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| **Dimension I:**  **Alignment to the Depth of the ELA Core** | **Questions to guide development of units that meet the instructional intent of the CCSS** |
| * **Targets a set of grade-level CCSS ELA/Literacy standards.** | * Does the teacher/developer articulate alignment to a reasonable set of standards? Do they make sense as a group? Too many? Too few? * Do the standards selected relate directly to the essential question / big understanding and do they direct the kinds of activities and assessments that will be used in the unit of study? * Are only a few literacy standards the focus of instruction for a multi-day plan or unit? * Will the selected standards be directly assessed? * Will the selected standards be explicitly taught? * Do the assignments, tasks and activities suggest a set of standards that should be targeted for instruction? * Do the assignments and activities make sense given the standards listed? * Is the lesson/unit instructionally tight?   ***Note****: Don’t lose sight of the content objectives over and above the literacy objectives. Literacy objectives need to be in service of the content objectives.* |
| Other Questions / Criteria: | |
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| * **Includes a clear and explicit purpose for instruction.** | * Is the instructional purpose of the lesson/unit clearly communicated? * Is the purpose for instruction coherent with the standards identified and/or the assignments and activities? * Is accomplishing the purpose sustained throughout the unit? * Are there multiple purposes? Do they compete with each other? * When there are multiple lessons in a unit, do the purposes relate in a way that is sensible? When taken together, do the lessons accomplish the overall purpose? * Will the purpose be clear to the student? * Is there coherence and appropriate scope to the purpose? Does the focus of the unit remain strong throughout the unit? |
| Other Questions / Criteria: | |
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| * **Select text(s) that measure within the grade-level text complexity band and are of sufficient quality and scope for the stated purpose (i.e., presents vocabulary, syntax, text structures, levels of meaning/purpose, and other qualitative characteristics similar to CCSS grade-level exemplars in Appendices A & B).** | * Does the text measure within the grade-level complexity band, both quantitatively and qualitatively? (grades 2-12) * Is the text of sufficient quality and scope for the instructional purpose? Are the texts of sufficient quality? * Can the selected texts sustain the work that students are being asked to do? * Do the texts relate to one another? * Do the texts relate clearly to the key ideas / understandings of the unit? * Are a variety of genres represented? * What scaffolding will be needed to help all students have access to the text?   ***Note****: The point is to discern whether or not the texts are rich enough and worth the time for study. Determine whether or not the texts can sustain the work that students are being asked to do. If some of the texts measure below the grade level of complexity, have a rationale for including them. Every text within a unit does not need to be at the complexity of the grade band. When considering text complexity, take into account the associated tasks as well as the place in the sequence of instruction where students encounter it.* |
| Other Questions / Criteria: | |
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| *A unit or longer lesson:* |  |
| * **Integrate reading, writing, speaking and listening so that students apply and synthesize advancing literacy skills.** | * Are students provided with multiple opportunities to develop reading, writing, speaking and listening skills? * Are students provided explicit instruction on reading skills needed to handle the selected texts? * Are students provided with explicit instruction on writing skills needed to complete the assigned tasks? * How will speaking and listening skills be enhanced? * Does the lesson/unit provide opportunities for students to present ideas and information through writing and/or drawing and speaking experiences? (K-2) * Do the text and writing tasks connect coherently? Does the student use the text directly in the assigned writing? |
| Other Questions / Criteria: | |
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| * **(Grades 3-5) Build students’ content knowledge and their understanding of reading and writing in social studies, the arts, science or technical subjects through the coherent selection of texts.** | * Does the instruction help students understand the disciplinary nature of the reading and writing skills needed in the content area? * Does the text build student’s ability to read text in the discipline? * How will the unique structure of text in the discipline be made evident? * How will students’ increasing understanding of reading skills in the content area contribute to their understanding of the content?   ***Note:*** *This is about disciplinary behaviors and moving past general reading behaviors. It is about significant context.* |
| Other Questions / Criteria: | |
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