

CURRICULUM SUPPORT — GUIDE —

W O R K B O O K

Key Action II.2: Determine the Plan for Assessment
and Grading

II.2: DETERMINE THE PLAN FOR ASSESSMENT AND GRADING

	Key Action II.1: Set Goals, Roles, and Monitoring Plan	Step II.2.A: Study the assessments in the curriculum
Phase II: Prepare >	Key Action II.2: Determine the Plan for Assessment and Grading	Step II.2.B: Inventory all currently used assessments for purpose, frequency, and quality
	Key Action II.3: Determine Expectations for Use and the Plan for Collaborative Planning	Step II.2.C: Determine the plan for common assessment and what you will do with the data
	Key Action II.4: Determine the Plan for Coaching	Step II.2.D: Establish grading guidance for the new materials
	Key Action II.5: Determine the Plan for Training Teachers and Leaders	Step II.2.E: Organize next steps and communicate the plan

WHAT IS THE GOAL?

The goal of this key action is to clarify the expectations for assessment and grading in the new curriculum. This step comes before pacing because your common assessments will anchor your planning.

WHY IS THIS KEY ACTION IMPORTANT?

The majority of systems have a pre-existing assessment strategy prior to selecting materials. It's important to consider your system's overall assessment strategy (the purpose, frequency, and quality of each assessment) in thinking through the role of curriculum-embedded assessments. Several early implementers spent considerable money and time designing item banks or additional assessments without realizing how many assessments were already in their curriculum. This often led to teachers administering multiple assessments for the same purpose, which was confusing for both students and teachers. Similarly, students and parents often experience the materials for the first time in the form of grades, and being proactive about what will be graded and how can make this transition easier. Taking the time to understand the assessments in your materials, how they fit into your larger assessment strategy, and what will get graded can reduce mixed signals, confusion, and anxiety for all involved.

EXPLANATION OF LANGUAGE

We use the expression **assessment** purposes to describe why the assessment is being given in the first place. We use the expression **common assessments** to describe assessments that are expected to be taken at the same time and in the same way across an entire school or district.

II.2.A: STUDY THE ASSESSMENTS IN THE CURRICULUM (CONT.)

GUIDING QUESTIONS

vi. Are there end of module/unit assessments?

vii. What do they assess?

viii. How are they designed?

ix. What information will the end of module/unit assessments give teachers?

x. Within a module/unit, what assessments are included?

xi. What do they assess?

xii. How are they designed?

xiii. What information will the assessments within modules/units give teachers?

NOTES

The end of module/unit assessments are the assessments that most early implementers chose to have all teachers complete in common.

Have the team take the assessments individually to understand the mental work required.

If the difficulty of the assessment causes feelings of fear and concern, go back to your core beliefs in **Step I.2.B: Articulate the vision of instruction and core beliefs** and allow time to process, but persevere. Follow the [Guide for Discussing Assessment](#) for managing emotions.

Assessments within modules/units vary considerably across different materials.

Have the Implementation Support Team take the assessments to understand the mental work required.

II.2.B: INVENTORY ALL CURRENTLY USED ASSESSMENTS FOR PURPOSE, FREQUENCY, AND QUALITY

GUIDING QUESTIONS

i. What are our key purposes for assessments?

NOTES

The resource [Assessment Purposes](#) provides a starting point, and pages 36–39 of [ANet’s Analyzing Assessment Strategy Case Study](#) describe how one implementation team conducted this step.

ii. What are all the assessments that students in our district currently take and how often do they take them?

Use the [Assessment Inventory Template](#) to develop your inventory, and take a look at the [Completed Assessment Inventory](#) for a completed example.

iii. What purpose(s) does each assessment serve?

This step is typically completed by the system team, but can be replicated at each school if schools have added additional assessments.

iv. What is the quality of each assessment?

Your inventory will likely vary by subject and grade. The Implementation Support Team can complete the inventory for the grade they have studied, but ensure that the same study is conducted for other grades.

v. What do we do with the data from each assessment?

The resource [Assessment Review Tools](#) provides guidance and tools for determining the quality of assessments. At the highest level, early implementers in ELA found it helpful to focus on quality texts and quality items. In math, they focused on quality items and standards being assessed at the right level of rigor.

vi. Are there any purposes that we lack assessments for at this time?

