students listen to familiar sounds using the *Listen to Your World* CD. Students listen to and identify rhyming words in games, songs, stories, and poems. Students also practice phonological skills when they substitute letter sounds in familiar chants, such as “fee-fi-fo-fum, bee-bi-bo-bum, lee-li-lo-lum,” and recite tongue twisters. During “Word Awareness” lessons, children discriminate between different spoken words heard orally and identify if two words are the same, such as *truck/truck* and *bus/car*. This kit also has lessons that teach “Syllable Awareness,” where children repeat and clap or use counters to show how many syllables are heard in words.

Another lesson introduces children to environmental sounds in and around the house. The teacher displays pictures of people and objects, such as a crying baby, a clock, a telephone, a doorbell, and a blowdryer. Then the teacher asks students, “What do you see in this picture? and “What would the picture sound like?”

In the “Healthy You” Investigation Kit, the teacher introduces the letter card for the letter *Nn*. The teacher discusses what the letter looks like by describing it, introducing the sound, and teaching words that start with the letter. While learning about rhyming, students say pairs of rhyming words several times and listen for the rhyming sounds: *scrub/rub*, *jump/pump*, and *sleep/sheep*. Objects related to healthy habits are passed out, such as a toothbrush, a bar of soap, a washcloth, and an apple. The teacher says the rhyme as students repeat the words. After each pair that rhymes, students act out the rhyme using their object. The materials incorporate play and movement into the phonological awareness learning process. The “Mighty Minutes” quick activities have children make up silly rhymes about foods; the teacher leads by substituting different beginning sounds. For example, students chant, “Yogurt, yogurt, I like yogurt. Mogurt, mogurt, I like mogurt.”

In the “Splash and Dig” Investigation Kit, students practice phonological awareness skills in support of future alphabetic instruction. For example, after singing a song, students identify the sounds they hear at the beginning of the words *waded*, *water*, and *wet*. Next, students are asked what words rhyme with *wet*, and then they discuss other words that rhyme with *wet* and *yet*. This work is done orally and creates the foundation for future alphabetic work.

The “Weather Watchers” Investigation Kit provides a teacher-led activity: Students sing “Rain, Rain Go Away” as a whole group and then change the beginning sounds. The lessons include phonological awareness tasks with advanced blending. For example, while outside, the teacher says: “I spy the /s/ /u/ /n/.” The materials guide: “Have children blend the sounds to make the word and then point to the object. Repeat with: /r/ /o/ /k/, /b/ /u/ /g/, /h/ /i/ /l/, /gr/ /a/ /s/.” Also in this kit, students develop phonological awareness by separating word sounds and substitute sounds. For example, the teacher gives each child connecting cubes and has the Bruno puppet use oral language cards to ask questions such as “Does this picture show day or night?” Students take a cube for each sound they hear in /d/ /a/ /y/, put the cubes together, and then touch each cube from left to right as they say *day*. The teacher continues the activity using other unit-related words such as *light*, *night*, *moon*, *sun*, and *rain*. In another activity, the teacher shows a picture of a kite, and students say the word and sounds that make up the word *kite*. Then, children bounce a ball three times, one bounce for each sound of the word (/k/ /i/ /t/). Students repeat this lesson using picture cards for words such as *key*, *day*, *sun*, *rain*, *leaf*, *night*, and *light*.

The “Research and Professional Guide” (RPG) provides instruction in all phonological awareness skills using a research-based scope and sequence and notes that phonological awareness is the single most reliable predictor of future reading success. The RPG also shares current research in the development of children’s phonological awareness skills. In the “STEAM and Literacy

Challenge Guide,” students sit in a circle on the floor and roll a ball to each other while saying a letter that begins with the same sound as their name. This guide also provides modeling of phonological awareness. Lessons include activities for onset-rime with examples such as “Tell children that some words end with the /m/ sound like ‘ham’ and ‘swim.’” Children repeat words as they listen for the ending sound.

5.3 Materials provide direct (explicit) instruction and opportunities for student practice in alphabetic knowledge skills.

- Materials follow a research-based, strategic sequence for introduction of alphabetic knowledge.
- Materials provide teacher guidance on directly introducing, modeling, and using letter names and sounds.

Meets 4/4

The materials include direct (explicit) instruction and opportunities that follow a research-based, strategic sequence for the introduction of alphabetic knowledge. The materials provide teacher guidance on directly introducing, modeling, and using letter names and sounds.

Evidence includes but is not limited to:

The materials support the development of alphabet recognition by giving children daily opportunities for letter recognition, associating letters with their shapes, drawing attention to distinct features of letters, teaching the order of the alphabet, and providing alphabet books, following the guidance in the “Research and Professional Guide.” This guide supports starting with commonly used letters with continuous sounds, then moving to letters with stopped sounds, and finally teaching confusing letters. Students can apply alphabetic principles to daily instruction; materials teach the names of letters and the sounds they make using alphabet cards and a corresponding engaging character, demonstrate how letters are formed when writing, and encourage children to finger-trace or attempt to write letters. While reading, the teacher points to letters and words, encouraging children to notice beginning letters in their names and familiar words; the teacher also displays letters and charts in the classroom. Other examples of research-based, sequential teaching of alphabet knowledge include singing letter songs and reciting rhymes, making letter-sound matches whenever possible, and having a designated place where children can play with and manipulate letters.

In the “Let’s Investigate” Investigation Kit, the teacher sings “Dilly’s Alphabet Song” to introduce the alphabet. Students listen and sing along while following print. The teacher introduces “Dilly’s Alphabet Cards” to build knowledge of the alphabet and the “Alphabet Flapboard” to practice the alphabet. The teacher writes the following message on the “Bruno Bee Mail” poster: “Where can we find the alphabet in our school?” Then the teacher shows the students

the poster and explains that the letters on the message are put in a special order to make words that have meaning. Students interact with the poster by matching a given magnetic letter to the corresponding letter on the poster.

The “Healthy You” Investigation Kit uses alphabet cards and puppets during read-alouds and learning centers, providing students with a variety of ways and opportunities to practice and interact with letters. In this kit, teachers lead an activity similar to “musical chairs.” Each chair has a letter card on it; students walk around listening to “Dilly’s Alphabet Song” and sit down when the music stops. Then, students identify the letter they have and its corresponding sound and read their letter out to the class. The teacher uses Dilly the puppet to introduce the letter *N*—its sound, its shape, and words that begin with it. Students write the letter in the air and then engage in a sensory activity: Letters are placed in a bag; students reach inside and use their sense of touch to find the letter *N*. In another activity, “Investigate the Alphabet,” the teacher displays magnetic letters in alphabetical order, and then removes the letters *B*, *F*, *N*, and *S* and hides them in the room. Children sing the “Alphabet Song” to discover which letters are missing and search for the missing letters.

In the “Splash and Dig” Investigation Kit, the materials provide playful opportunities to experience, manipulate, and interact with letters. The materials include movement-based activities to support the development of letter and sound knowledge. For example, in the “Let’s Read” lesson, in the “Reading” center, children go fishing with rods made from wooden dowels, string, and magnets. Small cut-out letter cards are attached to paper clips. When students catch a card, they turn it over and read the letter out loud.

In the “Weather Watchers” Investigation Kit, lessons develop alphabet knowledge targeting specific letters throughout the unit (*W*, *U*, *G*, *K*, *X*); they then provide opportunities for children to model and use the letters and sounds. The letters are introduced using a chant, after which the teacher describes the characteristics of the letter as well as letter formation. For example, when discussing the letter *Kk*, the teacher says, “Capital and small ‘K’ look like three long roads that meet.” Then, students write the letters in the air.

5.4 Materials provide direct (explicit) instruction in print knowledge and concepts and opportunities for student practice.

- Materials provide direct (explicit) instruction in print awareness and connect print awareness to books/texts.
- Materials provide opportunities for students to develop an understanding of the everyday functions of print in context to the students' experience at school.
- Materials include a research-based sequence of foundational skills instruction and opportunities for sufficient student practice.
- Materials follow a developmentally appropriate continuum for the development of print awareness knowledge.

Meets 4/4

The materials provide direct (explicit) instruction in print knowledge and concepts and opportunities for student practice. The materials provide opportunities for students to develop an understanding of the everyday functions of print in context to the students' experiences at school. The materials include a research-based sequence of foundational skills instruction and opportunities for sufficient student practice. The materials also follow a developmentally appropriate continuum for the development of print awareness knowledge.

Evidence includes but is not limited to:

The “Literacy Framework” follows a developmentally appropriate continuum for student development of print awareness. At the beginning of the year, teachers are prompted to ask questions about how to track text (left to right, top to bottom). The Literacy Framework also provides a sequence of supplemental texts that build on themes and print awareness. A series of questions accompany each text; questions include “Where is the title of the book?” and “Where is the author’s name?” The “Research and Professional Guide” explains that “children who know about print understand that the words they see and the words they speak and hear are related.” Materials further explain, “With exposure and guidance, [students] learn that print is all around and is used for different purposes.” The guide includes recommendations for setting up a print-rich environment, which includes suggestions for teachers to incorporate print-rich activities in learning centers by putting books and magazines in each center; label materials; display posters and signs with print; have a display area showcasing examples of students’ print; have teacher-created instructional and functional print; use different materials

such as magnetic letters; and provide a variety of writing materials (paper, pencils, markers, crayons, letter stamps, and stickers). Materials also provide guidance in the “Effective Teaching Strategies Guide,” which contains strategies such as reading aloud frequently from many different kinds of books, pointing out letters and words in the classroom, helping children recognize their names in print, and encouraging children to scribble, draw, and attempt to write. Concepts of print, print awareness, and book knowledge are fostered in the “InvestiGator Club” through explicit reading, writing, and shared writing lessons. The guide states, “Print is different from pictures. The child points to the picture and then to the word in a book. Print has meaning. The child ‘reads’ and interprets environmental print. Print has practical uses. The child writes his or her name on an art project or a message to a friend. Print has many purposes. The child listens to and interacts with the printed word in books, nonfiction text, graphs, lists, and so on. Words are made up of letters. The child frames a word in text or attempts to write a letter or an entire word. There is an association between spoken and written words. The child follows print as it is read aloud.”

The “STEAM and Literacy Challenge Guide” provides activities that follow an appropriate continuum for the development of print awareness. Included lessons use interactive reading to demonstrate appropriate reading behaviors. For example, the teacher points out words in the read-aloud book *The Birthday Pet*. The “Literacy Leveled Readers” have children identify the parts of a nonfiction book and look for headings, captions, and other text features that can help them understand how the text is presented and what topics will be covered.

In the “Let’s Investigate” Investigation Kit, students develop an understanding of the everyday functions of print in their school experience. The teacher writes, “Where can we find the alphabet in our school?” on the “Bruno Bee Mail Poster.” The teacher names the first letter and the last letter in the sentence and explains what a question mark means. Planned read-alouds include introductions, questions, and prompts to use before, during, and after reading to help children develop knowledge about print. In an activity called “Literacy: Teach Manny to Read,” the teacher displays a book upside down and explains that Manny the puppet needs help reading the book. Students are encouraged to interact with Manny, who says, “I want to read this book, but something looks wrong. What is it? (the book is upside down). I can’t find the title. Where is it? What is a title?” Manny further asks, “What do I do first to read the book? Where do I start reading? Who can help me turn the page?” In the “Literacy: Word Puzzles” lesson, the teacher collects empty food cartons that are familiar to children and cuts each carton into pieces to make a puzzle. Students use picture cues to put their puzzle together and name the food, pointing to words in the puzzles and to the spaces between words. During small groups, students participate in literacy work focusing on print awareness. The teacher reads and uses a decorative pointer to model how to track words. The teacher says, “I use my special pointer to keep track of the words I read. I can read aloud each word that is printed on the page.” After the teacher models tracking, students use the special pointer to point to a word and a space on the page and then attempt to read each page.

In the “Splash and Dig” Investigation Kit, there are multiple opportunities for children to experience authentic print throughout the day. Materials incorporate activities in learning centers that allow students to engage with print and print concepts. For instance, in the “Writing” center, students create a list of different bodies of water by drawing pictures or taping cut-out pictures for each word. Students can write or trace letters on the labels and then display them in the center. To demonstrate awareness of concepts of print and letter identification, the teacher writes a short poem message on the “Bruno Bee Mail” poster and reads it aloud. Bruno the puppet asks children to track each line of print as the teacher rereads the message, point to show how print moves from top to bottom and from left to right on the poster, tell in their own words what the message says, and point to and name letters they know.

In the “Weather Watchers” Investigation Kit, in an activity called “Literacy: The Umbrella is Red,” the teacher points out the umbrella on oral language card 64 and asks, “What color is the umbrella?” The teacher says each word as it is written on the board and invites students to read the sentence. The teacher asks follow-up questions, such as “How many words did I write?” “How can you tell?” “What do the letters in a word stand for?” “Why do we need spaces between words?” In the “Literacy: Look Again” lesson, the teacher rereads *Letter Look*, pausing for children to predict what is behind each flap. Then children help make a poster for each of the four letters in the story (*W, U, K, G*). Using the weather section from old newspapers, magazine stories related to weather, or other forms of available print, the teacher helps children look for and cut out words that begin with the four letters and glue them to the poster for that letter. Finally, the teacher reads the words aloud, and students repeat them.

5.5 Materials include a variety of text types and genres across contents that are high-quality and at an appropriate level of complexity.

- Text selection is at the appropriate level of complexity for students' developmental level.
- Materials include both fiction and nonfiction texts.
- Materials include a variety of types of texts, such as poems, songs, and nursery rhymes.
- Texts include content that is engaging to prekindergarten students and include opportunities for students to interact with the stories, including repeated parts.
- Read aloud texts cover a range of student interests.
- Materials include use of purposeful environmental print throughout the classroom.

Meets 4/4

The materials include a variety of text types and genres across contents that are high-quality and at an appropriate level of complexity. Throughout the "Investigation Kits," the materials provide an appropriate level of complexity for students' development level. Texts include both fiction and nonfiction, with a variety of poems, songs, and nursery rhymes. The materials' texts include content that is engaging to prekindergarten students, and read-aloud texts cover a range of student interests. Students have opportunities to interact with the stories, including repeated parts. Lastly, materials include the use of purposeful environmental print throughout the classroom.

