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# Savvas

## Prekindergarten Program Summary

### Section 1. Texas Prekindergarten Guidelines Alignment

- [Proclamation 2021 List of Materials Eligible for Adoption](#)

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 promote positive social interactions.
- Materials provide 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' design around nine themes includes specific, intentional, and purposeful cross-curricular connections to create a unified experience for students. The materials name which domains are purposefully developed or reinforced for each lesson.

Evidence includes but is not limited to:

The materials are organized around the themes: "Hello School!," "Marvelous Me," "Look Outside," "Taking Care," "Everyday Helpers," "From Farm to Table," "On the Go," "Animals All Around," and "Earth, Moon, and Sky." Each theme includes information summarizing which content domains are being taught or reinforced and how multiple domains are integrated and connected. For example, in Theme 1, the following domains are integrated throughout the lessons: Social and Emotional Development, Language and Communication, Emergent Literacy Reading, Emergent Literacy Writing, Mathematics, Science, Social Studies, Fine Arts, Physical Development, and Technology. Each lesson includes a description explaining how they connect to the Texas Prekindergarten Guidelines. This description includes the domain, skill, and outcome. Theme 1 states that the domain is "Emergent Literacy Reading," the skill is "Prekindergarten Guideline IV.A.1," and the outcome is children "intentionally use marks, letters, or symbols to record language and verbally share meaning."

Children engage in related but varied experiences across multiple days. For example, in Theme 3, "Look Outside," children learn how the seasons are different. First, they read about the seasons using the book *Goodbye Summer, Hello Autumn*. Then during math, the teacher teaches a lesson on shapes, integrating the pictures from the book. Next, the children connect these shapes to blocks they use when building an outdoor scene from the book. This theme concludes with a discussion about seasons, a season-themed puzzle, and an opportunity for students to draw and write about fall. This theme shows how lessons organize around a common theme so students can build background knowledge, make connections, and explore concepts in a variety of ways.

“Everyday Helpers” is the focus of Theme 5. Students explore community helpers during a read aloud, “Math Circle,” “Literacy Circle,” Social Studies lesson, and a role-playing activity. After reading the story, *Delivering Your Mail*, the teacher leads a class discussion about what mail carriers do and how their job helps us. Students practice sorting classroom items depending on where they belong, just like a mail carrier sorts the mail according to an address. Then during the Math Circle, the teacher provides a mathematical story about a mail carrier delivering mail to three mailboxes on one street and two more mailboxes on another street. Students use this story problem to create a pictorial model representing the five mailboxes all together. During Literacy Circle, students compare and contrast the job of a mail carrier with that of a veterinarian. Finally, the Social Studies lesson involves a class discussion about the roles and responsibilities of community helpers.

Not only do lessons include multiple references to the Texas Prekindergarten Guidelines, but teachers also have access to which domain(s) and skill(s) are embedded into any given page. For example, in Theme 9, one page refers to a science lesson, an outdoor movement activity, and a reading opportunity. This page lists four relevant Prekindergarten Guidelines: the child uses a wide variety of words to describe places II.D.1.f, the child observes earth materials VI.C.1.a, the child discusses earth materials VI.C.1.d, and the child demonstrates coordination in isolation IX.A.1.b. Toward the end of the theme, lessons integrate multiple domains during “Story Time,” Math Circle, and “Social Studies Circle.” In the Story Time lesson, students begin by labeling the book *Mission to Space* as fiction or nonfiction. In this lesson, they review print concepts and retell the story. During the Math Circle, they discuss data collected through the “training activities” from the book. The teacher asks specific questions about the collected data, and they discuss how to interpret the information. During Social Studies Circle, the children participate in a fingerplay chant about space. The teacher asks guided questions like, “What are some ways an astronaut has to prepare to go to space?” After the discussion, the teacher makes a list, and children connect this information to what they do to prepare for school.

**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 to support content and skill development throughout the year. These texts are strategically chosen to support development in multiple domains, including the Social and Emotional Development and Emergent Literacy Reading domains.

Evidence includes but is not limited to:

The materials include multiple text genres, including nonfiction, fiction, poetry, songs, and nursery rhymes. Two texts that help students develop reading skills in Theme 2 are *Marisol McDonald Doesn't Match* and *The Lion and the Mouse*. With the book *Marisol McDonald Doesn't Match*, children practice their print awareness. They identify where to start when reading and demonstrate how to read print from left to right. In the book, *The Lion and the Mouse*, students practice their recall ability. After reading once for enjoyment, the teacher reads the text again; this time, she pauses at important parts of the story and asks the students if they remember what happens next. For instance, when the mouse leaps for a berry and the lion is the trap. The end goal is to have students recall that the lion and the mouse end up helping one another. In this practice, students show they recognize that text has meaning by answering different discussion questions.

Texts are consistently high quality, including the Theme 4 text *Thank You, Omu*. This Caldecott and Coretta Scott King award-winning book celebrates cultural diversity, community, and the act of showing kindness. In the text, grandma Omu gives away all of her stew. All the neighbors return, this time not to take, but to give back to Omu. The teachers use the text during “Story Time” as a focus for the Emergent Literacy, Language and Communication, and Social and Emotional Development domains. After the first read, teachers begin the second read by providing direct vocabulary instruction for the text-based words *delicious*, *thick*, *red*, and *delectable*. In a discussion, students try using similar descriptive words to talk about their favorite foods. As the teacher reads the book a second time, she uses the “Talk More About It” card, prompting students to “describe what they see” in the several text images. Next, the teacher explains the different personal pronouns used in the book: *he*, *she*, and *they*. Students practice using these words in associated sentence frames. Finally, during the “Let’s Talk” lesson,

students learn why and how we care for others. Noting the different facial expressions in the illustrations, the class discusses how each character is feeling. Then, the teacher extends the discussion to include body language cues. Finally, during playtime, the teacher recommends students look at their friends' faces and body language to know how they are feeling. Each domain is intentionally integrated and related to one another, with the text as the foundation.

Across Theme 5, lessons utilize the text, *The Little Red Hen*, as a foundation for student-practice with directionality, alphabet knowledge, recall and re-enacting, comparison, addition, and problem solving. After the first read, students respond to relevant text-questions like, "When a friend asks for help, what's a good thing to do?" and "Is helping a friend important? Why?" During a "Literacy Circle" lesson, the teacher uses pages from the text to focus on print directionality. She says, "I started reading here (point the word out to children) and I read this way (slide your finger under the text from left to right)." On page five, she stops to review the letter Cc: "Find the words on this page that begin with the letter c." In the "Fine Arts Circle," students retell the story and recreate major events by acting out lines from the text. After rereading the book a fourth time, students compare and contrast the behaviors of the dog and cat from the text. Finally, in "Math Circle," the teacher returns to pages six and seven so students can count the animals on the pages and determine the sum.

Often curriculum texts are popular current titles or classic children's literature written by well-known or award-winning authors. In Theme 7, students read *The Ugly Truckling*, written and illustrated by David Gordon. Gordon is a well-known graphic artist who has won several awards for his illustrations; many of his books have spent time on the New York Best Sellers list. This text is used as the foundation for lesson design, content, and skill integration in Theme 7. During "Story Time," students engage in an activity where they think of a friend with a shared common interest. Then in "Let's Read," they review upper- and lowercase letters before being introduced to compound words. Finally, during the whole-group "Writing Process" activity, children think through how they can extend the story further. For differentiation, English Learners work with a peer to think of something unique about the main character.

**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. Students have a variety of opportunities for purposeful play, and the materials provide teacher-guidance connecting all domains to this play. Additionally, each activity includes enough guidance for teachers to set up and facilitate activities so they meet, reinforce, or practice learning objectives. There is an intentional balance of direct instruction and student choice, including purposefully planned learning centers, as appropriate for the content and skill development.

Evidence includes but is not limited to:

All lessons for large-group, small-group, and independent learning are hands-on, providing and encouraging critical interactions that turn play into learning. The “Professional Learning Guide” (PLG) states: “An engaging, highly visual, student-friendly prekindergarten environment is critical for teachers who want to foster the development of oral language in their classroom.” The materials suggest a “varied learning space,” where teachers recognize the children’s need to move. This space should allow for large-group, small-group, and individual learning. It should be inviting and organized based on the number of children in the classroom. Routines are an important part of this setup, as they help children make sense of their days, anchor them to appropriate behavior, and encourage independence. This guide provides teacher recommendations for organization and structure, like using helper charts and attendance charts. To keep these routines stimulating, teachers routinely “add small, incremental changes” to activities. Finally, the document also includes research-based information explaining the importance of play as a foundation for learning. For example, this section summarizes the “Fine



Arts Circle” as a building block for age-appropriate development that improves children’s content-knowledge, language, and fine motor skills.

Many of the Theme 1 activities set a strong foundation of routine that is then repeated throughout the year. Often, these activities integrate purposeful play. For instance, during “Welcome to Today,” students start each day with a new song. “Centers” are important to instruction as children have daily opportunities to engage in projects, problem-solve, and role play. Additionally, most of the transitions utilize song, rhymes, chants, or fingerplays to facilitate quicker movement between activities. These different strategies are offered as part of the daily instruction plan. For reading instruction, the teacher reviews the nursery rhyme, *Maria Had a Little Llama*. During the second read, children recite the rhyme along with her. Then, students use puppets to reenact the story for their classroom audience. Each lesson clearly indicates necessary materials in a box titled “What You Need” to help teachers facilitate these activities. Themes also include an additional books list and “Teachers Tool Kit” that offers hands-on resources like picture cards, posters, maps, and digital apps.

Throughout Theme 5, the materials support developmentally appropriate practice across content domains, often integrating play. Theme activities help students explore community helpers and help them practice geometry. Students begin by pretend-playing that they are shopping at a grocery store. Some adopt the roles of different grocery employees, while others pretend to be shoppers and purchase food items. As an extension of this activity, the children play “Community Helper Freeze Tag” outside. When tagged by an opposing team member, students must stand in place while pretending to be a community helper, for instance, a baker stirring in a bowl or an artist painting on a canvas. They continue acting until another teammate tags them, releasing them to run. Then in the “Learn and Play” section, students play-act as a firefighter, use materials to build a tunnel, and take turns crawling through the tunnel. In “Math Circle,” the theme focus transitions to geometry. Students begin by participating in a traditional guided-practice activity. When they finish this lesson, they are sent on a scavenger hunt to find items of varying shapes within the classroom; they return to the circle and discuss what they found. For “Snack Time,” the teacher passes out snacks of different geometric shapes. Before eating their snack, students practice geometry by naming the shape they receive. Then they model shapes out of clay to complete this thematic focus.

The teacher introduces students to the Theme 8 topic by displaying animals and asking them to guess the animal’s name. The rules are, “You can ask and answer questions about my animal, but I will not tell you the name of it.” Then, the teacher transitions into the first lesson with the prompt: “Animals need shelter, says the teacher. A shelter is a type of home.” In this first lesson, students use different materials to make homes for small animals. Each activity includes a chart listing all necessary materials. For example, this activity requires white modeling dough, green chenille sticks, cardstock, leaves, rocks, crayons, and glue. This lesson characteristic ensures that teachers can set up and facilitate the activity successfully. Students continue practicing their animal knowledge during two “Outdoor Play” activities. For the first activity, they toss a ball around, and each time a child catches the ball, they must share an animal name. In the second activity, students use sidewalk chalk to draw pictures of how animals grow and

change. For example, a kitten grows into a cat, or an egg changes to a tadpole and grows into a frog. This theme includes “Centergize Theme Centers” that offer students a choice between eight different activities related to the study of animals. Some choice activities include using playdough to “make” animal food, determining whether different outdoor materials sink or float, and playing with plastic animals and a sandbox. While these activities provide fewer instructions than other theme activities, they offer children valuable content-related choice.

**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. Although the materials are primarily for four-year-old children, they do specify some lesson adaptations for three-year-old children. Additionally, there are differentiated use recommendations for half-day and full-day prekindergarten programs.

Evidence includes but is not limited to:

The materials are built around a full-day structure but do provide guidance for a half-day program. The full-day plan denotes which activities should be included in a half-day setting, guiding teachers to omit activities with dotted outlines around the listed activity type. These schedules allow the teacher to see, at a glance, the daily activity sequence. It also provides a predictable daily schedule that provides children structure and allows them to anticipate what comes next. The full-day schedule includes one 90-minute activity, one 60-minute activity, five 15-minute activities, and one 10-minute activity. In contrast, the half-day schedule includes one 60-minute activity, five 15-minute activities, and one 10-minute activity.

While instruction is primarily designed for four-year-old children, recommendations describe how to adapt some lessons for three-year-old children in a section called “Differentiated Support.” For example, in Theme 1, an accommodation for three-year-olds helps them understand the concept of the “Big Book” by asking them to put stuffed animals together and then move them apart. They repeat this demonstration so they can show their understanding of the phrase, *get together*. Later in the lesson, four-year-olds are expected to respond to questions relevant to the text by sharing activities they enjoy doing with their friends. On the other hand, three-year-olds reinforce their understanding of “get together” by making the stuffed animals act happier and happier each time they are together and sad when they are apart.

The lesson and activities support and encourage a responsive interaction style by providing specialized support to nurture young children's dispositions to learn. During "Learn and Play" in Theme 2, the children participate in a movement activity. First, the teacher assigns the role of "Ms. Giraffe" or "Mr. Giraffe." Next, the rest of the children chant, "How many steps, Ms./Mr. Giraffe?" The leader dictates how many steps the children have to take, between one and five, and the children respond by moving that many times. For three-year-olds, teachers differentiate support by clarifying how many steps to take or explaining the sequence of the game. The teacher restates directions and helps count steps one-on-one, as needed. Teachers can find these strategies described next to the lesson.

During the "Pledge of Allegiance" in Theme 4, when four-year-old students receive each pledge, they identify the American and Texas flags on their own. Contrastly, the teacher assists three-year-olds in this activity by having a volunteer hold and name each flag for reference.

In Theme 5, four-year-old students orally share what they know about community helpers. In this activity, three-year-old students receive oral sentence frames and language models to help them share successfully. Later in the unit, teachers take attendance by the first letter of each student's name. Four-year-old children line up in the classroom by this letter card. The differentiated support for three-year-olds tells teachers to provide individual alphabet cards for reference and remind them of words that start with the same letter.

Finally, the "Learn and Play" activity in Theme 6 begins with a left or right challenge. The teacher commands four-year-old students to move either their left or right leg or left or right arm in specific ways. The students listen to the command and move the appropriate body part. For three-year-old students, the teacher differentiates the activity by tying red yarn to their right hands and ankles. This helps them remember their left from their right and allows them to participate successfully.

**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 by providing explicit instructional strategies for teaching prekindergarten skills. Guidance includes direction for both teacher and student actions that support student development and proficiency of content and skills. These suggestions also help teachers connect students' prior content knowledge to new learning.

Evidence includes but is not limited to:

The "Professional Learning Guide" (PLG) provides teachers background on skill development and a general outline describing what they should expect from students in the classroom. This outline covers both academic domains and social domains. It goes into depth, serving as a useful resource for lesson implementation. For instance, the section on speech production includes visuals to help teachers understand the tongue, teeth, and lip placement necessary for correct speech production. This section goes on to explain the common language mistakes that English Learners may face when acclimating to the English language.

Circle time activities, small group activities, and independent practice also come with specific instructional suggestions. Some of the direct-instruction lessons include teacher scripting. They all come with a lesson outline describing how the teacher should explain the concept, explaining the guided practice related to the topic, and making suggestions for independent practice. Lessons include a combination of realia, total physical response opportunities, and pictures to help build content knowledge. Concrete manipulative are foundational in the math lessons, and students have an opportunity to explore math concepts further using the manipulatives during independent center time.

The “Teacher Guide” also includes highly visible tips and suggested instructional strategies within each lesson or activity. For example, the Theme 3 guide includes open-ended questions, model examples, strategies to connect students’ background knowledge. An example of open-ended questioning occurs when the class reads the book *Bloom, Bloom*. The teacher asks students higher-order thinking questions like, “What does this picture make you think about?” Students respond, answering in their own words. In the “Science” lesson, teacher-guidance includes a scripted introductory model. They display how the sun provides light and heat using a flashlight. Steps include: “(1) Say, ‘Let’s pretend this flashlight is the sun.’ (2) Turn the flashlight on. (3) Say, ‘It gives off light.’ (4) Put the flashlight near your hand. (5) Say, ‘It also gives warmth.’ To complete the introduction, students discuss their answers to the question, ‘What does the sun give us?’” Finally, teachers connect students’ prior content knowledge to the book, *I Love Snow*. Before reading, the teacher facilitates a discussion about what students know about snow, if students have seen it in person, and if they have played in it.

In Theme 6, students use picture cards to produce words during “Literacy Circle.” The teacher displays a card, and in their answers, students should name the letter sound, identify words that begin with the same letter, and attempt to produce the word on the card. This activity is very scripted, providing students explicit language instruction. Later, when students read about community helpers, teachers use questioning again to spark prior knowledge. When complete, students have the opportunity to reflect on people in their community and how they help others through their work. This is a good example of connecting prior knowledge to new learning.

Theme 8 includes a balance of teaching strategies that meet the needs of grade-level children. For instance, the math lesson incorporates a variety of concrete manipulatives during instruction. The teacher models how to compare towers made with cubes; one tower is made with three cubes, while the other tower is made with five cubes. The teacher states, “When an object is shorter, it measures a smaller amount from end to end. When an object is taller, it measures a greater amount from end to end.” This scripting and manipulative usage sets a strong foundation for student learning. Students then compare towers on their own, determining which is taller. During “Story Time,” well-planned questions support oral language as students read the book, *The Ugly Truckling*. During the reading, the teacher stops and asks questions about the illustrations. For example: “Does it look like a truck?” and “Does it look like an airplane?” The lesson concludes with the teacher asking students to reflect on the statements: “Think about a time when you felt happy” and “How did the ugly truckling feel when she found friends who liked the same things as her?”

**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 include a clear description of how the curriculum is supported by child development research. Lessons provide research-based guidance for instruction, and teachers have access to cited research that is current, academic, and relevant. There is also a bibliography present, consisting of research applicable to Texas-specific context and demographics.

Evidence includes but is not limited to:

The “Professional Learning Guide” (PLG) includes a research section summarizing research for the various instructional domains: Social Skills, Language and Communication, Literacy Reading, Literacy Writing, Math, Science, Social Studies, Fine Arts, as well as classroom environment and family involvement. The chart also includes a summary of how the materials address the research in each area.

Citations are as recent as 2018 and go as far back as 1984, and they are from reputable sources in the field of early childhood education. For example, the bibliography gives a recent source from the 2016 article by Alison Porcelli Mraz, *Purposeful Play: A Teacher’s Guide to Igniting Deep and Joyful Learning Across the Day*. Another reputable source comes from expert Gilberto Soto. He is an educator and performer at Texas A&M International University who teaches early childhood and bilingual music. Dr. Soto’s research is an example of citations that are applicable to Texas-specific context and demographics.

The PLG also includes a section called “Research Into Practice.” This section begins with a rationale for why the summarized research is important titled, “Why It Matters.” For example, the Why It Matters section related to math explains that prekindergarten children “have a natural curiosity about numbers and that they come to school ready to explore.” Specific lesson-suggestions capitalize on this natural curiosity by including hands-on activities for exploration. The Research Into Practice section then explains what the research looks like in a classroom setting. For example, the teacher should set up the classroom environment in such a way that cultivates learning and positivity. This can be done through classroom arrangement, family involvement, routines and transitions, developmentally appropriate practices, the implementation of whole- and small-group lessons, centers, and celebrations.

In Theme 4, research alignment is evident in each area of instruction. For example, research suggests that children's attitudes about themselves are paramount in how they learn. During the theme-based lessons, children are made to feel nurtured and safe. The teacher uses “Social- and Emotional Learning Cards” that display different social situations; students have the opportunity to discuss these situations and how they should respond. One card teaches students how to have positive interactions with the teacher. In the Language and Communication lessons, children gain an understanding of new vocabulary by hearing and talking about stories. This practice aligns with research encouraging students to hear, rehearse, and retell stories, as well as discuss them. Literacy Reading lessons include a planned sequence of daily phonological awareness instruction that ensures children become successful readers. Teachers use daily read-alouds as a means to get the students ready to read. These routines reflect current research understandings of this subject matter. Lastly, science instruction focuses on inquiry and investigation; this directly aligns to research suggesting students have the ability to use reasoning and inquiry when investigating how the world works.

