Massachusetts CURATE Project: *Cu*rriculum *Ra*tings by *Te*achers

 History and Social Science, K-12

Purpose of the Rubric 

The CURATE rubric is designed for use by CURATE panelists to evaluate core ***curricular materials*** for English Language Arts/Literacy (ELA); Mathematics; Science and Technology/Engineering (STE); Digital Literacy and Computer Science (DLCS), and History and Social Science (HSS). It may also be used by educators in other contexts.

***Core curricular materials*** are comprehensive resources designed for use with *all* students to access grade-level content and standards in a given class over the course of a year or semester.

Through the use of the rubric, CURATE aims to elevate curricular materials that are high quality. A further distinction to clarify is connected to skillful implementation and aligned professional learning. The CURATE rubric evaluates for the content of the materials but **does not and is not intended** to measure implementation or professional learning. The Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) believes ***high quality instructional materials (HQIM)***are aligned to the Massachusetts content and practice standards, empower culturally and linguistically sustaining practices, and exhibit a coherent sequence of target skills, instructional practices, and understandings. These materials are accessible for all students, including students with disabilities, students working above and below grade level, English learners (ELs), and students of color. HQIM should strongly support teachers in their everyday work to be inclusive and culturally and linguistically sustaining.Curricular programs that receive an overall rating of ***“meets expectations”***or ***“partially meets expectations”*** via CURATE are considered HQIM. Although materials may be rated “high quality” this does not mean they are perfect. Materials rely on the skillful implementation of teachers who need to consider their local contexts and student needs. Schools or districts should also consider their local priorities and their student and teacher needs when analyzing CURATE reports since the challenges reported may impact districts differently.

Guidelines for Review

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

Sources of Evidence

* The product itself: unit and lesson plans, teacher guides, student-facing resources, associated software, and other components
* Other credible and comprehensive reviews of materials, such as those by [EdReports](https://edreports.org/) or similar curricular analyses by independent, third party, educator led reviews, such as those conducted by the Rennie Center for DESE’s [K-12 History/Social Science Curricular Materials Guide](https://www.doe.mass.edu/rlo/instruction/k-12-hss/index.html#/);
* Perceptual data, such as survey responses and focus group findings, from educators with experience using the product in schools
* Information—such as product specifications and videos of teachers using the product—provided by its developers or publishers
* Research findings: see criterion 5 below for guidance on how to evaluate and interpret research on a product’s efficacy

Definitions of Ratings

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

Rubric Structure

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

Rubric

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| **Domain: Standards Alignment** |
| **Criterion** | **Indictor** | **Notes and Tips** | **Further Reading** |
| **1. Scope and Progression** | 1. **Materials include coherent tasks and sequences of lessons that help students build knowledge and understanding systematically.**
 | * Knowledge of the topic, concept, or information is built in layers through repeated exposure to the same topic from different perspectives or entry points.
* Tasks require students to repeatedly engage with key concepts and vocabulary related to the topic through reading, writing, listening, and speaking.
* Lessons and/or culminating tasks ask students to integrate knowledge from multiple sources and points in the unit to demonstrate understanding.
 | * [2018 History/Social Science Framework](https://www.doe.mass.edu/frameworks/hss/2018-12.pdf)
* [Educating for American Democracy Roadmap](https://www.educatingforamericandemocracy.org/the-roadmap/)
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| 1. **Materials support students’ abilities to engage in history and social science practices with increasing levels of complexity.**
 | * Students are expected to apply the practice standards with greater levels of independence and/or complexity over time.
* Materials offer scaffolds to support use of the practice standards as appropriate.
* Materials provide opportunities to engage with practice standards at greater depth for students who are already performing at or above grade level.
 | * [Vertical Progression of the Standards for History and Social Science Practice](https://www.doe.mass.edu/frameworks/hss/vertical-progression.docx)
* [College, Career, & Civic Life C3 Framework](https://www.socialstudies.org/system/files/2022/c3-framework-for-social-studies-rev0617.2.pdf)
 |
| 1. **Materials center a diversity of perspectives, voices, and narratives.**
 | * This may include, e.g.:
	+ Amplifying non-dominant groups' experiences and include their voices within, or as a challenge to, mainstream narratives.
	+ Including sources and artifacts that show the diversity, fluidity, and complexity found within groups.
* Materials represent historically marginalized people and communities through their strengths, skills, and knowledge rather than perceived flaws or deficits.
 | * [Planning through an Inclusive, Critical, and Responsive Lens](https://www.doe.mass.edu/instruction/hss/gp2-qrg-questions.docx)
* [Frequently Asked Questions on Race, Racism, and Culturally Responsive Teaching in History/Social Science](https://www.doe.mass.edu/frameworks/hss/faq.pdf)
* [Assessing Bias in Standards and Curricular Materials](https://greatlakesequity.org/resource/assessing-bias-standards-and-curricular-materials) (Coomer, Skelton, Kyser, Thorius, & Warren, 2017)
* [Culturally Responsive Curriculum Scorecard](https://research.steinhardt.nyu.edu/scmsAdmin/media/users/atn293/ejroc/CRE-Rubric-2018-190211.pdf) (New York: Metropolitan Center for Research on Equity and the Transformation of Schools, NYU, 2019)
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| **Domain: Standards Alignment** |
| **2. Classroom Tasks and Instruction** | 1. **Materials engage students in grade-appropriate historical inquiry and analysis.**
 | * Units, lessons, and/or sequences of lessons are built around meaningful questions that are used to drive students’ learning forward.
* Lessons, or sequences of lessons, involve sustained investigation of sources, ideas, and/or arguments related to key disciplinary concepts.
* Tasks and texts are written at (or modified to) grade-level complexity.
* Tasks are designed in ways that will spark student interest and engagement.
 | * [2018 History/Social Science Framework](https://www.doe.mass.edu/frameworks/hss/2018-12.pdf), Appendix B: “Designing Questions and Investigations”
* Educating for American Democracy Roadmap Pedagogy Companion, [“Inquiry as the Primary Mode for Learning”](https://www.educatingforamericandemocracy.org/pedagogy-companion/#primary-mode-for-learning)
 |
| 1. **Materials develop students’ civic skills and dispositions.**
 | Materials engage students in learning experiences that reflect the practices of citizens, e.g.:* Working effectively with others to solve problems and reach consensus collaboratively.
* Considering solutions to the problems of our current world and envisioning a better future world.
* Engaging in civil discourse with those who hold opposing positions.
* Providing opportunities to use their learning to understand and/or take authentic action on current issues