Evidence includes but is not limited to:

The "Let's Investigate" Investigation Kit contains fiction texts that make up the program's *Dilly and Friends Lapbook Collection*, which comes with a read-along audio CD. Books include *Adventures in Circle Forest; It's Spooky Creepy Room; Dilly's Alphabet Show; Trouble at Triangle Beach; The Silly Dilly Dance; It's My Turn; Superhero to the Rescue; and Mystery in the Garden*. These books are used during the first eight weeks of the program to introduce students to the program's characters. The texts are written at the appropriate level of complexity for children's developmental level.

In the “Under Construction” Investigation Kit, fiction texts include *Goodnight, Goodnight, Construction Site*. This rhyming text’s interest level is geared toward pre-k and kindergarten students and has a Lexile level of AD610L. The illustrations are clear and easy to understand, and the text utilizes repetition and rhyme. Students can engage with the text by interacting with rhyming words and by making predictions about the text, such as when the teacher asks, “What do you think the trucks do at night?”

In the “Healthy You” Investigation Kit, texts include *More, Fewer, Less*. This nonfiction text’s interest level is geared toward pre-k through second-grade students. This wordless book explores the concepts of more, fewer, and less through photographs of everyday objects and familiar animals grouped in interesting ways. Students engage with the text by describing the pictures using the math terms *more*, *fewer*, and *less*. For example, students are guided to describe a page with pumpkins: “There are more pumpkins on the wagon than on the ground.” Also in this kit, the materials creatively incorporate poems in learning areas. For instance, after reading “Poetry Pox,” children summarize the events that happened in the story and say the words *rocks*, *box*, *socks*, and *fox*. The teacher asks, “How do these rhyming words help you remember details in the story?” The materials suggest making a “Poetry Pox” cure box to which children add other rhyming materials.

Fiction texts include but are not limited to:

Little Quack by Lauren Thompson
Growing Vegetable Soup by Lois Ehlert
My Truck Is Stuck by Kevin Lewis
The Three Little Pigs by James Marshall
The House that Jack Built by Simms Taback
The Snowy Day by Ezra Jack Keats
Goodnight, Goodnight, Construction Site by Sherry Duskey Rinker
Apple Farmer Annie by Monica Wellington
Good Thing You’re Not an Octopus by Julie Markes
The Shape of Things by Dayle Ann Dodds and Julie Lacome
One-Dog Canoe by Mary Casanova
The Birthday Pet by Ellen Javernick
Commotion in the Ocean by Giles Andreae
Snow by Uri Shlevitz
“The Wind and the Sun” (Indian folktale)

Examples of nonfiction texts include but are not limited to:

Building a House by Byron Barton

How a House Is Built by Gail Gibbons
Tool Book by Gail Gibbons
Cross a Bridge by Ryan Ann Hunter
Adventure in Circle Forest by Joellyn Cicciarelli
The Silly Dance by Susan Blackaby
It's My Turn by Barbara Adams
The Fish Tank by Stephen Ogilvy
My Five Senses by Stephen Ogilvy
The Shopping List by Stephen Ogilvy
What's the Weather? by Stephen Ogilvy
Mud Pies by Stephen Ogilvy
Build a Doghouse by Beth Alley Wise

Examples of poems, songs, and nursery rhymes include but are not limited to:

Commotion in the Ocean by Giles Andreae (poems)
Poetry Pox flapboard (story and poems)
“Rain, Rain, Go Away” (song)
“Over in the Meadow, Oat, Peas, Beans, and Barley Grow”
“Head, Shoulders, Knees, and Toes”
“Old McDonald Had a Farm” (song)
“A Sailor Went to Sea” (poem)
“Hickory Dickory Dock” (nursery rhyme)
“If you’re wearing (something red), get your things” (transition song to the tune of “If You’re Happy and You Know It”)
“Quiet Please!” (chant)
“The More We Get Together” (song)
“Dilly’s Alphabet Song”
“Dilly Gator investigates” (chant)
“My Space, Your Space” (rhyme)
“Name Song” (to the tune of “Frere Jacques”)
“The One and Only You!” (to the tune of “Frere Jacques”)
“Getting to Know Rosalita” (finger rhyme)
“The Storm” (poem)
“We Find Water” (to the tune of “Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star”)
“We Watch Weather” (rhyme)
“Walking in the Snow” (to the tune of “Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star”)
“The Sun” (finger-play)
“Wind Tricks” (poem)

“The Seasons” (chant)

“Sippity Sup” (rhyme)

Environmental print can be found in all units of the learning system. The materials include “Daily Routine” posters to be used throughout the classroom, covering items like birthday celebrations, daily weather, safety tips, and sequencing events (today, tomorrow, yesterday). Other posters include the “JT Days” poster, the “Great Auntie Lu Art” poster (featured artist), the “Chuck Safety” poster, the “Manny Weather” poster, the “Bruno Bee Mail” poster, the “Rosalita” word of the week poster, and the “Clubhouse” attendance poster. The posters are integrated into the daily routine to connect meaning to print throughout the day.

In the “Let’s Investigate” Investigation Kit, the materials contain purposeful environmental print to display throughout the classroom. During the “Literacy Read Around the Room” lesson, children “put on goofy-looking eyeglasses and find signs and environmental print around the classroom” related to the theme “Dilly Becomes a Reader.”

5.6 Materials use a variety of approaches to develop students' comprehension of text read aloud.

- Materials include guidance for the teacher to connect texts to children's experiences at home and school.
- Materials include guidance for the teacher on basic text structures and their impact on understanding of text.

Meets 4/4

The materials use a variety of approaches to develop students' comprehension of text read aloud. They include guidance for the teachers to connect texts to children's experiences both at home and at school. Additionally, the materials include teacher guidance on basic text structures and their impact on understanding of text.

Evidence includes but is not limited to:

The “Literacy Framework” guides teachers to support students in making personal connections to the texts through quality questions. For example, when reading the text *Cross a Bridge*, the teacher takes a picture walk, encouraging children to tell what they know about bridges. At the end of the text, the teacher asks what students’ favorite bridge is and why. The “STEAM and Literacy Challenge Activity Guide” includes guidance for teachers to help children identify and use basic text structures. The lessons include various examples of using graphic organizers to support the comprehension of text. Lessons also include teacher guidance on basic text structures and their impact on understanding of text.

In the “Let’s Investigate” Investigation Kit, the teacher monitors comprehension by providing simple choices after a read-aloud. The teacher asks questions such as, “The sea lion likes to surf. Is surfing something you do in the water or on the sand?” The materials include recommendations for quality questions that encourage children to make connections to the text. In the “Make Connections” section, the teacher explains that Great Auntie Lu helps Dilly learn things, like how to pay attention and listen carefully. In order to help students make connections, the teacher asks, “What grown-up do you talk to when you need help? When are some times that you need a grown-up’s help?”

In the “Under Construction” Investigation Kit, the teacher models making inferences and predictions from texts. For example, when reading *My Truck Is Stuck*, the teacher asks, “How do you think the dogs will get unstuck?” When reading *The Three Little Pigs*, the teacher asks, “Why can’t the wolf blow the third pig’s house down?” The materials also include guidance for teachers to help children identify and use basic text structures to develop comprehension of the text read aloud. Before the teacher reads the book *Goodnight, Goodnight, Construction Site*, the teacher copies pictures of the kinds of construction trucks that appear in the book and puts them in an anchor chart web. After reading the book once, the teacher distributes copies of the web. Students will use the web to show the ideas in the book, with the goal of making meaning from the text.

In the “Healthy You” Investigation Kit, the teacher guides students in connecting texts to their personal experiences at home and at school. During “Open Circle Time,” students talk about things they do every day to stay safe at home. The teacher asks questions such as “How do you stay safe in your car?” “How do you stay safe when you ride a bike or skateboard?” “How do you stay safe when you walk?”

In the “Watch It Grow” Investigation Kit, prediction questions grow in complexity. For the read-aloud *Growing Vegetable Soup*, the teacher poses the questions, “What do you think they will do with the tomato? What other vegetables do you think they will put in their soup? Where do you think they will get their vegetables?” Also in this kit, the teacher reviews the flapboard story *Silly Seasons* by allowing students to take turns role-playing Manny, who is all dressed for winter, and the other InvestiGators as they investigate fall. The teacher asks, “What does Manny forget to do? (Dress for fall.) How is Manny dressed? (In winter clothes.) Why can’t Manny ride his snowboard? (There is no snow.)”

5.7 Materials include appropriate strategies for supporting English Learners (ELs) in their development of emergent reading skills.

- Materials include a variety of strategies for supporting English Learners (ELs).
- Strategies include use of the child's knowledge of literacy in their primary language and ensure that knowledge is used to help them transfer to English language and literacy skills.

Meets 4/4

The materials include appropriate strategies for supporting English Learners (ELs) in their development of emergent reading skills. Throughout the “Investigation Kits,” the materials include a variety of strategies for supporting ELs. The lessons include the use of children’s knowledge of literacy in their primary language, and strategies ensure that knowledge is used to help them transfer to English language and literacy skills.

Evidence includes but is not limited to:

The materials include a variety of strategies for supporting ELs in developing emergent reading skills. The teacher guides contain recommendations for supporting ELs in all areas of emergent reading skills. The materials provide picture resources that support practice to develop phonological awareness skills. The kits support cultural diversity in a variety of ways; for example, there are multicultural stories in each kit, and there is a multicultural classroom library with “Bruno’s Buzz books” and other “InvestiGator Club” books.

The “Spanish Instructional Materials Guide” contains strategies that support children’s knowledge of literacy in their primary language. The materials include a set of vocabulary cards that have a photo on the front and corresponding Spanish and English labels on the back. Additional lessons for small groups include sorting and classifying activities, making connections, word meaning, reinforcing basic concepts, and vocabulary building. The materials ensure that prior knowledge is used to help students transfer to English literacy skills.

The “Let’s Investigate” Investigation Kit includes the use of pictures and objects to help children learn about what happens in different areas of the school; materials use concrete objects to teach and reinforce basic concepts (left/right, more/less). In the “Everyday Literacy:

“Phonological Awareness” lesson, the teacher says, “Hickory Dickory Dock,” and students listen to the words and recognize the rhyme. The teacher explains that the words *dock* and *clock* are rhyming words. The teacher displays oral language card 3 and identifies the pictures of *head*, *back*, *arm*, and *leg*. Students find a word on the card that rhymes with a given word. In one example of an EL support strategy, the teacher says important story words several times while pointing to illustrations or using gestures, and students repeat the words. Using visual supports that they receive during instruction, students can gain a better understanding of the topic being discussed.

In the “Under Construction” Investigation Kit, the teacher models for children to pantomime and say words such as *wet*, *soap*, *rinse*, and *dry*. During “Choice Time,” the teacher passes around objects with different textures such as fuzzy, hard, soft, and rough. As children touch the objects, the teacher says a describing word in a short sentence and has children repeat the sentence (e.g., “The sandpaper is scratchy.”) The teacher reads the book *Goodnight, Goodnight, Construction Site* and says, “This book is a story about a construction site where there is a lot of building going on.” Then, “The big trucks have worked hard all day, and now it’s time for the building to stop for the night.” The lesson includes an EL sidebar with a suggestion for teachers to use toy trucks to teach and reinforce vocabulary in small groups; at center time, students can play with the trucks.

In the “Weather Watchers” Investigation Kit, teachers use oral language cards to reinforce storm-related vocabulary and preview questions. The teacher shows pictures of a man’s hat, a newspaper, trees, and bushes and has students repeat the words. Students are encouraged to share words for the seasons and weather in their home language. Teachers provide ELs extra time and practice when working with these words, praising approximations. When discussing clothing, the teacher asks students to draw pictures of hats that people wear in their native country and to describe their drawings using gestures and English words if possible. These types of activities allow students to learn new vocabulary by making connections to prior knowledge.

6.1 Materials include a variety of experiences through which students can engage with writing.

- Materials include direct (explicit) instruction, as well as opportunities for children to imitate adult writing.
- Materials include opportunities for students to generate independent writing.
- Materials include opportunities for group writing on shared experiences.
- Materials include opportunities for illustration/drawing with detail, which transfers to writing.
- Materials include opportunities to write in response to reading and make explicit the connection between reading and writing.

Meets 4/4

The materials include a variety of experiences through which children can engage with writing. The materials include direct (explicit) instruction, opportunities for children to imitate adult writing, opportunities for children to generate independent writing, opportunities for group writing on shared experiences, and opportunities for illustration/drawing with detail, which transfers to writing. Materials also include opportunities to write in response to reading and make explicit the connection between reading and writing.

Evidence includes but is not limited to:

In the “Let’s Investigate” Investigation Kit, after the class has completed a list of favorite things, the teacher says, “Now it’s your turn to write about one of your favorite things.” The teacher helps children write a word to describe their picture and shows children that words we think and words we say can be written down. In the “Art” center, children find the first letter in their first and last name and stamp them on paper to make a unique design. In another activity, the teacher displays “Flapboard 1” with JT’s message and says, “We can write a message to the InvestiGators! We can wish them Happy InvestiGator Day and ask about joining the club. What else would you like to write in our message?” In this activity, the teacher points out how to write the words from left to right and how to leave spaces between words, tracks the print, and points out the special mark at the end of each sentence. Students learn to sign their name at the end of the message and get to reread it as it is used during the “Investigation Celebration.” This Investigation Kit includes daily charts that encourage shared writing for authentic purposes.

The “Bee Mail Chart” is used to write science questions and discuss them to launch an investigation or experiment, record and discuss daily news, announce new materials for the classroom, announce special events such as field trips or classroom visitors, or list a snack menu. The “Days in Review Chart” is used daily to help children learn to recognize the days of the week, record news or announce jobs, and express routines and scripts. The “Weather Chart” demonstrates awareness of print as it relates to the weather; children draw a weather symbol to record the weather and draw and label weather-related objects or articles of clothing. These routine charts extend the writing experience as children participate in composing lists, chants, and poems, all based on shared experiences. After the writing lesson, children have an opportunity to extend the lesson by drawing or writing on their own in the “Writing” center.

In the “Splash and Dig” Investigation Kit, students engage in a shared writing experience during “Closing Circle,” where they make connections to the class read-aloud through writing. After reading *One-Dog Canoe*, students select one animal they would like to take on a canoe. They draw and write about the animal they selected. During small groups, the teacher asks students to tell about things they do or would like to do in a stream, a river, or the ocean. Students then create a class book about water and what they want to do in it. The teacher models an example; students draw pictures and write words to show their preferred water activity. The teacher expands this lesson in a shared writing experience about activities students enjoy doing. The teacher explicitly models spaces between words and letter formation throughout the shared writing exercise.