In an example math lesson, research suggests students should experiment with various math tools and identify math concepts in their environment. During the Theme 7 math lesson, teachers introduce patterns by modeling the movement pattern, *stomp, stomp, clap*. Students then copy the pattern and try extending the pattern. Next, the teacher models making patterns out of color tiles. Students discuss this model and then make their own patterns using this tool. Finally, students end the lesson by looking for patterns within the classroom.



**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. Materials provide guidance on teacher modeling of these skills and include appropriate texts to support the development of social competencies. Materials include appropriate texts used to support the development of competencies to understand and respond to emotions. Children with special needs are not represented within the texts.

Evidence includes but is not limited to:

The teacher uses texts to support the development of social competencies, such as building relationships, self-concept, self-regulation, and social awareness. Themes include developmentally appropriate texts that support these competencies. For each theme, materials also provide a list of supplemental books that support prosocial behaviors. Big books, trade books, “Read More About It” books, and “wordless experience” books all include illustrations that represent students from various races. A wordless experience book also includes a picture of a student with a mobility difference. Throughout the year, texts provide support for students’ “development of academic concepts in literacy, math, science, social studies, and more.” Additionally, the materials include direct social skill instruction and explicit teaching of skills. Throughout the year, each theme includes components in line with the Social and Emotional Development domain; the teacher models self-regulation by using visual supports, texts, and a puppet named Javi.

In Theme 1, the teacher uses text, lyrics, and illustrations to develop social competencies while teaching students how to follow classroom and playground rules. One lesson prompts the teacher to ask, “What rules do you follow in the classroom and what rules do you follow in the

playground?” Additionally, each theme provides “Social and Emotional Learning cards” for teachers to read and model. Materials include developmentally appropriate texts to support emotional literacy during “Story Time.” In this theme, students are introduced to the emotion *worried* and discuss the concept while reading *Pete the Cat: Rocking in My School Shoes*. Each theme includes teacher guidance on how to model and demonstrate behaviors and these skills.

In Theme 3, the teacher uses “Sing, Rhyme, and Shout” vocabulary cards, which provide a song, a rhyme, or a shout to support the current skills being taught. For example, the teacher introduces the new theme by using the lyrics and illustrations on the card. The teacher explains that each child is special. Children listen to the song and then sing along. They point to themselves when they sing the first line and greet their friends with a handshake when they sing the third line.

In the Theme 4 activity, “Let’s Talk About It,” students determine solutions for taking turns in the classroom. This discussion allows them to practice self-regulation skills within a large group setting. A lesson within the “Let’s Celebrate” component invites families to prepare their favorite foods. This activity promotes concrete experiences of self-concept and promotes different perspectives. During the “Social Studies Circle,” the teacher explains human needs (food, clothing, shelter) by using the “I do, We do, You do” method. During the “Engage” step, the teacher introduces the concept to students using a vocabulary card. The “Develop” step helps students understand the concept; the teacher uses questioning and scaffolding to guide students to the correct answers. The “Practice” step gives students an opportunity to practice new information by making a motion that describes food, clothing, and shelter. There is also direct instruction on relationships with others in each of the themes. For example, during “Snack Time,” teachers facilitate a discussion about the important jobs children have in the classroom, including the job of the snack time helper.

Lessons also include “Check for Understanding” and “Differentiated Support” sections. Both sections provide recommendations for teacher modeling of social skills and instructional strategies to support the development of social skills. In one example from Theme 5, the teacher is instructed: “Stop and call attention to the child, praising their actions and modeling how to show pride in their abilities.” The teacher also guides students to use classroom materials appropriately, using think-alouds such as, “Does this book look like the others?” and “Can you make it look like the other books?”

In Theme 8, students develop their relationship with their teacher and further develop their social skills when they use a high-five greeting to enter the classroom. Students also express their emotions each day using a picture card. During the “Let’s Reflect” section, students take turns using Javi the puppet to reflect on the “Let’s Go to the Zoo” celebration. Also, in this theme, teachers provide direct instruction on how to solve a problem when there is a disagreement; students orally share their ideas about how to solve a disagreement.

**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

Materials provide opportunities to learn, practice, and apply social skills throughout the day that are authentically integrated within other content domains. There is guidance to support the teacher in building responsive interpersonal relationships with students or between students.

Evidence includes but is not limited to:

The “Getting Started” section within the “Realize” digital course offers guidance to teachers on how to build responsive interpersonal relationships with and between students using the resources provided in *Three Cheers for Pre-K*.

The materials include a meet and greet section in each theme. During this section, students make eye contact and shake hands while discussing their feelings. Their moods are then recorded on the classroom mood meter. The concept of taking care of oneself is first taught during “Meet and Greet” and extends through the day in content areas including “Morning Meeting,” “Story Time,” “Literacy Circle,” “Small Group Instruction,” “Snack Time,” “Health Circle,” “Rest Time,” and “Reflect.” The reflection part of the day often includes a social element. During reflection time, students discuss the fact that asking for help instead of becoming upset can make an activity more enjoyable. While social skill application is well-integrated throughout the day, there is a lack of support for the teacher in building interpersonal relationships between students.

Each theme also includes a social skills learning section with visuals to help reinforce these concepts. In Theme 1, the teacher models social interaction between students and then has children apply what they have learned.

In Theme 2, the teacher reviews the vocabulary words *family* and *special* using a “Social and Emotional Learning card.” The teacher reminds the children that the song tells why their families are special. The teacher asks the children to form two groups: one group sings the song while the other group role plays the actions. The song provides opportunities to learn, practice, and apply social skills. Later in Theme 2, students practice a counting math lesson where social awareness skills and relationship skills are not integrated. During this game, children pass around a ball while counting up by one. Once students are comfortable tossing the ball to one another, the teacher begins with a number, and students follow. If a child does not know the number, the teacher will provide support by saying the number and having them repeat the number. Here, students could be given supports promoting positive peer interaction and social awareness skills. Students could help one another out and learn how to support each other emotionally.

A science lesson in Theme 3 allows children to work together, sharing their thoughts. After reviewing the book, *Rain, Rain, Go Away* by Pat Corrigan, the teacher divides the children into small groups. Their objective is to take turns, socialize, and share what they like to do during the different seasons of the year. The teacher provides an example that she likes to drink lemonade during the summer. However, in this activity, there are no supports for the teacher to help facilitate these conversations between students.

In Theme 4, students practice the importance of taking turns through authentically integrated opportunities that are revisited throughout the day. Within the Social and Emotional Development domain, the teacher uses a talking stick to model taking turns before allowing students to practice. Within the Math domain portion of the lesson, the teacher guides the students to take turns when playing a counting game. During “Physical Education,” the teacher explains that each child will practice taking turns doing a particular exercise. Finally, during the daily Morning Meeting attendance activity, students regulate their own behavior by taking turns when placing their picture cards beneath their favorite food. Guidance supports the teacher in building responsive interpersonal relationships between students. The teacher uses Social and Emotional cards to reinforce the social awareness skill of participation, and children are prompted by the teacher to role-play ways to ask a new friend to participate in activities such as building with blocks, working in Centers, and reading a story. Direct instruction helping children to initiate social interactions and have empathy for others also appears in Theme 4.

In Theme 5, teachers are given direction on how to model ways that children can use effective nonverbal and verbal communication to build relationships with adults. During Meet and Greet, teachers are prompted to greet children with a handshake and encourage them to wave hello or communicate the greeting without saying the words.

The embedded “Check for Understanding If/Then Statement” prompts the teacher on how to elicit feedback from a child who may have difficulty imagining what a teacher and a child might be talking about.

To begin Theme 8, students read and discuss the text, *The Very Cranky Bear*. Then, the teacher uses Social and Emotional cards to reinforce the social awareness skill of understanding others' feelings. One particular card shows two pairs of children: in one pair, the children are smiling, and in the other pair, the children have opposite expressions (one smiling and one frowning). The teacher leads a discussion about how the two smiling children feel the same; students connect their smiles with the physical emotion of happiness, recognizing the expression and feeling are related. Then, the class discusses that the other pair of children feel different and that they know this because one is smiling and one is frowning. After the children discuss how they feel when they frown, the teacher reinforces that it is ok to feel sad sometimes. Direct instruction on how to make friends is also provided.

During the science circle in Theme 9, the children are reminded that others have perspectives that are different as they engage in coloring a tree. However, further teacher guidance in this lesson is limited. Math, Social Studies, and ELA content areas do not include many embedded practices for social skills. The materials do not guide teachers to address this kind of learning during these settings specifically.

There are at least six Social and Emotional-focused learning activities per day, plus embedded practices focusing on social, emotional, and behavioral skills within the learning domains. During Math Circle, the teacher is prompted to model fair sharing as part of a counting exercise and then swaps roles with the children so that they can practice sharing on their own.

Turn-taking is the one relational skill that is reinforced throughout content domains. The teacher occasionally uses a puppet during "Talking Circle" to identify the student who should be talking while everyone else is listening. In this activity, students are not always given the support necessary to navigate turn-taking amongst themselves. Javi the Helicopter is used in the final routine of the day to help children learn self-regulation and calming skills, with gentle reminders from the teacher about the rules for talking with Javi, as appropriate. This routine is taught on the first day of prekindergarten and revisited on a daily basis so that children can practice self-regulation.

**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

Classroom arrangement supports daily opportunities for the practice of social skills, including daily learning centers. These opportunities promote positive teacher-student and student-student social interactions. The program materials can be implemented easily and effectively and include consideration for physical space and its effect on interaction. Students sometimes help with arrangements, promoting student ownership of the space.

Evidence includes but is not limited to:

Within the “Professional Learning Guide” (PLG), there is guidance describing what the classroom environment should look like and feel like and how it should operate. This description goes beyond just physical space and furniture placement and includes numerous social considerations as well.

The “Research into Practice” subsection “provides useful tools to inform and support teachers as they nurture the children in their classroom.” It includes an explanation of why the classroom environment matters and two charts dedicated to suggestions, reminders, and directions. The charts are titled “Classroom Environment—Setting Up Your Classroom” and “Classroom Environment—Creating A Community.” Both charts are divided into halves: one half is titled “What It Looks Like,” and the other half is titled “How Teachers Support It.” The room setup chart focuses on how an environment can include physical and emotional safety, various learning spaces, and interesting and engaging materials. The community setup chart focused on

promoting diversity of instruction, providing careful attention to emotional needs, fostering inclusive attitudes, and offering gentle redirection.

The PLG also describes how teachers can arrange the classroom to promote daily interaction through routine and centers. For instance, the morning greeting promotes daily teacher-student interaction, while ending reflections promote student-student interactions. Students practice how to greet someone and how to positively end a day, respectively. Each day students also update their picture on the “Mood Meter,” informing the class of how they are feeling emotionally to start the day. Additionally, most lessons either intentionally or indirectly promote social interaction. Some lessons use 5x5 cards, “Social and Emotional Learning Cards,” or the “Let’s Talk” section to do so through direct instruction. Other lessons promote social interaction through activity organization and facilitation.

Each Thematic unit, or “Theme,” includes 16 learning center suggestions. All of these activities are summarized and described in the PLG. Some of the centers tie directly to the theme, and some are identified as choice centers. To help promote positive interactions during centers, the PLG suggests establishing a “turn list” to help children navigate and gain access to frequently visited centers. Another suggestion reminds teachers to arrange the “Reading and Listening” center for small group interaction, away from other large or noisy centers. Directions for choice centers, or “Centergize Centers,” also help students interact with one another during hands-on activity. For instance, one general facilitation suggestion states: “When a student is disengaged, connect with the student and redirect.” Another setup direction suggests that teachers use chairs to measure space for each student when preparing a center. This setup ensures each student is safe, feels comfortable, and is ready for social interaction. There are eight of these centers, ranging from “Cozy Corner” to “Technology Hub.” Often lesson-specific center guidance helps as well; in one lesson, the teacher watches interaction and helps students initiate positive pretend play.

At the beginning of the school year, teachers develop classroom rules alongside the children. For example, in Theme 1, the teacher uses the lyrics and illustrations from a Social and Emotional card to help children explore school rules. The teacher asks, “What rules do you follow on the playground and in the classroom?” and “Why do you think it is important to have rules?” The teacher asks the children to listen to the song a few times and chime in when they can. During the “Learn and Play” time, students extend their learning by reading the book *School Rules*. As a class, they discuss different routine rules and then finally make their own rules for the class. This activity serves as an opportunity to engage students in the classroom environment and promote student ownership of the space.

**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 provide activities to develop physical skills and refine motor development through movement. The materials provide guidance for both gross and fine motor development within several components of the day.

Evidence includes but is not limited to:

Materials include outdoor activities to develop gross motor skills. All themes include a green box that identifies “Outdoor Play” lessons. Transition activities also support gross motor skills. Additionally, each theme includes a section called “Let’s Move,” which outlines motor activities for children. The materials include hands-on instructional resources, including magnetic letters and snap cubes. Materials provide activities to promote child movement that develops gross motor skills.

In Theme 1, during the “Math Circle,” students develop gross motor skills in a movement activity. The teacher invites the children to join in to sing a song. The teacher tells the children that they are going to add movement to the song by tapping their knees. The teacher demonstrates by singing the song an additional time and tapping once for each number word in the first two lines of the song as she rote counts. The teacher then repeats this process, and the children join in. Students can then add in other movements for the number words, such as clapping or stomping. In the learning centers, students have access to a variety of tools, paper, and other materials to develop their fine motor skills. Also in this theme, students develop their fine motor skills when they create a collage by cutting up paper and gluing the scraps together to create shapes.

In Theme 3, an activity provided in the “Transition box” during the “Literacy Circle” helps develop students’ gross motor skills: Students stand up and march when the teacher plays the music. The teacher asks them to stop marching when the music stops. The materials provide



daily opportunities for students to develop their fine motor skills through tasks that do not require writing. In this theme, the teacher provides students with construction paper, glue, and other art materials in the “Creativity Station.” The children use art materials to create fall clothing for paper dolls.

In Theme 5, students play an outdoor game called “Place the Packages”: Students pick up and stack small blocks, pretending to be mail carriers. The lesson provides opportunities for students to use “small-muscle strength and small-muscle control” to complete tasks. In the “Let’s Move” section of this theme, teachers have students bend chenille sticks in various ways.

Theme 7 provides daily opportunities for students to develop their gross motor skills through movement. In the Let’s Move section, children participate in a series of movements mimicking their choice of transportation from the book *Row, Row, Row your Boat*, developing coordination and balance. Students also participate in the gross motor game “Lights on! Lights off!” When the lights are on, students run in place. When the lights are off, students freeze. Additionally, this theme provides suggestions for the development of fine motor skills in the Math Circle: Students develop a pattern by snapping two or more cubes together. In the “Science Circle,” students investigate and observe light by turning a lamp switch on and off.

Theme 9 provides daily opportunities for students to develop their gross motor skills through movement. During the Let’s Move activity, students demonstrate balance and isolation. Students pretend they are birds and jump down a pretend tree made out of the letter V. Designing the tree branch out of the letter V reinforces identifying the letter. The materials include a list of resources for children to use to practice gross motor skills. Some of the resources listed in the materials section (of each theme) are balls, bean bags, chalk, and wheeled toys.

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

Evidence includes but is not limited to:

In the “Professional Learning Guide” (PLG), there is evidence of materials promoting physical and mental health. The guide encourages teachers to acknowledge children’s emotional needs and validate their feelings. The PLG includes research that helps teachers to understand the “why” in modeling and guiding purposeful physical development. The guide states: “Instructional materials are developmentally appropriate to ensure safety throughout an activity. Children are given simple and explicit safety directions when using new materials.” Also: “Well-chosen activities can develop a range of skills such as creative thinking, problem solving, scientific observation, and gross and fine motor development.” The PLG recommends reminding students of safety routines when interacting with new material. Materials provide teacher guidance on modeling safe and healthy habits for students throughout the themes and lessons. Lessons include specific guidance on how to model healthy habits.

The materials provide a variety of opportunities and activities for students to practice and reflect on safe and healthy habits. Themes provide a 15-minute “Health Circle” to support safe and healthy habits. For example, in Theme 1, the teacher displays the lunchroom pages from *Pete the Cat: Rocking My School Shoes* and has the children call out the foods and drinks they see pictured. The teacher asks them to recall the snacks they have enjoyed this week. When someone mentions healthy food, a sample teacher response is, “Oh, apples have vitamins that

help our bodies grow and be healthy.” Also, in this theme, the teacher models scissor safety through the use of finger-play. The teacher gathers the children and asks them to listen and repeat the finger-play. The teacher moves the index and middle fingers like scissors cutting as she sings the finger-play.

In Theme 4’s “Sing, Rhyme, and Chant,” teachers use a picture card to teach the importance of eating fruits and vegetables for a healthy body. During the “Morning Meeting,” the teacher teaches students how to dress for the weather: “The weather today is (sunny, rainy, windy). I can take care of myself. I wear (a hat, jacket, boots).” Students choose one way that they can best dress for the weather described. This theme also provides various literature (big/small books), visual cards, centers, and technology to support personal health and safety. Students review the weekly question, “How do I take care of myself?” The teacher guides the children to understand that taking care of themselves prepares them to take care of the world. The teacher asks for volunteers to name ways we take care of ourselves. During outside play, the teacher models and students practice exercise habits by bouncing a ball back and forth. In the “English Language Development” (ELD) section, the teacher displays a vocabulary card. The teacher names the healthy snack and asks students to name a healthy snack they like to eat. Whole group instruction includes Health Circle time. During a “Personal Safety Habits Circle,” the lesson is divided into “Engage,” “Develop,” and “Practice” components. During Practice, students use paper puppets to demonstrate putting on a helmet and putting on a seatbelt. They discuss ways to walk safely, including tying your shoelaces and buttoning your coat. Students act out washing their hands and brushing their teeth. A box called “Taking Care of Myself” contains a chant, which teachers lead students in repeating. The chant is, “When I exercise, I take care of myself. When I brush my teeth, I take care of myself.” During another Health Circle, students engage in a chant about how healthy food and exercise are good for their mood. The materials in this theme also include some songs and books about healthy choices and how these choices are good for our bodies. The “Outside Time” box guides teachers to remind students about the importance of exercise.

In Theme 6, in the Health Circle activity “Good Foods For Us,” the teacher uses a book to guide students’ understanding of healthy and unhealthy foods. The teacher uses dialogue starters, such as “Cookies or candy every day is not good for health because these foods do not have what our bodies need to grow and stay strong.” Materials suggest that the teacher explains to students that “Cookies and other sweet foods are sometimes foods and not everyday foods such as fruits and vegetables.” The teacher prompts students to create a drawing of foods they like to eat, identifying nutritional foods. Students also have opportunities to identify healthy and not-so-healthy foods by giving a thumbs-up or thumbs-down after the teacher shows examples of each. “Celebration Day” celebrates the healthy way of eating that the students learned about throughout the health theme. Families visit the classroom to partake in songs, plays, and activities from the theme, as well as share favorite family foods.

In Theme 9, students practice personal safety habits. In the “Technology Circle,” students are invited to review the online safety chant. During a “Learn and Play” activity, the teacher divides the children into small groups to support personal safety. A small balloon is tossed into the air,

and the children must work together to keep the balloon in the air. During “Rest Time,” students are reminded that their bodies need rest to stay healthy. The teacher encourages students to stretch their fingers and toes, relax, and rest. This theme provides opportunities for the teacher to model and guide purposeful physical development. Children are invited to act out various physical movements: Reach for the star, block the sun, walk on the moon, swim in a lake, and catch a fish.

**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 provide teacher guidance on modeling and scaffolding active listening for understanding. Students hear sounds, appropriate sentence structure, and grammar in a variety of contexts. Additionally, instruction provides students the opportunity to hear conversations that follow conversation norms.

Evidence includes, but is not limited to:

The “Professional Learning Guide” (PLG) includes 5x5 visual cards that teachers can use when modeling active listening. One card includes a picture of children looking at each other, and this resource reinforces the idea that we look at the speaker when we actively listen. Throughout instruction, children both receive and are encouraged to use forms of nonverbal communication as scaffolds to their instruction.

