

Innovation Lab Network Performance Assessment Project
Quality Criteria for Performance Assessments
The British Industrial Revolution

Quality Criteria	Yes	Yes, with Slight Modifications	No	Rationale/Suggestions
1. Focus on Deeper Learning				
a. Does the task require the demonstration and/or application of complex skills (e.g., Critical Abilities, DOK Levels 3 and 4, 21 st century skills, Key Cognitive Strategies)?*	✓			Some problems with this task (detailed in other sections of this review) raise questions as to how effectively students can address the prompt and the task it poses. Aside from these problems, the task itself does address many complex skills. That task is to write an argumentative essay expressing an opinion based on concepts and evidence obtained from a variety of source documents. The task entails the analysis of texts and the synthesis of their ideas in an essay that involves careful planning in order to explain choices made from among alternative valid responses.
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)?*	✓			Students must respond by planning and writing a complete argumentative essay. In doing this, they must practice skills stressed by several Common Core standards and Critical Abilities.
c. Does the task address key concepts and skills in the discipline that are transferable to other contexts?*		✓		<p>The task asks students to answer a question about the Industrial Revolution. The concept of the Industrial Revolution is one of the most important in the field of both world and U.S. history. Students are likely to grapple with its meaning at numerous points in history, economics, and other social studies courses. The task also asks students to write an argumentative essay that demands the ability to find and analyze evidence from more than twenty primary or secondary sources, written and visual, and arrive at a conclusion about the entire Industrial Revolution based on the evidence provided. These are valid and transferable skills in the field of history and social studies.</p> <p>However, the task prompt asks students to make a judgment for which the evidence provided is insufficient. The question asks students whether the value of the Industrial Revolution was worth its cost. Yet the evidence is confined mainly to the early Industrial Revolution (up to the mid-1800s), and it is not of the broad</p>

Quality Criteria	Yes	Yes, with Slight Modifications	No	Rationale/Suggestions
				statistical sort one really would need to make such a cost-benefit analysis (statistics about real wage rates, GDP growth, population, infant mortality rates, life expectancy, consumer prices, etc). The excellent and wide-ranging sources provided do illustrate various positive and negative aspects of industrial change in the 1800s, and they do lend themselves to many sorts of questions. However, it is hard to see how a student could answer the broad question asked here in more than an arbitrary way given the materials provided.
2. Alignment to Standards				
a. Does the task measure key skills and major claims emphasized by the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) and/or NGSS? *	✓			This task lists several Common Core standards having to do with interpreting words and phrases, close reading, analysis and comparison of sources, and the steps involved in writing an argumentative essay. The task does measure the skills these standards describe.
b. Can students' responses to this task (what students are asked to produce) be scored using CCSS/NGSS aligned rubrics? *	✓			Despite the problems identified with the prompt, the task as a whole does give students the tools to enable them to do the research, reading, and evidence gathering needed to write a meaningful argumentative essay that could be scored by a CCSS aligned rubric.
c. Are the scoring criteria--rubrics, point scoring systems, checklists (if provided)--aligned to key expectations of the CCSS/NGSS?	✓			The LDC Argumentative Rubric aligns with the CCSS expectations spelled out by the instructions such as, the ability to do appropriate research, formulate a claim, support the claim effectively, demonstrate knowledge of relevant content, and organize the essay well.
d. Is the rigor of the task appropriately matched to the grade-level standards being assessed?		✓		The rigor of this task is appropriate. In fact, given the very comprehensive nature of the question posed in the prompt and the large number of sources students are to read and compare, the task may be a bit too rigorous for tenth grade students. CCR.W.I, for example, asks students to write arguments using "relevant and sufficient evidence." Yet even the large number of sources provided may not be "sufficient evidence" to answer the question posed.
3. Student Choice and Agency				
a. Does the task allow for a variety of responses and/or solution pathways? *	✓			The task limits students to writing an essay answering a single question. Within those constraints, however, this task leaves it up to students to decide how to extract, arrange, and synthesize the evidence they will use from a wide array of sources from which they are fairly free to pick and choose. Three separate collections of sources are provided. Class discussions, pair groupings, and other