The “Watch It Grow” Investigation Kit provides an opportunity for students to imitate adult writing in the large group setting. The teacher asks students to write a story about a truck moving crops from the farm. The students come up with the first sentence, and the teacher writes it down. Then, students share the pen to add pictures and letters or words to the story. Additionally, students write in response to the story *Apple Farmer Annie*. Students imagine that they are farmers and think about what crops they could grow on their farm. In a shared writing experience, the teacher writes the student responses on chart paper. Similarly, following the story, *Mystery in the Garden*, the teacher records student responses on chart paper. Later in the kit, children write in response to a story independently. After reading *My Favorite Vegetable*, students write or draw about their favorite vegetable. The lesson includes a sidebar that suggests that children who may not be able to write should be allowed to draw their favorite vegetable. After listening to the story *Growing Vegetable Soup*, students write down their favorite recipe or vegetable; the pages are turned into a class book that can be read in the “Dramatic Play” center. In the Writing center, the “Greeting from the Garden” activities allow students to write cards and draw flowers for their family that they can take home. In the Dramatic Play center, students play the roles of clerk and consumer at a produce stand. A sidebar contains a suggestion for students to write out posters and price lists showing fruits and vegetables they have for sale.

In the “Weather Watchers” Investigation Kit, in the lesson “An Ocean of Emotions,” the teacher reads the story *The Silly Dance*, reminding children of the feelings expressed in the story. The

teacher asks, “What other feelings or emotions can you name?” and records the students’ responses on chart paper in a shared writing experience. As an extension, students create a new ending to the story. The teacher rereads the story, and students describe how the two friends helped each other. The teacher says, “Think about someone who is your friend and let’s draw and write them a letter.” During a shared writing lesson, the teacher reads the book *We Watch Weather* and reminds students of the weather stories that they wrote. The teacher helps students write a poem using weather words. During centers, students write independently to make a book about the weather; they use various forms of writing, clipboards, and writing tools. In the activity “Literacy: A New Story,” the teacher reads, *What’s the Weather?* The teacher covers certain text with self-stick notes, explaining that the words are covered so they can write a new story. First, children decide on a name for the boy. As they look at the picture on each page, children say what they think he is saying about the weather. The teacher records each sentence and rereads the story using the students’ ideas.

6.2 Materials instruct students along the developmental stages of writing.

- Materials follow the developmental continuum of how children learn writing.
- Materials provide guidance for teachers on how to nudge students along the continuum for writing development.
- Materials include guidance for teachers on how to include appropriate student contributions to writing and the writing process, as specified by the Texas Prekindergarten Guidelines.

Meets 4/4

The materials instruct students along the developmental stages of writing. The materials follow the developmental continuum of how children learn writing and provide guidance for teachers on how to nudge students along the continuum for writing development. Additionally, the materials include guidance for teachers on how to include appropriate student contributions to writing and the writing process, as specified by the Texas Prekindergarten Guidelines.

Evidence includes but is not limited to:

In the “Let’s Investigate” Investigation Kit, the materials recognize that children move along the writing development continuum at different rates. For instance, in the activity “Early Writing: The Investigator Club,” after reading the story *Gone Investigating*, the teacher makes a chart of the children’s ideas about the characters in the story. A sidebar includes the stages of writing and other support strategies that teachers can reference to guide instruction. Students participate in shared writing lessons where the teacher models how to make a list of things they want to learn about. Students list favorite things, brainstorm and write down story ideas about animals, type a class letter, and write about their strengths. Children observe the teacher as she models how to form letters; then, they draw pictures and label them or dictate labels for the teacher to write for them. During “Closing Circle” shared writing, the teacher invites children to recall the story *Superhero to the Rescue*, asking students what happened first, next, and last in the story and recording children’s responses on chart paper. Another Closing Circle shared writing activity begins with a modeled writing activity; the teacher makes a list of students’ favorite things. In the shared writing activity “Type a Class Letter,” the teacher says, “Let’s type a letter to Rosalita using the computer.” The teacher begins by typing the date and “Dear Rosalita”; each child offers a sentence. The teacher reads back the letter when it is complete and ends it with “Love, ... Class.” When the letter is finished, the teacher reads it aloud, tracking

print. In a small group literacy lesson, the teacher asks children to draw a picture showing something they have read and then describe what the picture shows. The teacher writes the words below the picture as children dictate their ideas. Teachers encourage students' writing by saying, "I like the picture you drew. I see you wrote something too. Can you tell me what it says?" The teacher records the child's dictation on the picture below the words.

In the "Under Construction" Investigation Kit, the materials support the developmental writing stages, such as students' attempts to convey meaning through scribbles, letter-like forms, and text strings. In the lesson "Write About Helping," students think about a time when they helped someone and draw a picture to convey their thoughts. The lesson includes a textbox informing teachers that children may use scribble writing to represent their ideas, and teachers should have students tell them what their writing says. In the lesson "Describing Rocks," students brainstorm what type of rocks they might find on a nature walk outside and write about this in their journal. A shared writing activity encourages students to provide ideas to the teacher about the things they did to help build something together. The teacher writes the first sentence. The teacher models writing an alphabet letter in the air after finding it on an alphabet chart. The teacher then models writing the letter as part of the sentence.

In the "Weather Watchers" Investigation Kit, in the lesson "Write About the Seasons," the teacher writes "Fall is red, yellow, and orange leaves" on a sentence strip. Next, the teacher asks children to name a season and tell one thing they associate with that season. The teacher begins each sentence with the name of the season and the word *is*, saying each word as it is written. After the teacher helps write the students' dictation, students help read their sentence by tracking the print. The teacher asks, "What do our sentences tell us?" Students draw a picture to illustrate their sentences. The teacher displays the sentence and drawings around the room. In a small group literacy lesson called "Write a Story," the teacher tells children that long ago, people invented creatures to explain lightning, thunder, wind, rain, the sun, and other forces of nature. Children work together to name and create their own creature for thunder and lightning, add to the picture, and tell a story about their weather creature as the teacher writes it on chart paper. Students are encouraged to write letters and words they know or trace letters. In a Closing Circle shared writing lesson, "Write a Weather Poem," the teacher writes the title, "Weather Watchers," and points out that *Weather* and *Watchers* begin with capital *W*. Then the teacher asks, "Who would like to write a *W*?" Multiple children help write all the letters in the title. The teacher reminds children how letters are grouped to form words and how words are separated by spaces. The teacher then asks, "Who can find a *W*? Let's make a *W* in the air." The teacher helps children copy the words from the list, trace over letters, or write any letters they know. To differentiate the lesson, if a child has difficulty writing, the teacher invites the child to describe how to form a letter while the teacher writes it. Teachers can follow up the lesson by using "Assessment Card 27" and implementing intervention strategies.

The "Research and Professional Guide" provides information about writing development. For example, it explains that shared writing is a strategy that addresses concepts of print within an activity framework. It guides the teacher to model the writing process while moving students

from thinking and talking to writing. Children observe the way letters, sounds, and words are linked to ideas in written form as the teacher thinks aloud and participates in a “share the pen” activity with children to record their ideas. As students write, the teacher points out conventions of print, such as the capital letter at the beginning of the sentence and the period at the end. A research note states, “Research shows that preschool children understand that print has meaning as demonstrated through dramatic play activities such as ‘writing’ phone messages and shopping lists and pretending to look up recipes in cookbooks.”

6.3 Materials support fine motor development alongside and through writing.

- Materials provide a variety of opportunities for children to develop their fine motor skills.
- Materials provide differentiation and guidance on how to develop students' fine motor skills towards writing.
- Materials prescribe a variety of tools and surfaces for student writing experiences.

Meets 4/4

The materials support fine motor development alongside and through writing. The materials provide a variety of opportunities for children to develop their fine motor skills. They provide differentiation and guidance on how to develop students' fine motor skills towards writing. Materials prescribe a variety of tools and surfaces for student writing experiences.

Evidence includes but is not limited to:

The “Research and Professional Guide” provides research on quality motor skill development. It also provides tips for proper skill development using the small muscles in the hands through actions such as cutting, stringing, squeezing, grasping, pinching, and tearing. Suggestions in the guide include developing classroom procedures that allow children to bring materials from one learning center to another, such as using markers in the dramatic play area for writing lists or letters. The guide explains that the “Writing” center helps children develop writing skills that contribute to literacy development and emphasize the beginning stages of print. Throughout the year in the Writing center, to help develop students’ writing, the teacher should provide pencils, markers, crayons, a mailbox, envelopes, stamps, stamp pads, stickers, stencils, oral language cards, Dilly’s alphabet cards, magnetic letters, alphabet Flapboards and Flap Fillers, a chart of simple words, a variety of paper, poster board, and blank books. Suggestions to incorporate writing material into other learning centers (“Math,” “Social Studies,” “Dramatic Play”) are also included in this guide.

In the “Let’s Investigate” Investigation Kit, centers have a variety of unique writing instruments and stationery such as feather pens, glitter pens, markers, crayons, company letterhead, old greeting cards, and fancy stationery. Students use the supplies to write and draw stories, letters, poems, or songs. In the Dramatic Play center, the teacher puts a variety of pictures showing

people engaged in writing, such as a waitress, a police officer, a doctor, a business person, or a teacher. Using a variety of writing tools, children role-play real-life writing scenarios based on what they see in the pictures. While children are playing, an assessment note helps teachers notice children's grip and pincer control when they use writing instruments; teachers record progress as anecdotal notes.

In the “Under Construction” Investigation Kit, at center time, students develop their fine motor skills while building patterns with pegs. Students hammer the pegs into foam blocks to build a pattern. In another activity, students drive trucks through paint and water to create colorful patterns and designs. A sidebar supports teachers as they guide students in developing their fine motor skills; it suggests offering hand-over-hand assistance for students needing support in writing their name during shared writing time. Another sidebar suggests taping the writing paper down to the table to stabilize the work surface for students. In this kit, students practice forming the letter *Ff*. While the teacher models explicitly how to form the letter, students practice the formation on their palms or on a peer’s back.

In the “Finny Feathery Friends” Investigation Kit, during the activity “Farm Animal Sculpture,” children are given a variety of collage material, such as modeling clay, pipe cleaners, ribbon, masking tape, scissors, and glue to make an “animal sculpture.” The materials suggest teachers encourage children to hold writing instruments using a conventional grasp. In the “Closing Circle” shared writing, children choose an animal to write about, and the teacher records the children’s responses. A sidebar includes guidance for teachers to help children who have difficulty with a conventional grasp. The materials recommend students use a variety of surfaces during writing experiences. For instance, in the activity “I Would Be,” students tell what animal they would like to be and where they would like to eat. The teacher provides pallets of watercolors and paintbrushes for children to illustrate their ideas.

In the “Splash and Dig” Investigation Kit, the lessons include a differentiation sidebar that gives teachers suggestions for children who may need additional support with fine motor skills. For instance, in the lesson “Water Book,” children make a book about what they know about water. The differentiation textbook suggests that the teacher supply various shapes and sizes of writing tools to meet individual student needs. In the lesson “Let’s Clean House,” students use small spray bottles, buckets of water, liquid soap, and clothespins. In the Dramatic Play center, students take turns washing the baby clothes and using the clothespins to hang them on the provided clothesline. Students use their fine motor muscles to spray the dishes and clip the clothes. In the “Art” center, students develop their fine motor skills by using bowls of watercolors, eye droppers, and paper towels to create watercolor artwork. Another activity, during “Choice Time,” has students develop their fine motor skills: Students punch holes in paper flowers using a hole punch and use yarn to lace their flowers to make a lei.

7.1 Materials follow a logical mathematical continuum of concrete, pictorial, then abstract representations.

- Instruction in all mathematical competencies progresses from concrete to pictorial to abstract, with the greatest emphasis on using concrete manipulatives.
- Materials include a variety of types of concrete manipulatives and pictorial representations.
- Materials include activities that build conceptual understanding in: counting, adding to, taking away, geometry, spatial sense, measurement, classification, and pattern skills, as indicated by the Texas Prekindergarten Guidelines.

Meets 4/4

The materials follow a logical mathematical continuum of concrete, pictorial, then abstract representations. The materials progress from concrete to pictorial to abstract, with the greatest emphasis on using concrete manipulatives. Additionally, the materials include a variety of types of concrete manipulatives and pictorial representations. The activities build conceptual understanding in counting, adding to, taking away, geometry, spatial sense, measurement, classification, and pattern skills, as indicated by the Texas Prekindergarten Guidelines.

Evidence includes but is not limited to:

In the “Research and Professional Guide,” the “InvestiGator Club” includes standards-based explicit lessons in number and operation, geometry and spatial sense, patterns and measurements, and classification and data collection; clear teacher direction for building mathematics background and tapping children’s prior knowledge; purposeful mathematical exploration and discovery; mathematical experiences integrated into science investigations; literature-based mathematics lessons; engaging math manipulatives and games; and authentic mathematics assessment opportunities and tools.

In the “Let’s Investigate” Investigation Kit, the teacher leads a small group math activity in which students match concrete objects such as pairs of gloves, mittens, socks, and shoes. The teacher shows students how to match objects by attribute. The materials also provide a small group math lesson on the concepts of more/less using concrete manipulatives. Using letter tiles representing each student’s name, the teacher guides students in determining which name has

more, less, or the same amount of letters. In “Cut to Size,” the teacher demonstrates cutting yarn into three pieces of different lengths and then supports students in placing them in order of length. For pattern skills, one lesson has the teacher model how to create an AB pattern: The teacher sits some of the children down and says, “Boy, girl, boy, girl.” Students are encouraged to arrange themselves to extend the pattern. In a small group math lesson focused on classification called “Color Sorting Sacks,” the teacher labels three bags with different colored squares (red, blue, and yellow). The teacher fills each bag with objects that are that color. The teacher asks, “What kinds of red things might be in the bag?” After children name red things, they repeat with the blue and yellow bags. In a lesson called “From Small to Large,” the teacher displays objects that are small, medium, and large in size. Children put the objects that are the same size into groups. The teacher asks, “How many objects are in each group? Are the objects the same size or different sizes? Which one is small, which one is medium, and which is large?” In learning centers, students engage with concrete and pictorial representation in the activity “Math Match,” where they are given three sheets of paper with different numbers of dots, counter sets, and center cards.