Several times throughout the day, the teacher uses scripted materials to help students understand different skills. Often in the “Let’s Talk” section, teachers identify appropriate examples of active listening. Let’s Talk will “Give children practice in effective verbal communication with an adult by engaging them in a discussion.” At times, the teacher draws students’ attention to a peer who has appropriately modeled active listening. and at other times, the teacher models active listening herself. These opportunities can be found in the “Centergize” section of the curriculum, primarily in the “Pretend and Learn” center. There are “Check for Understanding” boxes allowing children to show their receptive listening skills in a variety of ways. When students have difficulty answering questions orally, they can use picture prompts in addition to using words.

Each day begins with a morning greeting; during this time, students practice different ways to greet people and begin a conversation. For example, one day, the teacher greets each student using their name and then offers a high five. On a different day, the teacher greets each student by name before asking the child to share what they plan to eat for breakfast. Each child receives the opportunity to both hear and practice conversations that follow conversation norms.

Theme 1 includes the “Vocabulary Card” *Listen* that guides the teacher to model how to listen. The teacher says, “This child listens,” pointing to the picture in the card. She then models listening as she cups her hand behind the ear and says, “Shh! I’m listening. When we listen, we are quiet.” She continues, putting her finger in front of her mouth and saying, “When you talk, I listen. When I talk, you listen.” Later in Theme 1, students demonstrate receptive listening skills in a variety of ways, including playing *Simon Says*, responding to 5x5 visual cards, and participating in a *Thumbs Up/Thumbs Down* game. For *Thumbs Up/Thumbs Down*, the teacher describes several hypothetical classroom situations. For each scenario, the children put their thumbs up if it is safe and put their thumbs down if it is not safe. Toward the end of the theme, students take turns role-playing as both the teacher and student in the “Pretend and Learn Center.” The teacher models by directing children’s attention to the morning meeting. The teacher says, “What do we use in the morning to start our day? Yes, we take attendance, and we review our helper jobs.” As she models, the teacher incorporates the materials she normally uses for each of the routines.

In Theme 5, children practice listening and follow two- and three-step directions through play. During an “Outdoor Play” activity, the teacher chooses a leader to call out a two-step direction like, “hop to the tree and then hug the tree.” This play is followed by a three-step direction like, “hop to the tree, hug the tree, and then sit down under the tree.” Students must actively listen to understand the directions and avoid losing the game. Once a leader gives both a two- and three-step direction, a new leader is chosen. This theme includes listening activities in the general classroom setting as well. During a read-aloud of the book *Little Red Hen*, children demonstrate listening through physical responses. As the teacher reads, the children listen for the phrase “not I.” When they hear the phrase, they shake their heads no.

In Theme 7, “Social and Emotional Learning cards” provide visual support to promote active listening. During a lesson, the teacher uses a Social and Emotional card that shows children sitting in a circle, looking at the teacher, with their mouths closed. The teacher uses this card to discuss the rules that the children in the picture are following. Through this discussion, children learn that good listeners look at the speaker when the speaker is talking, and that good listeners do not talk while another speaker is talking. Then the children must apply these rules during circle time. This theme also provides teachers grammatically correct scripts to support lesson delivery. During a later phonological awareness lesson, the script states: “Listen as I say this sentence and see if you can count the words in it.” The teacher then says, “The car is fast,” and asks the children how many words are in the sentence. The teacher repeats this with four additional sentences; Each time, the students practice listening for the number of words in the provided sentence.

**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 provide opportunities for students to practice producing sounds and to use appropriate sentence structure and grammar in a variety of contexts. Materials guide teachers through corrective student feedback for speech production, sentence structure, and grammar. Teachers also receive suggestions describing how to set up and facilitate activities promoting the production of sounds, appropriate sentence structures, and grammar. Materials provide support and guidance for students to work collaboratively to engage in discussion using conversation norms.

Evidence includes but is not limited to:

The "Professional Learning Guide" (PLG) has a section on linguistics. It explains how speech sounds are made and discusses sentence structure and grammar. For example, the guide explains that English syntax "requires adjectives to precede the nouns they modify." While this section outlines how speech sounds are produced, it does not provide an explanation of oral language development.

The materials include recommendations to facilitate conversations across the components of the day. At the beginning of the year, teachers establish a mood board in the classroom, which students utilize throughout the year. Students not only use a marker to indicate their mood, but the teacher also prompts them to explain why they are feeling that way. This activity provides for authentic use of oral language. At the start of each day, the teacher uses these materials to greet children and ask how they are feeling. During snack time, a small box with a suggestion is provided to facilitate oral language. The teacher has the children identify shapes in their snacks.

The teacher says, "Look particularly for triangles." Students use oral language when counting the sides and corners. After students count sides and corners, teachers lead a discussion about organizing their snacks: "Have children come up with ideas of where to serve, how to pass out servings, and how to make sure each child gets an equal amount of snacks." Snack time communication uses both child-to-teacher conversation as well as peer-to-peer conversation. During all transition times, the teacher uses a chant that promotes the practice of sound and teaches syllables. The children repeat the chant and clap the syllables in the words. During the "Reflection" portion of the day, the teacher guides the children to reflect on their day by engaging in child-to-teacher and child-to-child conversation.

The materials frequently provide oral language scaffolding guidance through suggested sentence stems. In Theme 3, the teacher supports the development of language by using prompting and a fill-in-the-blank sentence stem. The teacher uses a "Social and Emotional Learning card" with a picture of an angry child and a worried child. The teacher points to the child that is angry and asks the children to finish the sentence: "The child feels...." The teacher continues prompting to complete sentence frames. In a later lesson, the teacher encourages children to engage in conversation in an outdoor play activity. The teacher says, "Today, we are going to shape hunt and look for circles." The children search the outdoor play area for circle-shaped objects. The teacher then encourages students to describe the circles they find using location words. The teacher provides examples, such as "The ball near the swings is a circle." To complete the lesson, the teacher encourages students to talk about routines that they have at home, such as their before-bed routine or getting-ready-for-school routine. The teacher models for the children by saying, "First, I brush my teeth. Second, I read a book. Third, I go to sleep." Materials support multiple opportunities to use and practice speaking skills across content areas, such as math, science, and social studies. Often, lessons utilize the "Sing, Rhyme, and Shout" section to accomplish this goal. An example of this can be found in Theme 3. Students listen to and sing a song about the weather. The teacher introduces students to the song, "The Weather in the Summer." The teacher pauses after each verse and asks students to echo. This activity promotes the production of sound, appropriate sentence structure, and grammar.

During a Theme 5 social studies lesson, the teacher tells children to "think about a time they helped someone and how it made them feel." To engage children in conversations in appropriate ways, the teacher uses a sentence frame: "I help someone when I...." Here, the teacher returns to the practice of song. Children sing a song and act out what the helper is doing on the vocabulary card. During the "Learn and Play" portion of this Theme 5 lesson, students get to practice talking to the teacher. The materials state, "Have one child pretend to be the teacher and another child pretend to have a problem they want to address with the teacher." The teacher then has students brainstorm ways to ask someone to help them choose and read a book with them. Later in the theme, the teacher uses the "Role Play" materials to extend beyond the classroom context. Sticking to learning how to request help from an adult, the teacher leads students through asking for help from community workers: "Have pairs role play a scenario in which they need the help of a nurse." During the "Let's Talk" activity, the teacher uses a sentence frame to support the students' expressive language: "Give each child



an opportunity to say what they learned and what they liked about it. I liked.... It was fun to.... I learned....”

Theme 8 provides guidance on ways to scaffold child responses for differing verbal speaking abilities. Based on the responses, the teacher determines what level of instructional support is needed. The teacher begins an academic vocabulary activity by comparing the height of two pencils. The teacher asks, “Which pencil is taller?” The teacher provides opportunities for differentiated responses; for example, beginning students can respond by pointing, intermediate students can respond by pointing and verbally responding, and advanced students can respond with the sentence frame “The... is....”

Theme 8 also suggests ways to set up independent learning areas to support oral language development. The “Library and Technology” center provides opportunities for students to practice sentence structure independently. Here, students listen and read through books that use alliteration, rhyme, and repetition. The teacher maximizes independent centers by strategically placing them in an area away from noisier centers. The “Pretend and Learn” center is designed to support teacher modeling, cues to support nonverbal conversational rules, and turn-taking. For those reasons, this center is located away from the independent centers. During Pretend and Learn, the teacher holds up a picture of an animal and models conversational norms, such as asking questions, waiting, and making eye contact. Students take turns conversing with each other about their animal pictures. Here, students receive the opportunity to interact with their peers, practice speech, and receive teacher feedback. The teacher also reminds students to wait for their turn before sharing, encouraging active listening.

**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 is integrated and authentically embedded in content-based learning.

## Meets 4/4

The 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 is integrated and authentically embedded in content-based learning.

Evidence includes but is not limited to:

Every theme includes a set of vocabulary words for direct instruction. 5x5 picture cards are used for vocabulary instruction. Each theme also includes concept vocabulary cards. The concept vocabulary cards include a mixture of high-frequency and rare words. As the vocabulary words directly relate to each theme, students are encouraged to use the words frequently throughout the theme. They use the words during large group “Circle Time,” and associated materials are placed in centers to encourage the use of the words in centers. Each theme includes a list of vocabulary words, which are divided into theme vocabulary, concept vocabulary, and academic vocabulary.

The “Professional Learning Guide” (PLG) provides research-based strategies to guide young children in developing a rich vocabulary. The PLG states: “Story Time provides daily opportunities for children to hear stories, talk about stories, and reread favorites.” The PLG also states: “All texts are read and reread within the core instruction—plus children can independently select texts they want to reread in Centers and Learn and Play.”

Each lesson includes a vocabulary routine that uses picture vocabulary cards to teach children new words. For example, in Theme 1, during the “Literacy Circle,” the teacher reviews thematic vocabulary by displaying vocabulary cards and cueing the children to guess the word. First, the teacher displays the vocabulary cards *world* and *cultures*. The teacher says, “People live all over this place. What is my word?” The teacher holds up two cards and gives the children clues for

one of the words (*world, cultures, students, science, recess*). Then, the teacher has the children identify the word. The teacher repeats the same strategy until each word has been used at least once.

During Theme 4's small group time, the literacy lesson on oral vocabulary development invites the teacher: "Have the children complete the sentence frame with the correct possessive pronoun." During the "Let's Read" vocabulary lesson, the teacher uses a vocabulary card to introduce the word *reuse*. If students have a hard time understanding the concept, the teacher uses a real-life object (container) to help the students better understand the concept of reuse.

Theme 7 materials provide ways for students to interact with rare and high-frequency words. The "Social Studies Circle" incorporates a song to learn new words. The children move and sing as they learn the words *journey, land, and sea*. Each new word also comes with a child-friendly definition. During "Story Time," the teacher and the children examine the cover of the book *Ready, Steady, Race!* The teacher explains to the children that they will learn new words to describe the car in the story. The teacher proceeds with defining unfamiliar words using words the children are familiar with. For example, *stylish* means "looking good." The children have an opportunity to make a connection with the lesson by thinking about words that describe people. Theme 7's "On the Go" section also includes activities that support vocabulary development. The children have several opportunities to hear and practice language around the transportation theme. The themed centers incorporate transportation vocabulary words and visual cards. Themes also provide opportunities to spiral vocabulary. For example, in this theme, the teacher reminds the students of the routine vocabulary words *sitting quietly* and *remaining quiet*.

**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 appropriate strategies for supporting English Learners (ELs) in their development of English language skills and developmentally appropriate content knowledge. Resources intentionally support ELs in their language acquisition, including strategies that utilize the child's first language as a foundation for learning.

Evidence includes but is not limited to:

All nine themes include support for ELs as they make connections to new words. In addition to multiple exposures throughout each theme, ELs make connections to words through pictorial cues and total physical response activities. The materials include a section called "ELL Access." This section includes suggestions for students at the beginning, intermediate, advanced, and advanced high levels of English acquisition. Some strategies include the use of sentence stems and having students listen and repeat. For example, a student at the beginning level is guided to repeat a complete sentence modeled by the teacher: "Fruit is a healthy food."

The materials provide support for teachers to build on a child's first language. The "Professional Learning Guide" (PLG) includes a section that explains which phonemes are common between various languages and English. The guide also explains the grammatical rules that are the same and different between the languages. This knowledge helps teachers build upon the first language when instructing in English. The languages included in the guide are Spanish, Portuguese, Haitian Creole, Arabic, Mandarin, Cantonese, Vietnamese, Hmong, Filipino, and Korean. There is also a chart that addresses language transfer between the languages. The language transfer chart identifies the sounds that a student should already have familiarity with so that teachers can spend more time on new sounds that a student has not heard in their first language. This knowledge helps teachers to intentionally use knowledge of the first language as a foundation for further learning in English. Also, the PLG includes direct prompting for the teacher to acknowledge the importance of ELs' first language. The guide says, "When teachers

use children's early language proficiency as a basis for English language instruction, children are able to create connections between the language processes they know and the language they are learning." However, the materials do not guide the teacher to provide support in a student's native language when the teacher knows the native language.

Thematic learning supports ELs as they make connections to new words. For example, in Theme 1, during small groups, the teacher flips to the parts of the book *Pete the Cat: Rocking in My School Shoes* that describe actions. The main character Pete is reading, eating, and playing. The teacher points to the action and says, "What is Pete doing?" To support ELs, the materials have specific strategies for the teacher to use, depending on the student's ability level. For example, for beginning ELs, the teacher demonstrates action words, such as *sing*, *paint*, or *write* from the book. The teacher asks the children to say "I sing," and the teacher performs the action. Then the teacher says, "Now you sing," and the children act out the word. For intermediate ELs, the teacher takes turns with the children acting out action words, such as *singing*, *painting*, or *writing*, from the book. The teacher says, "I am singing," and the teacher performs the action. When the children act out the word, the teacher asks, "What are you doing?" to encourage responses. For advanced ELs, the teacher has a student choose an action Pete does in the book and act it out. The teacher encourages the other children to guess what the student is doing before they get their own chance to act out a word. For advanced high ELs, the teacher has the children name the actions in the illustrations of another book, *The More We Get Together*. The teacher encourages children to use the words in a complete sentence. In this theme, teachers also identify the importance of developing children's vocabulary in their first language as well as English. Thematic activities in *Three Cheers for Pre-K!* are mirrored in *Uno, Dos, Tres, Prekinder!* This mirroring enables the teacher to use materials flexibly to expand and extend concepts in either (or both) languages. This strategy helps the teacher enhance children's language development with parallel instruction. The children are encouraged to express understanding in their home language while increasing their use of English. For example, the teacher displays the alphabet cards *Aa*, *Ee*, *Ii*, *Oo*, and *Uu* one at a time. The teacher says, "This is the letter 'Aa,'" and points to the *Aa* card. The teacher repeats this step with each letter. The teacher then asks the children to name each letter in their home language.

In Theme 4, the teacher uses cognates to support ELs in learning new words by using Spanish as a foundation. For example, the teacher displays the vocabulary words *habits*, *energy*, and *relax*. The teacher reinforces that the Spanish and English words look similar and mean the same thing. Then, to further support ELs, the teacher uses the strategy of total physical response by having students act out each word. Another strategy to support ELs is the use of sentence frames. For example, the teacher shares the frame, "I can be healthy. I can..." and guides students to speak in two complete sentences by filling in the blank with ideas that came from a previous shared reading experience. If the student struggles to fill in the blank, the student is encouraged to look at the illustration from the read-aloud and point to a way to be healthy. The ELL Access section suggests beginners repeat words, phrases, or sentences after the teacher. During a math lesson, the teacher models taking a block out of a basket and then putting it back in the basket. Then the teacher thinks aloud while moving the block, saying, "Take it out. Put it back." The student is encouraged to repeat after the teacher while moving the block. At the

intermediate level, the teacher guides students to use elongated sentences, such as “I take the block out and then I put the block back.” At the advanced level, students are asked to explain the activity. At the advanced high level, students explain the activity while counting the blocks they move.

Theme 9 provides instructional strategies for Spanish speakers that use their first language to support their understanding of new vocabulary. The “Differentiated Support” section compares the English word *flower* to the Spanish word *flores*. The children explain the word *flores*, and teachers are encouraged to accept responses in the child’s native language. During the small group activity, the teacher shows the children the vocabulary card for the word *elephant*, and the students follow a similar process. During “Story Time,” the materials provide strategies that the teacher can use to support ELs. When a student demonstrates their understanding of a new vocabulary word, the teacher is instructed to accept responses with gestures. For example, for intermediate ELs, the teacher helps the student think of gestures for the four actions in the story. For advanced ELs, the children work together to think of gestures to show the four actions in the story. For advanced high ELs, the children work together, look through a book, and think of two gestures to show what happens in the story.

**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 provide opportunities for students to develop oral language skills, including through authentic text conversations. The teacher frequently asks open-ended questions about the texts read aloud and asks questions to extend student conversations. The materials provide opportunities for students to listen actively, ask questions, and engage in discussion to understand the information in texts. They provide consistent opportunities for students to engage in discussions requiring them to share information and ideas about the texts. The materials provide support and guidance for students to work collaboratively to engage in discussion.

Evidence includes but is not limited to:

Each theme includes five specific read-alouds, and most themes include a mixture of fiction and informational text. All texts include questions meant to guide students to listen for specific elements in the text. For example, in Theme 1, the teacher prepares the children for a read-aloud. The teacher tells the children they are going to read and talk again about *Bear's Big Day* and compare it to the text *How I Feel*. The teacher points to the pictures in the text *How I Feel* and asks questions, like, "Bear seems happy now. Why is he happy? How might the boy be feeling? Do the boy and bear have the same or different feelings?" The teacher then has the children look at the images in both books to tell what is alike and what is different. The teacher monitors their responses, guiding them to engage in conversation in appropriate ways.

The materials include lessons that support children in contributing to class discussions about a text read aloud. For example, children participate in an "Engage and Extend" writing activity in Theme 1. After the teacher reads the text *School in Many Cultures*, the children make drawings of something in their classroom like one of the classrooms in the trade book. The teacher then

provides opportunities for the children to share their drawings with one another. Materials include lessons with embedded “Turn and Talks” to encourage children to use their oral language and work together. After reading the text *The More We Get Together*, the teacher engages the children in a Turn and Talk activity. The teacher has the children turn to a partner and talk about the following questions: “Which pictures show something that is like our class? Which pictures show different things?” The teacher then walks among the children to monitor as they respond to each other. At the end of the lesson, partners have the opportunity to share what they discussed together with the whole class.

Theme 4 materials provide regular opportunities for students to build oral language through authentic discussions related to read-aloud texts. Students have many opportunities to participate in reading activities through “Story Time,” “Literacy Circle,” “Learn and Play,” and “Health Circle.” During Health Circle, students read the text *This Is the Way* and sing a song about the importance of taking care of themselves. Theme 4 materials include opportunities for students to listen actively to a variety of texts. During Learn and Play, the teacher reads the book *Grow Strong!* After reading the story, the teacher asks students to talk about one healthy habit from *Grow Strong!* that they wish to improve. The discussions and answers demonstrate active listening. This theme also includes opportunities for children to share information and ideas about texts. During the reading of *Thank You Omu*, students act out the actions that are occurring in the story. After the story, students share what they might do to help their classmates. The teacher asks students to “demonstrate caring actions for each other.” Lastly, this theme includes opportunities for children to practice listening and speaking skills through authentic peer conversation. During a vocabulary small group lesson, students discuss the vocabulary word *neighborhood* with a partner by saying the word in a sentence. All partners have a chance to say their sentences to the class.

Theme 7 materials include think-alouds that support engaging students in open-ended discussions. Before reading the story *Freight Train*, the teacher tells the children, “This is a book that will tell a lot about freight cars.” The teacher reads the story and implements additional think-aloud statements to prompt the children to engage in an open-ended discussion: “We can ask questions about a book to make sure we understand it.” “Sometimes we can figure out the answers too.” “Can you think of questions you have about the book?” Also, this theme includes opportunities for children to listen actively to a variety of texts. During Story Time, the teacher reads the narrative book *Row, Row, Row Your Boat*. After reading, the teacher names each type of transportation that was shown in the story. Students respond by standing if they have seen or traveled on the various types of transportation. Students’ responses demonstrate their understanding of the text and show they were actively listening. Students are exposed to daily reading activities during Story Time, allowing them to engage their oral language and participate in a genuine discussion. During the reading of *Hungry Crows*, students engage in a discussion with their teacher. The teacher supports the discussion with questions, such as “Refrigerator cars are like your refrigerators at home. There were apples in the refrigerator car. What is your favorite type of fruit?”