Research shows that students do benefit from one full-length practice test to understand the format and layout, but they don’t need every assessment to reflect the same structure and model. In fact, they learn more from experiencing a variety of item types.

II.2.B: INVENTORY ALL CURRENTLY USED ASSESSMENTS FOR PURPOSE, FREQUENCY, AND QUALITY (CONT.)

GUIDING QUESTIONS

- vii. What purposes can the curriculum-embedded assessments we studied serve?

- viii. Are there any assessments that have redundant purposes that we can discontinue?

- ix. Are there any assessments that have overlapping purposes? What is the best course of action?

- x. Which assessments are we going to administer across the district in each grade?

NOTES

The resource [ANet's Analyzing Assessment Strategy Case Study](#) describes how one system thought through these questions and the decisions they came to.

Simplifying the number of assessments allows for more time on instruction and more time to process and use the data you get from the assessments students are taking.

Curriculum-embedded assessments serve a different purpose than interims or summatives. They give shorter-cycle feedback (i.e. at the end of a unit) on student understanding of the standards and content, often highlighting student misconceptions.

Some teachers desire to blend the curriculum-embedded assessments with sample state test items to give some format experience. In assessment design, the design of the item is quite complex, and altering items to make them look like state assessments (such as making them multiple choice) will affect the validity and reliability of the item. It is better to keep items intact and draw from different sources (i.e. pull some state test items into the curriculum assessment) than to adjust the design of the items themselves.

II.2.C: DETERMINE THE PLAN FOR COMMON ASSESSMENT AND WHAT YOU WILL DO WITH THE DATA (CONT.)

GUIDING QUESTIONS

vii. For each assessment, will we collect the data centrally? If so, how?

NOTES

There are a number of platform providers that are able to import your assessments directly and help with administration and roll-up.

viii. How will results get reported?

Be careful in standard-based reporting for ELA — this is not reflective of how the state test is designed or how students learn to read. [SAP's Text at the Center paper](#) is an overview of what is different for ELA, and [SAP's ELA Assessment Quick Reference Guide](#) shares dos and don'ts for ELA assessment.

ix. For each assessment, what do we expect teachers to do with the data?

You will lay out your plan in more detail in **Step II.3.E: Determine how you will support collaborative and individual planning.**

x. How will we know if that is happening?

II.2.D: ESTABLISH GRADING GUIDANCE FOR THE NEW MATERIALS

GUIDING QUESTIONS

- i. What is our district/school grading policy, if any, for this subject/grade band?

NOTES

[Resources on Grading](#) shares a compilation of good resources around grading policy.

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- ii. What assignments in this curriculum do we expect to be graded?

Make sure the team has done the work of Steps II.2.A–II.2.C before tackling grading. Grading decisions should be made in the larger context of a defined assessment strategy. In considering what to grade, review your formative assessment list.

- iii. What questions will come up about how to grade these assignments? What are our answers to these questions?

While curriculum developers tend to produce a fair amount of guidance on use and pacing, they rarely provide guidance or support on how to handle grading. Occasionally, there will be rubrics and sample student work, but there is a lot of judgment that teachers and leaders need to make to match the curriculum to your grading policy.

- iv. What other questions will come up about grading? How will we handle them?

[Common Grading Challenges](#) includes frequent issues that come up in grading and options for how to approach them.

II.2.E: ORGANIZE NEXT STEPS AND COMMUNICATE THE PLAN

GUIDING QUESTIONS

i. In this key action, we reviewed the assessment and grading plan. What are the next steps that we need to take based on the decisions we made together?

ii. What can we add to our roles and responsibilities tracker?

iii. What training will all teachers using this curriculum need prior to launching the materials in order to be ready for their assessment and grading responsibilities?

iv. What training will all leaders supporting this curriculum need prior to launching the materials to be ready for their assessment and grading responsibilities?

v. What will each identified stakeholder group want to know about assessment and grading?

vi. How do we plan to proactively communicate this information? Who will deliver the communication? When?

vii. What questions do we expect we will get? How will we answer them?

NOTES

Go back to your [Implementation Plan](#) to track your next steps and add to your roles and responsibilities tracker.

Throughout Phase II, you will track the training needs at the end of every step, and in **Key Action II.5: Determine the plan for training teachers and leaders** you will prioritize and sequence these needs.