In the “Under Construction” Investigation Kit, students use construction paper shapes to explore geometry. Students compare and identify shapes as the teacher reads *The Shape of Things*. The teacher asks, “What do we call this shape?” and “Do you have a square? If you do, hold it up for everyone to see.” The teacher then asks the students what they notice about the color, size, and order of the shapes. Next, the teacher re-reads the story *The Shape of Things*, and students look for patterns in the art. Another activity with this book invites students to use wooden craft sticks and large marshmallows to make 2D and 3D shapes. The teacher encourages exploration by saying, “Think of shapes you want to make, use the craft sticks for each side,” and “Can you put the shapes together to make another shape?” In a small group lesson, the teacher introduces the number 1: The teacher gives each child a puzzle of the numeral 1 and explains that when they put the puzzle pieces together correctly, they will discover a mystery number. After students identify the number, they engage in pictorial representation by gluing their puzzles on paper and drawing a picture to show one object.

In the “Finny Feathery Furry Friends” Investigation Kit, in a math activity about the number 5, the teacher says, “This is the number five. Do you see five pictures in the row?” The students line up five counters below the symbols in one-to-one correspondence, combining both pictorial and concrete representation. The teacher demonstrates how to form the numeral 5, and students draw it in the air. In the “Choices” math lesson, the teacher gives each child two counters, displays a cricket, and tells the children that they will recite a rhyme about two little crickets. As each cricket hops off, children take away one counter. During “Math” centers, the teacher provides a variety of animal puzzles, including wooden puzzles, simple jigsaws, and puzzles made from calendar photographs mounted on tagboard. Partners pick a puzzle, mix up the pieces, and work together to reassemble the animal, explaining how they know where the pieces belong.

In the “Splash and Dig” Investigation Kit, the teacher teaches a pictorial math lesson by reading a story called *How Many?* The story includes pictures of different numbers of characters participating in outdoor activities; the teacher guides the students to say how many there are in each picture. The unit also includes materials to teach geometry, using shape blocks to teach about shapes. The teacher uses the shape blocks to create new shapes (e.g., two triangles can make a square, and four squares can make a bigger square). In another lesson, the teacher reads the book *One-Dog Canoe* while students use numbers and counting to solve problems. Throughout the book, more animals join the canoe. Students stop to count the animals in the picture that have joined the canoe. At the end, the students act out the book and explore concepts of measurement to see if all those animals could actually fit in a canoe.

7.2 Materials promote instruction that builds on students' informal knowledge about mathematics.

- Materials prompt teachers to inquire about students' developmental status and mathematical knowledge.
- Materials include cross-curricular opportunities to authentically integrate mathematics throughout the day.
- Materials support the use of the classroom environment and materials as vehicles to explore math concepts and skills.

Meets 4/4

The materials promote instruction that builds on students' informal knowledge about mathematics. The materials prompt teachers to inquire about a student's developmental status and mathematical knowledge. The materials include cross-curricular opportunities to authentically integrate mathematics throughout the day. The materials also support the use of the classroom environment and materials as vehicles to explore math concepts and skills.

Evidence includes but is not limited to:

The “Investigate Math Activity Guide” provides guidance on how to help encourage the math concepts that pre-kindergarten students are naturally exploring and integrating into everyday experiences and on how to help nurture their curiosity and deepen their understanding of mathematical relationships around them. The activities in the guide are divided into four types and use a variety of approaches to provide dynamic and active opportunities for building math competencies. “Math Explorations” are open-ended activities that encourage children to investigate and test math ideas, solve problems, and share ideas. “Math Play” includes activities designed to provide exposure to math concepts through fun interactions and games. “Outdoor Math” takes math outside and connects it to science, physical movement, music, and social and emotional development. “Number of the Day” has activities providing daily options, support, and interesting twists on ways to practice and assess basic number and operation concepts.

Additional information supports the teacher's understanding of students' mathematical understanding and how to include math throughout the day. The “Research and Professional Guide” includes material that builds teacher understanding of how children develop

mathematical understanding. The guide includes a 10-point list taken from the NAEYC and NCTM joint position statement titled “Early Childhood Mathematics: Promoting Good Beginnings.” This list includes but is not limited to the following concepts: “Use curriculum practices that strengthen problem-solving and reasoning processes, representing, communicating, and connecting mathematical ideas and provide ample time, materials, and teacher support for children to engage in mathematical play.”

In the “Under Construction Investigation Kit,” the materials provide mathematical lessons that are extended to be cross-curricular. For example, after the teacher shows students how to create and extend patterns, students create sponge paint patterns in the “Art” center. Also in the Art center, students use differently shaped bubble wands to make bubbles and then count and compare the bubbles by sizes. Using the classroom environment and materials, the students can also integrate math skills and concepts during “Sand and Water Choice Time” by loading packing peanuts into dump trucks and dumping the peanuts into boxes; in this activity, students work with quantity as they guess how many truckloads it will take to fill a packing box.

In the “Splash and Dig” Investigation Kit, students integrate mathematical skills such as one-to-one correspondence and counting to solve problems during learning centers. Using numbered plastic tubs filled with water, students identify the number on the plastic tub and count out that number of fish to place in the pond. During center time, students learn a rhyme and build sailboats out of pattern blocks. A sidebar on assessment notes that a teacher should observe and record the students who explore how shapes can be patterned together and those who stray from the objective. This supports teacher inquiry to understand the students’ developmental status and mathematical understanding.

In the “Watch it Grow” Investigation Kit, the materials give children opportunities to encounter math materials in play. In the “Dramatic Play” area, the guidance suggests setting up a produce stand with plastic fruit and vegetables. As children act out the role of clerk and consumer, they pretend to use money and a scale to weigh the produce. This activity builds off of students’ developing knowledge of mathematical concepts.

In the “Weather Watchers” Investigation Kit, math is incorporated when students read the book *SNOW*. The teacher tells the children to listen for number words and get ready to count snowflakes. While reading, children point to the number word and count the snowflakes. In order to help students make connections, the teacher gives each child a stack of paper snowflakes and rereads the story; children count out the same number of snowflakes as shown on each book page. During math centers, students discover several simple pattern-block designs or shapes such as a kite, the sun, and a bolt of lightning, drawn on pattern cards. Teachers can extend the activity by varying the number of blocks required to make each design and by inviting children to choose a card and try to make another one like it. In the whole group math lesson “Snowy Shapes,” the assessment sidebar has the teacher note whether children are able to employ reasoning strategies using geometric shapes. Teachers use assessment card 45 to assess this skill and to implement intervention strategies.

7.3 Materials intentionally develop young children’s ability to problem solve.

- Materials develop children’s capacity to ask thoughtful questions.
- Materials develop children’s capacity to recognize problems in their environment.
- Materials develop children’s capacity to use mathematical reasoning with familiar materials in the classroom and world outside the classroom.

Meets 4/4

The materials reviewed intentionally develop young children’s ability to problem solve. The materials occasionally develop children’s capacity to ask thoughtful questions. Additionally, materials develop children’s capacity to recognize problems in their environment. Materials develop children’s capacity to use mathematical reasoning with familiar materials in the classroom and world outside the classroom.

Evidence includes but is not limited to:

Each “Investigation Kit” has suggestions for outdoor play. These activities provide opportunities to teach children how to play respectfully and imaginatively problem solve and challenge themselves.

In the “Under Construction” Investigation Kit, students participate in an “Investigation Station” where they plan and build a structure based on their learning from the kit. At the end of the project, students are asked, “What should workers do to build a good structure?” The teacher is guided to prompt students about using materials that are the right size, shape, and weight. Based on these discussions, students go back and change their building structure plans. This provides the opportunity for students to develop mathematical problem solving and reasoning. Students can also explore shapes and attributes through “Art Choice Time.” The teacher takes children outside to explore shapes used to build neighborhood houses. Students then construct homes in the Art center based on the shapes they’ve observed.

The “Healthy You” Investigation Kit includes lessons and activities that encourage curiosity and questioning about informal mathematics. During the lesson “Shape Walk,” the teacher creates a four-by-four grid of shapes on the floor. Children step on the named shapes, moving from one shape to the next, and name each one as they step. In the lesson “Manny, May I,” the teacher

holds up Manny the puppet; students line up facing him. “Manny” calls a child’s name and gives directions such as “Take one giant step,” “Take two baby steps,” “Take three regular steps.” In the activity “Dough Numbers,” the teacher writes out a recipe for dough (with the words and number of cups of each ingredient) on chart paper. Students use mathematical reasoning to decide which measuring cup to use and how to include all the ingredients in order to make the dough. Once the recipe is complete, students use the dough to form numerals 1 through 4.

In the “Splash and Dig” Investigation Kit, at the Investigation Station, children develop their capacity to recognize mathematical problems in their environment. For example, the teacher models how to sketch and build a boat using aluminum foil and asks students to build a boat that looks similar to the sketch. The teacher asks, “How can I build a boat that will hold at least 20 pennies?” and records student ideas. While in centers, using reasoning to solve the math problem, students draw a sketch of the boat they will make, use aluminum foil to make the boat, and test the boat in the water to see if it holds 20 or more pennies. After experimenting with their boat, students can make structural changes to see if the results are different. Students share their boat designs and what they learned and answer questions from their peers. The teacher reads back the responses recorded earlier and guides children to draw real-world conclusions from their data. At the end of the project, the teacher asks, “Think about boats that carry heavy cargo or a lot of people. What should ship builders do to make sure a boat or ship is safe?”

7.4 Materials build students' number sense.

- Materials provide guidance for teachers on building conceptual understanding in math.
- Materials provide frequent, spiraled, and varied opportunities for students to participate in activities that build number sense, as outlined in the Texas Prekindergarten Guidelines. These activities include: subitizing, counting one-to-one, comparing set size and numbers, counting on, and finding one more than a number.

Meets 4/4

The materials build students' number sense and provide guidance for teachers on building conceptual understanding in math. The materials provide frequent, spiraled, and varied opportunities for students to participate in activities that build number sense, as outlined in the Texas Prekindergarten Guidelines. These activities include subitizing, counting one-to-one, comparing set size and numbers, counting on, and finding one more than a number.

Evidence includes but is not limited to:

The materials provide guidance for teachers to build children's conceptual understanding in math and support mathematical learning throughout the day, such as during attendance, snack time, learning centers, outdoor play, and whole and small group explicit lesson instruction. All "Investigation Kit" teacher guides include math activities for transitions, "Quick Minutes," and learning centers. Additional math activities can be found in the center cards for each kit as well as in the "Investigate Math Kit" and the "STEAM and Literacy Challenge Kit." Additionally, at the beginning of each unit, the Quick Minutes section has suggested routines that build number sense; some examples include the teacher counting one by one as students stack bricks to build a tower and students counting to 10 by whispering, shouting, or in a funny voice. In one activity in the "Math Activity Guide," children string beads to make colorful necklaces. The teacher asks two volunteers to compare the number of beads on their necklaces. Suggested questions include "Which necklace has more beads? How can we find out?" and "Have the group count the beads aloud as you touch each one." The teacher continues the lesson by modeling how to use the word *more* to compare amounts.

In the "Let's Investigate" Investigation Kit, students begin practicing one-to-one correspondence. A "Math" center activity guides the teacher to create three separate drawings

of three, four, or five circles in a horizontal row and then place the circle drawings in the center with four different counter sets and the center card. Children follow the directions on the card to complete the activity. Additionally, the materials provide instruction to build students' number sense in a flapbook story called *Knock for Numbers*. The teacher uses a puppet to demonstrate rote counting to 10. During the story, students find cards with numerals and cards with represented amounts. With these, they count the objects and match the numeral card to the correct amount. Another activity invites students to use letter tiles to investigate *more* and *less*. The teacher helps children arrange letter tiles to spell their names and then asks, "Who has the most letters in their name?" The teacher helps children arrange the letter tiles in rows to make comparisons by matching tiles one to one with a partner. As a class, the teacher helps students graph the tiles from the longest name to the shortest. The lesson concludes with the teacher helping children make comparisons using the words *more* and *less*.

In the "Under Construction" Investigation Kit, students act out mathematical concepts while listening and singing to "Dilly Builds with One Hammer." As they sing, students "pound" one fist into their lap to represent the one hammer in the song. As the number increases, students are asked how they can represent that number of hammers. Eventually, students use their hands, feet, and head to show five hammers pounding. In the math lesson "The Number 1," the teacher sets out 10 toy dump trucks and sings the song "Ten Little Dump Trucks," touching each truck while singing the song.

In the "Healthy You" Investigation Kit, the math activities can be transitioned to learning center activities. For instance, in the math activity "The Number 3," the teacher writes the number 3 on the board and holds up three fingers. As an extension, in the "Dramatic Play" center, students put on a doctor's coat and are told that they have hopping pox and have to hop three times to cure it. With "Math Stories," the teacher displays the math board with the numbers 1, 2, 3, and 4; students place their magnetic number on the corresponding number. The teacher guides the students to tell a number story about the symbols and counters.

In the "Splash and Dig" Investigation Kit, children act out the rhyme "1, 2, 3, 4, 5, Once I Caught a Fish Alive." Students also count from one to seven; or, the teacher calls out a number, and the children count up to seven. In "Fish Ponds," the teacher labels eight or more plastic tubs with a numeral from 0 to 7 along with the corresponding number of dots. Students fill each tub about halfway with water. The teacher models counting, saying, "The number on this container is four. Count with me as I put four fish into the water: one, two, three, four." Children count and fill the remaining fish ponds with the correct number of fish. In another activity, students sing "Over in the Meadow," and the teacher asks, "Who knows the number that follows six?" The teacher displays seven blades of grass and reminds the students that the song describes seven crickets chirping in the grass. The teacher models and the students practice writing the number seven; then, students are provided number sentences to create seven.

In the "Weather Watchers" Investigation Kit, in a small group lesson called "Math: We Know 10," the teacher places the foam numbers 1 and 0 (10) on the top row of the "Math and Sorting

Board.” Children line up ten counters below the symbols, using one-to-one correspondence. Students thus associate number concepts and quantities with numerals. In another game, “Math: Ten-Finger Game,” the teacher holds up ten fingers, with palms facing herself, and asks, “How many fingers am I holding up?” The teacher continues this by dropping different fingers and again asking, “How many fingers am I holding up?” and “How many did I take away?” In an example of building number sense, students have opportunities to subitize a quantity. In the lesson “The Number 10,” the teacher places a pile of paper snowflakes with small snowflake dots into the center of the table. The teacher shows students the big snowflake paper and asks students to name how many smaller snowflakes are on each paper.

