

Interdisciplinary Pre-Kindergarten Unit Rubric

This rubric is designed to support implementation of the [NYS Prekindergarten Foundation for the Common Core](#). It was created by the [Office of Early Childhood Education](#) specifically for Universal Pre-Kindergarten programs, and is based on rubrics from the [Common Core Library](#) and the [Tri-State Collaborative](#). Teachers, directors, and school leaders are welcome to use this rubric as a resource when designing and implementing interdisciplinary Common Core aligned pre-k units to support school readiness. It is designed to support practice; it is not designed to be used for evaluative or high-stakes purposes.

This rubric outlines characteristics of quality for different aspects of a unit:

- I. [Alignment with the NYS Foundation for the Common Core](#)
- II. [Focus on Common Core Learning Standard \(CCLS\) shifts](#)
- III. [Instructional Supports](#)
- IV. [Assessment](#)

Teachers, directors, and school leaders may use this rubric in a variety of ways depending on their needs. Some possibilities include:

- Referencing it as a guide when developing interdisciplinary Common Core aligned pre-k units
- Using it to reflect on existing units and make modifications to ensure the units are more strongly aligned to the Common Core
- Providing concrete, actionable feedback to colleagues about an existing unit plan

I. Alignment with the NYS Prekindergarten Foundation for the Common Core	
Characteristics of Quality	Notes
<p><i>The unit aligns with the guiding principles of the NYS Prekindergarten Foundation for the Common Core:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focuses teaching and learning on a targeted set of standards in all domains. • Integrates learning across all domains. • Includes deep exploration about a topic that interests students. • Emphasizes students’ expressive and receptive language development. • Acknowledges students’ rich backgrounds, cultures, and linguistic differences. • Engages families and communities in students’ learning. • Builds students’ content knowledge and their understanding of social studies, the arts, and/or science through the coherent selection of texts and hands-on learning experiences. 	
II. Focus on Common Core Learning Standard (CCLS) shifts	
Characteristics of Quality	Notes
<p><i>The unit provides sufficient evidence of the instructional shifts of the CCLS:</i></p> <p><u>ELA/Literacy</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Balancing informational and literary texts: Provides access to the world (science, social studies, the arts, and literature) through read alouds and access to multiple text-based sources. • Text-based answers: Facilitates rich and rigorous evidence-based discussions based on specific, thought-provoking questions about common texts. • Writing, drawing, and dictating from sources: Emphasizes gathering evidence from text(s) to inform, explain, make an argument, or answer a research question (e.g. How do caterpillars turn into butterflies?). • Staircase of complexity: Provides time and opportunities for close and careful reading that promotes higher order thinking, as well as reading for enjoyment, and provides appropriate scaffolding and supports. • Academic vocabulary: Focuses on expressive language and comprehension (i.e. receptive language) of pivotal and commonly found words (such as “author” or “rhyme”) and less on esoteric literary terms (such as “onomatopoeia” or “alliteration”). <p><u>Mathematics</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus: Provides opportunities to develop a deep conceptual understanding through explorations with mathematical manipulatives and tools, opportunities for students to describe their understanding of mathematics. • Coherence: Facilitates transferring knowledge and extending previous learning in mathematics to other domains. • Fluency: Provides opportunities for practicing repetition of basic mathematical skills (e.g. counting, finger rhymes, dancing). • Deep understanding: Provides opportunities to demonstrate a deep conceptual understanding of core mathematics by applying them to new situations, as well as writing and speaking about their understanding. • Application: Provides opportunities for students to make real-world connections and apply mathematical thinking and vocabulary to other content areas. • Dual intensity: Provides a balance of time and opportunities for students to build an understanding of mathematical concepts in student-guided learning centers and teacher-guided activities (e.g. song/dance, games) 	

III. Instructional Supports	
Characteristics of Quality	Notes
<p><i>The unit includes instructional support materials that:</i></p> <p><u>Student Engagement</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage an arc of learning: introduce a topic or skill, advance understanding over time, and deepen understanding as a unit of study ends. • Address multiple Depth of Knowledge (DOK) levels through scaffolding (e.g. utilize specific, text-based, and thought provoking questions to engage students). • Provide opportunities for students to engage with content in different ways (e.g. literature, field trip, centers). • Emphasize connections between all domains of development. • Provide opportunities for authentic learning experiences, application of skills, student-directed inquiry, analysis, evaluation, and/or reflection. • Facilitate a mix of instructional approaches, embedding key pedagogical strategies, such as checking for understanding, modeling, a range of questions, etc. • Contain a range of informational, literary, and literary non-fiction texts related to the topic and strategically selected and sequenced throughout the unit. <p><u>Diversity of Learners</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use authentic assessment data from previous units to guide instruction. • Provide multiple entry points for students of varying needs to engage in learning and access learning materials. • Anticipate any challenges with student access to the unit and successfully address barriers (sources of challenge) for all students (Universal Design for Learning). • Design instruction to support diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds, readiness levels, interests, and styles. • Provide supports and strategies for teaching and assessing all students, including English language learners, students with disabilities, and students who are advanced. • Scaffold learning by providing additional supports for some students and gradually removing supports for others. <p><u>Family Engagement</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide opportunities for families to understand children’s expected learning and be involved in the classroom. • Promote learning extensions at home and on the go; provide families with activities, resources and strategies to support their child’s learning outside the classroom and ensure these activities are brought back into the classroom 	
IV. Assessment	
Characteristics of Quality	Notes
<p><i>The unit provides opportunities to regularly assess student progress toward standards-based content and skills that:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are based on student-centered, hands-on learning experiences and elicits authentic learning opportunities. • Are curriculum-embedded and well sequenced. • Include assessment questions at multiple DOK levels, possibly through scaffolding. • Are easily linked to DOE/ACS approved authentic assessment tools (Work Sampling System, Teaching Strategies GOLD, High Scope Child Observation Record). • Include a culminating task that allows students to demonstrate content knowledge and progress toward standards • Demonstrate unbiased data and shows how the unit is accessible to all students. 	