Remember to track all of the needs as you go in your [Implementation Plan](#).

Go back to your [Implementation Plan](#) to review your list of stakeholders and key messages.

Use the resources [Email Communicating Assessment Choices](#) and [PowerPoint Communicating Assessment Choices](#) as a starting point to communicate your process.

Agenda for Assessment Study

This resource is an agenda for studying the assessments within the curriculum to make decisions about how to effectively utilize the curriculum-embedded assessments in alignment with overall assessment vision.

Meeting Goals

The overall goal for this meeting is to develop an understanding of the assessments included in the curriculum and to identify initial ideas for how the assessments may be used as part of the overall assessment strategy.

Preparing for the Meeting

Key Planning Questions	Approaches
Who should facilitate the meeting?	This meeting should be facilitated by the Implementation Support Team Leader and/or a senior instructional leader from within the system (CAO, Director of content area, etc.).
Who should participate in the process?	Participants should include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Members of the Implementation Support Team • Representative(s) from the Assessment & Data Teams • Teacher representatives
What will we study?	It is helpful to have all participants study the same set of assessments to better understand the assessment design and alignment within the curriculum. In order to do this, there are a few considerations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do all grade levels within the curriculum follow the same assessment structure? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ If so, you can choose a specific grade level and use that grade level to guide this process. ○ If not, you will need to go through this process multiple times for each approach that is taken within the curriculum. This occurs most frequently in curricula that differentiate their approach for different grade bands (i.e. K-2 is different from 3-5, or K-5 is different from 6-8). In this case, you will want to take a grade-band approach where you study a specific grade within each grade band.

Time	Section	Description
5 min	Opening	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introductions • Norms • Goals
20 min	Curriculum-Embedded Assessment Overview	<p>Explore the curriculum and identify the different assessments embedded within the materials. These may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Daily assessments and/or exit tickets • Weekly or bi-weekly quizzes or assessment forms • End of unit or end of module assessments
25 min	End of Unit/End of Module Assessment	<p>Each participant should independently take the end of unit or module assessment as if they were a student to understand the work required.</p> <p><i>If the assessment includes an essay or other longer assignment, participants should simply outline their response vs. constructing a full response as a student might be required to do.</i></p>
50 min	Analyze the End of Unit/End of Module Assessment	<p>Analyze the end of unit/end of module assessment and answer the following questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What does the assessment actually assess? • What are the different question types of the assessment • How long would it take for students to complete? • What type of data or information will the assessment provide for teachers? • How does this assessment assess the content of the unit?
45 min	Analyze other assessments within the materials	<p>Explore the other assessments within the materials and answer the following questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What does the assessment actually assess? • What are the different question types of the assessment • How long would it take for students to complete?

		<ul style="list-style-type: none">• What type of data or information will the assessment provide for teachers?• How does this assessment assess the content of the unit?
20 min	Implication for Action	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• What are our initial impressions and recommendations for how we might utilize the assessments?• What are the implications of these assessments on our other assessments and/or practices?• How is this different or similar than our state test?
10 min	Closing	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Connecting to the goals of the process<ul style="list-style-type: none">◦ Where we're headed (II.2B and II.2C)

Guide for Discussing Assessment

This resource provides a guide to managing emotions around assessment. It outlines key messages that can help clarify the importance of assessment in teaching and learning as well as specific ideas about how to handle possible scenarios that may emerge as stakeholders review assessments embedded in the curriculum.

Key Messages:

- We believe our students are capable of performing well on challenging assessments aligned to the rigor of the standards. It is our responsibility to give students meaningful assessment opportunities that prepare them for college and careers.
- For many educators, assessments drive the ways we spend our time in the classroom and our expectations for students.
- We believe that assessment should be tied to daily instruction. Assessments support excellent teaching & learning and give us insight to our students' understanding.
- Teachers need assessments that spotlight grade-level standards and practices. This is critical to illuminating where students are and what they need to do to improve.