Theme 7 materials also provide lessons that include opportunities for children to share ideas about the text. During the Literacy Circle, students “discuss and contribute ideas for a draft that is composed in a whole group activity.” The teacher reminds the children of the ending of the story, *The Ugly Truckling*. The children collaborate in a discussion and contribute ideas about what to write. This theme also includes a section called “Tips for the Teacher.” This section expands upon children’s conversations related to texts. The teacher reminds the children of the story *Let’s Go!* During the “Pretend and Learn” center, the children are encouraged to share their experiences and talk about how maps can help us. The materials suggest including the following items to expand children’s conversation: *Let’s Go!* (storybook), academic vocabulary (*school, map, travel, street*), props (*hat, chairs, and map*). The teacher encourages the children to combine more than one idea using complex sentences.

**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

While the materials provide direct (explicit) instruction and opportunities for student practice in phonological awareness skills, instruction does not follow the research-based developmental continuum of how children acquire phonological awareness. The materials do include all the necessary phonological skills. The Phonological Awareness Developmental Timeline is available in the materials.

Evidence includes but is not limited to:

Systematic phonological awareness instruction in *Three Cheers for Pre-K* starts in Theme 2, Week 1. The first three lessons focus on blending syllables. The next four lessons focus on segmenting syllables. This is in keeping with the developmental timeline in the Texas Prekindergarten Guidelines (TPG) from both the perspective that syllable blending is among the earliest phonological awareness (PA) skills to be acquired and within the timeline of the child's age for acquisition. Students return to segmenting or blending syllables for more direct instruction and practice in Themes 5, 6, 7, and 8.

Work with onset and rime is introduced in Theme 3, Week 1. On a developmental continuum, these skills should happen after syllables, as in the materials. Furthermore, it fits in with the developmental timeline provided in the TPG. Direct instruction and practice on that skill continue for five consecutive lessons. Then additional direct instruction and practice occur later in Themes 3, 6, and 9.

Identification of rhyme begins in Theme 1 because the anchor text, *Maria Had a Little Llama* is a book written in rhyme, and it would have been a missed opportunity not to point out that feature of the text. Systematic instruction on rhyming words starts in Theme 2 Week 1 with

four additional direct instruction and practice occurrences in that theme. This schedule adheres to the developmental timeline that shows that identifying rhyme is an early skill. Additional direct instruction and practice occur in Themes 5, 8, and 9.

Instruction on isolating and blending phonemes begins in Theme 3, Week 2, and continues for ten additional lessons in that theme. This instruction aligns with where Phonemes fit into the developmental timeline. Additional direct instruction and practice continue in themes 5, 6, and 9.

The routine in “Alphabet Knowledge,” which appears every time a letter is introduced, follows the enhanced alphabetic knowledge research and consistently connects phonological awareness with alphabet knowledge in the second step of the routine. This routine does not happen in instruction that is labeled phonological awareness so as not to cause confusion about whether the instruction is veering away from a focus on the sounds of the language.

The “Professional Learning Guide” (PLG) suggests that the materials follow current phonological awareness research. The PLG states, “A carefully planned sequence of daily phonological awareness instruction in ‘Literacy Circle’ starts with basic skills and builds toward more complex skills. Phonological awareness is continually and systematically reviewed and practiced to ensure that children are equipped to become successful readers.” The materials provide frequent and adequate practice in phonological awareness as phonological skills are a part of daily instruction across all themes. The activities focus on hearing and manipulating sounds before children have alphabet knowledge. The teacher may use picture cards as part of oral activity, but alphabet instruction is not utilized within most lessons.

For the most part, materials show evidence for skills becoming more complex as knowledge grows. At the beginning of the year, the teacher focuses on rhyming and onset-rime. Then the teacher introduces blending phonemes and compound words through phonological awareness activities. Toward the end of the year, children work on segmenting and blending syllables. Materials also provide direct instruction when acquiring phonological awareness skills. For example, when the teacher introduces segment syllables through a Phonological Awareness lesson, the teacher says, “I am going to say the first part of the word, and I want you to say the second part of the word.” The teacher displays a picture card of a *hammer*. Then the teacher says, “This is a ham\_\_\_\_.” and children give the missing word part (syllable).

In Theme 2, the teacher uses picture cards so children can recognize rhyming words. The teacher displays pairs of picture cards and has the children recognize the rhyming words. Picture cards for this theme include *box/fox*, *bed/house*, *nail/pail*, *bat/cat*, and *nest/fest*. Later in the theme, the children blend syllables into words. The teacher first says, “Words can have more than one part. Listen as I say a word with one part, and I will clap once for the word part: *book*. Now I will say a word with two parts and clap for each part: *kit-ten*. What word am I trying to say?” In this activity, children blend the syllables and say the word *kitten*. The teacher encourages students to clap for each word part as they say the following syllables: *pa-per*, *dog-house*, *pup-py*, and *sand-wich*. Then the children blend the syllables into words. Although both

activities are appropriate, the materials do not present the activities in the correct order as blending syllables is an easier task than segmenting syllables. Yet, the materials introduce the concepts in the same theme and practice the skills interchangeably.

Theme 7 material provides direct instruction for each newly acquired phonological skill. During the “Phonological Awareness” section, the teacher begins the lesson by displaying the pictures of the words *butter* and *fly*. Then, the teacher models putting both words together to create the compound word *butterfly*. For the remainder of the week, the children practice combining words to create compound words. Later in the unit, the teacher reviews compound words and models again how to create a compound word. This time, the teacher begins with the compound word *cupcake*. The teacher shows the students a picture of a cupcake and asks, “What will happen if I take away the word cup? The word cake is left.” Activities in this unit are also oral and auditory, allowing children to focus on hearing the sound. No activities in this theme connect phonological awareness skills to alphabetic knowledge skills. In the “Literacy Circle” section, the children separate four-word sentences into individual words. The teacher reminds the children, “we have been separating or taking apart the words in a sentence. Listen to this sentence and tell me the words that are in it. I like my bicycle.” Additional modeling activities include saying *miss* and *hiss* and telling the students that the words rhyme because they both have /iss/ at the end. This practice builds on instruction from Theme 3 when the teacher showed a picture of a dog and a duck, emphasized the first sound, and told students that both words start with the sound /d/. In both cases, the teacher does not connect the phonological sound to the related letters.

In Theme 9, the teacher reviews rhyming words. During the “Learn and Play” section, the teacher reads the first two lines from pages 8–9 in the book *Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star*. The teacher says, “Which two words rhyme? Listen as I read the lines again.” The teacher models raising her hand as she says each rhyming word. This theme is one of the few themes that embed movement-based activities into phonological awareness instruction. During the Literacy Circle section, the children review what they have learned about the letter Y. The teacher says, “Do you remember what sound this letter spells?” The teacher continues the lesson with, “I’m going to say some words, clap if the word begins with the sound /y/.” This is one of the few lessons where students connect phonological awareness skills and alphabetic knowledge. Later, children blend onset and rime to form one-syllable words in a large group setting. For this practice, they do not use any picture supports. The teacher says the sounds /s//u//n/ and asks, “What word am I trying to say?” Then the teacher continues with the additional words: /f//u//n/; /b//u//n/; /p//a//t/; /c//a//t/; and /h//a//t/.

**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 support expanding students' alphabetic knowledge skills. The materials follow a research-based, strategic sequence for introducing alphabetic knowledge. There are also a variety of strategies for teachers to introduce directly, model, and use letter names and sounds.

Evidence includes but is not limited to:

Throughout the themes, materials introduce all of the uppercase and lowercase letters and sounds in a meaningful way. For example, during Theme 1, "Literacy Circle," the teacher introduces the alphabet and then two letters and sounds. In Theme 2, the teacher introduces three new letters and sounds and then reviews previously introduced letters. In Theme 3, the teacher introduces three more new letters and sounds and again reviews the previously introduced letters. Teachers also use modeling to guide students toward an understanding of alphabet knowledge. There are three steps to this system. The first involves the teacher using an alphabet card to discuss the names of the letter: "This is uppercase 'S.' This is lowercase 's.'" In step two, the teacher models the sound the letter makes: "The sound that the letter 's' spells sounds like this: /s/, /s/, /s/, /s/. Say it with me." The final step is letter formation. The teacher uses the letter card to model tracing both letters and to explain the movements. One example of this practice comes when working with books. When reviewing the alphabet in Theme 1, the teacher uses a page from *Pete the Cat: Rocking in My School Shoes*, where Pete is at the chalkboard. The teacher points out the letters and says, "These are the letters of the alphabet. Pete is studying the alphabet at his school too!" The teacher then sings a section of *The Alphabet Song*: "A, B, C, D, E, F, G, H, I, J, K." The teacher points to the letters, and students repeat each letter and its sound. After the teacher provides a model, students also repeat tracing the letters.

Materials include a variety of activities that build off the letters in familiar words. The teacher puts a baking tray in the Theme 1 center, "ABC Fun." Students build their own names, using the

attendance chart to spell their names with magnetic letters. The children use the baking tray and magnetic letters to place each letter in order, and then the teacher asks them to name each letter. Along with magnetic letters, children get to form letters using different art supplies like sandpaper, shaving cream, alphabet lacing cards, and fingerpaints. Later in Theme 1, the teacher displays the alphabet cards *Ss* and *Mm*. The teacher points to each uppercase and lowercase letter and asks, “What is the name of this letter?” The teacher reminds the children that each of their names is a word that is spelled with letters. The teacher points to the first letter in a few names on the attendance chart and names them or asks volunteers to name them. Lastly, the teacher models by choosing an alphabet card and finding a magnetic letter that matches. The teacher thinks aloud, giving an example: “This is the lowercase letter ‘t.’ It’s a lowercase letter. I will look for the magnetic letter that matches.” The teacher displays the letters side by side to demonstrate that they are the same. The materials also include other learning center ideas for letter formation, such as using modeling clay for sensory exploration. The teacher has the children choose an alphabet card; students form the clay into the letter on the card that they chose. In another activity, students randomly choose alphabet cards from a container. The teacher has them lay the card flat on a surface and trace uppercase and lowercase letters with their fingers. These center activities successfully provide students an introduction, model, and practice of letter formation.

Theme 5’s ABC center materials provide guidance for a letter hunt. In this activity, students find a magnetic letter in a bin of rice and identify the letter using the vocabulary words *uppercase* and *lowercase*. In Theme 5’s “Let’s Read” activity, the materials provide direct instruction for reviewing the letter *C*. The teacher says, “Do you remember what the letter ‘C’ looks like? Find words on this page that begin with the letter ‘C.’” This activity occurs again later in Theme 5 with the letter *Nn* and its sound, /n/. Afterward, the teacher reads a short text and has “children signal a thumbs-up when they hear a word that begins with the sound /n/.” More review occurs in this theme when the teacher reviews the letter *Ii* and its sound. The teacher writes the students’ names that begin with the letter *Ii*. The “Professional Learning Guide” (PLG) instructs, “Have students say the sound and then practice writing the letters with an index finger in their hands.”

Each day, Theme 7 materials guide the teacher to introduce or review letters during the “Alphabet Knowledge” section. Using the gradual release model, the teacher introduces and models the names and sounds of the letters. In this theme, children are introduced to difficult letters such as *Q*, *U*, and *W*. This practice, introducing less frequent and more challenging words toward the end of the year, supports a research-based strategic sequence for introduction of alphabetic knowledge. The teacher displays the alphabet card *Q*, points to the uppercase and lowercase letter *Q*, and children trace the letter on the card with their fingers. When students review dotted letters in small group ABC centers, they dip cotton swabs into the paint and paint the dotted alphabet card.

During Theme 9, systematic letter introduction and review continues through the Alphabet Knowledge section. The teacher displays the alphabet card *Xx* and points to the uppercase and lowercase versions of this letter. Students trace the letter on the card with their fingers. In the

thematic center, students review all of the letters they have learned. Students match uppercase letters with lowercase letters. After students match the cards, they say the name of the letters. During a large group activity, students have the opportunity to review all letters and sounds. The teacher distributes letter cards to the students; then, one at a time, students say the letter name of their card. Then students work with a partner to switch cards and name the letter of their new card. The materials extend the lesson by inviting children with matching uppercase and lowercase letters to stand together.

**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 instruction in print knowledge. Environmental print is taught through a research-based sequence of foundational skills, instruction, and opportunities for student practice.

Evidence includes but is not limited to:

At the beginning of the year, the teacher focuses on identifying the cover and title of a book; later in the year, the teacher helps students identify words or punctuation. Beginning in Theme 1, students are introduced to the difference between letters, words, and pictures; in Theme 4, students are introduced to directionality; in Theme 6, students are introduced to punctuation. Each concept of print is reviewed throughout the year; however, not every concept of print is reviewed in each theme. There are daily review opportunities during "Story Time" and the "Literary Circle." Throughout the year, students are guided to identify letters, words, and pictures during read-aloud opportunities. In centers, students also engage with various kinds of print, including labeled picture cards, resources such as maps and grocery fliers, and letter and word tiles; some of the learning centers are "Reading and Listening," "Writer's Club," and "Cozy Corner." Engaging activities become more complex as students' print awareness knowledge increases.

Beginning in Theme 1, the initial print concepts lessons focus on the distinction between letters and pictures. The materials do not begin with the developmentally appropriate concept of environmental print. When setting up the classroom, materials do not mention creating a print-rich environment, such as labeling the classroom or building a letter wall. Building on the



information provided in the Professional Learning Guide, the “Getting Started” section within the “Realize” digital course offers guidance to teachers on how to create a print-rich learning environment in their classroom using the resources provided in *Three Cheers for Pre-K*.

The “Hello from Around the World” accent cards within “Theme 1: Hello, School! Teacher’s Guide” provide a fun and valuable way for children to learn how letters and words hold meaning. Each full-color card features a different way to say hello—from “Hola” for Mexico to “Aloha” for Hawaii—plus the name of each geographic location printed in English. The cards also have phonetic pronunciations for each greeting.

The “Ask Us About” poster is used by the teacher to pose questions that classroom visitors can ask children to gain an understanding of what they are learning each week. Displaying the Ask Us About poster in the classroom helps children recognize that questions are written and read from left to right and top to bottom.

The “Mood Meter” poster is used by the children to identify their feelings throughout the Pre-K day. Displaying the Mood Meter in the classroom helps children recognize that the illustrations correspond to the print they see.

There are suggestions for the teacher to incorporate activities in learning centers in which children can imitate reading behaviors and interact with print. As direct instruction, the teacher helps the children distinguish between elements of print when reading *The More We Get Together*. The teacher displays the cover of the big book, points to the illustration, and says, “This is a picture. Pictures show us what a story is about. Can we find other pictures inside this book?” The children volunteer to come up and show examples of pictures. The teacher then explains that “stories are made up of words and pictures.” The teacher is instructed, “Turn through several pages and point to words. Explain that the words in a story or text have meaning.” The teacher also has guidance when describing the difference between words and illustration: “Words are where we find meaning. Pictures help us tell the story.” In the Reading and Listening center, students extend this lesson to books they listen to on their own. The materials also provide teachers with “Centerize Choice” center ideas, one being the Cozy Corner. The Cozy Center includes trade books from the weekly theme; students choose one to “read” with a friend. While these practices increase print awareness and connect print awareness to text, they are limited to centers and do not increase print awareness throughout the classroom. Students are unable to develop an understanding of the everyday functions of print in the context of their experience at school.

The “Patterns Book,” located in the ‘Printables’ folder within the Realize digital course, helps develop children’s understanding of the everyday functions of print in the context of their classroom learning. Resources include, but are not limited to:

- “Letter Cards” to build word walls
- “Story Paper” to write and illustrate fiction and nonfiction text
- “Letters in My Name Chart” to practice letter/name recognition

- “Stick Puppets” to teach story sequencing and retelling

In Theme 5’s Literacy Circle, the materials guide the teacher to teach a lesson on directionality: “Display p. 12 from *The Little Red Hen*. Demonstrate print directionality, left to right and top to bottom, as you read.” This concept is taught again, using the same text, during “Learn and Play”: “Demonstrate how words are read from left to right and top to bottom by running your finger under them.” The teacher says, “Now I will go to the next line. Where did my finger move? My finger moved to the next line down. We read from top to bottom.” This direct instruction is developmentally appropriate at this stage of the school year and connected to the current classroom text.

Theme 7 materials also provide direct instruction in print awareness. During Story Time, the teacher introduces the book *Row, Row, Row Your Boat* by pointing to the word *row*. As the teacher begins to read the story, the materials provide an opportunity to connect print to the book. The teacher points to the word *boat* and the letters *b*, *o*, *a*, *t*. The materials provide opportunities for the children to distinguish between elements of print by pointing to a picture, a word, and several letters. The teacher says, “Point to the picture car, the word ‘car,’ and the letters ‘c,’ ‘a,’ and ‘r’ in the text.” This lesson includes introductions, questions, and prompts to help children develop knowledge about print. During the reading, the teacher turns the pages of the book backward to encourage students to point out how to hold the book correctly. The teacher continues, “This is the first word I will read. I see the word has three letters. There are spaces in between the words.” The teacher asks the children, “What letters do you see?” The lessons continue with the teacher guiding the children to name uppercase *i* and lowercase *o* and *w*.

In Theme 8, children are taught to interpret environmental print during “Small Group Literacy,” with access provided for English language learners based on the ELPS proficiency levels.

**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 the contents that are high-quality and at an appropriate level of complexity. The materials include fiction, nonfiction, poems, songs, and nursery rhymes. Texts include content that is engaging to prekindergarten students and provide opportunities for students to interact with the stories, including repeated parts. Materials include some use of purposeful environmental print throughout the classroom, although they do not provide guidance on the inclusion of a letter wall or labeling classroom spaces or materials.

Evidence includes but is not limited to:

The materials include many suggestions for books, including trade books, big books, “Read More About It” books, and wordless experience books. These books are displayed throughout the classroom in centers, in the classroom library, and in the large group instructional area. The materials guide teachers to point out features of print within these texts. Texts are at the appropriate level of complexity for children’s developmental level. For example, the Theme 1 story *Bear’s Big Day* by Salina Yoon is at the appropriate level of complexity for a pre-K student’s developmental level, with a Lexile level of AD (Adult Directed) 470 and a guided reading level of H. The read-aloud is easy for children to understand, to remember, and to reenact, and it is directly related to the “Hello School” thematic unit of study. The structure of the text is organized so that the reader can make connections, and the storyline is direct and clearly stated. All illustrations are age-appropriate and consume the majority of the page; colors are bold and bright. Later in the year, Theme 9 includes the classic story *Twinkle, Twinkle Little*

*Star*, adapted and illustrated by Jerry Pinkney. The material has a Lexile level of 680, but this does not align with the complexity level of this text. The text structure is a familiar nursery rhyme with repeated patterns; because of its popularity, this text is at the appropriate level of complexity for students' developmental level. The text has rhythm and repeated patterns that encourage movement; the author has adapted the poem to appeal to young readers. Bold and vivid illustrations are age-appropriate and directly contribute to the text's meaning.

Examples of fiction texts include but are not limited to:

*The Lion and the Mouse* by Jenny Broom (fable)  
*The Enormous Turnip* by Inna Chernyak (folktale)  
*Pete the Cat* by Eric Litwin (popular fiction)  
*Thank You Omu* by Oge Mora (realistic fiction)

Examples of nonfiction texts include but are not limited to:

*How Food Gets From Farms to Food Shelves* by Erika Shores (informational)  
*A Visit to the Fire Station* by Blake Hoena (informational)  
*Delivering Your Mail* by Anne Owen (nonfiction picture book)  
*Cold, Crunchy Colorful* by Jane Brocket (scientific nonfiction)

Examples of a variety of text types include but are not limited to:

*Row, Row, Row Your Boat* by David Clark (nursery rhyme)  
"Let's Go!" by Rene Colato (song)  
*Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star* adapted and illustrated by Jerry Pinkney (poem, song, and nursery rhyme)  
"The Changing Moon" (poem)  
*Hickory Dickory Dock* (nursery rhyme)

Theme 4 includes the big book *This Is the Way*. The repetitive text, which can be read or sung, is engaging. Students can use the pictures to predict the content of the song on any given page. For example, there is a large illustration of children brushing their teeth on a page with the text "This is the way we brush our teeth, brush our teeth, brush our teeth." *This Is the Way* covers a variety of activities that students likely do on any given day, such as brushing their teeth, greeting their friends, and eating a snack.

