

Instruction  
Selection of Instructional Materials

6161.1(a)

Instructional materials shall be chosen for value of interest and the enlightenment of all students in the educational community. Every effort will be made to provide materials that present various points of view concerning international, national and local problems and issues of our time. When selecting instructional materials, staff should use the general guidelines provided and the specific guidelines for the selection of tradebooks. The guidelines should be used when evaluating both student material and teacher material.

Instructional materials must encourage students to understand not only the historical roles and contributions of women and minorities, but also the forces which shaped those roles and contributions, and how and why the contemporary roles and contributions of women and minorities are different to portray accurately the cultural and racial diversity and the male and female roles in our society.

Limitations

In certain limited situations it would be inappropriate to require that a visual or textual item conform exactly to these guidelines. Such an instance would arise, for example, in reprinting a story by a named author or painting by a named artist which is considered to make an important contribution to a given instructional material. In such a situation, however, discussion material should be included indicating that, for example, a particular attitude toward women or minority groups was prevalent during a certain period in history, and how and why that attitude has changed.

When examining instructional material for adverse reflection on race, creed, sex, etc., the evaluator should make a qualitative judgment with respect to stories or articles having an historical perspective. Any description, depiction, inference, label or retort found to be, by itself, an adverse reflection should not be judged out of context. Rather, the story or article should be examined for appropriate explanations, discussion or other devices included therein, or immediately attached thereto, which may overcome the impact of such offending words or pictures. The instructional material should be rejected only if, on a total basis, the story or article would, in the mind of an average student for whom the material is intended, reflect adversely upon a person because of his or her race, color, creed, national origin, ancestry, sex or occupation.

General Guidelines for Selection of Instructional Materials

1. Male and Female Roles

To encourage the individual development and self-esteem of each child, regardless of gender, instructional materials, when they portray people (or animals having identifiable human attributes), shall portray women and men, girls and boys, in a wide variety of occupational, emotional, and behavioral situations, presenting both sexes in the full range of their human potential.

General Guidelines for Selection of Instructional Materials (continued)

1. Male and Female Roles (continued)

- A. Descriptions, depictions, inferences, labels or retorts which tend to demean, stereotype, or patronize females must not appear.
- B. Instructional materials that generally or incidentally reflect contemporary American society, regardless of the subject area, must contain references to, or illustrations of, males and females approximately evenly, except as limited by accuracy.
- C. Mentally and physically active, creative, problem-solving roles, and success and failure in those roles, should be divided approximately evenly between male and female characters.
- D. Emotions of fear, anger, aggression, excitement or tenderness should occur randomly among characters regardless of gender.
- E. Traditional activities engaged in by characters of one sex should be balanced by the presentation of nontraditional activities for characters of that sex.
- F. If professional or executive roles, or vocations, trades or other gainful occupations are portrayed, men and women should be represented approximately equally.
- G. Where life-style choices are discussed, boys and girls should be offered an equally wide range of such aspirations and choices.
- H. Whenever material presents developments in history or current events, or achievements in art, science, or any other field, the contributions of women should be included and discussed when historically accurate.
- I. Imbalance or inequality of any kind, when presented for historical accuracy, should, in the student edition of the instructional material, be interpreted in light of contemporary standards and circumstances.
- J. Sexually neutral language -- for example, "people", "persons", "men and women", "pioneers", "they", -- should generally be used.

General Guidelines for Selection of Instructional Materials (continued)

2. Ethnic and Cultural Groups

To project the cultural diversity of our society, instill in each child a sense of pride in his or her heritage, eradicate the seeds of prejudice, and encourage the individual development of each child, instructional materials, when portraying people (or animals having identifiable human attributes), shall include a fair representation of majority and minority group characters portrayed in a wide variety of occupational and behavioral roles, and present the contributions of ethnic and cultural groups, thereby reinforcing the self-esteem and potential of all people and helping the members of minority groups to find their rightful place in our society.