7.5 Materials develop students' academic math vocabulary.

- Materials include repeated opportunities to hear math vocabulary.
- Materials include repeated opportunities to practice using math vocabulary.
- Materials include guidance for teachers on how to scaffold and support students' development and use of academic math vocabulary.

Meets 4/4

The materials develop students' academic math vocabulary. The materials also include repeated opportunities to hear math vocabulary. The materials include guidance for teachers on how to scaffold and support students' development and use of academic math vocabulary.

Evidence includes but is not limited to:

The materials include recommendations for purposefully talking about mathematics using math vocabulary. Teachers receive recommendations for utilizing the daily routine posters to use and model math vocabulary in daily interactions and routines. The "Birthday Poster" is used to announce children's birthdays and can lead to discussions regarding children's birthdays as they compare to classmates'. Sample math vocabulary words that may come up when using the Birthday Poster are *amount, how many, more, less, equal, different from, guess, first, last, pairs, before, after, and order*. Students can use the attendance chart to have the class count the number of girls and boys that are in class. The chart could also be used to compare the number of letters that each student's name is made up of and make comparisons. Specific vocabulary words associated with the attendance chart include *more, less, all together, addition, and join*. Teachers can also create an illustrated chart that spells out routines children should follow when they arrive at school. Learning number names is incorporated into daily activities and provides authentic opportunities for students to hear and repeat number words. The materials include texts that are math-related and age-appropriate. The teacher is given guidance to introduce vocabulary (including math vocabulary) to make connections to math during different times of the day, such as during read-alouds.

The "Teacher's Activity Guide" provides "Quick Minutes" that teachers can use to integrate numbers throughout the day. The guidance suggests counting out snacks, plates, utensils, and drinks at snack time. During each unit's whole group "Math Story Time," the materials provide

vocabulary words. These terms are found in the literature and/or connect to the mathematical skills being taught.

In the “Let’s Investigate” Investigation Kit, teachers address math vocabulary with a teacher-led project called “Cut to Size.” The teacher cuts yarn into three pieces of different lengths and places them in order based on their length, presenting the words *long*, *longer*, *short*, and *shorter*. This lesson includes assessment cards to guide the teacher on how to scaffold students.

In the “Under Construction” Investigation Kit, the teacher reads the book *The Shape of Things*, and children manipulate cut-out shapes. The lesson gives a list of math vocabulary words: *circle*, *oval*, *square*, *diamond*, *rectangle*, and *triangle*. As a follow-through, students get multiple opportunities to practice with books that encourage and support using the vocabulary. Students again practice using the shape vocabulary when they answer teacher questions such as “What do we call this shape?” “This shape has only three sides. What do we call this?” and “This shape doesn’t have any sides. What do we call this shape?” Students hear the words again during a lesson where the teacher asks, “What do we call this shape? Do you have a square?” and when students answer the questions.

In the “Splash and Dig” Investigation Kit, students practice using math vocabulary such as *how many* and *how much*. As students reenact *One-Dog Canoe*, the teacher asks, “How many animals are in the canoe now?” During the “Investigation Station,” the teacher asks, “How many boats did you build?” and “How many pennies were you able to put in your boat without having it sink?”

8.1 Materials build science knowledge through inquiry-based instruction and exploration of the natural world.

- Materials develop children's observation and questioning of their environment.
- Materials develop children's ability to communicate ideas.
- Materials include exploration with scientific tools.
- Materials provide opportunities for students to explore physical science, life science, and earth and space science through hands-on experiences.

Meets 4/4

The materials build science knowledge through inquiry-based instruction and exploration of the natural world. The materials develop children's observation and questioning of their environment and their ability to communicate ideas. Materials include exploration with scientific tools and provide opportunities for students to explore physical science, life science, and earth and space science through hands-on experiences.

Evidence includes but is not limited to:

In the “Under Construction” Investigation Kit, the “Flapboard” story *Building Plans* encourages students to go to the “Build” center and build a structure. While students are building, the teacher offers ideas that encourage them to solve problems, such as what to do if the structure falls. At the end of the unit, the teacher displays all of the building plans and structures to allow children to share what they built. As an extension, students are encouraged to think about real construction sites and what materials should be used to build a structure, how workers build the structure, and what tools are needed to build the structure. In another activity, children learn about how and where water is used in their homes. The teacher asks students to observe their water usage at home and records the data when students return to school. In a physical science small group activity, students have an opportunity to explore with scientific tools as they examine rocks using hand lenses. Students feel their rock, describe its texture and color, and then communicate ideas by drawing a picture of their rock and dictating words about color, size, shape, and texture. In another activity, the teacher asks, “How would a piece of wood change if I used a saw to cut through it?” The teacher explains that builders make many changes to materials as they build. The teacher rereads *Build a Doghouse!*, pausing for students to find examples of changes that Gabby and her father made in the wood to build the doghouse, such as nailing the pieces of the frame together and drilling holes to screw the floor to the frame.

Afterward, students use “building materials” and “tools” to build their own small-scale cardboard doghouse, using the story as a guide; they share their completed doghouse.

In the “Splash and Dig” Investigation Kit, students participate in a rereading of *Muddy Story*. After reading the book, the teacher asks, “What can dirt be made of?” Students are provided containers of soil, clay, sand, pebbles, leaves, and small twigs; they put a scoop of each sample into a resealable container, add water, and seal tightly. The teacher asks, “What does the mixture look like now? How will it look after we shake it?” After the mixture settles, the students make observations and notice changes to the mixture. Another activity allows students to participate in a science observation in small groups: They make predictions about an egg floating better in freshwater or saltwater. In this activity, an egg is placed in freshwater, and the teacher asks, “What happens to the egg?” The teacher adds salt to the water and asks, “What do you see?” After the students report their observations, the teacher explains that objects float higher in saltwater than in fresh water because salt water is heavier than fresh water. The “Quick Minutes” section extends the activity by asking, “What would weigh more—a dry sponge or a wet sponge? Why do you think so? How can you find the answer?” A hands-on life science activity allows students to experience how blubber works: They put on gloves and use shortening on one hand to observe how it insulates the hand and keeps it warm in cold water. While students dip both hands in a bucket of ice water, the teacher asks, “How does each hand feel? Is one warmer than the other? What kept one hand warmer?”

In the “Watch It Grow” Investigation Kit, students plant seeds and visit their seeds throughout the unit to draw an observation log about how their seed is growing. They measure the height of each plant using a piece of yarn. As an extension, in a small group science activity called “In Living Color,” the teacher reminds children that fruits and vegetables are plants that need light, food, and water. Students investigate how plants get food and water from the soil by using food coloring and celery sticks; the celery “drinks” the water, causing the leaves to change colors.

In the “Weather Watchers” Investigation Kit, the materials engage children with their environment in a hands-on play-based way that facilitates science inquiry. For instance, in the activity “Electricity,” the teacher explains that sometimes during a storm, the electricity might go out. The teacher asks students what tools they may need if the lights go out. Each child is given a flashlight, the lights are turned off, and children explore the classroom. In the activity “Make Lightning,” the teacher shows students the picture of lightning on “Oral Language Card 64,” and children share what they know about lightning. Using a balloon, the teacher turns out the lights and rubs the balloon on different fabrics to create static electricity. The teacher explains that electrical charges cause lightning in storm clouds; the teacher moves the balloon close to a filing cabinet or another metal object to explain how the sparks jump from the balloon to the metal object, just like lightning.

8.2 Materials build social studies knowledge through study of culture and community.

- Materials follow a logical sequence of social studies, beginning with self and moving to family, community, city, state and country.
- Materials provide opportunities for students to explore commonalities and differences in individuals.
- Materials provide opportunities for students to learn about routines and events, both past, present, and future.
- Materials provide opportunities for students to explore the roles of consumers in their community.

Meets 4/4

The materials build social studies knowledge through study of culture and community. The materials follow a logical sequence of social studies, beginning with self and moving to family, community, city, state, and country. The materials also provide opportunities for students to explore commonalities and differences in individuals. Additionally, the materials provide opportunities for students to learn about routines and events, both past, present, and future. Also, the materials provide opportunities for students to explore the roles of consumers in their community.

Evidence includes but is not limited to:

In the “STEAM and Literacy Guide,” the materials provide a logical sequence of social studies skills and concepts. For instance, in the activity “State and Country Flags,” the teacher displays several state and country flags, and children identify which flag belongs to their state and country. The guidance suggests leading children to recite the pledges to the United States and state flags, standing to show respect and placing the right hand over the heart.

In the “Let’s Investigate” Investigation Kit, students are introduced to daily classroom routines via the daily routine posters. Activities are geared to establish health-related routines such as hand washing as well as arrival and departure transitions, clean-up time, and expected behaviors during learning centers; these are introduced during the first weeks of school. For example, during “Clean Up Time,” the teacher gives a five-minute warning using signals such as flipping the lights, ringing a bell, or lifting a “quiet hand” signal for children to imitate. During

this time, students are introduced to classroom jobs and contribute to the classroom community. In the “Social Studies” center, the teacher displays a variety of magazine pictures of families engaged in activities such as reading, having a picnic, gardening, cooking, playing sports, and vacationing. Children draw pictures of things that they like to do with their family, using the pictures to spark ideas. In this center, students can identify similarities and differences in family characteristics, and they can talk about their family members, roles, and traditions. The teacher enhances the center by asking, “How many people are in your family? What are their names? What does your family do every day? How does your family have fun? What special days do you celebrate?” Further, students can use a photograph of their family to help name roles such as father, grandma, and cousin. This Investigation Kit also celebrates students’ individuality. In the lesson “The One and Only You,” the teacher talks about children’s unique characteristics, explaining that everyone has different talents and not one person in the world looks exactly like another. The teacher asks, “What is your special talent? What do you like best about how you look?”

In the “Under Construction” Investigation Kit, the materials follow a logical sequence of social studies, beginning with self and moving to family, community, city, state, and country. In Social Studies centers, students learn about community roles by playing “Who Uses What?” The teacher sets out three baskets, one labeled “Painter’s Things,” one labeled “Carpenter’s Things,” and one filled with several job-related items for both a painter and a carpenter. In partners, students take turns picking an item and deciding who uses it on the job, the painter or the carpenter; they then put it in the corresponding basket. After sorting all the items, children have fun using the props as they pretend to be painters and carpenters at work.

In the “Finny Feathery Friends” Investigation Kit, students explore and identify how people are alike and different. For instance, in the activity “Same and Different,” the teacher displays the “Dilly and Friends” puppets and asks the children to name ways the characters are alike and different. Students take turns telling how they and specific friends are the same and different. Students draw a self-portrait on a paper doll cut-out, and the teacher writes down a unique characteristic of the student; these are displayed in the room.

In the “Weather Watchers” Investigation Kit, students participate in a “Morning Circle” that integrates learning about the role of the consumer. The teacher calls on students to tell about their experiences with shopping in grocery stores. Then the teacher says, “We’ve learned how plants grow. Now we’ll learn how they end up in the store.” Students sing a song about how fruits and vegetables get from farms to consumers. Students can role-play as consumers and producers in the “Dramatic Play” center, using plastic fruit and vegetables for a produce stand. Children help make price tags for each item, run a register, and shop. In an extension, the teacher introduces students to the concept of basic human needs for food, clothing, and shelter. The teacher uses “Oral Language Card 45” to talk about the needs of living things and how producers and consumers help people.

8.3 Materials expose children to fine arts through exploration.

- Materials include a variety of daily experiences through multiple mediums (dance, music, dramatic play, painting, sculpture, drawing, and other movement).
- Materials emphasize the students' engagement in the process of creating rather than the product that is created.

Meets 4/4

The materials expose children to fine arts through exploration. The materials include a variety of daily experiences through multiple mediums (dance, music, dramatic play, painting, sculpture, drawing, and other movement) and emphasize the students' engagement in the process of creating rather than the product that is created.

Evidence includes but is not limited to:

In the “Let’s Investigate” Investigation Kit, teachers use the “Featured Artist” poster to display children’s artwork, discuss it as a group, and praise the child’s effort. A component of the “Daily Routines” called “Quick Minutes” suggests making music spontaneous by relating it to other activities throughout the day, such as singing the “Investigator Club Theme Song” to start the day or singing a song while waiting for lunch, lining up, going out to play, or beginning a group activity. Dances such as “Gone Investigating” help children respond to rhythm and express themselves; singing familiar songs such as “Over in the Meadow” teaches and reinforces basic concepts such as numbers. Exercise, dance, and creative movement throughout the day incorporate gross motor skills, such as when students use fun stretches during transitions to help them refocus. Art is incorporated into the learning centers through painting and playing dress-up. In a whole group closing lesson, “The Artist in You,” the teacher invites each child to share and describe a piece of art; children use words to describe the artwork and record the words on a chart. The objective of this lesson is to understand and share opinions about artistic products and experiences. Another example is “Fine Art: Art of Today.” In this whole group lesson, the teacher displays one or more examples of modern art, including the “Fourth Grade Class” art print, and asks questions about the artwork; students draw or paint a picture of something that they see.

In the “Under Construction” Investigation Kit, students get a variety of daily experiences through multiple mediums such as dance, music, dramatic play, painting, sculpture, drawing,

and other movement. During “Choice Time,” students play the “Letter Hokey Pokey,” integrating dance and literacy. First, the teacher places a sticky note with *Ss* on each student’s right hand and a sticky note with *Ff* on each student’s left hand. Then, students sing and dance this version of the “Hokey Pokey,” where they use either their *S* or *F* hand to act out the song. In another song, the “Under Construction Dance,” students move like a dump truck, jackhammer, and a long-necked crane. This kit also includes an activity where students look at the art print “Bridge Tower.” The teacher discusses the shape and form of the painting; students use the ideas to create their own paintings. The materials include opportunities for movement and dance throughout the daily routine. For instance, the materials provide “Quick Minutes” transition suggestions that include music. In one activity, students march around the room and sing “Heigh Ho,” pretending to be construction workers on the way to the construction site. The materials emphasize the students’ engagement in the process of creating rather than the product that is created. During Choice Time, the teacher sets out sheets of cardboard to serve as students’ foundation for their cardboard structure. In partners, students arrange five boxes in several different ways on their base until they find the one that works best. Students take turns gluing the boxes and then decorate their buildings with packing peanuts, art scraps, and other materials.