Quality Criteria	Yes	Yes, with Slight Modifications	No	Rationale/Suggestions
				small group activities offer opportunities for students to respond in various ways to the task materials and problems.
b. Does the task offer opportunities for student ownership and student choice (e.g., selecting a research question or topic; selecting sources; etc.)?			✓	While students are able to choose some sources to use from a large array of such sources, they do not have opportunities to alter or select a different question, find other sources on their own, or choose among a variety of ways to present their answers or display their findings.
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.)?			✓	Students are responsible for managing a great deal of information in the form of notes and outlines filled in, from which they derive information for constructing their essays. However, they do not initiate any of these planning and management efforts, they simply follow a structure already set up for them.
4. Relevance and Authenticity				
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)? *	✓			A wide and very rich array of source material is provided from which students are to derive evidence for their essays. Many of these sources are vivid and dramatic. Some deal with the human impact of industrialization on individuals and communities. Much of this material will be meaningful to students and connect with their lives and concerns.
b. Is the task related to real world problems, contexts, and/or purposes?	✓			The entire nature of life in modern societies has been and is still being shaped by the Industrial Revolution and the social and technological forces that emerged during it and that have accelerated ever since.
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? *	✓			Some of the primary sources take strong stands on the social, political and economic conditions of life during the Industrial Revolution. Bias and stereotypes are likely to be contained in some of these materials. However, those biases and stereotypes are a part of what students need to analyze. The task "at its core" is free of any such biases or stereotypes.
b. Does the task include, or allow for the use of, a variety of stimuli?	✓			Most of the task involves reading, note-taking and recording ideas in writing. However a PowerPoint is included as well. Moreover, a great many visual sources are included among the materials for this task.
c. Does the task provide instructional scaffolds to support student learning and skill development toward successful completion of	✓			Three Student Writing Packets include a wide array of sources to be used in the task. A Worksheet Packet contains several worksheets to guide students in analyzing some of these sources. Other worksheets

Quality Criteria	Yes	Yes, with Slight Modifications	No	Rationale/Suggestions
the task?				are used in a variety of mini-tasks described in the instructions. These are helpful tools to enable students to record information, outline ideas, and construct their essays.
d. Does the task include appropriate recommendations for accommodations and differentiation to provide access for diverse students?			✓	Three alternate packets of sources are provided, but the instructions do not explain clearly how they are to be used. They do not appear to be assigned to diverse groups of students. Otherwise the instructions for the task are directed to all students together.
6. Design of Student Task				
a. Is the overall task prompt clear (e.g., clear student directions, unambiguous graphics)? *	✓			
b. Is task information presented in an organized way?			✓	<p>The task information describes a fairly typical sequence from preparing for the task, to several steps in reading sources and gathering information, to a set of steps in constructing the essay. However in a great many case, the instructions for the mini-tasks are very vague. It is not at all clear that teachers would know what to do to organize and carry out some of these mini-tasks.</p> <p>For example, on p. 8 of the instructions, teachers are told to introduce slides. This appears to refer to the PowerPoint, which in fact contains many slides left blank except for a few words indicating that text needs to be added. Yet no instructions explain what is to be done with these slides. For instance, Slide 5 has the heading "Unit Task" and a blank box that merely says, "Click to add text." A great many visuals appear in the PowerPoint with no text at all explaining their use, and no such explanations appear in the instructions either.</p> <p>Many other points in the instructions are extremely vague - for example, "Facilitation of group discussions regarding students' notes;" "Hold in-class debate or value-line activities;" "Mini-lesson on essential aspects of body paragraphs." In each of these and other cases, no additional information explains how teachers are to conduct these mini-tasks.</p>
7. Curriculum-Embedded				
a. Is the task feasible for most school/classroom environments (e.g., access to necessary resources)?	✓			
b. Does the task include opportunities for	✓			Students engage in several forms of peer and small group

Quality Criteria	Yes	Yes, with Slight Modifications	No	Rationale/Suggestions
independent work as well as interaction/collaboration with peers?				collaboration in analyzing sources, preparing for and writing parts of their essays. They must do some research on their own and they mainly work independently on the final drafts of the essay.

Task Materials	Yes	No
a. Is the task missing any referenced accompanying materials (resources, handouts, rubrics etc.)? If yes, please indicate which materials are missing.		✓
b. Does this task contain topics/materials/texts that might be sensitive for some students? If yes, please explain.		✓

Comments: The materials for this task are excellent. The topic is a valid and important one as the focus of a task of this sort. The particular prompt is overly ambitious given the time available for the task and the nature of the sources provided. Also, while the sequence of mini-tasks is well conceived, the details of the instructions for teachers are too thin and vague to be effective guides for teachers wanting help in planning to present this task. With some effort, these matters could be corrected and this could be an effective task.

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