The trade book *Things I Can Do to Help My World* is an informational text with interesting print formations. For example, on the page that discusses turning off the lights when you are not in the room, the text is written in the shape of a lightbulb. The book is also written in a way that encourages children to make predictions. For example, on one page, the text reads, "I remind my parents..." and the teacher is encouraged to have children predict what they might need to remind their parents. The book also includes child-appropriate topics, such as drawing or writing on both sides of a paper. This portion of the text uses child-like drawn images to

increase student interest. The text *Grow Strong!* includes illustrations of children completing an art activity about how to be healthy.

**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

There are a variety of approaches to develop students' comprehension of texts read aloud. There is quality guidance for the teacher to connect texts to children's experiences at home and school with specific questions designed to connect classroom experiences to the text. Materials also include guidance for the teacher on basic text structures like illustrations or pictures and their impact on the understanding of the text.

Evidence includes but is not limited to:

After reading the text *Picking a Pumpkin* in Theme 2, the teacher guides the children to make connections between the text and their own experiences as they respond to questions relevant to the text. The teacher asks questions like: "Have you visited a pumpkin patch or pumpkin farm? What did you see there? What did you hear? What did you smell? Have you visited a farm? What did you see and hear?" For this lesson, the teacher brings items to class like a small pumpkin, an apple, and a carrot. After reading about pumpkins, the children touch each item and use their senses to investigate and make connections. In this lesson, students both build between their experiences and the text, and the teacher creates opportunities for new experiences related to the text.

In Theme 3, the teacher reads *Goodbye Summer, Hello Autumn* and models making inferences. Before reading, the teacher asks students to use the title and pictures of the book to make predictions. Integrating these basic print structures into every aspect of the lesson builds a strong foundation for students. Later in the lesson, the teacher says, "the words on the page say that animals look for food in the fall." The teacher also thinks aloud, "since the next season is winter, the animals are probably looking for food that they can store away for wintertime." This guidance within the lesson successfully provides teachers enough support to model making inferences that build textual understanding.

In Theme 5, the teacher integrates classroom experience into the book they are reading, *Quinitos Neighborhood*. The teacher reminds students about their classroom art experiences and connects the students' artwork to that of an illustrator. Children are encouraged to look at the illustrations in the book and discuss how the illustrations make them feel. Students then choose their favorite illustration, recreate it, and explain why they like the illustration.

This practice is continued in Theme 6 when students read *How Food Gets From Farms to Store Shelves*. The teacher shows pictures in the book and has children make predictions about what the book might be about. Some prompting questions within the lesson guidance include: "What do you see in this picture? Can you guess what this book might be about? Why do you think that?" Not only do students have the opportunity to take the basic text structure of pictures and build understanding, but they also take the next step and justify their answers.

This practice is continued in Theme 7; however, students begin connecting texts to their own personal experiences. During "Story Time," the teacher asks the students, "Have you ever ridden a train, if so what was it like? Would you like to ride on a train, if so, what do you think it would be like?" Later in the Theme, the teacher builds on this experience and brings a similar experience to the classroom. During the "Learn and Play" section, the teacher guides students through creating a human train and a human tunnel. Similar to Theme 2, students connect their personal experiences to a text and then later build on this activity by creating new classroom experiences that also relate to the same text.

**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). Materials provide specific strategies beyond the use of Spanish cognates to support language transfer between a student's primary language and English.

Evidence includes but is not limited to:

Each thematic Teacher's Guide identifies concepts for that theme along with the vocabulary to be transferred. This guide allows for explicit and layered vocabulary instruction, which is made available to the teacher in a clear and consistent way. Total physical response (TPR), a comprehensive approach to language teaching and a proven cross-linguistic transfer strategy, is integrated throughout daily instruction. Multisensory learning of letter-sound correspondences within the curriculum initiates conversations about similarities and differences between the languages and pictures. Vocabulary cards are color-coded red for Spanish and blue for English to support teachers in establishing and maintaining a biliteracy-rich learning environment based on program needs from early-exit to dual language. The English Language Development lessons that appear at the back of each thematic Teacher's Guide offer the appropriate strategies to facilitate the transfer of skills, regardless of the teacher's level of expertise in teaching emergent bilinguals.

The "Professional Learning Guide" (PLG) includes a variety of strategies for teachers to support the development of emergent skills in ELs. A few examples include planning instruction by first considering the child's stage of language development, encouraging children to use nonverbal communication to overcome language barriers, and including resources in the child's native language to be used during instruction and independent activities. Additional strategies include providing visual cues to help children comprehend tasks and information, direct modeling of skills, and providing frequent feedback. Across the themes, there are lessons dedicated to EL



students; these lessons are broken down into three parts: “Introduce,” “Model,” and “Guided Practice.”

Each four-week theme includes weekly English Language development cards with specific reading strategies for beginning, intermediate, advanced, and advanced high students. The development cards scaffold new skills each week; for example, in week 1 of Theme 5, the teacher teaches print directionality, left to right. The second week’s development cards teach print directionality of top to bottom and the retelling of events in stories. Week 3’s cards include lessons on the letter *N* and reading comprehension, and week 4 cards include a review of all the letters learned during the theme plus an additional vocabulary lesson. The week 4 card tells teachers that ELs will likely require additional practice with connecting letter names and sounds. The students also reference picture cards associated with each letter and sound to think about the sound/symbol connection. Students pair up based on their particular sound/symbol and create their own example cards, and then students share their example cards with the group. To practice vocabulary, some students use a sentence frame to discuss a new vocabulary word, some students compare two vocabulary words from a chosen text, and some students clap out the syllables of the vocabulary words. These techniques all support ELs. The materials make some reference to cognates as support for transferring home language to English language skills. For example, English development cards in Theme 1 reference the word special in English and *especial* in Spanish and the cognate for favorite (*favorita/o*) in Theme 2.

Materials, activities, and lessons keep ELs engaged and focused through the use of manipulatives, classroom objects, books, vocabulary, pictures, alphabet cards, and numeral cards. In Theme 1, the teacher uses picture cards after a read aloud to differentiate support for ELs. After reading the book, *Bear’s Big Day*, the teacher uses these cards to help children name and recognize classroom objects that appear in the illustrations. The teacher says the words slowly (*backpack, snack, and glue*), pointing to the classroom objects in the associated pictures, and then has children repeat the words aloud. “ReadyRosie” videos are another resource available for children and include modeling videos that support learning. As well, EL access notes are included for the teacher to provide scaffolded strategies to boost language acquisition and oral language production. These strategies reinforce vocabulary, help develop language for a variety of concepts, and strengthen listening comprehension.

In Theme 4, the teacher again integrates Spanish into instruction. When teaching students about habits with the book *Grow Strong*, the teacher has students share the word habit in their home language. The PLG says to, “have Spanish-speaking children explain what *habito* means in their home language. Then define it in English. Have children demonstrate understanding by acting out an example.” The PLG outlines how a number of languages share common sounds with English and points out syntactical differences between the language and English. The resources “Culture Clues” have embedded insights into the cultural differences of each language learner as well as ideas for ways to embrace students’ diversity using the instruction.

“Grammar Hotspot” tips on the most common syntax errors by speakers of languages other than English are also provided, and boldface letters or symbols in the “Linguistic Contrastive Analysis Chart” indicate sounds or rules that can be used from children’s first language to help them learn English. In addition, the fundamentals of speech articulation help teachers understand where the languages differ from English. Differences in the spoken languages and in the writing systems are also explored in the Professional Learning Guide.

In Theme 9, the text *Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star* introduces repetitive sound patterns. The teacher pauses and allows the children to chime in on repetitive phrases of the poem. Teachers help ELs deepen their understanding of rhyming words by using the Spanish phonograms *mes*, *les*, *pez*, and *vez*. The *Read More About it Book* also guides the children to identify the English word *flower* with the Spanish word *flores*. Children are encouraged to explain what the word *flores* means in their native language, define the word flower in English, and use it in a sentence.

**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. These experiences include direct instruction as well as opportunities for children to imitate adult writing. Illustration and drawing with detail are often included as a transition to writing skills. During read aloud, students have the opportunity for group writing on shared experiences. Then during center time, they have the opportunity to generate independent writing.

Evidence includes but is not limited to:

Each theme includes suggestions for independent writing in the “Centerize” section of the curriculum. Additionally, each theme includes a writing center activity that relates to the theme being studied at that time. Specifically, this writing learning center is called “Writer’s Club,” and teachers have access to prompts, questions, scripts, and suggestions meant to help with writing facilitation.

In Theme 2, students write a book about themselves. To begin this activity, the teacher points out the cover of a book previously read aloud and explains that the illustrator draws the pictures while the author writes the book. The lesson continues with a teacher model; teachers draw their pictures and write their names on the cover of the book. Children intentionally use marks, letters, and symbols to record their language as they create their own books. Teacher prompts include: “Encourage the children to start at the top-left of the page, leave space between words, return sweep, and move from top to bottom.” The teacher refers to the book *The Lion and the Mouse* for visual support. As the children draw and write, the teacher asks them guiding questions like, “What does this picture tell?” and “What else do you want to talk

about?" The teacher continues to redirect children who may need to add additional writing: "Tell me about the marks in your book." Then during center time, the teacher conferences with students who need support in the writing process. They add pages to their book throughout the rest of the theme until it is complete.

In Theme 4, the class reads the book *10 Things I Can Do to Help My World*, and afterward, the teacher adds it to the "Writing Center" for future reference. During the Writing Center, children draw and write about how they can take care of their world. The teacher encourages them to look at the whole-class read-aloud books for ideas. In this activity, students write independently. The teacher is prompted to observe, looking for developmentally and age-appropriate writing activities. Particularly, that they can write using appropriate directionality, left to right and top to bottom. Then toward the end of the theme, students attempt independent writing again based on the story, *Grow Strong*. This lesson begins with a teacher think-aloud: "I can take care of myself by eating healthy foods." The teacher sketches a picture of a banana and broccoli, writing under the picture, "I take care of myself when I eat bananas and broccoli." She reinforces directionality as she narrates her actions: "Watch as I begin writing at the top of the page and continue at the bottom." The children use marks or letters to record language and share the meaning of their writing.

At the beginning of Theme 8, students write a story about an animal named David from the book *David, Fish & Penguins*. Together, the class brainstorms, drafts, revises, edits, and publishes. The teacher begins by asking guiding questions, "How should we begin our writing? What should we write about next?" Together, they discuss draft ideas and vote on the animal they will write about, and the teacher records the ideas on chart paper at the front of the class. While this is happening, each student is independently imitating writing on their own sheets of paper. The teacher guides children who are struggling with the hand over hand method. This writing is meant to help students with their letter strokes and letter formation. Over the next three days, they write a draft together, revise and edit their writing, and finally end with adding illustrations during publication.

**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. Lessons follow the general developmental continuum of how children learn writing, and they provide guidance for teachers on how to nudge students forward. Teacher-guidance also covers how to include student contributions to writing and the writing process.

Evidence includes but is not limited to:

Toward the beginning of the school year, students are introduced to letter formation. For example, in Theme 2, students trace both uppercase and lowercase */Bb/* and review the order of movements to form the letter. To reinforce the strokes, the teacher has the children trace the letter in the air. Then, in the middle of the year, the children move on from tracing letters to actually writing letters. For example, in Theme 6, the teacher displays the alphabet card for */li/* and says, “Uppercase I look like this I. Lowercase i looks like this i.” The teacher writes a child’s name that includes the letter */li/*, has the children say the sounds aloud, and then has them practice writing the letter in the palm of their hands. By starting with a word potentially familiar to students, their name, the lesson appropriately reflects this developmental stage of writing and letter recognition. Later in the year, the children practice writing stories in groups, revising, editing, and publishing. While the materials integrate some guided story-writing practice, Theme 8 is when students really compose writing across multiple days. With appropriate teacher guidance, students work through the writing process in a way that prekindergarten children understand.

In Theme 1, the teacher has students make marks, letters, symbols, and drawings to tell about their favorite thing at school. The teacher models the process by verbally sharing her favorite part of the day, drawing a picture to depict her idea, and then adding a phrase to the picture. The teacher script states: “I’m going to write down, *I like the Morning Meeting.*” Students then

mimic the writing process on their own, with a teacher emphasis on strokes, direction, and positive reinforcement. This introduction sets a strong foundation for all students, so they move forward confidently.

In Theme 3, teachers model the writing process by first discussing the topic with the class. Now, students are responding to their favorite part of fall. Just like in Theme 1, the teacher draws a picture to depict a thought. But instead of writing a phrase and having students mimic writing, the teacher labels the picture with a letter and has students practice letter strokes. She shares with the students that “we can record our ideas with pictures, and we can include letters or words in our writing.” For her picture, she draws a large pile of leaves, and for her label, she writes the letter /p/ for *pile*. She models saying the word, the letter sound, and explains her picture. Students complete this lesson by drawing their own picture of a fall item that starts with /p/, and they practice writing the letter.

When students get to Theme 4, they move on to actually writing words in phrases. In this theme, the children write a card to a family member or friend. First, the teacher models how to write, “I love you.” The teacher tells the children, “It’s ok if you do not know all of the letters in the word,” and they attempt to copy the phrase. To complete this writing assignment, students write their name at the bottom of the card. This specific prompt successfully balances providing feedback with politely nudging students along in their writing development.

By Theme 9, students are putting the final touches on their letter formation and transitioning into the writing process. In the “Literacy Circle,” the teacher models the process of identifying sounds “to help children move from writing scribbles to some sound-symbol correspondences.” They go through some of the letters of the alphabet, discuss their corresponding sounds, and the teacher writes a message on chart paper. During this activity, a teacher prompt states: “Show children how to write the words as you talk about the features of the letters for the ending sounds of the letters spell. Then help them write the letters for the ending sounds in the words.” Once they finish revisiting letters and sounds, students start an extended lesson on writing. Together as a class, they compose a book. To begin, the teacher introduces the concept of brainstorming: “Use the wordless experience book to write a class story. Lead the children in a brainstorming session so they can discuss and contribute ideas. Say words as you write them.” The next day, the teacher begins the drafting stage with students. She says, “Yesterday, we shared ideas for our class story. Today let’s talk more about that. As we talk, I’ll write your ideas on this chart. In two weeks, we’ll use what we’ve written to make a book!” Next, the revision process begins. “We wrote down ideas about the living things under the girl’s feet. We wrote about the paper airplane. Listen as I read what we wrote. If something doesn’t sound right, raise your hand. We can change it.” Then, the teacher marks the student’s changes on the chart. Lastly, the teacher introduces the process of editing. “We wrote down ideas about our class story. Let’s reread and see if we need to make changes or edits.” The teacher explains the need for punctuation within the process. Together the class completes the publication process, thus completing their introduction to the writing process.

**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 toward 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. These practice opportunities occur during snack time, centers, and math activities that use small manipulatives. Students use a variety of tools and surfaces for their writing experiences. Teachers have access to differentiation and guidance describing how best to develop students' fine motor skills toward writing.

Evidence includes but is not limited to:

Learning centers are one of the primary settings where students develop fine motor skills. Specifically, these activities increase the strength and coordination of the small muscles in the hand. During this time, students use a variety of tools when participating in writing experiences like modeling clay, play dough, paint, and crayons.

Although the materials do not specifically communicate the importance of prewriting strokes, the guidance does note that students will “make marks,” and teachers should identify these marks as early writing attempts. When students begin connecting fine motor development to writing, they use many different utensils like pencils, markers, dry erase markers, and crayons. Among other things, students write on whiteboards, sand, paper, and chart paper. Sometimes prompts remind teachers to integrate fine motor development during non-instructional time. For instance, the teacher makes sure students are using the pincer grip to pick up and sort pieces of snacks during “Snack Time.”

In Theme 1, the teacher models how to hold a crayon. In the “Creativity Center,” teacher directions state: “demonstrate for children how best to hold a crayon, using your fingers instead of a fist. Then model drawing a straight line.” Students are using stencils to trace shapes; as they work, the teacher observes if they are holding their crayons in a more conventional grasp and if they are demonstrating small-muscle strength.

Teachers introduce some prominent letter shapes in Theme 2. When introducing the letter /Bb/ to the class, the teacher shows a letter sample, explains the movements while tracing the letter, and then has students trace both the capital and lowercase letter in the air. A similar process is completed for letters /Ss/ and /Mm/. To promote practice, the teacher adds the “Alphabet Cards” /Ss/, /Mm/, and /Bb/ to the “Sand, Water, and More” learning center. When at this center, students can practice forming letters in the sand with their index finger. Other centers in this theme help students develop their fine motor skills more generally. These centers include cutting out food pictures and squeezing a glue bottle to glue the pictures to paper; building homes with yarn, glue, and craft sticks; squeezing a spray bottle to explore what happens to sand when it is wet; and completing a puzzle with multiple pieces. At the end of the theme, students read a book and use their fine motor skills. During the “STEM Center,” the teacher displays the thematic book, *Just Like You*, and says, “think about where you live and the different materials used to build your home” (or a home in their favorite book). The teacher models building a home with blocks, yarn, or tape. Students follow the teacher’s lead during unstructured time, and the teacher monitors progress. Specifically, she observes eye-hand coordination and whether children show pincer control when holding different materials.

Center practice continues in Theme 4. For example, During the “Technology Center,” students use a drawing application to make classroom signs for recyclable and reusable materials. Again, teachers observe how students write with the utensil and encourage those who are holding it incorrect to use a more conventional grasp. In the “ABC Center,” the teacher adds play dough to the other manipulatives. In this activity, children practice forming the letters of their name. Throughout the year, this center also integrates dotted letter cards, lined paper, name charts, paper, pencils, crayons, and markers into different writing activities. Students have a more interactive experience in the “Sensory Center.” Here, they cover their written name with colored rice, form letters with yarn, and trace different names using shaving cream. While not a part of centers, “Outdoor Play” is another indirect way students develop fine motor skills. The teacher uses painter’s tape or chalk to make large letters on the ground. Then, the children trace these letters with chalk or crayons following small directional arrows to show them where to begin and end.

Outdoor Play is utilized again for fine motor development in Theme 5. The lesson directions state: “Provide children with plastic toy hoops and an assortment of ribbons of crepe paper to tie onto the hoop.” Later during “Learn and Play,” children work on small motor skills collecting sunflower seeds. Directions for this lesson state: “Sprinkle sunflower seeds around the play area. Give children paper cups and challenge them to see how many seeds they can collect with their fingers.” Both instances are interactive, engaging, and effective. Then, during the Social and Emotional lesson for this theme, children use modeling clay to create a tool for the community helper of their choice. Teachers “have children use modeling clay to create a tool for their helper. Model how to pinch, roll, flatten, and coil the clay. Circulate and guide children to ensure that they show small-muscle control while molding the clay.”



By Theme 9, students return to different activities that develop their fine motor skills toward writing. During small group, they use alphabet cards, construction paper, and yellow fingerprints to practice writing the letter /Yy/. The teacher starts by modeling the uppercase and lowercase versions of the letter, emphasizing the stroke pattern of each. Then students practice independently, starting with the uppercase Y using the paint on paper. After a round of feedback, students repeat with the lowercase y. Using paint, students practice their skills through a new, interactive, and exciting medium.

**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, and then abstract representations. Instruction includes a variety of concrete manipulatives and pictorial representations, with an emphasis on concrete manipulatives throughout. Activities build conceptual understanding in counting, adding to, taking away, geometry, spatial sense, measurement, classification, and pattern skills.