In the “Splash and Dig” Investigation Kit, during Choice Time, students participate in an art activity called “Sculpt a Story Scene.” To begin, the teacher explains that a sculptor is an artist who creates shapes using clay and other materials. The teacher provides modeling clay; students work as a class and sculpt the animals from “How the Fly Saved the River.” Then, on butcher paper, they paint a river with trees, bushes, grass, and flowers along the riverbank to recreate the story scene on the table. In another activity, students fill bowls or plastic cups about halfway with water and take turns mixing a few drops of food coloring in each bowl. The teacher demonstrates how to fill an eyedropper with colored water and then drop the color onto a folded paper towel. The teacher then chooses another color and asks students to predict what will happen when they drop that color onto the paper towel. Students then experiment with mixing colors to make a watercolor artwork.

8.4 Materials include technology applications.

- Materials provide opportunities to link technology into the classroom experience.
- Materials provide students the opportunity to explore and use various digital tools.
- Technology supports and enhances student learning as appropriate, as opposed to distracting from it, and includes appropriate teacher guidance.

Meets 4/4

The materials provide opportunities to link technology into the classroom experience. The lessons provide the students the opportunity to explore and use various digital tools. The materials include technology that supports and enhances student learning as appropriate, as opposed to distracting from it, and includes appropriate teacher guidance.

Evidence includes but is not limited to:

In the “Research and Professional Guide,” the teacher is provided with guidance to incorporate technology in each center to enhance student learning as a way to help students accomplish a task and not as an activity in itself. The Research and Professional Guide also contains a section stating the advantages and concerns about technology, where to begin, and best practice technology tips for the classroom. Technology is an integral component of the “STEAM and Literacy Challenge Activity Guide.” Teachers use the guide with a variety of resources to adapt the instruction to further individualize learning experiences with the use of a variety of technology tools, websites, and applications. The “Technology” learning center opportunities coincide with each of the Investigation Kits. Additionally, sidebars provide teacher guidance on how to adapt technology to students' needs. For example, a management sidebar states, “Place sound barriers, such as portable bulletin boards or bookcases, around the Technology center so the sound of children singing will not disrupt others.” Another suggests that while working with students, “You may wish to have an adult assist children with computers and other equipment.”

In the “Let’s Investigate” Investigation Kit, the Technology learning center includes “Computer Parts,” where the teacher places a disconnected computer in the center and discusses the use of computer parts such as a monitor, mouse, and keyboard. Students explore and pretend with the computer, encouraging safe and respectful use by following oral or pictorial cues for properly using a computer. In the activity called “Media Time,” the teacher puts pictures of

cameras, computers, telephones, and televisions from magazines in the center. As part of a shared writing lesson, students type a letter to Rosalita, starting with how to type the date and greeting (“Dear Rosalita”), and each child dictates a sentence as the teacher types and reads back what the students said.

In the “Under Construction” Investigation Kit, students have opportunities to link technology into the classroom experience. During learning centers, technology is specifically offered as a learning choice as students visit a construction site in City Square through the use of a Flapboard. Students learn more about City Square by listening to the interactive stories and exploring the computer activities on the eFlapboards. Before students go to the computer station, the teacher demonstrates how to start, use, and exit the program. Along with accessing computers, students work with an audio recorder during Technology learning centers. First, the teacher shows students how to use an audio recorder. As students learn songs and short rhymes about construction machines, tools, structures, and workers, the teacher invites them to record themselves. Students are encouraged to sing or recite along as they listen to their own recordings.

In the “Weather Watchers” Investigation Kit, the materials provide links to virtual field trips to support new learning concepts. The materials include a museum resource guide that incorporates activities from children’s museums across the nation, such as the *American Museum of Natural History*, *Wonder Works Children’s Museum*, and the *National Children’s Museum*. In the “Record Weather Stories” activity, teachers invite the children to record a story about their favorite weather or season. The students record their responses using the computer microphone or any other electronic recording device. In another Record Weather Stories activity, the teacher displays photos of weather scenes for all four seasons in the technology center. The teacher invites children to choose a picture to tell about in a story and then record it.

9.1 Materials include developmentally appropriate diagnostic tools (e.g. formative and summative progress monitoring) and guidance for teachers and students to monitor progress.

- Materials include a variety of diagnostic tools that are developmentally appropriate (e.g., observational, anecdotal, formal).
- Materials provide guidance to ensure consistent and accurate administration of diagnostic tools.
- Materials include tools for students to track their own progress and growth.
- Materials include diagnostic tools to measure all content and process skills for prekindergarten, as outlined in the Texas Prekindergarten Guidelines.

Meets 2/2

The materials include developmentally appropriate diagnostic tools (e.g., formative and summative progress monitoring) and guidance for teachers to monitor progress. The materials include a variety of diagnostic tools that are developmentally appropriate (e.g., observational, anecdotal, formal) and provide guidance to ensure consistent and accurate administration of diagnostic tools. The materials do include tools for students to track their own progress and growth. They do include diagnostic tools to measure all content and process skills for prekindergarten, as outlined in the Texas Prekindergarten Guidelines.

Evidence includes but is not limited to:

Materials provide a comprehensive “Prekindergarten Assessment and Intervention System.” It addresses the needs of children, teachers, and administrators by including benchmarks that identify learning goals in 10 key domains; a clearly labeled “Teacher Guide” that provides opportunities for observational and performance-based assessment; ideas for creating and maintaining portfolios; assessment cards to aid teachers in identifying children’s levels of development; intervention strategies to modify and differentiate instruction at home; and assessment management tools, including assessment forms, records, and surveys. Teachers use authentic performance assessments to provide an approach that is continuous, conducted in a natural setting, and based on a child’s performance and growth over time. Teachers evaluate children’s abilities in natural or authentic settings. Performance-based assessments evaluate children’s abilities to use specific knowledge, skills, and work habits as they perform meaningful and engaging tasks. Performance assessments include the “Assessment of Emerging Competencies” (to be administered at enrollment and at the end of the year) and the

“Assessment Cards,” which include step-by-step instructions, intervention strategies, and rubrics for common levels of performance. The system enables family members to provide their observations and input as collaborators in evaluating and planning for their children. The Assessment Cards measure the child’s development of 100 key skills across 10 domains of learning. Each card provides an objective, directions with scripts and questions to use, a scoring rubric, and ways to record the results. For example, Assessment Card 1 focuses on the domain of “Language Development: Listening and Understanding.” It states that the objective is to “listen and understand conversations.” The teacher is directed to show a picture card and read the provided script. The scoring rubric includes three categories: 1) not yet, 2) developing, and 3) secure. Each has brief descriptions of student behaviors, so the teacher can accurately score students’ skills.

In the “Research and Professional Guide,” the materials include information guiding teachers to set up, maintain, and analyze a portfolio to plan further instruction. First, the teachers plan how many times a year they will review the students’ portfolios. The guide mentions that when teachers analyze a portfolio, they carefully study all of a child’s assessment forms and representations of his or her learning, noting areas of marked growth as well as areas that remain a challenge. The teacher engages in this work solely and without the continued and intentional input of the students; the materials do not include recommendations for assessment tools that allow for children’s own evaluations of their work.

In the “Let’s Investigate” Investigation Kit, during “Opening Circle,” the teacher notes if children respond to questions to show understanding of a story; the teacher uses Assessment Card 2 to assess this skill and to implement intervention strategies.

In the “Watch it Grow” Investigation Kit, the assessment materials are designed to measure what children can do independently; there are tools and supports that assist the teacher in gathering information in a variety of settings, such as small group, whole group, and one on one. For instance, in the small group lesson “Shopping List,” students write out a grocery shopping list. An “Assessment” textbox says, “Note whether children are beginning to understand the different functions of printed forms, and use Assessment Card 22 to assess this skill and to implement intervention strategies.” Each Assessment Card includes activity directions, a scoring rubric, intervention strategies, and a list of assessment records that can be used to record results.

In the “Weather Watchers” Investigation Kit, the informal assessment tool is designed to be ongoing, strategic, and purposeful, as outlined in the Texas Prekindergarten Guidelines. For instance, a section titled “Check Up” provides a checklist for specific skills after the read-aloud *What's the Weather*. The checklist provides specific skills to look for: “Does the child recognize changes in the weather?” and “Does the child need more time with the concept?” The teacher also notices if children are able to button, snap, zip, and tie as they dress for the weather; they use Assessment Card 77 to assess this skill and to implement intervention strategies.

The model structure for investigations can be found in the Teacher Guide. The steps of this process are 1) Look and Ask, 2) Try It and Try Again, 3) Think About It, and 4) Make Meaning. During these “Investigation Stations” that last through each Investigation, students are experimenting, testing their own skills and knowledge, collecting data, thinking about the data, and measuring their own progress and growth in solving the problem. This method helps young children assess their own learning and progress. It is used in every “Investigation Launch” using Flapboards and prediction, Investigation Station, Learning Centers, and throughout the entire program. In the “Try It and Try Again” section of Investigation Station of the “Watch It Grow” Teacher Guide, children observe plants and collect data to assess whether or not their techniques are working: “Ask children to make changes if they see that some of their ideas for caring for plants are not working. Ask: Which plants seem healthy? What changes can you make to help the other plants grow better?” In Think About It, they are asked, “How did your seeds change during the investigation? What was hard about taking care of a plant? What was easy?” In Make Meaning, they are asked, “What did you learn that can help you grow plants in your home or in a garden? What can you do if your houseplants look droopy?” Next, “Have children take home a plant they grew and invite them to share what they learned with family members.”

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

- Materials support teachers with guidance and direction to respond to individual students' needs in all domains, based on measures of student progress appropriate to the developmental level.
- Diagnostic tools yield meaningful information for teachers to use when planning instruction and differentiation.
- Materials provide a variety of resources and teacher guidance on how to leverage different activities to respond to student data.
- Materials provide guidance for administrators to support teachers in analyzing and responding to data.

Meets 2/2

The materials include guidance for teachers and administrators to analyze and respond to data from diagnostic tools. The materials support teachers with guidance and direction to respond to individual students' needs in all domains, based on measures of student progress appropriate to the developmental level. The diagnostic tools yield meaningful information for teachers to use when planning instruction and differentiation. The materials also provide a variety of resources and teacher guidance on how to leverage different activities to respond to student data. The materials include guidance for administrators to support teachers in analyzing and responding to data.

Evidence includes but is not limited to:

In the “Assessment and Intervention” system, the teacher creates and maintains individualized education plans specifically tailored to each child. The teacher revisits these plans throughout the year at regular intervals and makes adjustments as the child develops. The system includes 100 “Assessment Cards” that allow teachers to assess specific objectives; they cover the areas of language development, literacy, mathematics, science, creative arts, social and emotional development, approaches to learning, physical health and development, social studies, and technology. Each assessment includes a scoring rubric identifying the student’s knowledge as *not yet, developing, or secure*. For example, in Assessment Card 1, students listen to conversations, and the teacher asks questions about the conversations to analyze students’

knowledge; the teacher records results in the form of a class record objective, “Investigation Assessment” checklist, or anecdotal notes.

The materials include guidance to support teachers with analyzing a child’s progress to plan further instruction. The teacher decides how many times a year the portfolio will be reviewed and uses the child’s assessment forms to see the child’s progress over time. After the teacher analyzes and records children’s progress, the teacher proceeds with further instruction for the class as a whole and for individual children. The “STEAM and Literacy Challenge Activity Guide” provides additional guidance to further individualize learning experiences for students.

The “Research and Professional Guide” states that assessment analysis can be shared with families, administrators, and teaching personnel. The teacher provides administrators with access to the portfolios, “Investigation Assessment” checklists, and the class record. However, the materials do not include a way for administrators to analyze the program data at the program level. The materials do not provide guidance to support administrators in analyzing data to shape program goals and professional development. The guide prompts the teacher to ask, “What skills present the biggest challenge for the majority of my class? Should the children already be secure in these skills, or are they developmentally on track? What can I do each day to reinforce these skills? Do I need to review these skills with explicit instruction?”

“Assessment” sidebars are found throughout the materials to support teachers on when and how to assess students during that unit. For example, in the “Under Construction” Investigation Kit, the sidebar asks, “Do children make reasonable predictions about what will happen next in the story? The teacher uses Assessment Card 19 to assess this skill and to implement intervention strategies.” The “Finny Feathery Furry Friends” Investigation Kit includes an activity titled “Making a Word Web,” where students recall what they have learned about living things to create a word web. The Assessment sidebar tells the teacher to listen as children suggest facts and clues; the teacher is instructed to use Assessment Card 60 to assess this skill and implement intervention strategies. In the activity “How Many Dogs,” the teacher makes three toy doghouses and places toy dogs in each house. The children take turns counting the number of dogs in each house. An Assessment box says, “Note children who are able to name how many, and provide counting dot cards for students needing extra support.” In the “Splash and Dig” Investigation Kit, in the activity “Let’s Read,” the teacher cuts out ocean animal shapes with a letter of the alphabet on the back. Students “go fishing” and read the letter attached to the animal shape they catch. An Assessment box says, “If children are unable to identify the letter, say the letter names and have children repeat it.”

The “Monitoring Tool” in the Research and Professional Guide provides a tool and guidance to help administrators support teachers through observation during various classroom times and groupings. Administrators complete the tool several times a year. Administrators are guided with tips on completing the tool “During the Observation.” For “Follow-Up,” administrators are told, “Immediately following an observation, schedule an appointment with the teacher to share your evaluation and to work together to create a Plan of Action (see pages 169–170).

Follow up as needed to support the teacher.” In the Assessment section, administrators observe and evaluate to support teachers as they:

- Use Assessment of Emerging Competencies as pre- and post-test.
- Observe children and write anecdotal notes.
- Collect samples of children’s work to show progress.
- Share progress with families at least three times a year.
- Use assessment results to guide instruction.

9.3 Materials include frequent, integrated opportunities.

- Materials include routine and systematic progress monitoring opportunities that accurately measure and track student progress.
- Frequency of progress monitoring is appropriate for the age and content skill.

Meets 2/2

The materials include frequent, integrated opportunities. The materials include routine and systematic progress monitoring opportunities that accurately measure and track student progress. Additionally, the frequency of progress monitoring is appropriate for the age and content skill.

