

Innovation Lab Network Performance Assessment Project  
Quality Criteria for Performance Assessments  
**American Dream: Reality, Promise, or Illusion?**

| Quality Criteria   | Yes | Yes, with Slight Modifications | No | Rationale/Suggestions   |
|--|-----|--------------------------------|----|---|
| <b>1. Focus on Deeper Learning</b>   |     |                                |    |   |
| a. Does the task require the demonstration and/or application of complex skills (e.g., Critical Abilities, DOK Levels 3 and 4, 21 <sup>st</sup> century skills, Key Cognitive Strategies)?*  | X   |                                |    | Task requires students to demonstrate literary analysis skills, as well as the ability to synthesize information from a number of different sources.  |
| b. Can students' responses to this task (what students are asked to produce) provide evidence of important college/career readiness skills and Critical Abilities (e.g., collaboration, research skills, evidence-based communication)?* | X   |                                |    | Students' responses can provide evidence of the following Critical Abilities: analysis of information skills (e.g., integrating and synthesizing information from a variety of formats—poetry, novels, American foundational documents) and communication skills (oral and written).  |
| c. Does the task address key concepts and skills in the discipline that are transferable to other contexts?*   | X   |                                |    | The ability to analyze information from different sources and to synthesize that information into a written product (e.g., an essay) is a skill that is transferable to other contexts.   |
| <b>2. Alignment to Standards</b>   |     |                                |    |   |
| a. Does the task measure key skills and major claims emphasized by the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) and/or NGSS? *   | X   |                                |    | Task measures Claim #1 (students can read closely and analytically), Claim #2 (students can produce well-grounded writing), and Claim #4 (students can engage in research and inquiry to analyze and synthesize information). In addition, the task module lists multiple CCSS standards in language, reading, speaking and listening, and writing, most of which the task does measure. It is not clear that the task measures all of the speaking and listening skills listed, however, and the task does not seem to measure RL.9-10.6, which focuses on works of literature from outside the United States. |
| b. Can students' responses to this task (what students are asked to produce) be scored using CCSS/NGSS aligned rubrics? *  | X   |                                |    | Students' responses (essays) can be scored using a CCSS-aligned rubric.   |
| c. Are the scoring criteria--rubrics, point scoring systems, checklists (if provided)--aligned to key expectations of the CCSS/NGSS?   | X   |                                |    | Students' written responses are scored using the "LDC Student Work Rubric—Informational or Explanatory," which is aligned to key expectations of the CCSS.  |

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|---|-----|--------------------------------|----|--|
| d. Is the rigor of the task appropriately matched to the grade-level standards being assessed?  | X   |                                |    | The rigor of the task appropriately matches the grade-level standards being assessed, although it should be mentioned that the focus of the task—looking at how different works of literature approach the topic of the American Dream—could be said to also match RL.6.9 and the grade-level of most of the texts used in the task is below grade 10.                 |
| <b>3. Student Choice and Agency</b>   |     |                                |    |  |
| a. Does the task allow for a variety of responses and/or solution pathways? *   | X   |                                |    | Task allows for a variety of student responses in terms of which evidence students choose to support their explanation of how identified texts illustrate the American Dream.  |
| b. Does the task offer opportunities for student ownership and student choice (e.g., selecting a research question or topic; selecting sources; etc.)?  | X   |                                |    | Task offers students the opportunity to choose the texts (from a list of texts) that they will write about in their essay explaining how texts illustrate the American Dream, and they choose the evidence to support their explanation.   |
| c. Does the task require student-initiated planning and management of information/data and ideas (e.g., determining strategies for solving a problem; designing an investigation; deciding how to present findings; etc.)?  |     | X                              |    | Task requires students to decide how to present their findings, but other than that, there is no student-initiated planning or management of information/data.   |
| <b>4. Relevance and Authenticity</b>  |     |                                |    |  |
| a. Is task content represented in a way that is appropriately authentic (i.e., not overly hypothetical), relevant (i.e., relatable), and/or meaningful to students and the discipline (e.g., topic connects to students' lives, task simulates authentic purpose and audience)? * | X   |                                |    | Task content is represented in a way that is authentic and meaningful to the discipline (i.e., understanding that different authors can write about the same theme in different ways). Task content is also very relevant and meaningful to students' lives, as all students are part of the American culture, which is affected by the concept of the American Dream. |
| b. Is the task related to real world problems, contexts, and/or purposes?   | X   |                                |    | Task is related to real world problems in that the concept of the American Dream is still being debated today.   |

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|--|-----|--------------------------------|----|---|
| 5. Suitable for Diverse Student Populations  |     |                                |    |   |
| a. Is the task, at its core, free of bias that might disadvantage specific student populations and free of stereotypes in language, content, and design? * | X   |                                |    | At its core, the task is free of bias.  |
| b. Does the task include, or allow for the use of, a variety of stimuli?   | X   |                                |    | Task requires students to use a variety of sources to investigate the topic of the American Dream.  |
| c. Does the task provide instructional scaffolds to support student learning and skill development toward successful completion of the task?               | X   |                                |    | Task provides instructional scaffolds that support skill development toward successful completion of the task.  |
| d. Does the task include appropriate recommendations for accommodations and differentiation to provide access for diverse students?                        |     |                                | X  | There are no specific recommendations for accommodations and differentiation to provide access for diverse students.  |
| 6. Design of Student Task  |     |                                |    |   |
| a. Is the overall task prompt clear (e.g., clear student directions, unambiguous graphics)? *  |     | X                              |    | For the most part, the overall task prompt is clear. The task prompt refers to many different sources and asks students to explain how different authors illustrate the American Dream. The actual task, however, requires students to synthesize information, which is not clear in the prompt.<br><i>Recommendation:</i> Change prompt to read, “explain how these texts together illustrate the American Dream.” |
| b. Is task information presented in an organized way?  | X   |                                |    |   |
| 7. Curriculum-Embedded   |     |                                |    |   |
| a. Is the task feasible for most school/classroom environments (e.g., access to necessary resources)?  | X   |                                |    | Task is feasible for most school/classroom environments.  |
| b. Does the task include opportunities for independent work as well as interaction/collaboration with peers?   | X   |                                |    | Instructional scaffolding activities include opportunities for independent work and interaction/collaboration with peers.   |

| Task Materials   | Yes | No | Comments  |
|--|-----|----|---|
| a. Is the task missing any referenced accompanying materials (resources, handouts, rubrics etc.)? If yes, please indicate which materials are missing. |     | X  | All referenced materials are included or a source of the text is indicated. |
| b. Does this task contain topics/materials/texts that might be sensitive for some students? If yes, please explain.                                    |     | X  |   |

**Comments:** Task is text-based, appropriate, and authentic for the discipline. Instructional scaffolds are tightly aligned with the task. Focus of the task is central to the discipline. Task topic—the American Dream—is highly relevant to students. Consideration might be given to strengthening the prompt by making the following edit: “...explain how these texts together illustrate the American Dream.” This edit would make clear that the task focus is on synthesis.

Criteria summarized in this document were derived from the following sources:

- *Quality Criteria for Performance Assessments*, SCALE, 2013
- *Criteria for High-Quality Assessment*, SCOPE, CRESST, LSRI, June 2013
- *Quality Performance Assessment: Harnessing the Power of Teacher and Student Learning*, Brown & Mevs, February 2012
- *ThinkReady Task Review Checklist*, 2013