

# INSTRUCTIONAL PRACTICE GUIDE: COACHING

ELA/LIT

SUBJECT

K-2

GRADES

LESSON

GUIDE TYPE

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Date

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Teacher Name

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School

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Grade / Class Period / Section

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Topic / Lesson / Unit

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Standard(s) Addressed in this Lesson

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Learning Goal

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Observer Name

The Coaching Tool helps teachers, and those who support teachers, to build understanding and experience with Common Core State Standards (CCSS)-aligned instruction. Designed as a developmental rather than an evaluation tool, it can be used for planning, reflection, and collaboration, in addition to coaching. For all uses, refer to the CCSS for English Language Arts and Literacy ([corestandards.org/ELA-Literacy](http://corestandards.org/ELA-Literacy)).

The three Shifts in instruction for ELA/Literacy provide the framing for this tool<sup>1</sup>.



Regular practice with complex text and its academic language.



Reading, writing, and speaking grounded in evidence from text, both literary and informational.



Building knowledge through content-rich nonfiction.

This guide is organized around three Core Actions which encompass the Shifts; each Core Action consists of individual indicators which describe teacher and student behaviors that exemplify Common Core-aligned instruction.

The Core Actions and Indicators should be evident in planning and observable in instruction. For each lesson, evidence might include a lesson plan, exercises, tasks and assessments, teacher instruction, student discussion and behavior, and student work. Although many indicators will be observable during the course of a lesson, there may be times when a lesson is appropriately focused on a smaller set of objectives or only a portion of a lesson is observed, leaving some indicators unobserved and some portion of this tool blank.

Classroom observations are most effective when followed by a coaching conversation based on evidence collected during the observation. After discussing the observed lesson using this Coaching Tool as a support, use the Beyond the Lesson Discussion Guide to put the content of the lesson in the context of the broader instructional plan for the unit or year. The questions in the Beyond the Lesson Discussion Guide help clearly delineate what practices are in place, what has already occurred, and what opportunities might exist in another lesson, further in the unit, or over the course of the year to incorporate the Shifts into the classroom.

Companion tools for Instructional Practice include:

- Instructional Practice Guide: Coaching (Digital) - a digital version of this print tool, view at [achievethecore.org/coaching-tool](http://achievethecore.org/coaching-tool).
- Beyond the Lesson Discussion Guide - for post-observation conversations, view at [achievethecore.org/beyondthelesson](http://achievethecore.org/beyondthelesson).
- Instructional Practice Guide: Lesson Planning- to support teachers in creating lessons aligned to the CCSS, view at [achievethecore.org/lesson-planning-tool](http://achievethecore.org/lesson-planning-tool).

All tools are available at [achievethecore.org/instructional-practice](http://achievethecore.org/instructional-practice).

**STUDENT  
ACHIEVEMENT  
PARTNERS**

1. Refer to Common Core Shifts at a Glance ([achievethecore.org/ELALitShifts](http://achievethecore.org/ELALitShifts)) and the K-2 Publishers' Criteria for the Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts and Literacy ([achievethecore.org/publisherscriteria](http://achievethecore.org/publisherscriteria)) for additional information about the Shifts required by the CCSS.

**CORE ACTION 1 FOR READING/LISTENING COMPREHENSION: Focus each lesson on a high-quality text (or multiple texts).**

INDICATORS / NOTE EVIDENCE OBSERVED OR GATHERED FOR EACH INDICATOR	RATING
<p>A. A majority of the lesson is spent listening to reading, writing, or speaking about text(s).</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><input type="checkbox"/> NOT OBSERVED</p>	<p>Yes- The lesson is focused on a text or multiple texts. No- There is no text under consideration in this lesson.</p>
<p>B. The text(s) are above the complexity level expected for the grade and time in the school year.<sup>2</sup></p> <p style="text-align: right;"><input type="checkbox"/> NOT OBSERVED</p>	<p>Yes- The text(s) are above both the qualitative and quantitative complexity expected for the grade and time in the school year. No- The text(s) are not above both the qualitative and quantitative complexity expected for the grade and time in the school year.</p>
<p>C. The text(s) exhibit exceptional craft and thought and/or provide useful information; where appropriate, the texts are richly illustrated.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><input type="checkbox"/> NOT OBSERVED</p>	<p>Yes- The quality of the text(s) is high – they are well written and/or provide useful information. No- The quality of the text(s) is low – they are poorly written or do not provide useful information.</p>

**CORE ACTION 1 FOR FOUNDATIONAL SKILLS: Ensure that instruction and materials explicitly and systematically provide all students with the opportunity to master foundational skills.**

INDICATORS / NOTE EVIDENCE OBSERVED OR GATHERED FOR EACH INDICATOR	RATING
<p>A. The foundational skills being taught are aligned to the standards for this grade.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><input type="checkbox"/> NOT OBSERVED</p>	<p>Yes- Foundational skills addressed fully align with the standards for the grade. No- Foundational skills addressed do not align with the standards for the grade.</p>

2. Intended for texts read aloud by the teacher in grades K – 2. Evaluations of text complexity are only applicable to student reading materials beginning in grade 2. Refer to [achievethecore.org/ela-literacy-common-core/text-complexity/](http://achievethecore.org/ela-literacy-common-core/text-complexity/) for resources to help analyze the complexity of texts.

