

Innovation Lab Network -- Quality Criteria for Performance Assessments  
(Full Quality Review)

Historical Fiction: Mostly True? (Revised)

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 the demonstration of analysis skills (analysis of literature and informational text), communication skills (writing an essay), and interpersonal interaction/collaboration skills. Task is presented using an Argumentation/Analysis template.
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 college/career readiness skills and Critical Abilities listed in 1a.
c. Does the task address key concepts and skills in the discipline that are transferable to other contexts?*	X			Analysis of information is a skill in the discipline that can be transferred to other contexts, as is the skill of writing an essay. The ability to determine the veracity of a piece of writing is also a skill in the discipline 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 addresses Claim #1 (students can read closely and analytically), Claim #2 (students can produce well-grounded writing), and Claim #4 (student can engage in research and inquiry to investigate topics). The task measures the anchor standards for writing that are listed in the module, but the other standards listed in the module (e.g., the College and Career Readiness Anchor Standards for Reading, the AASL standards) are only loosely aligned with the content of the task.
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' responses are scored using a rubric that is aligned to CCSS expectations for writing an argumentative essay.

Quality Criteria	Yes	Yes, with Slight Modifications	No	Rationale/Suggestions
d. Is the rigor of the task appropriately matched to the grade-level standards being assessed?			X	The rigor of the task is appropriately matched to the CCSS Anchor Standards for Reading, but no grade-level standards are listed in the module. The rigor of the task does match CCSS W.5.1 and could also be said to match RI.5.9. and possibly RI.5.7 (without putting a focus on “quickly”).
<b>3. Student Choice and Agency</b>				
a. Does the task allow for a variety of responses and/or solution pathways? *	X			Although the task asks for a yes or no answer to the question posed in the prompt, it allows for a variety of responses in terms of the evidence used to support their answer.
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 answer yes or no to the question posed in the prompt and to support their answer with evidence of their choosing.
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 authentic in that the task asks students to evaluate whether an event described in a historical novel is depicted accurately. The part of the task that asks students to write a letter to the author of the novel explaining their position is not authentic and likely not relatable. Evaluating the accuracy of a description of an event in a historical novel (or other types of writing) is meaningful to the discipline. <i>Recommendation:</i> Rewrite the prompt to delete the reference to the author—i.e., change “write a letter to the author” to “write an essay.”
b. Is the task related to real world problems, contexts, and/or purposes?		X		Determining whether an event is depicted accurately or not is related to a real-world context and purpose. Asking students to write a letter to the author of a historical novel in which they tell the author whether his/her

Quality Criteria	Yes	Yes, with Slight Modifications	No	Rationale/Suggestions
				writing is accurate or not is not related to a real-world purpose.
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			The task is free of bias, but students who have studied the Civil War and, in particular, the Battle of Gettysburg may find the task more accessible than those who have not. This task may be most appropriate during or after the time students have studied the Civil War.
b. Does the task include, or allow for the use of, a variety of stimuli?	X			In addition to the historical novel, task includes four other required texts (although the exact amount may be increased or decreased depending on students' abilities).
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 student learning and the skill development required to successfully complete the task.
d. Does the task include appropriate recommendations for accommodations and differentiation to provide access for diverse students?		X		Task includes a few recommendations, but they are mostly general.
6. Design of Student Task				
a. Is the overall task prompt clear (e.g., clear student directions, unambiguous graphics)? *	X			Student directions are clear.
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			The novel <i>The Mostly True Adventures of Homer P. Figg</i> is a Newbery Honor book, so it should be accessible to most schools. The other required texts are listed in the module as being available on the LDC module creator site.
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	
b. Does this task contain topics/materials/texts that might be sensitive for some students? If yes, please explain.		X	

**Comments:** This task is focused and text dependent, and the prompt wording is clear and unbiased. The task could be made more authentic by changing the wording in the prompt (i.e., change “write a letter to the author” to “write an essay”). All parts of the instructional scaffolding activities are grade-appropriate. The task addresses content central to the discipline.

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