



EXPEDITIONARY LEARNING

Deeper Lessons Tool

The goal of this tool is to ensure that students across EL classrooms and schools experience lessons that are rigorous, engaging, and student-centered. When planning, observing, and/or reflecting on lessons, teachers, coaches, and school leaders can refer to the set of criteria and “look fors” below. Please note that this tool is not intended to be a comprehensive list of criteria for quality lessons. There are many vital dimensions of a classroom that this tool is not meant to assess, such as a safe and respectful classroom culture, efficient routines, and classroom environment. Feel free to adapt or draw from this tool to inform other tools your school may use. This is not meant to be a stand-alone tool, but rather needs to be surrounded by systems and structures that engage and support teachers in designing and implementing deeper lessons.

Evidence Continuum Less ——— ^x ——— More	Criteria and “Look Fors”	Notes: Praise, Questions, Suggestions
_____	Appropriate academic content: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The lesson is designed to address grade-level standards and learning targets.• Instructional tasks are clearly aligned with these standards and targets.	
_____	Purposeful context: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• A framing question and/or the instructional task connects to an authentic personal, disciplinary, and/or social issue.• The work is cognitively rigorous as well as relevant• When appropriate, the work students are doing simulates professional work that happens in this discipline or field.	
_____	Rigorous cognitive engagement: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Students are applying, analyzing, evaluating, and/or creating during a significant portion of the lesson.• Students are engaged in productive work throughout the class.• The teacher uses instructional methods that promote simultaneous engagement for all students.	

<hr/>	<p>Opportunity to grapple:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Instructional tasks make room for students to struggle individually and collectively • The lesson design provides space for uncertainty, puzzling, and/or playful exploration. • The teacher explicitly and implicitly communicates a growth mindset to students. 	
<hr/>	<p>Higher-order questioning:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The teacher asks questions that promote critical thinking. • Students are given sustained opportunities to ask questions and engage with one other's ideas. • Students ask and answer text-dependent questions that go beyond recall. 	
<hr/>	<p>Collaboration and communication:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students collaborate and engage in structured group work/discourse in order to learn. • Roles and responsibilities for group work are clear. • Group work tasks are structured for both shared responsibility and individual accountability. 	
<hr/>	<p>Student-engaged assessment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The teacher effectively uses learning targets and criteria for success with students to promote student ownership of learning • The teacher uses assessment for learning strategies (e.g. descriptive feedback, critique, revision, self-assessment) to help students take responsibility for their own learning. 	

References

Fisher, D., & Frey, N. (2008). Releasing responsibility. *Educational Leadership*, 32-37.

Mehta, J., & Fine, S. (2013). Deeper Learning Inventory Tool.

Peterson, D. S., & Taylor, B. M. (2012). Using higher order questioning to accelerate students' growth in reading. *The Reading Teacher*, 65(5), 295-304.