



Because materials matter for all Nebraska students.

Content-area standards provide a framework for ensuring quality teaching and learning. Recent revisions and updates to Nebraska content standards, per Nebraska Revised Statute 79-760.01, require a number of key shifts that are essential to fulfilling the vision of Nebraska's College and Career Readiness (CCR) Standards for English Language Arts. For K-12 ELA instruction in Nebraska, the shifts are: the development of **foundational reading skills** in literary and informational text, the **acquisition and use of text evidence** to support analysis and reflection in reading, writing, and discussion tasks, and a focus on **conducting and publishing research** using multiple credible sources.

These instructional shifts are also a part of the Quality Instructional Materials Review Tools for [K-2](#), [3-8](#), and [High School ELA](#) from EdReports.org. EdReports.org developed its tools to provide educators, stakeholders, and leaders with independent and useful information about the quality of instructional materials (whether digital, traditional textbook, or blended) for those who will be using them in classrooms. Expert educators use the tool to evaluate full sets of instructional materials in ELA against non-negotiable criteria.

The tools have three major gateways to guide the evaluation process. Reviewers apply the three gateways sequentially to ensure EdReports.org communicates to the field the extent to which materials are aligned and usable by educators. Along with the Quality Instructional Materials Review Tool, the ELA Evidence Guides provide educator reviewers with guidance to identify, collect, calibrate, and report on instructional materials aligned to the standards for English Language Arts content, the standards for the ELA shifts, and the usability of the instructional materials. Those materials that meet or partially meet the expectations for Gateway 1 (**alignment**) move to Gateway 2 (**the instructional shifts**). Only those materials that meet the expectations for both Gateway 1 and Gateway 2 move to Gateway 3 (**usability**).



Because the Nebraska College and Career Ready Standards for ELA and the EdReports.org tool share the sequence and emphasis on both the standards and the shifts in ELA, the reports provide a strong starting point for Nebraska districts, schools, and educators to use as a part of their materials selection process for K-12 English Language Arts. Since EdReports.org produces reports for use in all states, there may be aspects of individual state standards or local district requirements that are not captured by EdReports.org.

Gateway 1: Alignment

EdR Indicator	Focus	NE Standards Alignment Notes
1a	High-quality anchor texts	All Nebraska ELA Standards in the reading strand are addressed in this Gateway review, with particular emphasis on vocabulary and comprehension standards.
1b	Distribution of text types and genres	Text types/distribution not specified in the Nebraska Standards.
1c	Text complexity	Text complexity is determined at the local level, but generally will follow similar, research-based guidelines. Complex texts are essential to provide students with rich context, opportunities to learn and apply vocabulary skills, and to grow their knowledge.
1d	Growth of literacy skills over the course of the year	This indicator addresses all Nebraska ELA Standards, particularly in reading.
1e	Text complexity analysis and rationale	Texts must be at the appropriate level to provide a rigorous context for instruction and texts included instruction that fall above or below grade level must provide a rationale for the inclusion in the materials to support proper implementation

		(e.g., a text that falls below grade level might be included to support student background knowledge about a topic).
1f	Range and volume of reading to be reading on grade level by the end of the year	This indicator supports all Nebraska ELA Standards in reading comprehension.
1g	Text-dependent questions, tasks, and assignments	Text-dependent and text-specific questions, tasks, and assignments must be present to facilitate the other literacy standards. Indicator LA x.1.6.i-- use of text evidence for reading comprehension, and carries over into writing and speaking as students discuss texts and demonstrate the knowledge and skills they have gained through their reading.
1h	Sequences of text-dependent questions and tasks build to a culminating task that requires students to use writing and speaking skills to demonstrate their knowledge and skills	A culminating task is essential to demonstrate growth, gaps in knowledge, and mastery of both content and skills. This also allows the teacher to assess (formally and informally) if students are progressing towards mastery of the grade level standards. High-quality materials will support students throughout a unit to move them toward growth and mastery.
1i	Protocols for evidence-based discussions and support for the use of academic vocabulary within those discussions	This indicator supports all of the Nebraska Speaking and Listening Standards. It also supports the CTE Standards for Career Readiness as it teaches students how to participate in discussions in various settings, including how to respond to others, disagree productively, and how to listen to and weight the ideas of others to work collaboratively.
1j	Text-based listening/speaking opportunities	This indicator supports all of the Nebraska Speaking and Listening Standards as well as providing opportunities for students to discuss what they are reading, writing, and hearing with peers and teachers.