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**INDICATORS / NOTE EVIDENCE OBSERVED OR GATHERED FOR EACH INDICATOR**

**RATING**

**B. Instruction and materials address foundational skills by attending to phonological awareness, concepts of print, letter recognition, phonetic patterns and word structure.**  
 (Note: not all elements will be addressed in each lesson.)

Yes- Instruction and materials address appropriate foundational skills for the grade.  
 No- Instruction and materials do not address appropriate foundational skills for the grade.

NOT OBSERVED

**C. Instruction and materials provide sufficient opportunities for all students to practice reading and writing newly acquired foundational skills.**

4- Instruction and materials provide continuous opportunity to practice reading and writing newly acquired foundational skills for the range of students in the classroom.  
 3- Instruction and materials provide many opportunities to practice reading and writing newly acquired foundational skills for the range of students in the classroom.  
 2- Instruction and materials provide few opportunities to practice reading and writing newly acquired foundational skills for the range of students in the classroom.  
 1- Instruction and materials do not provide opportunity to practice reading and writing newly acquired foundational skills for the range of students in the classroom.

NOT OBSERVED

**D. Instruction and materials connect acquisition of foundational skills to making meaning from reading.**

4- Instruction and materials consistently connect foundational skills to making meaning from reading.  
 3- Instruction and materials sometimes connect foundational skills to making meaning from reading.  
 2- Instruction and materials rarely connect foundational skills to making meaning from reading.  
 1- Instruction and materials do not connect foundational skills to making meaning from reading.

NOT OBSERVED

**E. Instruction and materials provide opportunities for students to demonstrate understanding of the skills being taught through frequent monitoring of student progress.**

4- Instruction and materials consistently monitor and respond flexibly to student progress.  
 3- Instruction and materials sometimes monitor and respond flexibly to student progress.  
 2- Instruction and materials rarely monitor and respond flexibly to student progress.  
 1- Instruction and materials do not monitor and respond flexibly to student progress.

NOT OBSERVED

**CORE ACTION 2: Employ questions and tasks, both oral and written, that are text-specific and accurately address the analytical thinking required by the grade-level standards.**

INDICATORS <sup>3</sup> /NOTE EVIDENCE OBSERVED OR GATHERED FOR EACH INDICATOR	RATING
<p>A. Questions and tasks address the text by attending to its particular structure, concepts, ideas, events and details.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><input type="checkbox"/> NOT OBSERVED</p>	<p>4- Most questions and tasks return students to the text to build understanding.</p> <p>3- Many questions and tasks return students to the text to build understanding.</p> <p>2- Few questions and tasks return students to the text to build understanding.</p> <p>1- Questions and tasks do not refer to the text.</p>
<p>B. Questions and tasks require students to use evidence from text to demonstrate understanding and to support their ideas about the text. These ideas are expressed through a variety of means (e.g., drawing, writing, dramatic play, speaking).</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><input type="checkbox"/> NOT OBSERVED</p>	<p>4- Most questions and tasks require students to cite evidence from the text.</p> <p>3- Many questions and tasks require students to cite evidence from the text.</p> <p>2- Few questions and tasks require students to cite evidence from the text.</p> <p>1- Questions and tasks can be answered without evidence from the text.</p>
<p>C. Questions and tasks attend to the words (academic vocabulary), phrases, and sentences within the text.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><input type="checkbox"/> NOT OBSERVED</p>	<p>4- Vocabulary questions and tasks consistently focus students on the words, phrases, and sentences that matter most and how they are used in the text.</p> <p>3- Vocabulary questions and tasks mostly focus students on the words that matter most and how they are used in the text.</p> <p>2- Vocabulary questions and tasks rarely focus students on the words that matter most and how they are used in the text.</p> <p>1- No questions and tasks focus students on the words that matter most and how they are used in the text.</p>
<p>D. Questions are sequenced to build knowledge by guiding students to delve deeper into text and graphics.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><input type="checkbox"/> NOT OBSERVED</p>	<p>4- Most questions are sequenced to support building knowledge.</p> <p>3- Some questions are sequenced to support building knowledge.</p> <p>2- Few questions are sequenced to support building knowledge.</p> <p>1- Questions seem random and are not intentionally sequenced to support building knowledge.</p>

3. These indicators may be viewed over the course of 2-3 class periods.

**CORE ACTION 3: Provide all students with opportunities to engage in the work of the lesson.**

**INDICATORS<sup>3</sup> / NOTE EVIDENCE OBSERVED OR GATHERED FOR EACH INDICATOR / RATING**

- 4 – Teacher provides many opportunities, and most students take them.
- 3 – Teacher provides many opportunities, and some students take them; or teacher provides some opportunities and most students take them.
- 2 – Teacher provides some opportunities, and some students take them.
- 1 – Teacher provides few or no opportunities, or few or very few students take the opportunities provided.