Common Challenges or Areas for Discussion:

If...	Then...
The group needs to reset or clarify expectations around the role of assessment in curriculum	Return to your core beliefs and instructional vision. Discuss how assessment is reflected in this vision/ belief statement.
The group needs to surface conflicting emotions about assessment	Consider these activities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take a Stand: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Place the word “positive” on one side of the room and “negative” on the other. ○ Ask participants to think about the word “assessment” and where they stand on the scale of positive to negative. Direct them to stand on the line accordingly. ○ Discuss variance instances. • Best Experience:

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Ask participants to consider their best, most positive experience with assessment -- as a teacher or learner. ○ Generate group criteria for positive assessment experiences.
<p>The group expresses concern about the rigor of new assessments</p>	<p>Discuss:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What fears do we have? Why do we have them? • When we embrace assessment as a starting point for instruction, how will that change our practice? • How do assessments support equity in our schools? • What do common assessments allow us to know and do? <p>Draw upon resources in the Key Messages for Maintaining High Expectations for Students document.</p>
<p>The group expresses concern about assessment overload</p>	<p>Preview the steps to come in Key Action II.2, emphasizing that there will be time in the process to develop a comprehensive assessment strategy.</p> <p>Share pages 14-16 from Achievement Network’s White Paper: Teaching Comes First to spotlight the overarching process.</p> <p>Discuss:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What kinds of professional learning around assessment is needed to best support our teachers? • What systems are already in place to support analysis of assessments and re-teaching? What systems are needed?

Assessment Purposes

This resource shares purpose, frequency, and examples of the various types of assessments.

Summative/Evaluative Assessments

- **Purpose-** These are usually used as part of an accountability system (national, state, and/or district) or to otherwise inform policy. They are the least flexible of the assessments.
- **Frequency-** Given one time at the end of a set time period (i.e. semester or school year) to evaluate students' performance against a defined set of content standards and to monitor and track student performance as a group.
- **Examples-** State test scores used by a principal to evaluate the success of a new curriculum; SAT scores used by colleges to evaluate college readiness.

Formative/Instructional Assessments

- **Purpose-** As a result of formative assessments, teachers provide corrective feedback and can modify their instruction to improve student understanding.
- **Frequency-** These assessments are conducted by teachers in the classroom for the explicit purposes of diagnosing where students are learning and identifying gaps in their knowledge and understanding. These assessments are small-scale, short-cycle, and embedded within the current unit of instruction. Formative assessments can be differentiated depending on the teacher's judgement about the need for specific information about a student at a given point in time.
- **Examples-** End-of-unit module used by a teacher to check understanding; a daily exit ticket used by a teacher to guide the next day's lesson.

Interim/Benchmark Assessments

- **Purpose-** The results of these assessment can be meaningfully aggregated and reported at a broader level.
 - Many interim tests are intended to serve as predictive for an end of year assessment, often the state test. To truly be predictive, a test must quantifiably show how results align with end-of-year tests.
 - Interim assessments can also serve formative instructional purposes, but only if they are substantially aligned with local curricula and are timed to allow teachers to adapt instruction.^{1,2}
- **Frequency-** These tests are given in cycles throughout the year, usually every 6-8 weeks.
- **Examples-** iReady, ACT practice tests, state practice tests

¹ Perie, M., Marion, S., & Gong, B. (2009). Moving toward a comprehensive assessment system: A framework for considering interim assessments. *Educational Measurement: Issues and Practice*, 28(3), 5-13.

² Achievement network, (2018). *Teaching comes first: How school district leaders can support teachers, save time, and serve students with a new vision for assessment.*

Completed Assessment Inventory

This resource provides a completed example of the Assessment Inventory Template for a school from our early implementer group. These use notes are not intended to be an evaluation of this assessment, but are intended to share how one system thought about their use of this specific assessment.

Name	STEP: Strategic Teaching and Evaluation of Progress
Entity Requiring (state, school, etc.)	School
Grade(s)	Kindergarten - 3rd Grade
Subject	ELA
Intended Purpose and Use	Formative - A research-based formative assessment that provides data to inform classroom literacy instruction
Actual Purpose and Use	Given as a diagnostic benchmark at the beginning of the year to determine a student’s independent reading level; given as a formative assessment at the end of each quarter to show reading growth and inform classroom instruction; provides opportunity for grade-level data comparisons and trend analysis
Assessment Administration Time	Given one-on-one; takes about 15-30 minutes per scholar
Frequency	Benchmark (beginning of the year) + four end of quarter waves
How is the data used?	Data is used to inform literacy instruction in the following areas: phonemic awareness, reading accuracy, reading fluency, reading comprehension, and developmental spelling
Cost	~\$5,200.00/year

Assessment Review Tools

This resource provides tools and guidance for reviewing assessments.