Evidence includes but is not limited to:

The materials prioritize activities that include concrete representations. Students use manipulatives when practicing counting skills. For example, when practicing counting with ordinal numbers in Theme 2, the teacher lines up six stuffed toys, and students identify which toy is first in the line. After identifying the first and the last, they continue and count all the numbers between 1 and 6. Later in Theme 2, children play a game where they look at a group of objects and decide how they are similar or why they are alike. The objects share one obvious characteristic, but they also have enough differences so that children can clearly classify them accordingly. The teacher may use blocks that are the same shape but not the same size, balls that are all round but not the same material, or crayons of the same length but not the same color. The teacher asks questions such as: “How are these blocks the same? In what way are they alike?” Math Circle time also includes activities that progress from concrete to pictorial representation. Children compare their heights by standing next to each other. The teacher continues the lesson by stating, “Let’s compare our height. Which of us is taller? Which of us is smaller?” The children then stand back to back with a partner and identify who is taller and who is shorter. During the next day’s lesson, children move beyond concrete representations and use pictorial representations to compare adults’ and children’s heights. Children are

encouraged to draw pictures of the people in their family. The teacher says, “Make the tallest person in your family the tallest person in your picture. Make the shortest person in your family the shortest person in your picture.” In discussions, students use the math vocabulary words *shorter*, *shortest*, *taller*, and *tallest* to describe their picture.

At the beginning of Theme 6, the teacher begins an addition and subtraction lesson by stating, “If I have five peaches, and I eat two, how many peaches will I have left?” Then, the teacher models the problem pretending that the math counters are peaches: “‘Here are my five peaches (*Take two and pretend to eat them*) I just ate two peaches. How many do I have left?’ The teacher models counting the remaining peaches. The teacher encourages the children to model other problems in which they take away one or two food items.” This activity covers a different conceptual understanding (taking away instead of classification or measuring) but still depends on concrete manipulatives as the foundation of instruction. Another example of instruction covering taking away can be found when students read *Baby Goes to Market*. Starting with the number of items that the mother buys, the teacher then models taking away items as the baby eats each item. For counting skills in this Theme, students count standard classroom objects such as crayons, blocks, and various toys. Students also march while counting their steps and count the number of times they clap their hands. When adding, students practice joining groups of snap cubes. For spatial sense, students physically attempt to slide, turn, and flip various three-dimensional shapes such as cones and rectangular prisms. For measurement, students act out a variety of activities such as brushing teeth or zipping a jacket to determine which activities take longer than others. For classification, students brainstorm lists of questions such as “Which color do you like more—red or green?” take the data and then classify the data to make a pictorial graph. For pattern skills, students are provided sentence strips with various patterns and blank spaces, and then they draw the items to complete the blank spaces on the pattern.

Later in the year, in Theme 8, children count without using concrete representation. The children count 1–14 by repeating after the teacher multiple times and in different volumes. The teacher models rote counting from 1 to 14 before asking the students to count along. She then says, “Now we will count like monsters. How would a monster count? Let’s try!” After counting aloud as a class from 1 to 14, the children get to choose another voice to use when counting again. This rote counting is repeated several times, in a variety of voices. During the middle of Theme 8, students still use concrete manipulatives for comparison. The teacher models comparing towers made with cubes (one tower is made with three cubes, the other tower is made with five cubes). “When an object is shorter, it measures a smaller amount from end to end. When an object is taller, it measures a greater amount from end to end.” Students then count how many cubes are in each tower, summarizing: “The tower with five cubes is taller than the tower with three cubes.” Students move beyond concrete representation and into pictorial representations when they sort animals into two groups (heavy and light) using picture cards. The teacher uses two large circles for the children to sort the picture cards. As the lesson continues, children then sort and classify animals according to those who have paws and those who do not have paws. These activities show the various instructional strategies that integrate

different conceptual representations and that progress through a logical mathematical continuum.

**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. Teachers inquire about students' developmental status and mathematical knowledge through the use of frequent performance checks and skill checklists. There are cross-curricular opportunities to authentically integrate mathematics into other content areas like social studies and reading. Classroom centers serve as an additional vehicle for students to explore math concepts and skills.

Evidence includes but is not limited to:

The "Professional Learning Guide" states, "Teachers support preschool math literacy when they identify children's existing mathematical schema and choose instruction and activities that build upon their prior knowledge." One example of this practice can be found in the small group guidance when teachers are prompted to ask, "What number words do you know? Do you know how to count? Show me." Within each theme, teachers have access to guidance detailing how to set up their classroom to encourage the use of math concepts in daily interaction. In the "Teacher's Tool Kit," the materials suggest various items to include in the classroom: math posters displaying numbers, cubes in the math centers, growth charts, and reading materials that include academic math vocabulary. There is also an assessment guide with weekly math checklists designed to "monitor student progress and inform instructional decisions." These checklists help teachers intentionally build children's math knowledge across skill areas and build off what they know.

In Theme 2, students practice their number skills through the book *Grandma's Tiny House*. When reading, the teacher emphasizes each number included in the text: "*one* grandma, *two* turkeys, *three* neighbors." Using magnets on a magnetic board, students then locate the correct

number that corresponds with each phrase. During the discussion, students talk about what makes a family, and the teacher asks, "What number tells how many people are in your family?" Immediately after this lesson, students further their number skills during math centers. Using these same magnetic numbers, students learn how to play a numerical hopscotch game. The teacher models: "I chose the number five; I will jump five to get to the number five on the hopscotch game." Repeating this sentence stem, students practice picking different numbers and jumping to the correct location on the hopscotch board. Additionally, students continue their rote counting practice during classroom "Morning Meetings." The teacher gives each child a numeral card ranging between 1 and 21. The teacher calls out each number one by one, and when the child hears their number, they move their attendance card. Once complete, the teacher says, "There are 21 children here, so I will count to 21. If you want to help me, join along." Together they count to 21. The morning meeting continues with current events and reviewing the date on the calendar. Sometimes, the teacher asks a survey question for students to answer. During numerous morning meetings, students take data and create a graph to represent their understanding.

In Theme 5, students practice subitizing during snack time. They close their eyes as the teacher puts snacks on the table. Then, they open their eyes and, without counting, say the number of snack pieces they have in front of them. During this time, they also practice adding with snack pieces. This skill is applied during read alouds when the teacher asks students to identify the number of objects in a picture quickly. Math is also periodically embedded within recess and social studies. At recess, the teacher leads students around the playground, and students count the number of steps between each piece of playground equipment. During social studies, students identify the patterns found in the United States flag. Finally, during a small group reading lesson, students read a text and answer questions that deal with joining zero to different amounts. The teacher states, "Here are Quinto, the mail carrier, and Sonia Isabel. How many people do you see on the page? Now, what happens when no more people join them?" After facilitating a brief concept about zero, students practice with other problems adding zero to different numbers.

Additional examples of cross-curricular opportunities can be found in Theme 7. The different learning centers provide students the opportunity to make connections between math skills and other areas. During the "STEM" center, students use a variety of wheeled toys to investigate and describe the position of objects. In the puzzle center, students use puzzle pieces to play a matching game that requires the sorting of shapes. Similar shape practice occurs in the "Build and Play" center, where students must identify and track which blocks they use while building a town. Categorizing them by shape, other students then have the opportunity to build the same town, matching the shapes to the materials list. Finally, during the "Make it Take it" center, students draw a picture of a vehicle and identify the different shapes used.

**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 intentionally develop young children’s ability to problem solve. Intentional prompting, modeling, and questioning strategies develop students’ capacity to ask thoughtful questions and recognize problems in their environment. Using familiar materials, students increase their capacity to use mathematical reasoning.

Evidence includes but is not limited to:

Theme 2 supports the idea that open-ended questions are not meant to elicit correct answers from children but rather to engage them in conversations that promote higher-order thinking. During a classification math game, the teacher engages the children in conversation about how objects are similar. Without explaining why the teacher has two children who share a characteristic stand side-by-side. Then, the teacher asks, “How are these friends alike?” The teacher repeats the activity with more pairs of children who share distinct characteristics with each other.

In Theme 3, students apply their mathematical reasoning to problems in their environment. During a small group lesson, students receive an overview of the shape rectangle. The teacher asks them questions like, “How do you know you made a rectangle? Are the sides across from one another the same length? Does your shape have 4 corners?” This line of questioning provides an effective combination of open- and close-ended questions and promotes a deeper understanding of geometric concepts. Then the teacher facilitates a brief discussion comparing rectangles and squares. To conclude this lesson, students draw and color a rectangle in their shape book. Later in the unit, students authentically return to this concept during “Outdoor” play. The teacher asks, “Can you find any squares in the play space?” and students go on a square hunt. They are required to apply their mathematical reasoning to a new environment, using the knowledge they acquired earlier in the unit. Geometric practice continues into Theme 4 Outdoor play. During one activity, the teacher draws large shapes, patterns, and lines on the

ground. Using proper outlining techniques, students must move wheeled toys to trace the lines. After tracing, they have to describe and identify each shape.

Throughout Theme 6, students have numerous informal opportunities to interact with mathematical reasoning during snack time, outside activity, and centers. During snack, the teacher facilitates discussions meant to promote problem-solving skills. Students answer questions like, “How many pretzels or carrot sticks are left if someone eats one?” and “Do you think there will be more carrot sticks or pretzels left after everyone takes a snack?” While these questions could be limited to single-word answers, students are at least developing their mathematical reasoning skills with familiar materials in an authentic environment. Another suggestion for snack time is to have students predict how many snacks will fit into a cup. The teacher holds a brief and simple experiment once everyone makes their prediction, and then she facilitates a discussion if students are unable to identify the number of snacks correctly. This activity better engages students in problem-solving, and it does not limit their ability to discuss or ask questions.

Problem-solving skills are also integrated into Theme 6 read alouds. When reading the book *Baby Goes to Market*, students discuss a family’s shopping trip. A mother takes her baby to the store, and students make predictions about what items the baby will eat. Based upon the number of people that like each item, the teacher leads a discussion about supply and demand. For example, the teacher ponders how many bananas should be on the shelf, and students are encouraged to make suggestions about how many bananas are needed. Through discussion and addition, students move through each item, determining how many items should be on the shelf.



**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

Students receive frequent, spiraled, and varied opportunities to participate in activities that build number sense. These activities align with the Texas Prekindergarten Guidelines and include subitizing, counting one-to-one, comparing set size and numbers, and finding one more than a number. Additionally, teachers receive adequate guidance to help students build a conceptual understanding of these topics.

Evidence includes but is not limited to:

Number sense is explored throughout the day during “Math Circle,” read alouds, centers, snack, and outdoor play. Formal math lessons are provided each day during Math Circle time; however, math is sometimes incorporated into read alouds as well. Instruction begins with smaller numbers or quantities at the beginning of the year and increases to larger numbers by the end of the year. For example, in Theme 2, students subitize up to three items, count sets of three, and recall numerals one through three. In Theme 3, students subitize up to five items; by the end of the year, students count sets up to ten objects, and in Theme 8, counting lessons include counting one to twenty.

In Theme 2, the teacher holds up a card with two dots and a card with three dots and asks the students which card has two dots. After the children indicate a card, a specified student checks which card is correct by actually counting the dots. The lesson continues with the teacher turning the cards face down, rotating them for a different look, and asking the children to identify the card with three dots. The lesson develops as the teacher introduces sets of four and five. She quickly turns the cards over and asks the children to look for the set with fewer dots without counting. The lesson extends into the book, *The Lion and the Mouse*. “There is a set of two butterflies and a set of four butterflies on this page. Without counting, point to the set you think has four butterflies.” The teacher encourages the children to explain how they found their

answer by using the words *more* or *fewer*. During a later Math Circle lesson, the teacher uses snap cubes to teach one more. In the Develop portion, the teacher tells the students, “I have three cubes here and one more cube there. I wonder how many cubes I have now? Let’s join them together and see how many there are.” Together, these activities provide a strong foundation for subitizing, counting one more, and comparing set size.

In Theme 4, the children practice one-to-one correspondence by matching pom-poms. Students place the pom-poms into two rows, and their objective is to draw lines connecting pom-poms in the first line with pom-poms in the second line. Later in the unit, students have the opportunity to compare set size and apply number knowledge. They receive sets of six buttons and have to separate them into two equal groups.

In Theme 6, students practice adding; the teacher puts two manipulatives in a box and says, “I’m a farmer. I pick bananas. How many do I have?” After having children count, the teacher then says, “(Child’s Name) pick one more. How many do I have now?” Children count and then repeat the activity two more times, adding another manipulative each time. Mathematical learning also occurs throughout the day, not just a specific period or time of day. During snack time, the teacher tells the children to watch their plate as they eat and to let her know when they have zero snacks left. Then the teacher connects this experience to a word problem by saying, “Sofia had four apple slices. She ate four apple slices. Now Sofia has zero apple slices left.” Students discuss the number of snacks they ate during snack time, repeating this phrase accordingly.

Students continue practicing number sense during additional portions of the day in Unit 8. In “Story Time,” the teacher reads the book *Five Little Ducks* and spirals in counting practice. The teacher holds up five fingers when she gets to the phrase, “five little ducks.” As the teacher reads, she folds down one finger to represent one duck that went away and the four ducks that remained. She asks the children, “How many ducks are left?” before finishing the story. When students get to centers and small group time, the teacher reviews counting to ten with EL students. The teacher represents the number 10 with her fingers. As the teacher counts, she moves her finger up as she adds a number. The children chorally count along. During rest time, the teacher reminds the children of the story *Five Little Ducks* and revisits numbers one through five. Students are encouraged to count silently to themselves. This frequent and spiraled instruction provides students adequate number sense practice.

**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 through repeated opportunities to hear and practice the terms. While there is limited guidance for teachers on how to scaffold and support students' vocabulary development, it is enough for all students to reach proficiency.

Evidence includes but is not limited to:

In whole group lessons, teachers use academic math vocabulary repeatedly; often, students repeat the vocabulary as call and response pronunciation practice. The "Professional Learning Guide" recommends teachers to use key mathematical vocabulary to explore and manipulate shapes, discuss spatial relationships, and describe attributes such as length, area, capacity, or weight. Each lesson includes vocabulary differentiation boxes; however, guidance remains general. These scaffolds are more about language acquisition and less about specific math terminology unless the vocabulary is directly related to the name of a numeral.

In each theme, there are ongoing opportunities for children to use math vocabulary. A list of math academic vocabulary is included with each theme, and instruction occurs whole-group, small-group, individually, and during learning centers. Whole-group instruction is often done during "Math Circle Time" and integrates books, manipulatives, games, and songs. For example, in Theme 2, children practice number counting with the book *Grandma's Tiny House*. Outside of direct instruction, students learn and practice vocabulary most during learning centers, particularly the *Engage* and *Observe* portions of the "Math Fun" and "STEM Learning" centers. These centers teach vocabulary along with manipulatives like snap cubes, tangrams, and attribute blocks. Lessons include engaging questions, prompts that ensure academic vocabulary usage, and opportunities to observe student progress. For example, In Theme 4, children use numeral cards to learn numbers six through nine in the Math Center. Generally, teachers should be layering math vocabulary into all informal math center conversations. For example, when students build a structure, the teacher asks them to explain what shapes they used to

build the structure. This layering both integrates vocabulary into unstructured practice and honors students' language and ideas.

In Theme 1, the teacher introduces the academic vocabulary word *count* in a chant about counting to five. "I can *count*, you can *count*, we all can *count* to five." Then, the first activity asks students to count their classmates in a single row, left to right. The teacher prompts a student to also "Count children in a different order, starting with the child at the right side." The teacher says, "When we count, we can start at different places, but the count is always the same." During "Learn & Play," the teacher plays a game called *How Many Steps, Mr. Wolf*. Students take a certain number of steps, counting each as they walk, thus reinforcing number vocabulary. Then during the "Reflect" portion of the day, the teacher uses a 5x5 picture card to help students count the number of images on the card.

During the beginning of Theme 4, the materials include repeated and ongoing opportunities for children to practice using math vocabulary. The teacher organizes the children into six groups, assigning each group a number from one to six. Going group by group, the teacher points to students and counts them aloud, and the students say their number in response. The teacher reminds them, "Remember, when we count, we say the numbers in order. When I point to your group, say your number as loud as you can." As the lesson continues, it becomes more rigorous; the teacher mixes up the groups, and children have to recount in order. Sometimes, the teacher points to a random number in the sequence, and students have to count on from there. In the "Learn and Play" section, children count the words and letters in a book titled, *This is the Way*. A teacher prompt states: "I see a word with three letters; who can find one?" As they read on, additional prompts ask students to count the number of words on a page: "How many words are on this page? Let's point and count." In a later lesson, the teacher returns to counting through the "Social and Emotional Learning card," *Solve a Problem*. Students engage in a conversation based on the following teacher prompt: "Oh, no, we don't have enough snacks for everyone. What should we do?" Through discussion, students realize they need to divide the snacks into parts to solve the problem. Students then count their snacks one-by-one, making sure everyone has an equal amount of snacks.

Often, math vocabulary is built upon between units. For example, students practice counting while reading the book *Five Little Ducks* during Theme 8. In this book, students count up to five and back down to zero. Then in Theme 9, a math lesson script has the teacher use the academic vocabulary word *time* once, the word *night* seven times, the word *day* six times, and the word *pattern* once. As students practice reading and repeating the words, they also have to count them aloud. If students have trouble counting to a certain number, the teacher intervenes with appropriate support. Then, the next day's math lesson includes intentional teacher usage as well. This schedule ensures that students have repeated opportunities to hear vocabulary.

**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 scientific knowledge through inquiry-based instruction and exploration of the natural world. Over time, children develop the ability to observe, question, and communicate their ideas. They achieve this through exploration with scientific tools like balances, water wheels, and pinwheels. In all, students explore physical science, life science, and earth and space science through these hands-on experiences.

Evidence includes but is not limited to:

Theme 1 includes a focus on physical science by providing children with a variety of materials to explore, describe, and sort based on their characteristics. For example, children use a balance to determine which items are *heavy* and which items are *light*. They begin by making and recording predictions about weight. Using a balance, the teacher says, “I can observe, or see, the block weighs more than the crayon because it moves the balance down on this side a little.” Next, the teacher replaces the crayon with an item that is heavier than the block on the balance. She points out how the pans of the balance changed and says, “I can tell this building block is even heavier. It pushes the balance down more.” This lesson concludes with the students investigating using different objects. In a subsequent lesson, students practice their observation skills describing the differences between apples and lemons. The teacher explains the concept of similar and different by having children use the terms *smooth* and *rough* to describe fruits. They continue this activity with additional items before the teacher recalls the concepts of *heavy* and *light*. To complete the lesson, students apply these terms to different fruits as well. Then students continue exploring physical characteristics during learning centers. “Children will observe, investigate, and discuss the characteristics of the sand, focusing on how it feels.” Throughout the week, students use different tools to measure sand, mix sand with water, and build with sand.

Theme 3 allows children to communicate their ideas of the environment in a variety of ways. To begin the theme, students learn about the relationship between organisms and their environment. Teachers “begin a discussion in which the children observe, investigate, describe, and discuss the relationship of organisms to their environment. In this case, the organism is them.” The lesson begins with a repeated chant about growing and changing. The teacher displays the *family* vocabulary card and reviews how families are made up of many different people: “In many families, there are babies, children, and adults.” As she explains family members, she also describes the life cycle people experience as organisms. For example, “The people in a family grow and change. A baby grows into a child. A child grows into a teenager, then an adult.” The teacher guides discussion about personal change with the question, “What are some things you can do now that you could not do when you were a baby?” The teacher creates a class growth chart, and, as the year progresses, they measure and compare growth every few weeks.

In Theme 9, students explore science with an earth and space focus. For example, the teacher displays a picture of Earth as seen from space and asks the children to identify what covers Earth’s surface. Then, the teacher points out the land that covers Earth and says, “Look at the land. Tell me what you see.” She explains that the land that covers Earth has different shapes and formations. Across the next few lessons, students examine and sort various kinds of rocks, determine what happens to sand when it gets wet, and observe objects from the night sky. For this last activity, students create basic paper models of a full, half, and crescent moon. During the second half of the theme, students experiment with different forms of energy. In one activity, they move water through a toy water wheel. The children ask each other questions and discuss what happens to the wheel when water is poured on it. While exploring the different properties of water, the children use a sentence frame for guidance: “Pouring water slowly over a wheel makes the wheel....” In a similar activity, students use a pinwheel to discuss energy created through moving air. Children blow slowly on the pinwheel and make observations about the speed the pinwheel moves. Then, they blow with greater force and make a note of the increased speed.

**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 the study of culture and community. Instruction follows a logical sequence, beginning with self and moving to family and beyond. Lessons provide students practice opportunities to explore commonalities and differences, routines and events, the passage of time, and community consumers.