- A. Descriptions, depictions, inferences or labels which tend to demean, stereotype, or to patronize minority groups must not appear.
- B. When diverse ethnic or cultural groups are portrayed, such portrayal should not depict differences in customs or life-style as undesirable and should not reflect an adverse value judgment of such differences.
- C. Instructional materials that generally or incidentally reflect contemporary American society, regardless of the subject area, must contain references to, or illustrations of, a fair proportion of diverse ethnic groups.
- D. Mentally active, creative, and problem-solving roles, and success and failure in those roles, should be divided in fair proportion between majority and minority group characters.
- E. The portrayal of minority characters in roles to which they have been traditionally restricted by society should be balanced by the presentation of nontraditional activities for characters of that race.
- F. Minority persons should be depicted in the same range of socioeconomic settings as persons of the majority group.
- G. Depiction of diverse ethnic and cultural groups should not be limited to the root culture, but rather expanded to include such groups within the mainstream of American life.

General Guidelines for Selection of Instructional Materials (continued)

2. Ethnic and Cultural Groups (continued)

- H. If professional or executive roles, or vocations, trades or other gainful occupations are portrayed, majority and minority groups should be presented therein in fair proportion.
- I. Whenever developments in history or current events, or achievements in art, science, or any other field are presented, the contributions of minority peoples, and particularly the identification of prominent minority persons should be included and discussed when historically accurate.
- J. Imbalance or inequality of any kind, when presented for historical accuracy, should, in the student edition of the instructional materials, be interpreted in light of contemporary standards and circumstances.

3. Entrepreneur and Labor

- A. References or labels which tend to demean, stereotype, or patronize an occupation, vocation, or livelihood must not appear.
- B. Where appropriate, reference should be made to the role and contribution of the entrepreneur in the total development of Connecticut and the United States, and any such reference should be accurate.
- C. Where appropriate, reference should be made to the role and contribution of labor in the total development of Connecticut and the United States, and any such reference should be accurate.

4. Ecology and Environment

- A. Responsibilities of human beings toward a healthy, sanitary environment are appropriately portrayed.
- B. Wise use of resources, both human and physical, is actively encouraged.

General Guidelines for Selection of Instructional Materials (continued)

4. Ecology and Environment (continued)

- C. Interdependence of people and their environment is portrayed.
- D. The effects of solutions to environmental problems are identified.
- E. Appropriate means of protecting the environment are suggested.

5. Dangerous Substances

- A. The hazards of the use of tobacco, alcohol, narcotics, and restricted dangerous drugs are depicted in illustrations or discussions where references to these substances are included in instructional materials.
- B. The use of tobacco, alcohol, narcotics, or restricted dangerous drugs is not glamorized or encouraged by illustrations or discussion references.

6. Religion

- A. No religious belief or practice shall be held up to ridicule nor any religious group portrayed as inferior or superior.
- B. Portrayals of contemporary American society should, where religion is discussed or depicted, reflect its religious diversity. Except where material deals with a particular historical era, materials in art and music must, where religious aspects thereof are depicted, reflect the religious diversity of contemporary American society.
- C. Any explanation or description of a religious belief or practice shall be presented in a manner which neither encourages nor discourages belief in the matter, nor indoctrinates the student in any particular religious belief, nor otherwise instructs students in religious principles.

General Guidelines for Selection of Instructional Materials (continued)

7. Brand Names

Instructional materials shall not contain illustrations of any identifiable commercial brand names, representations or corporate logos unless such illustrations are necessary to the educational purpose of the instructional material, and that purpose cannot be achieved without using such illustrations, or unless such illustrations are incidental to a scene of a general nature. If, under these exceptions, a brand name, representation or corporate logo is illustrated, prominence shall not be given to any one brand or corporation unless, in turn, such illustration is necessary to the educational purpose of the instructional material and that purpose cannot be achieved without using such illustration.

8. Food

When instructional materials contain illustrations of foods, there shall be an emphasis on foods of high nutritional value.

Trade Book Selection Guidelines

Tradebooks are defined as books that are used with students for instruction for achieving specific learning outcomes offered over a period of days. These may include fiction, nonfiction, and artistic pieces. Independent reading books do not fall within the scope of the tradebook process.