There are a few assessment review materials that are frequently used. Much like reviewing new sets of curriculum materials for selection and quality, reviewing assessments requires deep content knowledge of the subject and grade area.

Tools

- **Louisiana Believes Assessment Review Tools ([ELA](#), [Math](#)) and [Reviewed Assessments \(LDOE\)](#)** The LDOE has shared tools for reviewing assessments as well as their internal reviews. The majority of their reviews are for interim assessments and are aligned closely to the Assessment and Evaluation tools for [ELA](#) and [Math](#) from **Student Achievement Partners**.
 - The math criteria focuses on alignment to the shifts and standards, practice-content connection, variety in item type and student work, and quality materials (answer keys, no errors, etc.).
 - The ELA criteria focuses on quality and range of texts, writing to sources, variety of item type and student work, integration of language standards with reading and writing, and quality of materials (answer keys, no errors, etc.).

Guidance

- When possible, use adopted assessments versus writing your own. Ensuring the alignment of questions and standards is complicated and time-consuming. Using vetted curriculum-embedded assessments saves valuable teacher time.
- When leading assessment reviews, focus on both item level and overall assessment analysis. While the rubrics give specific parameters, guide the review with three major goals: the *focus* of the assessment and ensuring this alignment with the standards; the *coherence* of the standards across grades and within major topics within grades; and the *rigor* of the assessment ensuring conceptual and procedural understanding.
- Invite multiple stakeholders across the district to participate in assessment reviews (e.g., teachers, curriculum specialists and administrators)

Assessment Purpose Template

This resource provides a template for you to organize your analysis of current assessments and their purposes. It can be helpful to use your Assessment Inventory as a starting place. This template is designed to capture your final decisions.

Assessment Name	Type (diagnostic, interim, summative, etc.)	What is the intended purpose?	Who will analyze data and how will we use data?	How will results be reported?	What feedback will students get?

Resources on Grading

This resource outlines the considerations that should be taken prior to finalizing or adjusting a grading policy. It also provides example grading policies and links to relevant resources about grading research, guidelines, and principles. You can also refer to the resource, “Grading Challenges”, before constructing or revising a policy.

Conversations about grading can be emotional and loaded because many people have had their own personal experience as a student or an educator. While discussing grading and all that comes with it can feel daunting, it is also crucial to provide clarity and guidance for educators, kids, and families. While the Implementation Team will be the primary driver of constructing or revising the grading policy, it is important to solicit feedback from other stakeholders throughout (i.e. teacher leaders, families, students).

As you begin the process of constructing or refining your grading policy, consider the following: (Please note: If you do not yet have a grading policy, refer to the example grading policies below as starting points.)

- **As an Implementation Team, review your current grading policy and previous steps in [Key Action II.2](#).**
 - Ensure all members of the team are aware of the current grading policy.
 - Provide any necessary context to the Implementation Team behind the current grading policy.
 - Review the completed steps of II.2.A-II.2.C to ensure those are top of mind. Reviewing those steps will also allow you to proactively identify if there are any glaring revisions that need to be made to the grading policy to align with the work done in those steps.
- **Go back into the completed II.2.A and II.2.B steps to identify which pieces of the chosen curriculum align with the different categories of the grading policy.**
 - Your grading policy might include assessment data, classwork, homework, etc. You will want to identify the specific assessments, classwork, or homework that would be utilized as part of the grading policy. For example, if classwork is embedded in a grade, is there specific classwork that should be included? You may need to refer back to the grading policy after you’ve completed step [II.3A “Study the Design of the Materials”](#). Please also refer to the [“Example Curriculum and Grade Specific Grading Policy”](#) below.
- **Refine your grading policy. Consider having a system-level grading policy as well as a curriculum-specific policy to ensure as much clarity as possible for teachers and students.**
 - Refine your grading policy to ensure it reflects:
 - The vision for high quality instruction established in [Key Action I.2](#).
 - [The decisions made in step II.2.C “Determine the plan for common assessment and what you will do with the data”](#).
 - Consider what tools exist within the curriculum to assess student performance (i.e. rubrics, exemplars, etc.) and how teachers should be using these to grade student work.
 - Ensure specificity (curriculum-specific and grade-specific) in what assignments will be graded and which category those assignments fall within (i.e. classroom, assessment, etc.).