**For Grade 8:** This should include opportunities to act with meaningful agency in a real-world context as described in the [Civics Project Guidebook](https://www.doe.mass.edu/instruction/hss/civics-project-guidebook/index.html). | * [Civics Project Guidebook](https://www.doe.mass.edu/rlo/instruction/civics-project-guidebook/index.html)
* [Civics Projects Quick Reference Guide](https://www.doe.mass.edu/frameworks/hss/civics-qrg.docx)
* [Civics Project Artifact Library](https://www.doe.mass.edu/instruction/hss/civics/artifacts/)
* Educating for American Democracy Roadmap Pedagogy Companion, [“Practice of Constitutional Democracy and Student Agency”](https://www.educatingforamericandemocracy.org/pedagogy-companion/#practice-of-constitutional-democracy-and-student-agency)
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| 1. **Materials are designed to** **center student thinking and agency.**
 | This may include, e.g.:* + Supporting students in actively making sense of ideas, drawing upon their own perspectives, experiences, and curiosity.
	+ Encouraging teachers to notice and leverage students’ diverse sensemaking contributions throughout the inquiry process, rather than expecting students to contribute in narrow or prescribed ways.
	+ Providing students choice related to the process, content, and product of their learning.
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| 1. **Materials challenge students to consider how identity and social position shape people’s perceptions of events, and encourage honest and informed discussions about power, prejudice, and oppression.**
 | This may include, e.g.:* + Supporting students’ and teachers’ engagement in honest and informed academic discussions about prejudice, racism, and bigotry in the past and present.
	+ Providing opportunities to explore and critique social norms, policies, and institutions that have created and maintained injustices in the past and present.
 | * + [Fostering Civil Discourse: How Do We Talk About Issues That Matter?](https://www.facinghistory.org/resource-library/fostering-civil-discourse-how-do-we-talk-about-issues-matter) (Facing History)
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| **Domain: Classroom Application** |
| **Criterion** | **Indictor** | **Notes and Tips** | **Further Reading** |
| **3. Accessibility for Students** | 1. **Materials provide for varied means of accessing content, helping teachers meet the diverse needs and abilities of students with disabilities and those working above or below grade level.**
 | * Focus here on access to grade-level content, not intervention or remediation.
* Consider whether materials provide [multiple means of representation](http://udlguidelines.cast.org/representation) and opportunities for collaborative learning (e.g., partner work).
* Materials should **include multiple entry points for learning and leverage the strengths of all learners.**
 | * Guidebook for Inclusive Practice, [Example Artifact List](http://www.doe.mass.edu/edeval/guidebook/5b-exartifacts.pdf): illustrates ways in which instructional materials can support *inclusive practice*, which encompasses Universal Design for Learning (the focus of these two indicators), Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports, and Social and Emotional Learning
* [Universal Design for Learning Guidelines](http://udlguidelines.cast.org/?utm_medium=web&utm_campaign=none&utm_source=cast-about-udl) (CAST, 2018)
* [2018 History/Social Science Framework](https://www.doe.mass.edu/frameworks/hss/2018-12.pdf), Appendix A: “Application of the Standards for English Learners and Students with Disabilities”
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| 1. **Materials provide for varied means of demonstrating learning, helping teachers meet the diverse needs and abilities of students with disabilities and those working above or below grade level.**
 | * Focus here on demonstration of grade-level learning, not intervention or remediation.
* Consider whether materials provide [multiple means of action and expression](http://udlguidelines.cast.org/action-expression) and opportunities for students to make choices.
* Materials should **include multiple modes of assessment to demonstrate learning.**
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| 1. **Materials help teachers ensure that students at various levels of English proficiency have access to grade-level content, cognitively demanding tasks, and opportunities to develop academic language in English.**
 | Materials may, e.g.:* + Include supports specific to ELs (e.g., references to cognates) as well as supports that benefit ELs among other learners (e.g., repeated exposure to academic vocabulary).
	+ Support teachers to develop ELs’ content knowledge and English proficiency simultaneously.
	+ Support teachers to differentiate language demands for ELs while maintaining cognitive demand.
 | * DESE’s [EL Blueprint for Success](https://www.doe.mass.edu/ele/blueprint/dashboard.html)