1k	On-demand and process writing and short, focused projects (incorporation of digital resources, where appropriate)	This indicator supports all of the Nebraska Writing Standards and some Multiple Literacy Standards.
1l	Opportunities to address a variety of writing modes	The Nebraska Standards include a broad range of writing modes at each grade level. Attention will be needed to assure that all modes are included at the district/building/classroom level.
1m	Evidence-based writing	This indicator supports all of the Nebraska Writing Modes Standards.
1n	Grammar and conventions instruction	This indicator supports all of the Nebraska Writing Standards.
1o	K-2: Alphabetic principle, letter-sound relationships, phonemic and phonological awareness, phonics 3-5: Phonics, word recognition, morphology, vocabulary, syntax, and reading fluency (research-based and transparent progression)	K-2: This indicator supports the phonological awareness and word analysis indicators found in the Nebraska ELA Standards. 3-5: This indicator supports the word analysis, fluency, and vocabulary indicators found in the Nebraska ELA Standards.
1p	K-2: Print concepts, including alphabetic knowledge and structures/features of text 3-5: Reading with purpose and understanding incorporating reading skills (phonics/ decoding focus)	K-2: This indicator supports the concepts of print indicators found in the Nebraska ELA Standards. 3-5: This indicator supports the fluency and comprehension indicators found in the Nebraska ELA Standards.
1q	K-2: Decoding automaticity, sight words, and fluency 3-5: Reading fluency in on-grade level text	K-2: This indicator supports the phonological awareness, word analysis, and fluency indicators found in the Nebraska ELA Standards. 3-5: This indicator supports the fluency and comprehension

		standards found in the Nebraska ELA Standards.
1r	K-2: Word recognition and analysis skills	K-2: This indicator supports the word analysis indicators found in the Nebraska ELA Standards.
1s	K-2: Assessment of foundational skills and protocols for follow-on instruction	K-2: This indicator supports the phonological awareness, word analysis, and fluency indicators found in the Nebraska ELA Standards.
1t	K-2: Differentiation of Foundational Skills	K-2: This indicator supports the phonological awareness, word analysis, and fluency indicators found in the Nebraska ELA Standards.

Gateway 2: Instructional Shifts

EdR Indicator	Focus	NE Standards Alignment Notes
2a	Texts organized around a topic to build knowledge.	This indicator supports the comprehension and vocabulary indicators found in the Nebraska ELA Standards.
2b	Questions and tasks that require students to analyze the language, key ideas, details, craft, and structure of individual texts	This indicator supports the reading standards/skills found within the Nebraska ELA Standards, with a special focus on literary elements.
2c	Text-dependent questions and tasks for analysis of knowledge and ideas within and across texts	This indicator supports the comprehension indicators found in the Nebraska ELA Standards.
2d	Culminating tasks to demonstrate knowledge on a topic	This indicator supports the comprehension indicators found in the Nebraska ELA Standards and provides the teacher with the opportunity to assess the student's ability to read, comprehend, and demonstrate the knowledge and skills

		they have acquired.
2e	Academic vocabulary plan	This indicator supports the vocabulary indicators found in the Nebraska ELA Standards.
2f	Year-long plan for writing instruction	This indicator supports all of the Nebraska Writing Standards.
2g	Focused research projects	This indicator supports all of the Nebraska Writing Standards and some Multiple Literacy Standards.
2h	Plan for independent reading	This indicator supports all of the Nebraska Reading Standards.

Gateway 3: Usability

EdR Indicators	Focus	NE Standards Alignment Notes
3a-3e	Use and design to facilitate student learning.	These indicators represent the instructional supports and usability ratings--often the pieces that districts include as they work through an adoption process. These ratings have more to do with the user experience, the supports included, and the ease with which a new district (and a teacher new to the program or even new to the profession) could implement the program without extensive professional development and support prior to implementation.
3f-3j	Teacher Planning and Learning for Success with the CCSS	
3k-3n	Assessment	
3o-3r	Differentiated Instruction (including information about supports for students with disabilities, high-ability learners, and ELL students)	
3s-3v	Effective Technology Use	

Key Terms Used throughout Review Rubric and Reports

- **Indicator** Specific item that reviewers look for in materials.
- **Criterion** Combination of all of the individual indicators for a single focus area.
- **Gateway** Organizing feature of the evaluation rubric that combines criteria and prioritizes order for sequential review.
- **Alignment Rating** Degree to which materials meet expectations for alignment, including that all standards are present and treated with the appropriate depth to support students in learning the skills and knowledge that they need to be ready for college and career.
- **Usability** Degree to which materials are consistent with effective practices for use and design, teacher planning and learning, assessment, and differentiated instruction.