- **Engage grade team leader or department chairs**
 - At each impacted school, grade team leaders or department chairs are provided upfront and ongoing training on:
 - Rationale for revisions to the grading policy.
 - Use of curriculum-specific rubrics and exemplars to grade student performance.

- **Communicate final grading policy with students and families**
 - Share the final grading policy with students and families.
 - Revisit the grading policy multiple times throughout the year to ensure students and families are continuously aware of how student grades are being calculated.

Example District-Level Grading Policy

Vision

The purpose of grades and gradebooks is to give students and families an accurate reflection of a student’s mastery of academic content. Gradebooks are not intended to reflect effort, completion, or reward positive behaviors. We celebrate effort in other ways (i.e. assemblies, parent communication, class jobs). Because our goal is for students to master the grade-level content that is presented to them, students are permitted to redo classwork and/or homework for partial credit. It is our hope that these are inputs to an output of academic achievement.

Gradebook Weights

From 5th to 12th grade, assessments will gradually increase in their weight against the overall quarterly grade. The intention of this scaffold is to prepare students for college grading where you are generally assessed a small number of times. These few assessments determine one’s overall grade.

Grade	Assessments	Classwork	Homework
12th	70%	15%	15%
11th	60%	20%	20%
10th	55%	25%	20%
9th	45%	30%	25%
8th	40%	30%	30%
7th	35%	35%	30%
6th	30%	35%	35%
5th	30%	35%	35%

Assigning Grades

Each assignment in the gradebook is graded for mastery/accuracy. Teachers may assign ungraded assignments for the purpose of delivering feedback.

At minimum, teachers are expected to have the following grades in the gradebook weekly: 2 classwork assignments (exit ticket, student work packet), 3 homework assignments, and 1 assessment.

Example Curriculum and Grade Specific Grading Policy

This example grading policy is specific to 6th grade and Eureka Math.

Vision

The purpose of grades and gradebooks is to give students and families an accurate reflection of a student’s mastery of academic content. Gradebooks are not intended to reflect effort, completion, or reward positive behaviors. We celebrate effort in other ways (i.e. assemblies, parent communication, class jobs). Because our goal is for students to master the grade-level content that is presented to them, students are permitted to redo classwork and/or homework for partial credit. It is our hope that these are inputs to an output of academic achievement.

Gradebook Weights

Assessments	Classwork	Homework
30%	35%	35%

Assessments

Assessments include:

- Daily exittickets
- Mid-moduleassessments
- End-of-moduleassessments

Classwork

Classwork includes:

- Problemsets
- Fluencyexercises

Homework

Homework includes:

- Homework will be checked daily for completion (completion is notfactored into the student’s overall grade, but will be reflected as an ungraded assignment in thegradebook)
- The teacher will identify specific assignments based on the module’spriority standards to grade for accuracy.
- At least 2 assignments a week will be graded foraccuracy.

Assigning Grades

Each assignment in the gradebook is graded for mastery/accuracy. Teachers may assign ungraded assignments for the purpose of delivering feedback.

At minimum, teachers are expected to have the following grades in the gradebook weekly: 2 classwork assignments (i.e. problem sets), 3 homework assignments, and 1 assessment (i.e. exit ticket).

For clarity, all assignment grades (assessments, classwork, and homework) are communicated out of 100%. Some assignments will be graded on a rubric and converted to a score out of 100%. Rubric scores will be adjusted to make grades reasonable. Math exit tickets and module assessments are graded using the 4-point rubric. A score of 4 would equate to 100%, a score of 3 would equate to 75%, 2 would equate to 50%, and 0 would equate to 25%.

Please reach out directly to your child's teacher if you have any questions regarding the grading policy for 6th grade mathematics.

Common Grading Challenges

This resource outlines some of the challenges and considerations around grading during the implementation process. These are some of the more common challenges that arise, but please note that this is not an exhaustive list, and some unique grading challenges might not be reflected here.