Evidence includes but is not limited to:

Every day begins with a “Morning Meeting.” During this time, the class takes attendance, updates the class jobs, and charts the weather. This routine provides a routine opportunity to explore events and discuss the past, present, and future. Each day includes a reflection time during which the class thinks back over the day to discuss what they learned. Additionally, some morning meetings include a “Daily Event.” The teacher asks the students if anyone is celebrating something special today. Students are given the opportunity to share events such as birthdays, holidays, or traditions. At the end of this morning routine, students locate the flag in the classroom and say the Pledge of Allegiance.

Throughout the Themes, there are opportunities for children to explore commonalities and differences in individuals. In the Theme 1 Social Studies lesson, students use non-physical characteristics to describe something about themselves. The teacher further develops the concept by talking about the words, *same* and *different*, “Point out that people are alike in some ways and different in others. Help children understand that others have perspectives that are different from their own.” Children engage in discussion related to their favorite color, types of breakfast foods they eat, and whether they have siblings. Then, students use the text, *The More We Get Together*, to explore similarities and differences. Teacher guidance states:

“Have children look at the picture and describe and compare and contrast similarities and differences among the children to themselves.” Later in the lesson, teacher guidance states: “Guide them to describe, relate, categorize, or compare and contrast specific characteristics and talk about cultural influence they know among their classmates.” This activity directly supports the exploration of commonalities and differences, using both the classroom and the text as foundations for discussion.

Theme 2 is structured such that it follows a logical sequence of social studies instruction. The lessons progress from self to community. In an early lesson, students start by chanting a song about *self*. The teacher tells them, “You are special,” and proceeds to point out eyes, ears, mouth, nose, and feet with the class. To end this sequence, the children draw a picture of themselves. During a later “Social Studies Circle,” students complete a similar chant to start the lesson, this time about people being the *same* and *different*. Referencing the “Vocabulary Card” for *family*, the teacher says, “A family is a group of people. Families can have a few people or many people. People in families are of different sizes and different ages, such as babies, children, and grown-ups like parents and grandparents. Each family may look different, but they are the same in many ways too.” Volunteers share a description of a younger or an older family member, and then the class discusses different activities they like to do with their family. The social studies topic expands to *community* when the teacher shows students pictures of different homes and different foods. Then, the class reads the book *School in Many Cultures*, and together they talk about the different communities they see.

In Theme 5, children identify the state and country flags. During the Social Studies Circle, the teacher teaches the importance and significance of both. Teacher guidance states: “Remind the class that since the flag is so special, we say the pledge. Invite children to show how they should stand for the pledge.” Later, the teacher invites a community guest (Principal, Veteran, Girl Scout, etc.) to speak to the students concerning the flags and their importance. In the latter half of this theme, students focus on consumers in their community. The “Let’s Play” activity encourages the teacher to “set up a pretend neighborhood in the classroom with shops as in Quinto’s Neighborhood. Children are divided into consumers and shopkeepers. Consumers use pretend money to purchase products from the shopkeepers.” Then materials guide the teacher to discuss what it means to be a consumer. The teacher transforms the pretend and learn center into a grocery store, and students pretend to be shoppers and checkers. The teacher observes the student interactions, looking and listening for students who show an understanding of what it means to be a *consumer*.

Students return to the roles of consumers during the Theme 7 “Reflect” activity. Students have just completed a role-play activity where they mimicked buying and selling train tickets. The teacher says, “Remember, we learned that people who buy things are called consumers. Raise your hand if you are buying a ticket. Now raise your hand if you are selling a ticket.” The class discusses the concepts of *consumer* and *seller*, connecting these ideas to the activity.



**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. Students participate in a variety of activities through multiple mediums, including dance, music, dramatic play, painting, and drawing. The materials emphasize the students' engagement in the process of creating, rather than the product that is created.

Evidence includes but is not limited to:

Students have various opportunities for movement and dance throughout the day. The curriculum provides planned transition activities that involve chants, rhymes, and movement. During Theme 2, "Transition Time," students stand up, form a circle, and hold hands. As the class chants together, the children walk around the circle. The chant repeats two phrases, "Walk together, walk together." and "Let's stop and...." Each time, the students say a different action at the end: *Let's stop and clap*. The teacher can provide a variation, asking children to uniquely move in place when the circle stops.

Later in Theme 2, students participate in a "Creativity Station." Each time this station is listed in a lesson, it includes a different list of suggested art materials and possible thematic connections. This time, the list suggestions include picture cards, mirrors, dry-erase markers, drawing paper, pencils, crayons, markers, paint, and paintbrushes. The students use these materials to create self-portraits, and they can explore without limitation or direction. The teacher observes how they use the materials and offers different suggestions.

During an early Theme 4 lesson, students make music with plastic bottles and investigate how different earth materials sound. In this activity, they have the freedom to choose what materials to place in their bottles, and they are encouraged to work with a partner. Once complete, they listen to their own shaker and to the shakers of their friends to determine how they sound alike or different. During a later "STEM Center," children reuse milk cartons to create and design a planter. After reading the book, *10 Things I Can Do to Help My World*, the

students share why it is important to care for our environment. This activity includes a scripted teacher model: "I cut the top off this milk carton. I might glue on tissue paper, pom-poms, ribbon, or paint." Children discuss which materials they are going to use; during the discussion, the teacher encourages students to use the academic vocabulary, *care*, *recycle*, and *reuse*.

Daily dance opportunities are often based on songs. For example, in Theme 6, students sing about food preparation; they decide as a class the best kind of movement to help remember the meaning of *boiled* and *fried*. Science lessons throughout the theme include songs about lettuce, beans, carrots, and plants. Then during the structured lesson for "Music Circle," children sing and move to *Old MacDonald*. The teacher models how to do the movements to the song, such as moving to the right on *here* and to the left on *there*. As they sing, the class adds additional movements to the routine.

In Theme 7, students sing the song, *Row, Row, Row Your Boat* and act out the movements while they sing. Then, they change the words to *Drive, Drive, Drive Your Car* and act out the song. This activity directly relates to an art center. Students use paint and various other materials to create different parts of a train. The teacher models the desired process, demonstrating tying the smock, placing appropriate amounts of paint on the paintbrush, and using the slow, wide strokes to paint; The product is not as important in this activity. Teacher questions promote process reflection: "Why did you choose this color? What will you do to make this part look like a train engine?"

**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. Students explore and use digital tools via tablet, and the tools enhance student learning appropriately. The technology activities are not a distraction, and teachers have access to necessary implementation and facilitation guidance.

Evidence includes but is not limited to:

The materials provide opportunities for children to engage with technology in a way that meaningfully connects to the classroom experience. Digital texts, visuals, and scaffolds are consistently integrated throughout the normal classroom experience. These materials are age-appropriate for prekindergarten children and can be used on interactive whiteboards. All the print materials are available for projection from the publisher's website. Technology-based practice occurs within the "Technology Circle," "Technology Center," "Reading and Listening Center," and "Library Center." Technology Circles primarily involve direct instruction, while centers primarily involve playful practice.

In the Technology Center, children develop literacy and math skills using the Games app, "Javi's Whirly World." The Reading and Listening Center is set up so students can participate in different online reading activities. For one activity, specific teacher guidance states: "Have children turn on a computer or digital device. Guide them to the letter sounds game. Children can listen to the sounds that letters spell. They can choose the word from three choices that begin with a certain letter sound." Then, in the Library Center, children can access a wealth of literature online; different texts-types include trade books, tales, rhymes, and fables.

Students are introduced to technology devices at the beginning of the year. In Theme 1, the teacher shows them either a tablet, cell phone, or laptop and explains that we use the devices to learn new things. The digital tool that is most frequently referenced in the materials is a tablet. In Theme 3, students use a tablet and a drawing application to create a picture depicting

winter. The children share their digital drawings and point out the shapes they see in their drawings.

Some themes, such as Theme 4, include specific lessons on technology use. During a Technology Circle time, the teacher displays a technology device and talks to students about safe technology behavior. She asks, "Who can tell me some rules for using this device?" The teacher has a pre-selected app or game ready, so students use digital tools and resources safely. The teacher then tells the children, "When you use digital tools and resources, you should have permission from an adult. I have already selected an app to find out more about caring for others." After the teacher shows students how to open and navigate the game, the students spend time playing the game on their own.

Later in Theme 4, The teacher begins a Technology Center explaining how the class will use different digital tools to research eating and choosing healthy foods. The teacher models turning on the power switch, opening, and using one of the healthy nutrition applications. "First, I find the picture for the app here on this part of the screen. Then, I click on the app, using my mouse." As the children practice turning on the computer and opening the app, the teacher asks guided questions. "Which food did you zoom in on to start a healthy eating habit? Show me how you swipe the screen to get to the next picture." This activity is similar to the Technology Center in Theme 6. In this activity, students use the website [choosemyplate.gov](http://choosemyplate.gov) to explore healthy food choices. They use this online shopping application to add grocery items to a digital cart.

In Theme 8, children use a digital device to listen to a book. In the "Reading and Listening Center," the teacher sets up the center by providing digital devices and headphones. Then, the teacher displays the program, "Realize Reader," with the digital story *Five Little Ducks* on the digital device. She shows the children how to open the book, listen to the audio, and turn pages.

**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 a variety of developmentally appropriate diagnostic tools allowing both teachers and students to monitor progress. This monitoring includes a self-assessment tool for students to track their own progress and growth. Guidance is provided to ensure consistent and accurate administration of these tools. Together, the diagnostic tools measure all content and process skills for prekindergarten.

Evidence includes but is not limited to:

The various diagnostic tools are included in the “Assessment Guide.” Resources help teachers implement tools for screening, observation, progress monitoring tools, portfolios, and self-evaluation. Some of these tools include resources meant for students as well. All ten domains important for kindergarten readiness are covered; however, math and literacy-reading take priority. The Assessment Guide states, “While all of the domains are important and will be observed and informally assessed in the classroom, the direct assessments of skills in this assessment guide help the teacher monitor children’s progress of emergent literacy and math skills essential for kindergarten readiness.” The materials include assessment tools that are designed to be ongoing, strategic, and purposeful. For instance, the screening assessment helps teachers obtain a baseline measurement of children’s proficiency in literacy and math. After the initial screening assessment, teachers administer two “Progress Monitoring Assessments” on the 12th week and the 24th week of school. The year ends with an end of year assessment, similar to the screening assessment.

Both the screening and progress monitoring assessments are administered one-on-one and include skills drawn directly from the Texas Prekindergarten Guidelines. Visuals, manipulatives,

and oral questioning help the teacher determine what the children know and can do. The materials contain an overview of the assessment visuals describing what they are, how they work, and their purpose to provide teachers with useful context.

Each assessment also includes direct administration guidance. Beyond general guidance like setting aside 10–15 minutes for a one-on-one literacy screening, specific guidance sometimes includes direct scripting. For example, the alphabet knowledge section tells teachers to display the alphabet knowledge page and ask students, “Do you know the name of any of these letters?” Teachers are encouraged to gently guide the children to look at the letters. If a child responds “no,” the teacher advances to the second section of the assessment. If the child provides a letter name, the teacher continues with additional letters.

The Assessment Guide also offers weekly observation checklists and English Learner checklists to be completed during “Purposeful Play” centers. These checklists can be completed digitally on the online program, “Scout.” Or, teachers have the option to print these documents out and complete by hand. Additional anecdotal forms are provided that help teachers track skills in each of the identified pre-K domains. “Teacher Tips” for observation and assessment include finding a quiet area, allowing time for breaks, remain objective, document observations in a timely manner, date observations, and “listen and observe children in such a way that does not bring awareness to the observation.”

Students primarily track their own growth and progress in two ways: portfolios and self-evaluations. Portfolios are a visual representation of what each student knows and can do. Their purpose is to document a child’s proficiency, collect examples of work, and encourage children to reflect on and take pride in their learning. Teachers can utilize portfolios at any time to track student’s progress, and students themselves can add to them whenever they want. There are integrated opportunities throughout the year for students to reflect on their performance by tracking their own growth.

In addition to portfolios, students can use self-evaluations for self-assessment. The teacher reads a series of “I statements,” and the student identifies their proficiency with a thumbs up, thumbs sideways, or thumbs down. Then the corresponding icon is colored in. For example, the teacher might say, “I keep my hands to myself,” and the student may give a thumbs-up sign. Then either the teacher or child colors the thumbs up icon. This assessment can be administered several times during the year so students can see their progress or how they have changed.

**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 to analyze and respond to data from diagnostic tools, but they do not include guidance for administrators. Assessments and observations yield meaningful information for teachers to use when planning instruction and differentiation. Based on student-progress, teachers then have the tools to respond appropriately to all domains. However, the materials do not provide administrator-specific guidance meant to help them support teachers in this response. Considering the guidance and resources that are available, administrators will still be able to leverage information and provide meaningful support.

Evidence includes but is not limited to:

The materials include an "Assessment Guide" that instructs teachers on how to collect, document, and evaluate data. A specific subsection also explains how teachers should alter instruction based on the data results. For example, the teacher uses assessment results to set up flexible small groups, guide instructional decisions throughout the day, and determine if children need a more in-depth diagnostic assessment that analyzes strengths, weaknesses, and special needs. This resource and subsequent resources are accessible both in paper and pencil format or through a digital tool; results can be shared with parents either way.

The beginning of the year "Screening Assessment" helps teachers measure how students enter prekindergarten. This assessment includes a results page outlining the student's current understanding and providing a rating for both literacy and math. Students are rated either

*emerging*, *developing*, or *proficient* learners. These ratings are broken down by student skill. For example, when measuring literacy understanding, a student who names eight or fewer letters is considered *emerging*. If the child names 9–13 letters, they are considered *developing*. Then, a child who names 14 or more letters is in the *proficient* stage. A similar standard is used when measuring math understanding. General recommendations are then made according to the student proficiency level. These recommendations usually reference the extra instructional strategy boxes that accompany each standard lesson. For instance, if a student rates at *emerging*, they may receive the standard lesson designed for four-year-old students, a lesson modification from an instructional strategy box meant to support three-year-olds, or an instructional strategy box labeled “Extra Support.” This page also includes recommended games from the publisher’s website for students to practice and improve their understanding.

The Assessment Guide also includes “Observational Checklists” to help teachers measure student progress. These checklists are aligned to Pre-K Learning Outcomes and also include a provider box where teachers can make anecdotal notes and observations. Otherwise, the teacher places a checkmark in the appropriate column besides each Pre-K Learning Outcome; they can choose between *Not Yet*, *Sometimes*, or *Yes*. General recommendations follow depending on how the student is assessed.

While the materials do not have administrator-specific guidance, they do include data that administrators can use to identify which program areas need improvement. “Scout” is the observational assessment tool that helps teachers document student learning in a single, organized place. Through Scout, teachers can generate reports to help differentiate instruction for individual students. The information is useful, and administrators can use it as they support teachers.



**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 progress monitoring opportunities. These assessments are routine and systemic, accurately measuring and tracking student progress. The frequency of progress monitoring is appropriate for the age and content skill.

Evidence includes but is not limited to:

Literacy and math assessment opportunities occur at the beginning, middle, and end of the year, clearly outlining student proficiency levels of emerging, developing, and proficient. Additional skills across all domains are monitored via weekly checklists that align with the focus domain skills of the week. Teachers complete the checklists throughout the year while informally observing students during purposeful play and other activities. The teacher can then generate reports to help differentiate instruction for individual students. These resources and guidance reminders help teachers recognize that young children experience incredible growth and learning at an uneven and sometimes unpredictable pace.

The materials also include “Screening Assessments” to help teachers formally measure progress across time. The “Assessment Guide” offers these screenings to obtain a baseline measurement of the children’s proficiency in literacy and math. They are administered at the beginning of the year. Throughout the year, teachers can use the “Pre-K Outcomes Progress Report” to note children’s progress toward mastery of prekindergarten learning outcomes. Lastly, the teacher uses “Portfolios” to gather anecdotal notes, photographs, and center work samples for each child; this helps teachers document and demonstrate progress over time.

All assessments are developmentally appropriate, aligned with the Texas Prekindergarten Guidelines, and are administered one-on-one or via observation during authentic play. “Benchmark Assessments” are the formal assessments that are administered three times a year. These assessments last 10–15 minutes for literacy and 10–15 minutes for math. As stated, the screening assessment measures students’ beginning of the year knowledge. Middle of the year knowledge is assessed twice, once at 12 weeks and again at 24 weeks. Then, the end of

the year assessment determines whether students have obtained the necessary skills for kindergarten.

**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 guidance, scaffolds, supports, and extensions that maximize student learning potential. Materials provide recommended targeted instruction and activities for students who struggle to master content. Throughout the themes, materials provide recommended targeted instruction and activities for students who have mastered the content. Materials also include enrichment activities for all levels of learners.

Evidence includes but is not limited to:

Materials provide recommended targeted instruction and activities for students who struggle to master content. Throughout the themes, the materials include an “Extra Support” differentiation support box with suggested downward scaffolds for students who need extra support. Theme 2 provides the teacher with visual opportunities to support children’s learning. For example, as an extra support, children who may not yet be able to identify the letter their name begins with can choose from given cards, as the teacher prompts them by asking, “Is this your name? If so, please come up and place your name card on the chart.” The teacher offers support to children with visual and mobility issues by making materials more accessible to them. The teacher also allows students who cannot articulate responses to questions to act out their responses. In Theme 3, during the “Literacy Circle,” the teacher displays picture cards that support student success with onset and rime. In Theme 6, teachers guide students to understand the vocabulary term *enormous* by having them draw various sizes of shapes and then sort the shapes by size.

Materials provide differentiated instruction through extra “Engage and Extend” activities to support students who have mastered content. In a Theme 1 Engage and Extend box, students who have mastered the majority of alphabet letters are guided to identify the first letter in their name and identify other students’ names that start with the same letter. The centers in

Theme 1 include flexible grouping, inviting students who have mastered sorting objects to begin comparing the objects' size and weight, thus engaging tactile learning. Theme 4 includes a "Math Circle" activity in which students count up from one to six. The teacher is guided to engage and extend the lesson by asking the child to name any number between two and seven and having the child count back from that number. Also, in Theme 4, the teacher reads the story *This Is the Way*. Then the class discusses how people care for themselves. To extend student learning, the materials provide a differentiated support recommendation to ask volunteers to act out one way to care for friends that was not included in the story; the class guesses what the volunteer is acting out. In Theme 9, students identify objects in the classroom that have a given sound rather than simply matching alphabet letters. Theme 9 also invites students to make a connection with a "Turn and Talk" activity to discuss where they have seen a tree.

Materials provide additional enrichment activities for all levels of learners. Throughout the year, themes include themed centers and choice centers wherein the teacher provides materials that allow children to explore and apply new learning in a variety of ways. Centers include "Reading and Listening," "Pretend and Learn," "ABC Fun," "Writer's Club," "Creativity Station," "Math Fun," "STEM" (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math), and "Sand, Water, and More." Each center allows children to spend sustained time exploring a concept or theme. In Theme 1, children are given the opportunity to role-play the job of a teacher. Children get to engage in this Pretend and Learn center at their personal level of understanding of the concept. In Theme 5, students create a self-portrait at the Creativity Station. This center allows students the freedom to create without expectations or a specific goal in mind. Theme 7 guides the teacher to model making observations and to describe how light can change, providing opportunities for children to investigate and observe light. Theme 8 includes enrichment activities that invite the child to make a connection with their experiences of pretend play and their imagination.

**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 provide guidance, scaffolds, supports, and extensions that appeal to a variety of student learning interests and needs. Throughout the units, the materials support developmentally appropriate instructional strategies, flexible grouping, and multiple types of practices, allowing children to participate in guided, independent, and collaborative activities. Materials include activities to engage children in mastery of the content.

Evidence includes but is not limited to:

Materials include a variety of instructional approaches to engage students in mastery of the content. Each day includes lessons delivered in whole group “Circle Times,” small groups, and directed play through centers. The materials include a “Learn and Play” section, which contains movement activities associated with core content in each theme. The teacher directs “Story Time,” “Literacy Circle,” “Math Circle,” the additional Circle Time, “Let’s Talk,” “Let’s Read,” and “Reflect.” Students engage in indirect instructional activities during center time and during part of Learn and Play in the daily schedule.

