
Checklist for Evaluating Question Quality (ELA Tool 4)

The second advance in college and career readiness standards is “reading, writing, and speaking grounded in evidence from text.” This resource can serve as a quality check on the alignment of questions that require students to present careful analyses, well-defended claims, and clear information on the text they read.⁵

Lessons Under Review (include page numbers): _____

Criteria	Comments/Questions/Fixes (refer to specific questions!)
A. Text-Dependent Questions	
A1. Does the student have to read the text to answer each question?	
A2. Is it always clear to students that answering each question requires using evidence from the text to support their claims? (Reading Standard 1 should always be in play!)	
B. Text-Specific Questions	
B1. Are the questions specific enough so they can be answered only by reference to this text? (Can they be answered with careful reading rather than background knowledge?)	
B2. Are the questions tied to level-specific standards?	

⁵ Adapted from *Checklist for Evaluating Question Quality* from Student Achievement Partners. <http://achievethecore.org/page/47/checklist-for-evaluating-question-quality>

CHECKLIST FOR EVALUATING QUESTION QUALITY

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C. Sequence of Questions That Build Knowledge	
C1. Do the early questions in the sequence focus on specific phrases and sentences to support basic comprehension of the text and develop student confidence before moving on to more challenging tasks?	
C2. Are the questions coherently sequenced? Do they build toward gradual understanding of the text’s meaning?	
C3. Do the questions stay focused on the text and go beyond it to make other connections in extension activities only <i>after</i> the text has been explored?	
C4. If multiple texts/different media are under consideration, are students asked to examine each text closely before making connections between texts?	
D. Well-Constructed Culminating Task or Writing Prompts	
D1. Does the culminating task or writing prompt(s) call on the knowledge and understanding acquired through the questions?	
D2. Does the culminating task or writing prompt(s) demand that students write to the text and use evidence?	
D3. Are the instructions to teachers and students clear about what must be performed to achieve proficiency?	
D4. Is this a writing task worthy of the student and classroom time it will consume?	