Common Challenge	Consideration
<p>Teachers/school leaders have different perspectives on the purpose for grading.</p>	<p>The Implementation Team should share the varying perspectives on the purpose(s) for grading before beginning the process of refining a grading policy. Refer to the following research as a starting point:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grading Principles and Guidelines (Great Schools Partnership) • Conversations About Grading (ASCD, 2011) • The Opportunity Myth (TNTP) • Grading and Reporting Student Learning (Thomas Guskey) <p>Once a grading policy is refined/created, it is important that there be clear rationale for <i>how</i> and <i>why</i> these decisions were made and how the grading policy aligns with the curriculum (refer to decisions made in II.2.C).</p>
<p>There is not currently a school or system-level assessment and/or grading policy, so there is considerable variance in how and what teachers are grading within the curriculum. This challenge is directly linked to II.2.C and determining an assessment strategy because if it is not clear what assessments/assignments will be graded across the school/system, variance in <i>what</i> and <i>how</i> things are being graded is inevitable.</p>	<p>The Implementation Team is tasked with constructing a grading policy for the system in an effort to provide clarity and guidance, but also to ensure that there is a common grading experience for all students. The Implementation Team will need to consider how the grading policy is working in tandem with assessment strategy, student data review, and PLCs. Refer to II.2.C during this time, and circle back when you have completed Key Action II.3.</p>

<p>Some students are passing their classes but are not showing proficiency on standardized assessments.</p>	<p>When finalizing the purpose(s) for grading, if it is determined that grades should be a predictor for student performance on standardized assessment, ensure that common grading policy reflects that purpose. Ensuring clear procedures for what is being graded, as well as how it is being graded through student work review in PLCs or collaborative planning time will help to ensure a similar bar for student responses. This challenge often arises when teachers are unclear what their criteria for success is on a specific assignment/assessment.</p>
<p>The state/city/district dictates a specific number of assignments/ types of assignments that need to be in the grade book.</p>	<p>Make sure to keep this in mind during your common assessment inventory and when you are reviewing the materials in step II.2.B and II.2.C.</p> <p>Ensure that these requirements align with your common grading policy in II.2.D</p>
<p>Since implementing the new curriculum, students' grades have dramatically dipped.</p>	<p>Preemptively addressing this possibility with teachers, kids, and families is a crucial part of the communication plan the Implementation Team creates during Phase II.</p> <p>Consider including in your grading policy that students may redo assignments for partial/whole credit when that student shows mastery of the content being assessed.</p>

Teachers are having a challenging time finding enough assignments in the materials to fill the required number of grades.

Ideally a system's grading policy aligns with the chosen curriculum, and if it doesn't, that the system troubleshoots solutions proactively. In the event this is not possible, it is first important that this challenge be identified prior to the school year beginning so that an appropriate plan can be put into place to address it. In order to be aware of if this is a challenge that will

Implementation Plan

This resource is a template for keeping track of all of the projects and tasks that your team will take on during implementation. Before the work plan, there is space for recording major decisions and notes relevant to your work plan from across Phase I and Phase II: vision, core beliefs, goals, communications, roles and responsibilities, and decision-making process. This is meant to be a “one-stop shop,” but the format may not be right for your team. Modify as needed - add or delete sections, adjust tables and rows, or separate into multiple templates.

Vision (set in Establish the vision, Phase I, Key Action 2, Step B):

Core Beliefs (set in Establish the vision, Phase I, Key Action 2, Step B):

Goals (set in Set goals, roles, and monitoring plan, Phase II, Key Action 1, Step C):

Goal Area	Goal(s)	Measures and Frequency	How will we collect and analyze data?	When will we step back and adjust?
Teacher and Student Investment				
Teacher Practice				
Student Outcomes				

Key Stakeholders and Communications (set at the end of each step in Phase II):

Stakeholder Group	Communication Channels	Communications Needed

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Roles and Responsibilities (set in Set goals, roles, and monitoring plan, Phase II, Key Action 1, Step E):

Person / Role	Responsibilities	Training and Support Needs

Decision-Making (set in Set goals, roles, and monitoring plan, Phase II, Key Action 1, Step E):

Key Decision	Who is responsible for making it?	Who will consult?

Progress Monitoring (set in Set goals, roles, and monitoring plan, Phase II, Key Action 1, Step D):

Goal	Progress Monitoring Action(s) to be Taken	Owner	Date	Outcome

Work Plan: Below are descriptions of some of the terms across the top row.