* [The ELD Standards Framework, 2020 Edition](https://wida.wisc.edu/teach/standards/eld/2020) (WIDA Consortium)
* [Examples of relevant resources](https://wida.wisc.edu/sites/default/files/resource/Implementation-Guide-WIDA-ELD-Standards-Framework.pdf) (WIDA Consortium, p. 8-16).
* [2018 History/Social Science Framework](https://www.doe.mass.edu/frameworks/hss/2018-12.pdf), Appendix A: “Application of the Standards for English Learners and Students with Disabilities”
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| 1. **Materials offer all students opportunities to connect their multiple identities and experiences to their study of the past.**
 | Materials include opportunities for students to gain a deep understanding and appreciation for their cultures of origin (mirrors) and other cultures (windows) that goes beyond superficial representation and works toward cultural fluency by, e.g.:* + Asking students to entertain the perspectives held by other people in the past and present, supporting them in respecting differences without justifying oppression.
	+ Bridging classroom learning to students’ identities, families, and communities outside of school.
	+ Providing opportunities for students to leverage their background knowledge.
 | * + [Culturally & Linguistically Sustaining Practices (mass.edu)](https://www.doe.mass.edu/instruction/culturally-sustaining/default.html)
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| **Domain: Classroom Application** |
| **4. Usability for Teachers** | 1. **Materials include informal and formal assessments that help teachers measure learning and adjust instruction.**
 | * Assessments include item types that measure the depth and rigor of the expectations of the standards.
* Assessments help identify students’ misconceptions and gaps in knowledge, and guide teachers toward next steps based on assessment data (e.g., reteaching, reassessing, continued practice).
 | * Educating for American Democracy Roadmap Pedagogy Companion, [“Assess, Reflect, and Improve”](https://www.educatingforamericandemocracy.org/pedagogy-companion/#assess-reflect-and-improve)
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| 1. **Materials include rubrics, exemplars, or other resources to help teachers set clear and high expectations for students.**
 | * Resources provide specific, observable, and measurable look fors that demonstrate understanding.
* In addition to rubrics and exemplars, relevant resources might include, e.g.:
* Checklists for students to use in peer or self-assessments
* Annotated student work at various levels of achievement, including non-exemplars
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| 1. **Materials include guidance and resources designed specifically to build teachers’ subject matter knowledge.**
 | * Relevant supports might bolster aspects of content knowledge (e.g., knowledge of Supreme Court cases) and/or pedagogical content knowledge (e.g., developing students’ ability to contextualize sources, effective strategies for embedded writing instruction).
* Formats might include callout boxes and annotations in lessons, videos of classroom instruction, implementation guides, links to readings and videos, etc.
 | * Subject Matter Knowledge (SMK) Guidelines set expectations for Massachusetts educators’ content knowledge. Information about SMKs is available on DESE’s [educator preparation page](http://www.doe.mass.edu/edprep/resources/guidelines-advisories/).
* [Designing Educative Curriculum Materials to Promote Teacher Learning](http://www.project2061.org/research/ccms/site.archive/documents/Promote_Teacher_Learning.pdf) (Davis & Krajcik, 2005)
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| 1. **Materials include resources to support implementation in teachers’ particular context.**
 | Materials may, e.g.:* + Support teachers in addressing politically sensitive topics by providing instructional strategies and/or strategies for communicating with parents and community members.
	+ Provide guidance on possible adaptations or modifications to the curriculum.
	+ Include flexible options for a variety of school schedules.
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| **Domain: Classroom Application** |
| **5. Impact on Learning***Note:* For CURATE reviews, DESE’s research office determines ratings for this indicator and criterion. | 1. **Research demonstrates that the materials have a positive impact on student learning.**
 | Research that meets expectations:* Falls into evidence tiers 1, 2, or 3 as [defined by ESSA](https://www2.ed.gov/policy/elsec/leg/essa/guidanceuseseinvestment.pdf)
* Concerns the specific product under review, not just pedagogical strategies the product incorporates
* Is conducted by an independent, disinterested party
 | * DESE’s [“How Do We Know?” Initiative](http://www.doe.mass.edu/research/howdoweknow/) helps educators gather, assess, and use evidence to make informed decisions about programs and practices.
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