Prepare/Train For The Adoption Process

1. Review the Brookfield Literary Frameworks in order to create a focus for the kind of tradebook(s) needed.
2. Review the current collection of tradebooks to determine the needs that are already met and the existing gaps.
3. Learn about the elements of the Tradebook Selection Guidelines. (see Appendix)
4. Review current list of approved tradebooks for your grade and subject.
5. Consult with librarians, journals, bibliographies, reviews, electronic searches, etc. to help locate suitable titles for meeting the identified tradebook needs.
6. Read the tradebooks (at least two professional staff members, one of which should be a library/media or reading specialist).

## Selection of Instructional Materials

### Trade Book Selection Guidelines (continued)

#### Evaluate Tradebooks

1. Use the Tradebook Selection Guidelines to evaluate the book in terms of its:
  - A. Alignment with Curriculum and District Beliefs
    1. Alignment with learning outcomes
    2. Balance of tradebook collection
  - B. Connections to Learners
    1. Readability
    2. Motivational and interest factors
  - C. Content
    1. Author
    2. Quality of the writing
    3. Illustrations
    4. Values, attitudes, attributes
2. Summarize the Strengths/Weaknesses of Tradebook on Form #5: TRADEBOOK SELECTION GUIDELINE

#### Share Findings With Staff/Seek Reactions

1. Communicate evaluation results to relevant grade level/subject area staff.
2. Gather input from relevant grade level/subject area staff.

#### Recommend to Department Chairperson/Curriculum Leader for Purchase

*A list of trade books or a course description which contains a list of readings by thematic unit will be sent to parents/guardians at the beginning of each school year for their review. A student will be provided with an alternate material if said parent/guardian objects to a listed book or reading.*

### Challenged Instructional Materials

The principles of academic freedom and professional responsibility are basic to the selection of instructional materials. Occasionally, there may be objections to instructional material by concerned citizens. The Board of Education recognizes the right of an individual parent/guardian to request that his/her child be given alternative material provided a written request is made to the appropriate building administrator. Residents SHALL NOT have the right to determine instructional materials for students other than their own. The “Brookfield Resident’s Request for Reconsideration of Instructional Materials” (Form #1) must be completed by the complainant. The procedure for processing challenges is as follows:

1. The person making the challenge must complete the “Brookfield Resident’s Request for Reconsideration of Instructional Materials” (Form #1).
2. Form #1 must be submitted to the building principal in the school in which the material was used.
3. The materials under question shall be reviewed by a Special Review Committee.
4. Values and faults shall be weighed and a decision will be based on the materials as a whole and not on passages pulled out of context.
5. Challenged instructional materials shall remain in use in the schools pending a final decision.



Challenged Instructional Materials (continued)

6. A report shall be written by the Special Review Committee and submitted to the Superintendent of Schools.
9. The Superintendent shall make his/her recommendation for consideration and action within six weeks of the original filing date of the “Brookfield Resident’s Request for Reconsideration of Instructional Materials

The Superintendent shall make his/her recommendation for consideration and action within six weeks of the original filing date of the “Brookfield Resident’s Request for Reconsideration of Instructional Materials”.

Regulation Approved: 8/15/12

BROOKFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
Brookfield, Connecticut

Challenged Instructional Materials

BROOKFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
Brookfield Resident's Request for Reconsideration of Instructional Material

Title \_\_\_\_\_ Book \_\_\_\_\_ Periodical \_\_\_\_\_ Other \_\_\_\_\_

Author/Producer \_\_\_\_\_

Publisher/Distributor \_\_\_\_\_

Request initiated by \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Are you a parent/guardian of a student in the class: Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

Are you representing any Organization or Group? If so please provide the name of the  
Organization or Group \_\_\_\_\_