- Project: describes the bucket of work; many organize projects by key action (i.e. coaching)
- Task: describes an action step in the project (i.e. determine who will lead upfront materials training)

Project	Task	Owner	Deadline

Email Communicating Assessment Choices

This resource provides a sample email that can be shared with leaders and teachers about the assessment plan that will be adopted to support the implementation of the new curriculum.

Team,

As we prepare to implement Core Knowledge Language Arts in grades K-5, I want to share with you the plan for assessment and grading in this new literacy curriculum. Assessment is a cornerstone of our curriculum implementation process. With strong assessment systems in place, we can ensure that we know exactly how our teaching is working!

A team of educators has been hard at work analyzing the assessments we currently have in place and evaluating the assessments embedded in CKLA. The team has considered the frequency, quality, and purpose of the various assessments to determine the best plan moving forward.

Based on the recommendations of our assessment team, we will plan to use the assessments embedded in our new curriculum when we roll out CKLA next school year. This means that students will take the assessments provided for each unit and domain. These common assessments will replace current reading unit tests and will be used as formative data to measure students' progress. We will all use the rubrics and scoring guides provided in CKLA to grade the assessments. During monthly data meetings, teachers will be able to work in grade-level teams to analyze the assessment results and plan for reteaching, using resources from the curriculum. Students will continue to take our quarterly benchmark assessments as well as our state end-of-year assessment (grades 3-5 only).

Type of Assessment	Purpose	Grades	Change from current practice?
NYS Annual Test	The state test is a summative assessment given in April. It shows students' performance on grade-level standards.	3-5	No
One Practice Test	Instead of doing quarterly benchmarks, we will do one practice test before the state assessment.	3-5	Yes
CKLA Unit/Domain Assessments	The unit/domain assessments will be given every 4-6 weeks at the end of a unit. They help diagnose gaps in students' knowledge and understanding. Teachers can use this data to modify instruction.	K-5	Yes. The CKLA unit/domain assessments will replace current reading unit assessments and benchmarks.

In addition to the assessments listed above, teachers will use ongoing informal assessments to track student progress and inform next steps in daily instruction. Feedback is essential to our students' growth!

If you have any questions about the assessment plan, please don't hesitate to follow up.

Best,

Leader

Assessment Plan

Objectives

- Share the process involved in determining the plan for assessment and grading in the new literacy curriculum
- Describe which assessment practices will continue and which practices will change with the implementation of Core Knowledge Language Arts

2

What was the process for determining the plan for assessment and grading?

A team of educators:

- Studied the assessments embedded in the new curriculum
- Inventoried currently used assessments to analyze purpose, frequency, and quality
- Determined which assessments to include
- Created a timeline and plan for analyzing data
- Established grading guidance

3

What will continue and what will change?

Type of Assessment	Purpose	Grades	Change from current practice?
NYS Annual Test	The state test is a summative assessment given in April. It shows students' performance on grade-level standards.	3-5	No
One Practice Test	Instead of doing quarterly benchmarks, we will do one practice test before the state assessment.	3-5	Yes
CKLA Unit/Domain Assessments	The unit/domain assessments will be given every 4-6 weeks at the end of a unit. They help diagnose gaps in students' knowledge and understanding. Teachers can use this data to modify instruction.	K-5	Yes. The CKLA unit/domain assessments will replace current reading unit assessments and benchmarks.

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How will the assessments be graded?

- The CKLA domain assessments will be scored using the rubrics and scoring guides provided in the CKLA curriculum
- The scores will be rolled up into a marking period grade using our district's standards grading guidelines

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How will the assessment data be used?

- The data from the CKLA domain assessments will inform teachers' instructional decisions for whole-group and small-group teaching
- Teachers will have time during bi-monthly data meetings to analyze class data and to plan reteaching lessons

6

Questions?

7



THANK YOU

INSTRUCTIONPARTNERS.ORG

About Us

The Curriculum Support Guide was written and designed by Instruction Partners, an education non-profit that works shoulder to shoulder with educators to support great teaching and accelerate student learning. Our work with schools and systems is grounded in the instructional core, and we provide coaching, action planning, and professional development. In the last three years, we have observed hundreds of classrooms and been fortunate to partner with many schools and school systems. We specialize in supporting smaller school systems, who may lack capacity but are able to make big changes quickly.

Many thanks to the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation for their generous support of this work.

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