Materials support multiple types of practices and provide guidance and structures to achieve effective implementation. Math, science, and social studies lessons include guidance to engage, develop, and practice a given skill following a gradual release model. Independent practice opportunities occur during the “Practice” part of math, science, and social studies lessons as well as during centers. The materials do not include guidance related to project-based learning. Materials support opportunities for students to practice new skills in a variety of ways by working collaboratively. Children are allowed to participate in activities that allow for independent practice after a whole group activity. Materials use multiple teaching strategies in

lessons by incorporating a variety of different instructional approaches in order to engage students in mastering the content and to meet children's individual learning needs. The materials also include a "Differentiated Support" box that indicates the learning style that best represents the additional support. The teacher uses the Reflect portion of the day as well as whole group time to facilitate direct instruction. During the Reflect portion, the teacher uses visuals and questioning to guide the students to understand the concept better. The materials include developmentally appropriate strategies for outdoor play, physical movement to illustrate various concepts, pictorial representation to support vocabulary development, and learning through song. The "Professional Learning Guide" gives guidance on linguistics to support students struggling with language acquisition or pronunciation. The Differentiated Support box provided on nearly every lesson page includes alternating guidance on how to support struggling learners and students who would benefit from an extension. The materials guide and support teachers in selecting appropriate teaching strategies depending on the learning goal, specific context, and needs of the children.

The instructional strategies can be located throughout the year within the "Meet and Greet" section, which utilizes songs and rhymes, "Morning Meeting," and snack time to have children practice concepts that are being taught. The teacher uses centers and small groups to implement hands-on, concrete materials to guide children toward understanding. Developmentally appropriate strategies include acting out a concept, using a sentence stem to prompt an oral response, and providing visuals. Throughout the year, differentiated supports, extensions, and teacher notes are guidelines that teachers can use to support all learners. Core and supplemental center activities that directly relate to the theme are identified within each theme. Some Circle Time activities include guidance on engaging students in the content, developing an understanding of the content, and practicing the content. During some of the "Practice the Content" sections, there is guidance related to independent student work. Throughout the year, small group lesson materials provide teachers with opportunities to guide students to understanding through talking, scaffolding, and hands-on discovery. During the math small group, the teacher uses picture cards to guide students to understand how to compare numbers through talking and using hands-on materials. The teacher asks, "Who has more cards?" and guides the students to talk about the concept. Each theme has a Story Time, which is specifically designed for daily large group instruction. During this large group time, the teacher sets the stage for the introduction of the theme through a read-aloud and provides information about new concepts. The "Centergize" portion of the day allows students to engage in hands-on activities with teacher observation, commenting, and scaffolding. The teacher-directed activities that take place during whole group instruction, Reflect portions, and "Sing, Rhyme, and Shout," lead to child-led learning within small groups, centers, and outdoor play. The materials support the teacher by laying out exactly what should be in each center and by explaining the teacher's role within the center: introduce, engage, and observe.

Each theme provides a Learn and Play section, which allows children to engage in indirect and direct learning through play. In Theme 3, in a teacher-directed activity, the teacher uses a puppet to review using location words. The teacher demonstrates this by putting the puppet below, in front of, or on the desk. The teacher encourages students to respond using the

correct location words. Also, in Theme 3, students learn about looking outside. The teacher reads aloud a book about weather. The teacher asks questions to engage children in conversations. After reading the book, the teacher asks the children to volunteer to share fun things they like to do in different seasons. If students need more one-on-one attention for a particular skill or concept acquisition, materials provide differentiated support.

In the Let's Talk section of Theme 7, students pass Javi around in a whole group circle; they practice sitting quietly and waiting until it is their turn to hold Javi and respond to the question. In this theme, the teacher reminds students of three-step directions: "Hang up your jacket, sit in circle time, sit quietly and listen." The teacher extends the lesson by asking students to remember additional directions that were given.

In Theme 8, the "Your Choice" center provides opportunities for children to interact and communicate with a peer. In the Let's Talk section of Theme 8, the teacher engages children in communication about their pretend play. Through teacher-directed questioning, the children engage in conversation and pretend play and devise a common plan. In the "Differentiated Support" section of this theme, the teacher guides students to problem-solve and resolve conflict. Then, in Sing, Rhyme, and Shout, students act out multi-step directions as a whole group: First, they pretend to be caterpillars and move slowly; then, they pretend to be butterflies and fly away.

**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 include enough support for English Learners (EL) to meet grade-level learning expectations. There are communicated, sequenced, and scaffolded linguistic accommodations commensurate with various levels of English language proficiency found throughout each theme. Scaffolds for English Learners include sentence stems, echoing a model, visuals, and total physical response. The materials also mention the use of students' first language as a means to develop linguistic, affective, cognitive, and academic skills in English. Some Spanish cognates are included, but other specific teacher guidance utilizing a student's first language could be improved.

Evidence includes but is not limited to:

The materials include an "English Teacher's Guide," "Spanish Teacher's Guide," and an "English and Spanish Professional Learning Guide" for teachers to utilize so they can become familiar with effective EL strategies. These guides include relevant strategies for all nine themes and provide targeted support. The Teacher's Guide explains that ELs benefit when teachers provide instruction in following directions, understanding social and academic conversation, learning vocabulary acquisition, and practicing sound discrimination. Generally, teachers can support these areas by regularly engaging students in conversations about school, drawing attention to key vocabulary, and providing feedback on language structures. Across each week, the English language Development section includes specific strategies for students depending on their language proficiency level. According to the Professional Learning Guide, "Children develop an ongoing curiosity about language and internalize meanings of a wide variety of words as teachers provide recursive vocabulary instruction and practice." The material provides children with multiple opportunities to engage with language through songs, fingerplays, stories, structured phonemic awareness, and phonics instruction.



Each theme includes a section specific to the needs of English language learners. This section is located at the end of each weekly activity plan and works in conjunction with the “English Language Development” cards to provide support for ELs. Both resources provide suggestions for students that span the language proficiency standards of beginner, intermediate, advanced, and advanced high. Including resources in the child’s native language, providing cognates whenever possible, and allowing answers in the student’s home language are three suggested supports listed in the Professional Learning Guide; however, there could be more resources that support the application of these practices. Spanish cognates are mentioned and provided many times throughout the themes, but the materials do not provide other examples of how to use children’s first language as the foundation for developing skills in English.

During the first week of Theme 2, Beginners follow an *I say, we say, you say* structure to learn and speak the word *shy*. Intermediate students sort pictures of students that are *shy* or *not shy*. Advanced students complete sentence frames about being *shy*, and Advanced High students use the word *shy* in a sentence independently. Common strategies from the English language development cards include the use of sentence frames, visuals, and total physical response. Total physical response opportunities are generally playful in nature as students act out the meaning of words or use props to develop the understanding of a concept. Later in the unit, students read the book, *The Lion and the Mouse*. Again, support is differentiated depending on proficiency level; strategies range from choosing between two picture cards, completing sentence frames, and responding to answers through drawing. These strategies continue regardless of the content. During a small group math lesson, the teacher models finger counting before asking the children what else they can count in the classroom (desks, pencils, windows, etc.). For this specific lesson, the teacher has access to picture cards she can utilize as a visual scaffold for ELs: “Let’s count these cards together: One, two, three, four, five. I have five cards.” The teacher shows the numeral card 5 and has the children say the number word. Then, the children work in pairs to practice counting objects together, showing numeral cards to represent each total.

In Theme 7, one of the scaffolds is that children echo the teacher after she says the letter *q* and the sound for *q*. The teacher listens carefully to pronunciation and provides corrective feedback as needed. When the teacher introduces the letter *W*, she begins with similar modeling and echoing. For the beginner EL, the teacher distributes upper and lowercase letter *W* cards, and the children say the name and the sound. For the intermediate learner, the children use these letter cards to go around the room to find a peer who has the same card as them. For the advanced EL, the children complete a sentence stem: “This is a \_\_\_\_\_. It sounds like /w/.” For the advanced high EL, the children trace the uppercase and lowercase letter *W*. The materials are sequenced in a way that supports children at varying levels and allows for repetition that is playful and interactive where children interact with the letter *W* with their peers.

The strategies in the differentiation section are specific to the lesson being taught that day. For example, in Theme 9, when ELs struggle with a vocabulary lesson on the words *tree*, *apple*, and *fruit*, the teacher holds up the picture of the word *tree*. The teacher says, “Say the word *tree*,”

and tells the students to repeat the word. The teacher does the same thing with the words *apple* and *fruit*. In a small group, the teacher displays and says the words *fan* and *can*. “These are rhyming words; they both end the /an/.” Children repeat the rhyming words, and the teacher adds additional words until the children show mastery.

**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 a cohesive, year-long plan to build students' concept development that includes purposeful practice and review opportunities. These review and practice opportunities cover all domains throughout the curriculum. Additionally, this plan considers how to vertically align instruction so that it builds year to year with specific connections to kindergarten TEKS.

Evidence includes but is not limited to:

The materials provide a year's worth of content across nine themes. Each theme is four weeks in length for a total of 36 weeks of instruction. Many of the themes connect with kindergarten Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS). These vertical connections are summarized prior to each theme in a chart titled, "Ready for Kindergarten." This resource can help teachers see the alignment between Pre-K and Kindergarten at a glance. For example, the theme called "On the Go" includes a study of transportation forms and how things move. This theme has a direct connection to the kindergarten TEKS that expects students to observe and describe the way that objects can move. All ten pre-Kindergarten domains are represented throughout the Thematic units, or "Themes."

Throughout these themes, the content plan is cohesively designed to build upon children's current level of understanding with clear connections within and between the lessons. Domains are addressed at the beginning, middle, and end of the year, and instruction follows a general progression of skills. Using math as an example, at the beginning of the year, students rote count and identify numerals. By the end of the year, students use concrete models or make verbal word problems for subtraction.

The instructional materials include repeated opportunities for students to review and practice skills across all domains. Each theme includes a section entitled "Weekly Focus," that lists the guidelines that will be covered during the theme as well as the guidelines that are spiraled

during the theme. During a “Transition Activity” in Theme 2, the teacher reviews previously taught rhyming words through a “Chant and Rhyme.” Then, the teacher has access to relevant guidance when setting up learning centers for concept review and practice. At the end of the theme, the teacher references the “Centergize Theme Centers” section to refresh, introduce, and add materials to learning centers. This section helps teachers customize centers according to each thematic topic and helps teachers keep activities interesting and engaging.

Materials in Themes 4 and 5 provide multiple opportunities to review and practice knowledge and skills. For math skills, students first practice counting in Theme 4, week 1, when students use words to count from 1–30. This practice is also described as aligning to the Kindergarten skill, “students should be able to count to 100 by both ones and tens beginning with any given number.” Then in Theme 5, students review counting up to ten using picture cards in a small group. In this activity, they compare numbers with their classmates and count upward from any given number. Other opportunities for review or practice occur during “Outdoor Play” and transitioning periods during this theme. During “Outdoor Play,” students practice following two- and three-step directions while playing the game, *Follow the Leader*. Then when transitioning from one subject to the next, students say a syllabication chant that involves repeating words that have different syllables.

Throughout Theme 7, the children practice social skills that were taught previously in Theme 2. At the beginning of Theme 2, students identify where they are and where their body is located in a particular space. Then at the beginning of Theme 7, children revisit this concept prior to the activity. They are reminded to show respect for other people's space by not bumping into one another. When they complete the activity, teachers hold them accountable for their body and watch for intervention opportunities.

**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. 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. Lessons include support to help teachers implement a school years' worth of prekindergarten instruction, including realistic pacing guidance and routines. Although there is ample guidance for teachers, there is no specific guidance for administrators. Some supports that are framed as general guidance could help administrators support teachers in implementation.

Evidence includes but is not limited to:

The curriculum supports implementation by providing educators with the "Professional Learning Guide" (PLG). In this guide, teachers have access to an overview, lesson walkthrough, relevant research, vocabulary list, scope and sequence, and resources for linguistics and letter formation. The "Scope and Sequence" aligns with the Texas Prekindergarten Guidelines. The different sections are Social and Emotional Development, Language and Communication, Emergent Literacy-Reading, Emergent Literacy-Writing, Math, Science, Social Studies, Fine Arts, Physical Development, and Technology Applications. Each section lists the skills and the themes in which the skills are taught. For example, this resource shows that students explore geographic tools and resources in Themes 5 and 7.

The materials include 36 weeks' worth of full-day instruction across nine themes. The pacing guidance is realistic as the direct instruction lessons include a full "I do, We do, You do"

instructional model within 15-minute time blocks. “Purposeful Play” is either 60 minutes long or 90 minutes long, and it occurs both in the morning and in the afternoon. This model provides children with opportunities to thoroughly explore content or concepts within each instructional day.

Themes and lessons are organized in a way to support teacher implementation of the curriculum. Each theme includes a section called “Theme at a Glance” that includes the books and resources used during instruction. Then, the materials provide guidance on how to launch each theme, followed by an overview summarizing the theme “focus skills” and “spiraled skills.” Some resources, such as the Javi doll, are used across themes and lessons to introduce the topics and to focus attention during lessons. Finally, the materials present an explanation of each lesson in a day-by-day format. “Pacing Your Day” includes a complete, predictable schedule for the teacher and student. Both themes and lessons are color-coded. Different types of text are color-coded accordingly within individual lesson plans, and teacher scripts clearly state what they should say during direct instruction. Additionally, there is a color-coded section of the necessary materials for activity implementation. These lessons and many associated instructional resources are available in both print and digital format.

Teachers and students can access the online resources through the “The Go Digital!” portal. The website gives teachers access to a planning portal that allows them to view instructional components as either teacher or student, plan anytime and anywhere, and customize lesson plans to meet the daily needs of the students. “Alphabet Cards,” “Vocabulary Cards,” pictures, and “Social and Emotional Learning cards” are all available online. Students can use these resources both in class and at home as well.

Themes break down all observations and progress monitoring that should occur within that particular theme. For example, in Themes 4, 5, and 6, teachers should monitor students’ progress each week by using observational checklists, portfolios, and checks for understanding daily. These resources help teachers monitor Phonological Awareness, Alphabet Knowledge, and Theme Vocabulary. During the first week of instruction in Theme 7, teachers monitor the phonological awareness skill of sentences, the alphabet knowledge skill of letter identification, patterns in math, light and electricity in science, and vocabulary development.

**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. Guidance explains how the program can adjust 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 the established teacher, campus, or district environments.

Evidence includes but is not limited to:

The materials are built around nine themes, each theme spanning four weeks. Early themes have a focus on exploring the school environment, while later themes are more content-driven. For example, the first theme is titled, “Hello School!” while Theme 9 is titled, “Earth, Moon, and Sky.” These thematic units are sequenced in a way that the focus begins with the child, then moves toward the community, and finally, the world and beyond. Themes are designed to be taught in order as most of the embedded skills increase in complexity over time.

To accommodate programmatic design and scheduling considerations, the materials can easily adapt to either a full-day or half-day prekindergarten class. While originally designed for full-day instruction, the materials integrate intuitive suggestions that make half-day instruction simple. The half-day program is identified with broken dots, and some of the instructional activities are reduced or modified. Both half-day and full-day pre-K classes provide materials that are easy to use.

The “Professional Learning Guide” (PLG) includes a “Scope and Sequence,” recommending how the teaching skills should be taught in a progressive manner. While pre-K outcomes are taught

in a thematic sequence that increases in complexity over time, skills within each theme also increase in complexity as well.

As lessons progress in rigor, they include strategic implementation guidance ensuring the sequence of instruction is consistent with the developmental progression of skills. Early math instruction includes rote counting and numeral recognition through the numeral 5, but later in the year, the numbers go up to 20. Instead of the alphabet being taught from A–Z, the letters are introduced in a sequence that supports how children learn best. In Theme 1, the teacher introduces the alphabet with a song. Later in Theme 2, the teacher introduces the letter Tt, /t/. In Theme 3, the teacher introduces the letter Pp, /p/. Starting with familiar consonants, moving through vowels and lesser-used consonants, alphabetic instruction also uses the students' names as a foundation for learning. This structure reflects the current research understanding of how students best develop alphabetic knowledge.

The focus in Theme 5 is on “Everyday Helpers.” “Language and Communication” lessons within this theme follow a progression of skills that begin with responding appropriately, move toward following two- and three-step directions, and end with students engaging appropriately in conversation. Language and Communication skills end with students using sentences that have more than one phrase. Writing instruction for this theme follows a similar sequence that reflects developmental progression.



**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. Both digital and print mediums help promote strong relationships between teachers and families. The materials specify activities for use at home to support students' learning and development through a site called ReadyRosie, in addition to the online skill games that families can play together.

Evidence includes but is not limited to:

The "Professional Learning Guide" (PLG) outlines the importance of "Family Engagement" and why it matters in both an early childhood classroom and at home. This section indicates that teachers support families as partners when they create a welcoming environment that promotes respect. The guide states that communication with parents is key to fostering a positive connection between home and school.

To support this communication, teachers have access to weekly letters that outline the learning targets for the week and how parents can reinforce the learning targets at home. These letters can be sent home in English, Spanish, Vietnamese, Chinese, Tagalog, or Arabic. As well, families are encouraged to read with their children at home. Digital books are provided so that families can access them from the home setting to facilitate reading. Along with the books from the "Three Cheers for Pre-K Engagement" site, the "Go Digital!" interface gives families access to the "Games" app and "Javi's Whirly World" from home. These resources allow families to support students' learning and development at home and connect them to instruction in the classroom. On the website, parents can also find how-to-videos to improve at-home learning.

Each theme includes a "Let's Celebrate" section at the conclusion of each unit. For Theme 1, families are invited to a "School is Cool" celebration during which families sing songs and participate in a gallery walk of children's art and writing. Theme 2's Let's Celebrate opportunity invites families to sing and look at student's hand-drawn family portraits. During this time,

students share what they have learned through their purposeful play centers. Afterward, students reflect and celebrate what they have accomplished in this theme.

In Theme 4, "Take Care," students discuss different traditions in the community. At the end of the theme, teachers encourage families to discuss traditions that are important to them with their children. In a subsequent lesson, students come prepared to share these traditions with the class. Then, in the Let's Celebrate section, families are invited to prepare their favorite foods and bring them to school.

**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 in print or digital) is neither distracting nor chaotic. The materials include appropriate use of white space and a design that supports and does not distract from student learning. Additionally, pictures and graphics support student engagement without being visually distracting.

Evidence includes but is not limited to:

The “Teacher Guide” is designed so teachers can easily navigate to desired; each main section includes a bolded content title like, “Story Time,” “Literacy Circle,” “Alphabet Knowledge,” “Math Circle,” “Science,” “Social Studies,” and “Technology.” The sections for differentiated support are easily identifiable because they are consistently outlined by a bold purple box. Within lessons, “Check For Understanding” boxes are consistently colored yellow and located along the edge of the page. Extra times during the day like recess, snack, and rest time are always found in a green box. When a lesson references a resource, such as a vocabulary support card, the teacher’s guide notes this with a small yet clear picture of the specific resource. Themes are color-coded weekly, and visuals are provided for teachers to identify the materials they will use for each lesson. For example, all the themes include four weeks. All Week 1s are color-coded with a green border, Week 2s are purple, Week 3s are yellow, and Week 4s are orange. This color code is used consistently throughout the nine themes.

The student-facing materials contain a combination of real and cartoon images with bright colors. These materials, including vocabulary cards, 5x5 cards, books, and alphabet cards, are large enough for the class to see during circle time activities. Each alphabet card consists of a letter and a picture. The bolded letter includes both lower and uppercase letters, while the graphic representation serves as a cue word to help children remember the letter and its sound association. For example, the alphabet card for the letter *Bb* includes the picture of a cartoon baby. Similarly, vocabulary cards list a definition paired with a large photograph that helps

students understand the vocabulary word. In Theme 2, the vocabulary card *Senses* includes clear and realistic pictures that help define the word. The card shows a photo of a child using his senses.

Throughout the classroom, visuals help support student engagement without causing distraction. Center signs have a picture specific to each domain. For instance, the math center sign has a truck that is filled with numbers and shapes. These interactive images help students navigate the classroom appropriately. The mood meter poster uses plants to indicate the different moods of *sad*, *happy*, *mad*, and *calm*; the colors are bright and vivid. For individual “Social and Emotional Learning Cards,” the graphics used are also age-appropriate and kid-friendly. Students can easily recognize the intent of the Social and Emotional card and describe the action that they see. The cards are designed to promote conversation between the teacher and students, as well as between the students and their peers. In all, materials and resources adhere to the User Interface Design guidelines integrating functionality and aesthetic design.