Evidence includes but is not limited to:

The “Research and Professional Guide” provides support on what to place in the student’s portfolio throughout the year. It states, “Preschool teachers need to keep anecdotal notes about student performance along the way so the information can be used later to make instructional decisions” (LeLaurin, 1990). “Retaining a portfolio of examples of student performance is critical to making the kinds of decisions about children that can make a real difference in their learning, and the use of this kind of information helps teachers focus on what is most important instructionally.” The “Assessment” sidebars help teachers determine when to assess and what to collect for a student’s portfolio. The “Assessment and Intervention System” provides progress monitoring options that are appropriate for the age and content skill. Each “Investigation Kit” has embedded assessment side notes to give teachers tips for tracking student progress throughout the units. The materials recommend assessing children at the beginning, in the middle, and at the end of the year to allow teachers to identify who is progressing and who is not demonstrating progress. Assessments are included in the areas of language development, literacy, mathematics, science, creative arts, social and emotional development, approaches to learning, physical health and development, social studies, and technology.

In the “Under Construction” Investigation Kit, the materials include teacher tips for tracking students’ progress and growth in specific skills throughout the unit. For instance, in the small group activity “Building Plans,” the materials suggest children write about a time they helped someone or someone helped them; students draw pictures and write words to show how they

helped. A “Check Up” box asks, “Does the child readily represent an experience through a picture and dictation?” “Does the child represent an experience after adding prompting?”

In the “Splash and Dig” Investigation Kit, materials state, “Note children who use letter-like symbols or letter strings or attempt to copy a familiar word. Record your observations as anecdotal notes and place them in the child’s portfolio. Use Assessment Card 27 to assess this skill and to implement intervention strategies.”

The materials support an appropriate frequency of assessment that reflects the variable rate of child learning at this age; they provide suggestions for tracking progress in an ongoing and observational manner. The materials provide a sample yearly assessment plan where the teacher can customize the use of the components, integrating them with assessments or procedures recommended by the school or organization. At the beginning of the year, each family completes the “At Enrollment Family Survey.” The teacher administers the “Assessment of Emerging Competencies” to each child, completes an “Individual Education Plan” for children who show need, begins authentic and performance assessments, collects representations of children’s learning, completes anecdotal note forms, and keeps documents in a portfolio. Throughout the year and at the end of the year, teachers continue to do assessments and add documentation to the various assessments performed at the beginning of the year.

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

- Materials provide recommended targeted instruction and activities for students who struggle to master content.
- Materials provide recommended targeted instruction and activities for students who have mastered content.
- Materials provide additional enrichment activities for all levels of learners.

Meets 2/2

The materials provide targeted instruction and activities for students who struggle to master content and for those who have mastered content. Materials also provide additional enrichment activities for all levels of learners. Materials provide guidance and support that help teachers meet the diverse learning needs of all students through additional enrichment activities intended for all levels of learners.

Evidence includes but is not limited to:

The materials include specific ideas for targeted instruction for students who struggle to master content. The materials provide guidance on adapting language expectations to include students who may have a language delay. For example, materials suggest students can use sign language to express themselves with the class, which allows all students to learn. The “Adaptive Materials Kit” offers suggestions for inclusion and differentiation to meet the needs of various student learning styles, advanced learners, and three-year-olds. In the “Let’s Investigate” Investigation Kit, the whole group materials provide inclusion guidance when students work to learn the difference between the left and right hand. In the “Splash and Dig” Investigation Kit, the materials provide guidance for teachers within class discussions, noting that if children need a longer processing or word-retrieval time, the teacher can emphasize turn-taking responses so more children have a chance to contribute to the discussion. Throughout the materials, sidebars are used to help guide teachers with additional scaffolds and assessment opportunities within lesson activities. For example, in the “Weather Watchers” Investigation Kit, an assessment sidebar prompts teachers to assess students’ new vocabulary and grammar in speech as they engage in an oral language activity about the sun.

The materials include guidance for targeted instruction and activities for students who have mastered content. The lessons are designed to follow the daily routine, learning centers, whole group, and small group. The materials provide both child-led and teacher-led experiences. In the Let's Investigate Investigation Kit, the materials contain a guide that includes guidelines and strategies for children who may need additional support with foundational skills; for example, there are sidebars to use with three-year-olds, which modify materials and expectations. Each lesson contains specific guidelines on how teachers can differentiate the content. In the "Finny Feathery Furry Friends" Investigation Kit, students have opportunities to investigate animals through multiple avenues. For example, students can look at and touch stuffed animals as they write to complete their animal riddle books. The "Differentiation" sidebar provides suggestions for students with vision or hearing impairments. These inclusion supports are evident in all Investigation Kits. The materials include research-based guidance across the domains.

The materials have enrichment opportunities for active engagement, including guided questioning, whole group activities, small group activities, independent playtime, and learning centers for all levels of learners. The materials include recommendations for learning extensions within lessons and in each Investigation Kit. In the "Under Construction" Investigation Kit, the materials include opportunities for extensions through learning centers. Specifically, in the "Social Studies" center "Building Plans," advanced differentiation is offered through building blueprints that incorporate an increasing number of blocks. In the "Healthy You" Investigation Kit, students explore problem-solving skills, such as turn-taking, through active exploration and interactions with peers and adults. The materials allow children to explore this skill through literacy, personal connections, math lessons, music, art, and writing. In the Finny Feathery Furry Friends Investigation Kit, daily transitional routines support advanced differentiation: A sidebar notes that children can suggest other animals for the transitional marching song and also supply new rhyming words. In the "Watch It Grow" Investigation Kit, students practice writing advanced phrases (e.g., "Thank you," "I love you," "Get well soon," "Happy Birthday") as they work in the "Writing Choice" learning center. Throughout the kits, a section titled "For the Project-Oriented Classroom" provides extension activities that build on students' interests. For example, within "Math Kit: All Sorts of Colors," activities include open-ended language to provide children opportunities to explore and apply new learning concepts; for students who know primary colors, the teacher identifies secondary colors.

10.2 Materials provide a variety of instructional methods that appeal to a variety of learning interests and needs.

- Materials include a variety of instructional approaches to engage students in mastery of the content.
- Materials support developmentally appropriate instructional strategies.
- Materials support flexible grouping (e.g., whole, small, individual).
- Materials support multiple types of practices (e.g., guided, independent, collaborative) and provide guidance and structures to achieve effective implementation.

Meets 2/2

The materials are developmentally appropriate and provide guidance and support that help teachers meet the diverse learning needs of all students. The materials include a variety of instructional approaches to engage students in mastery of the content; they include flexible grouping and multiple types of practices.

Evidence includes but is not limited to:

The materials provide a variety of instructional methods that appeal to a variety of learning interests and needs. The “Investigation Kits” provide different types of groupings, including child-centered learning that extends from the teacher-directed activities. For example, the teacher explains that through the Investigation Kits, children will investigate the world around them, make discoveries, solve problems, and, at the end, receive a quick preview of the following Investigation Kit.

In the “Let’s Investigate” Investigation Kit, students practice skills in a variety of ways. The whole group “Opening Circle Time” lesson introduces children to new characters. The materials provide puppets named Dilly and her best friend, Rosalita. The puppets are used during collaboration to teach turn-taking and interactions between peers. For example, Rosalita introduces herself and talks about where she lives and what she loves to do. At the end of this Investigation Kit, there is a celebration of its successful completion with a ceremony: Children join the “InvestiGator Club,” which allows for individual achievement.

In the “Healthy You” Investigation Kit, whole group and small group activities are found throughout the day. Students engage in whole group lessons on basic human needs, such as having to decide how to set up a doctor’s office in the “Dramatic Play” area, comparing numbers and objects, and identifying types of lines. During the day, students experience small groupings focused on the number 3, writing about hygiene, and comparing and contrasting in science. The teacher leads the discussion of what materials students need to have to be successful in the center. At center time, students can choose what role they want to play.

In the “Splash and Dig” Investigation Kit, during learning centers, students participate in creating a collaborative mural, adding water, land, and sea creatures they learned about to their artwork. Additionally, within the unit, the materials provide guidance for the teacher in modeling a skill and opportunities for students to practice the skill. For example, while reading poems about sea creatures, the teacher models directionality and tracking print with a pointer. The teacher then invites students to demonstrate this skill while the class rereads the poems.

In the “Watch It Grow” Investigation Kit, there is one-on-one individualized instruction and support for children who may be exhibiting a need for additional support; there are also project-based learning opportunities. The materials include activities that allow for independent practice of skills in learning centers. There is also an example of a shared writing activity that builds off of a previous read-aloud: Students decide what crops they would like to grow and how many, and the teacher scaffolds students to write their own story and draw a picture to accompany the story. There is a section for “Look and Ask” about a new concept. For example, in a lesson about plants, the Look and Ask section provides questions for the teacher to model or think aloud about a new concept. Questions include “What does your body need to stay healthy and grow? Do you think plants need the same things to make them grow? I wonder what plants need. How can we find out?”

In the “Finny Feathery Furry Friends” Investigation Kit, students work collaboratively with partners during their learning centers to explore more about pets. Partners match pet care items with pets and act out routines in caring for a pet. Also within this kit, students work independently to draw and write about what animal they would want to be and why. Later, they share their writing with the class.

The materials include sidebars focusing on adapting the instruction for three-year-olds in a developmentally appropriate manner through hands-on materials with direct, concrete exploration. The “Family Welcome Guide” helps to inform families about the importance they play in the education of their children and provides them and the teacher with an overview of the program. The guide goes into detail about how daily routines help 4-year-olds define a structure for their day and feel safe and secure; how opening with whole group circle activities sets the tone for the rest of the day; how learning centers encourage children to make choices to become independent thinkers; how small group instruction provides the teacher with opportunities to work with a few children at a time; and how whole group instruction builds children’s sense of belonging to a group.

The “Research and Professional Guide” has material recommendations for meaningful activities that encourage children to independently practice skills in learning centers, such as drawing, games, puzzles, reading, and writing. The guide also includes a paragraph to support specific domain areas, a guide for supporting all learners, and tips that support lesson delivery.

10.3 Materials include supports for English Learners (EL) to meet grade-level learning expectations.

- Materials must include accommodations for linguistics (communicated, sequenced, and scaffolded) commensurate with various levels of English language proficiency.
- Materials provide scaffolds for English Learners.
- Materials encourage strategic use of students' first language as a means to develop linguistic, affective, cognitive, and academic skills in English (e.g., to enhance vocabulary development).

Meets 2/2

The materials meet grade-level learning expectations, including accommodations for linguistics (communicated, sequenced, and scaffolded) commensurate with various levels of English language proficiency. The materials provide scaffolds for English Learners (ELs), and they encourage strategic use of students' first language as a means to develop linguistic, affective, cognitive, and academic skills in English.

Evidence includes but is not limited to:

The “Spanish Instructional Materials Guide” includes resources for teachers to use based on strategies specific to ELs, incorporating their primary language. This guide includes a glossary of terms and translations for each of the 64 “Oral Language Cards.” The lessons encourage strategic use of students’ first language in the development of linguistic, affective, cognitive, and academic skills in English.

In the “Let’s Investigate” Investigation Kit, in the “Reading” center, the teacher observes as children repeat words using print materials. For example, “This is a book. Say ‘book.’” Additionally, teachers encourage students to say the word in the students’ home language. During learning centers, the teacher pairs native English speakers with ELs for block play, as children learn language effectively through natural conversation and play. During “Opening Circle Time,” the teacher encourages children to teach others how to say *hello* in their home language. During “Choice Time,” the teacher repeats children’s responses to reinforce and extend their language into a full sentence; for example, if a child responds *grandmother*, the

teacher says, “Yes, your grandmother is part of your family.” During learning centers, ELs act out activities they do with their families in the “Dramatic Play” center.

In the “Under Construction” Investigation Kit, the materials include engaging small-group instruction with scaffolds for ELs. The kit includes vocabulary words such as *construction*, *whistle*, and *crane* in both English and Spanish. In a math counting lesson, each student is given 10 toy dump trucks to count using English number words. The lesson provides an EL textbox with a suggestion: “Model the response you expect from children during the game.” Lessons provide scaffolds for ELs, such as using gestures to emphasize actions.

The “Healthy You” Investigation Kit has lessons that include instructional strategies; for example, teachers are guided to provide visual cues to aid students’ understanding of English. When teaching “Safety Signs,” the materials suggest taking children on a walk around the neighborhood to look for safety signs and discuss their meaning. The teacher can reinforce these opportunities by placing the signs in various learning centers in the classroom.

In the “Finny Feathery Furry Friends” Investigation Kit, EL sidebars include supports such as finding popular animal stories available in Spanish and other languages and inviting volunteers to read the story in their primary language before they read the English version. Another strategy includes using visuals whenever possible or pantomiming each animal’s movement for children to repeat. Another EL sidebar suggests teachers review the names of human body parts related to the senses by pointing to the body part and having students repeat it.

The “Splash and Dig” Investigation Kit provides explicit scaffolds for ELs when the class discusses the book *Commotion in the Ocean*. If ELs cannot say the name of an ocean animal or only provide one-word answers, the teacher elaborates by giving more information, such as “Yes, this is a shark, and its jaws are open wide!”

In the “Weather Watchers” Investigation Kit, the materials provide an effective strategy to support children at different English language proficiency levels. During a discussion of rain, the EL support section recommends ELs pantomime their answers. Materials provide a variety of effective strategies teachers can utilize to support children at different English language proficiency levels; these include modeling common classroom questions and responses; using visual clues to point out vocabulary; encouraging students to use common vocabulary during role-play; and giving clear, simple directions by breaking them down into steps when students complete tasks. In a lesson about tornados, the teacher fills a large plastic jar with water and glitter or bits of paper. Students observe as the teacher swirls the water around to create a “tornado.” The teacher asks, “What is the water doing? (spinning) What does it look like? (a funnel) What is happening to the glitter? (it is getting sucked up by the spinning water).” Finally, while showing students a picture of a tornado, the teacher tells students that when the wind does this, it is called a tornado. After the activity, the teacher places the tornado model in the “Science” center, allowing students to interact with the material and talk about the topic.

11.1 Materials include year-long plans with practice and review opportunities that support instruction.

- Materials include a cohesive, year-long plan to build students' concept development and consider how to vertically align instruction that builds year to year.
- Materials provide review and practice of mathematical knowledge and skills throughout the span of the curriculum.

Meets 2/2

The materials include year-long plans with practice and review opportunities that support instruction. The materials include a cohesive, year-long plan to build students' concept development and consider how to vertically align instruction that builds year to year. The materials also provide review and practice of knowledge and skills in all domains throughout the span of the curriculum.

Evidence includes but is not limited to:

The "Research and Professional Guide" provides a "Year at a Glance" for three-year-olds that spans 30 weeks of instruction and a Year at a Glance for four-year-olds that spans 32 weeks. The guide provides a "Scope and Sequence" listing the learning domains that each "Investigation Kit" targets; it supports teachers by identifying directly-taught learning goals within each Investigation Kit as well as outlining opportunities for review and practice of other content domains. It is aligned with the Texas Prekindergarten Guidelines.