<p><b>A. The teacher keeps all students persevering with challenging tasks.</b></p> <p><b>Students</b> habitually display persistence with challenging tasks, particularly when providing textual evidence to support answers and responses, both orally and in writing.</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">4 3 2 1 <input type="checkbox"/> NOT OBSERVED</p>
<p><b>B. The teacher encourages reasoning and problem solving by posing challenging questions and tasks that offer opportunities for productive struggle.</b></p> <p><b>Students</b> persevere in solving questions and tasks in the face of initial difficulty.</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">4 3 2 1 <input type="checkbox"/> NOT OBSERVED</p>
<p><b>C. The teacher guides students to read with purpose and understanding by making frequent connections between acquisition of foundational skills and making meaning from reading.</b></p> <p><b>Students</b> demonstrate comprehension while developing foundational skills in reading.</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">4 3 2 1 <input type="checkbox"/> NOT OBSERVED</p>
<p><b>D. The teacher demonstrates awareness and appropriate action regarding the variations present in student progress toward reading independently.</b></p> <p>When appropriate, <b>students</b> demonstrate progress toward independence in reading and writing.</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">4 3 2 1 <input type="checkbox"/> NOT OBSERVED</p>
<p><b>E. The teacher focuses on explicitly and systematically strengthening students’ reading foundational skills.<sup>4</sup></b></p> <p><b>Students</b> demonstrate use of language conventions and decoding skills, activating such strategies as needed to read, write, and speak with grade-level fluency and skill.</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">4 3 2 1 <input type="checkbox"/> NOT OBSERVED</p>

4. Indicator 3E is only applicable during a Foundational Skills lesson.

# BEYOND THE LESSON: DISCUSSION GUIDE

## ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS/LITERACY

### INTRODUCTION

The Beyond the Lesson Discussion Guide is designed for the post-observation conversation using the Instructional Practice Guide Coaching Tool ([achievethecore.org/coaching-tool](https://achievethecore.org/coaching-tool)) or any other observation rubric. The questions put the content of the lesson in the context of the broader instructional plan for the unit or year. The conversation should first reflect on the evidence collected during the observation to consider what worked, what could improve, and what resources are available to support improvement. If any parts of the Lesson Planning Tool ([achievethecore.org/lesson-planning-tool](https://achievethecore.org/lesson-planning-tool)) were used in preparing for the lesson, refer to that information during the discussion. After discussing the observed lesson, use the “Beyond the Lesson” questions to help clearly delineate what practices are in place, what has already occurred, and what opportunities might exist in another lesson, further in the unit, or over the course of the year to incorporate the Shifts into the classroom.

1. **Why was this text selected for today’s lesson? Is this text one of a sequence of texts designed to build knowledge? Please explain.** For more information refer to page 33 of the Standards.
2. **What content knowledge are students expected to gain from reading this sequence of resources?** For sample resources refer to [achievethecore.org/text-set-project](https://achievethecore.org/text-set-project)
3. **Beyond this lesson, what steps have been taken to ensure that students are reading a range and volume of literary and informational texts as recommended by the CCSS? (Remember, Grades K–5 focus on 50% Literary and 50% Informational, while Grades 6–12 focus on 30% Literary and 70% Informational.)** For more information refer to page 5 of the Standards.
4. **What steps have been taken to ensure students are given frequent opportunities to read independently and engage with a high volume of texts? How are students held accountable for reading independently?** For sample resources refer to [achievethecore.org/text-set-project](https://achievethecore.org/text-set-project)
5. **Beyond this lesson, what steps have been taken to ensure all students are reading texts of increasing complexity with increasing independence over the course of the year?** For sample resources refer to [achievethecore.org/text-set-project](https://achievethecore.org/text-set-project)
6. **How are students monitored as they progress toward being able to read and comprehend grade-level literary and informational texts independently and proficiently?** For more information refer to page 5 of the Standards.
7. **How are all students supported in working with grade-level text? What scaffolds are provided for students who are reading below grade level? What opportunities are provided for students who are reading above grade level to engage more deeply with grade-level or above-grade-level texts?**
8. **How are students increasingly taking charge of speaking & listening, language and writing tasks expected by the grade level standards?**
9. **Beyond this lesson, what steps have been taken to ensure that student writing tasks reflect the range of tasks recommended by the CCSS? (Remember, CCSS recommends 30% argument, 35% explanatory or informational, and 35% narrative.)** For more information refer to page 5 of the Standards.
10. **What steps have been taken to ensure students regularly conduct both short and more sustained research projects?** For sample resources refer to [achievethecore.org/text-set-project](https://achievethecore.org/text-set-project)

### CLASSROOM ENVIRONMENT: IMPORTANT TO CREATING A LITERACY RICH ENVIRONMENT

In addition to the discussion between observer and teacher, be aware that the following environmental factors may also provide useful information. The classroom library organization supports the following:

- Reading a wide range of text genres and resources at varying levels of complexity (poetry, fiction, bibliographies, informational texts, videos, etc.)
- Building knowledge about a range of topics (history, social studies, science, technical subjects, arts, music, etc.)
- Integrating authentic response options for students (book reviews, recorded reading, writing, discussions, etc.)