1. To what in the work do you object? Please be specific. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

2. Did you read, view, or listen to the entire work? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

3. Have you read scholarly reviews of the material? \_\_\_\_\_

4. Enumerate the reasons for the complaint (Be specific cite pages) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

5. What do you feel might be the result of exposure to this work? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

6. For what age group would you recommend this work? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

7. What do you believe is the theme of this work? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

8. Attach additional pages as necessary \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

BROOKFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
Brookfield, Connecticut

Selection of Instructional Materials  
Challenged Instructional Materials

Evaluation of Instructional Materials  
Guidelines for Special Review Committee

- A. The process begins with the submission of the “Brookfield Resident’s Request for Reconsideration of Instructional Material” with documentation concerning specific instructional materials.
- B. The Superintendent or his/her designee convenes Special Review Committee (see Form #3).
- C. The Superintendent or his/her designee shares the “Brookfield Resident’s Request for Reconsideration of Instructional Material” with the Special Review Committee.
- D. The Special Review Committee reviews issues related to instructional materials by complainant by:
  1. Reviewing specifics of resident’s request for reconsideration.
  2. Interviewing person(s) submitting request to clarify and verify reason(s) for request for reconsideration.
  3. Examining materials in question with reference to request for reconsideration.
  4. Researching topic of the materials in question by contacting appropriate resources (i.e. Connecticut State Department of Education).
  5. Obtaining and reviewing correspondence and testimony relevant to materials or practices in question.
  6. Obtaining written resources concerning the materials or practices in question whenever possible.
  7. Discussing materials or practices in question in light of resources obtained with regard to the following criteria:
    - Purpose
    - Content
    - Appropriateness
    - Reviews

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FORM #2

Challenged Instructional Materials (continued)

8. Submitting a summary of findings and providing a written recommendation to the Superintendent of Schools.
- E. The Superintendent reviews the Special Review Committee recommendation(s) and renders his/her decision.

BROOKFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
Brookfield, Connecticut

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FORM #3

## Challenged Instructional Materials

### Evaluation of Instructional Materials Special Review Committee - Composition

Actual composition of the Special Review Committee will be determined by the Superintendent or his/her designee based on the nature of the complaint and personnel available. Possible membership may include:

- 1 Curriculum Coordinator
- 1 to 2 Administrators
- 2 Classroom Teachers (from grade level or subject area) to which instructional material is assigned)
- Reading Specialist
- Library Media Specialist
- 1 Guidance Counselor
- 1 Psychologist/Social Worker

Note: The committee may utilize the services of an outside consultant, although the consultant will not be a member of the committee.

BROOKFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
Brookfield, Connecticut

Selection of Instructional Materials

Challenged Instructional Materials

Special Review Committee  
Reconsideration Instructional Materials  
Evaluation Form

Title: \_\_\_\_\_ Book \_\_\_\_ Periodical \_\_\_\_ Other \_\_

Author: \_\_\_\_\_

A. Purpose

1. What is the purpose, theme, or message of the material? How well does the author/producer/composer accomplish this purpose?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

2. If the story is fiction, is it the type that has imaginative appeal and is suitable for students? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_  
Indicate recommended grade level(s) \_\_\_\_\_

3. Will the reading and/or viewing and/or listening to material be prejudicial against any individual(s)? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

4. Does it present an opportunity to better understand and appreciate the aspirations, achievements, and problems of various social groups without it presenting the group in a negative way? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

5. Are any questionable elements of the material an integral part of a worthwhile theme or message? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## Challenged Instructional Materials (continued)

### B. Content

1. If set in modern times, does the text or instructional material give a realistic picture of life which is necessary to meet educational objectives of the course?  
Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. Does the text or the material avoid an oversimplified view of life, one which leaves their reader with the general feeling that life is either "sweet and rosy" or "ugly and meaningless?"  
Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. When factual information is part of the material, is it presented accurately?  
Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. Is there an appeal to prejudice and bias which is readily identifiable by the potential reader? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
5. Are concepts presented appropriate to the ability and maturity of the potential readers?  
Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
6. Do characters speak in a language true to the period and section of the country in which they live? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Challenged Instructional Materials (continued)

7. Does the material offend, in some special way, the sensibilities of women or a social group by the way it presents either the chief character or any of the minor characters?  
Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