The materials are organized into seven Investigation Kits. They discuss themes such as school, construction, health, animals, water, plants, and weather and are organized to build and develop students' skills through a natural progression. On average, students spend a total of four weeks learning about each theme, allowing them the opportunity to learn about a specific subject for an extended period of time while building background knowledge for future learning of the kindergarten TEKS. For example, within the "Literacy" domain, students begin the year discriminating and identifying sounds in spoken language. By the end of the year, student goals are to show awareness of the separation of word sounds. Recommended daily "Choice Time" activities include opportunities for students to review and practice skills and concepts across domains in child-led and playful ways. These include using eye droppers, water, and food coloring to explore mixing colors while also working on dexterity, strength, and control; in

another example, students use measuring tools at the “Sand and Water Table” to describe the properties of water. In the “Let’s Investigate” Investigation Kit, in the activity “Going on a Shape Search,” students go on a shape hunt in the school neighborhood; students use a notebook and pencil to draw the shapes of buildings, cars, signs, and other things they see. The teacher provides circles, triangles, rectangles, and squares for children to use as a guide. In the “Under Construction” Investigation Kit, to build on the previous kit’s math lesson on shapes, the students listen to the read-aloud *The Shape of Things* and identify shapes in the story. During “Art” Choice Time, students use shapes to build an artistic rendering of a house. The materials in the “Weather Watchers” Investigation Kit clearly connect to the kindergarten essential knowledge and skills on earth science. The materials include daily routines for tracking and discussing the weather. This activity builds the knowledge and skills needed for students to observe and describe weather changes from day to day and across seasons in kindergarten.

11.2 Materials include implementation support for teachers and administrators.

- Materials are accompanied by a Texas Prekindergarten Guidelines-aligned scope and sequence outlining the essential knowledge and skills that are taught in the program, the order in which they are presented, and how knowledge and skills build and connect across grade levels.
- Materials include supports to help teachers implement the materials as intended.
- Materials include resources and guidance to help administrators support teachers in implementing the materials as intended.
- Materials include a school years' worth of prekindergarten instruction, including realistic pacing guidance and routines.

Meets 2/2

The materials include implementation support for teachers and administrators. The materials are accompanied by a Texas Prekindergarten Guidelines-aligned scope and sequence outlining the essential knowledge and skills that are taught in the program, the order in which they are presented, and how knowledge and skills build and connect across grade levels. The materials include supports to help teachers implement the materials as intended. The materials also include resources and guidance to help administrators support teachers in implementing the materials as intended. Lastly, the materials include a school year's worth of prekindergarten instruction, including realistic pacing guidance and routines.

Evidence includes but is not limited to:

The materials include a “Scope and Sequence” that shows learning domains and skills covered across the year. This guide shows how the materials intend to build and develop students’ skills through a natural progression. Each unit clearly maps out which skills are introduced and reviewed across the learning domains; however, the Scope and Sequence does not reference the Texas Prekindergarten Guidelines. The “Research and Professional Guide” supports teachers in understanding the materials’ philosophy and research behind the sequencing and progression of skills in each domain.

Each “Investigation Kit” begins with an overview of the learning, whole-day and half-day schedules, “Investigation Components,” a “Family Introduction Letter,” “Investigation at a

Glance,” daily routines, transitions, and learning centers. The kits also provide read-aloud books called “Flapboards,” in which children can lift the flaps to reveal the characters in the story. The materials include a variety of reusable resources to support implementation, including a “Math Board,” “Counting Strips,” “Magnetic Numbers and Letters,” a “Teacher Guide” for each “Investigation,” “Dilly and Friends Lapbooks,” “Dilly and Friends Puppets,” “Bruno’s Buzz Nonfiction Readers,” trade books, “Daily Routine and Song Posters,” art prints, “Center Cards,” the “Assessment and Intervention System,” “Dilly’s Alphabet Show Picture Book,” “Dilly’s Alphabet Cards,” “Oral Language Cards,” “Dilly’s Music and Movement CD,” “Dilly and Friends Read Along CD,” “Listen to Your World CD,” “Let’s Investigate! eFlapboards Learning Software,” and a “Teacher Resource Guide.”

Within the Research and Professional Guide, the materials include guidance and tools for administrators to support and evaluate the preschool program. The materials include a “Monitoring Tool” as a professional development resource. The form provides questions to reflect on during classroom observation, such as “What content is being taught?” and “What is the objective of the lesson or activity?” Additionally, the resource provides a “Things You Should Know About This Curriculum” sheet to support administrators in their overview of each content area. After the observation form, a “Plan of Action” form allows administrators to provide feedback for teachers. The Monitoring Tool is used when observing preschool sites using the publisher’s learning system to note areas of strength and challenge for teachers using the program, to provide support to ensure teacher success, to provide continued professional development, and to note fidelity of program use. It includes notes regarding what to look for during the observation and follow-up recommendations. Materials recommend performing the classroom observation and subsequent follow-up with each teacher four times a year. The materials provide tools to support the administrator in recognizing best instructional practices and arrangements in the prekindergarten classroom.

The materials include seven “Investigations Kits” meant to encompass an entire school year. Each Investigation Kit has four subtopics, and students dive deep into each one in order to gain experiences and build connections within the theme. For example, in the “Under Construction” Investigation Kit, subtopics include “Let’s Build,” “Homes,” “Tools and Helpers,” and “Builders at Work.” This expansive focus in thematic learning allows students time to develop concepts within the larger topic of construction while making connections among each of the subtopics within a realistic timeframe. Each Investigation Kit is organized for ease of implementation. The materials provide a “Week at a Glance,” which outlines the theme of each lesson for each part of the daily routine. A section called “Investigation Planner” lists the explicit lesson, the areas of study, and supplemental books and resources to support instruction. The “Investigation Components” section provides illustrations of the components that teachers will need in order to support instruction during each kit. The materials include posters, Center Cards, alphabet cards, and Flapboard stories, all used in a variety of lessons throughout the school year. The units of the kit are connected and allow for depth and focus. For instance, the materials in the “Watch it Grow” Investigation kit include the interconnected subtopics of “Trees,” “Fruits and

Vegetables,” “Flowers,” and “The Market.” The experiences support children to be able to spend time developing understanding and making connections within and across themes.

11.3 Materials provide implementation guidance to meet variability in programmatic design and scheduling considerations.

- Materials provide guidance for strategic implementation without disrupting the sequence of content that must be taught in a specific order following a developmental progression.
- Materials are designed in a way that allow LEAs the ability to incorporate the curriculum into district, campus, and teacher programmatic design and scheduling considerations.

Meets 2/2

The materials provide implementation guidance to meet variability in programmatic design and scheduling considerations. The materials provide guidance for strategic implementation without disrupting the sequence of content that must be taught in a specific order following a developmental progression. The materials also are designed in a way that allows LEAs the ability to incorporate the curriculum into district, campus, and teacher programmatic design and scheduling considerations.

Evidence includes but is not limited to:

The materials include a “Research and Professional Guide,” which discusses the philosophy and research behind the sequence of the materials in each of the domain areas. For example, for “Oral Language,” it explains the intricacies of the domain and the progression of skills needed: “Oral language instruction does not just mean teaching children to verbally exchange words; it includes teaching children to share their thoughts and to understand others who are speaking to them. In many cases, it means teaching children to listen properly in discussions, to recognize facial expressions and incorporate context clues, or to verbalize emotions.” Within the domain of “Phonological Awareness,” the guide shows how the materials implement current research by building students’ phonological skills through a specific order and sequence. The program provides explicit instruction in the development of phonological awareness skills, such as listening, rhyme, word awareness, syllable awareness, and phonemic awareness, which increase in difficulty and are reinforced throughout the school year. The materials provide a separate chart so that the teachers can follow this sequence and clearly see the progression.

The materials incorporate schedules for full- and half-day programs; the main variation is how many rounds of “Choice Time” students get to engage in within the day. Other components of the day, such as “Opening Circle,” literacy, small groups, whole groups, and “Closing Circle,” are present in both full-day and half-day schedules with no variation in the amount of time given to the activities.

Flexibility and choice are built into each “Investigation Kit,” allowing teachers to choose the lesson and activities that best fit their schedules. Each kit provides a blank space where teachers can add their own ideas after daily routines, and learning center activities are presented. There is also a “My Week Lesson Plan” template, in which the teacher can plan each day’s “Investigation Launch,” Opening Circle, everyday literacy, small/whole group lesson, and Closing Circle. Connections and suggestions are included within and across lessons to support teacher implementation. For example, in the “Let’s Investigate” Investigation Kit, students are introduced to characters as well as the skills that they will learn in the following Investigation Kits. Materials introduce students to the alphabet by having the class sing “Dilly’s Alphabet Song.” During the following weeks, students continue singing the song and are introduced to the “Alphabet Cards.” The “Alphabet Flapboard” provides more practice to increase children’s alphabet knowledge. In the “Under Construction” Investigation Kit, in the activity “Rock and Rhyme,” the teacher hands out toy dump trucks. As students say the rhyme pairs *truck/duck*, *dump/stump*, *wheel/peel*, they put a toy block in the truck. A textbox for the teacher says, “See the ‘Let’s Investigate Teacher Guide’ for explicit lessons that introduce rhyming words and spoken words in a developmental sequence.” In the “Healthy You” Investigation Kit, in the activity “Me Books,” children write and draw about themselves (e.g., their names, siblings, pets, favorite foods, and things that make them happy). Teachers can follow a provided recommendation: “Make the instructions easier by asking children to write and draw about things that make them happy only.”

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

- Materials support development of strong relationships between teachers and families.
- Materials specify activities for use at home to support students' learning and development.

Meets 2/2

The materials provide guidance on fostering connections between home and school. The materials support development of strong relationships between teachers and families. Additionally, the materials specify activities for use at home to support students' learning and development.

Evidence includes but is not limited to:

The “Research and Professional Guide” contains a section on parental involvement, which states, “The recipe for student achievement and success in later life contains the primary ingredients of ongoing parent and guardian involvement, effective school systems, and community collaborations.” A section in this guide, “Reading with your Child,” provides parents with helpful tips for reading aloud with their child, such as “making eye contact with your child and using facial expressions” and “changing your voice to imitate characters and create suspense.” The materials include a process and various tools to assist in forging a relationship with parents and involving them in their children’s educational path. Two surveys, the “At-Enrollment Family Survey” and the “End-of-Year Family Survey,” allow the teacher to open lines of communication with parents and to learn more about the children in their class, their families, health issues and special needs, what interests them, and to encourage parents to share their opinions about their children’s overall prekindergarten experience. Four primary tools—portfolios, an individualized education plan, narrative progress reports, and assessment and intervention cards—provide ongoing ways to encourage meaningful, regular, two-way communication that is crucial in having parents help guide their children’s education.

The “Welcome Family Guide” includes a letter to send home to families at the beginning of the year; it contains tips on how to support students at home. These tips include ideas such as reading with their children, talking and listening, playing games, using everyday math, and exploring new things together. The Welcome Family Guide informs families about research on skills and traits appropriate for four-year-old learners in the areas of language, learning,

movement, and social and emotional health; the guide also explains the daily routines in the classroom and how they support learning. For example, the guide explains that when children put on dress-up clothes in the “Dramatic Play” center, they are learning to use fine motor skills and build self-confidence. Additionally, a “Family Letter” is provided within each “Investigation Kit” in both English and Spanish to introduce the Investigation Kit’s theme and provide questions for parents to ask students related to their learning in that particular kit.

Materials also include a “Home and Back Family Activity Book.” This book comes with each Investigation Kit and centers around the kit’s theme; it provides learning targets for families to practice together at home. For example, in the “Under Construction” Investigation Kit, materials include a Home and Back Book called *Matt’s Toolbox*. A letter sent home asks that families read the book together, practice using household tools together that were mentioned in the booklet, and collaborate together on a journal page about something the family member and child could build or fix together. In another example, the “Let’s Investigate” Investigation Kit provides the book *Maggie Investigates* and a parent letter with instructions for the family to read the book together, use illustrations to talk about how Maggie uses her senses to investigate and point out Maggie’s notebook and how she uses a computer and books to learn more about the things that make her curious. At the end of the story, parents make a list of some things that they might enjoy investigating with their child. The letter closes by asking parents to have their child bring the journal page to school the following day.

11.5 The visual design of student and teacher materials (whether in print or digital) is neither distracting nor chaotic.

- Materials include appropriate use of white space and design that supports and does not distract from student learning.
- Pictures and graphics are supportive of student learning and engagement without being visually distracting.

Meets 2/2

The visual design of student and teacher materials (whether print or digital) is neither distracting nor chaotic. The materials include appropriate use of white space and design that supports and does not distract from student learning. Additionally, the pictures and graphics are supportive of student learning and engagement without being visually distracting.

Evidence includes but is not limited to:

Through the “Teacher Guide,” teachers can easily find the “ELL,” “Differentiation,” “Assessment,” and “Research” sidenotes. Visual aids are clear and concise without being distracting. Student materials are appropriately designed and clearly state the intent. For example, “Dilly’s Alphabet Cards” include large, easy-to-read fonts, with both uppercase and lowercase letters. Each card has a graphic to support the letter-sound correspondence; there is an appropriate use of white space and simplicity to keep the focus on the letter and graphic symbol. Additional cards for each letter demonstrate the letter strokes and dotted outline form of the letter. Text resources such as the “Dilly and Friends Lapbooks” provide a balance of simple text and colorful pictures; they can be easily seen in a large group setting.

The materials also include appropriate use of white space in both student materials and teacher guides. In teacher materials, all units provide white space after the “Daily Routines,” titled “My Daily Routines”; this provides space for the teacher to write their own ideas and the materials and objectives for their ideas. For example, the “Yesterday, Today, Tomorrow” poster has space for the teacher to write about the things they are doing in the past, present, and future. The materials include pictures and graphics that support learning and engagement for students.

The Teacher Guide supports ease of use; it is designed for easy access to important information for lesson planning and implementation of the curriculum. For instance, the materials contain a tabbed page box on each page that identifies the content such as “Whole Group,” “Closing Circle,” “Everyday Literacy,” “Small Group,” and “Learning Center Choices.” Teacher support information is presented on each page and is easily identifiable. For instance, a “Check Up” textbox with teacher tips and suggestions appears consistently throughout the materials.