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8. Is there preoccupation with sex, violence, cruelty, brutality, and aberrant behavior that would make this material inappropriate for students?  
Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

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9. If there is use of offensive language, is it relevant and appropriate to the purpose of the educational objectives of the course?  
Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

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10. Is the material free from derisive names that would offend social groups and are not necessary for the situations created in the text?  
Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

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11. Is the material well written or produced? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

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12. Does the story give a broader understanding of human behavior without stressing differences of religion, national origin, sex, or physical handicap as embodied in the federal statutes or philosophy in any adverse way? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

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Challenged Instructional Materials (continued)

13. Does the material make a significant contribution to the history of literature or ideas?  
Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

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14. Does this material present information not otherwise easily available to students?  
Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

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15. Does this material give a new dimension or direction to its subject?  
Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

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16. Are the illustrations appropriate and in good taste?  
Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

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17. Are the illustrations realistic in relation to the story?  
Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

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## Challenged Instructional Materials (continued)

### C. Appropriateness

1. Does the material promote the educational goals and objectives of the curriculum of District Schools? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

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2. Is the material appropriate to the level of instruction intended? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

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3. Are the illustrations appropriate to the subject and age levels of students using the material? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

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### D. Professional Reviews

1. Source of review \_\_\_\_\_

Favorably reviewed \_\_\_\_\_

Unfavorably reviewed \_\_\_\_\_

Challenged Instructional Materials (continued)

2. Does this title appear in one or more reputable book selection aids?

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_ N/A \_\_\_\_\_

If answer is yes, please list titles of selection aids:

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Additional Comments:

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My recommendation in response to the complaint filed with the Superintendent's Office by \_\_\_\_\_ with regard to inclusion of \_\_\_\_\_ as part of the \_\_\_\_\_ grade \_\_\_\_\_ curriculum is as follows:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

BROOKFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
Brookfield, Connecticut

School(s) \_\_\_\_\_  
 Grade Level \_\_\_\_\_  
 Subjects \_\_\_\_\_

## TRADE BOOK SELECTION GUIDELINES

## EVALUATION PROFILE for \_\_\_\_\_

		1 = Yes                      5 = No				
(name of material)		1	2	3	4	5
Subject matter content	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• congruence w/learning outcomes</li> <li>• accuracy</li> <li>• articulation</li> </ul>	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Social Content:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• congruence w/local values</li> <li>• congruence w/social values</li> <li>• content balanced/unbiased</li> <li>• positive attitude re: diversity</li> </ul>	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Comprehensibility:						
Appropriateness--	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• appropriate level</li> </ul>	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Cohesiveness--	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• relation to prior knowledge</li> <li>• good use of connectives, etc.</li> </ul>	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Unity--	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• stand alone chapters</li> <li>• clear theme</li> </ul>	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Style--	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• effective use of topography</li> <li>• use of active voice</li> <li>• varied sentence structure</li> <li>• appropriate vocabulary</li> </ul>	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Instructional Design:						
Design--	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• departure from previous texts</li> <li>• congruence w/teachers' styles</li> </ul>	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Sequence--	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• logical</li> <li>• simple to complex</li> <li>• topics revisited</li> </ul>	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Synthesis--	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• overviews, etc., incorporated</li> <li>• presentation, practice, feedback</li> </ul>	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Levels of Learning--	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• variation in presentation</li> </ul>	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Instructional Support--	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• mnemonics, analogies, etc.</li> <li>• frequent, appropriate examples</li> </ul>	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Objectives--	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• chapter objectives/content congruent</li> <li>• match between cognitive levels</li> </ul>	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Visuals--	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• relevant, uncomplicated, etc.</li> </ul>	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Mot'l Strategies--	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• motivational strategies used</li> </ul>	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Productional Quality:						
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• sturdy</li> <li>• appropriate print size, style, etc.</li> <li>• appropriate size of book</li> <li>• print quality</li> <li>• format</li> <li>• true colors</li> <li>• non-glare paper</li> </ul>	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

Strengths/Weaknesses:

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