Instructional Practice Toolkit
ELA/Literacy
Analysis Activities

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Shifts at a Glance

College- and Career-Ready Shifts in English Language Arts/Literacy

Complexity: Practice regularly with complex text and its academic language.

Rather than focusing solely on the skills of reading and writing, the Common Core and other college- and career-ready (CCR) standards highlight the growing complexity of the texts students must read to be ready for the demands of college and careers. CCR standards build a staircase of text complexity so that all students are ready for the demands of college- and career-level reading no later than the end of high school. Closely related to text complexity—and inextricably connected to reading comprehension—is a focus on academic vocabulary: words that appear in a variety of content areas (such as *ignite* and *commit*).

Evidence: Ground reading, writing, and speaking in evidence from text, both literary and informational.

College- and career-ready standards place a premium on students writing to sources, i.e., using evidence from texts to present careful analyses, well-defended claims, and clear information. Rather than asking students questions they can answer solely from their prior knowledge or experience, CCR standards expect students to answer questions that depend on their having read the text or texts with care. CCR standards also require the cultivation of narrative writing throughout the grades; in later grades, a command of sequence and detail will be essential for effective argumentative and informational writing.

Likewise, the reading standards focus on students' ability to read carefully and grasp information, arguments, ideas, and details based on text evidence. Students should be able to answer a range of text-dependent questions, questions in which the answers require inferences based on careful attention to the text.

Knowledge: Build knowledge through content-rich nonfiction.

Building knowledge through content rich nonfiction plays an essential role in literacy and in CCR standards. In K–5, fulfilling the standards requires a 50–50 balance between informational and literary reading. Informational reading primarily includes content rich nonfiction in history/social studies, science, and the arts; the K–5 standards strongly recommend that students build coherent general knowledge both within each year and across years. In grades 6–12, ELA classes pay much greater attention to a specific category of informational text—literary nonfiction—than has been traditional. In grades 6–12, the standards for literacy in history/social studies, science, and technical subjects ensure that students can independently build knowledge in these disciplines through reading and writing.

To be clear, CCR standards–including the Common Core–require substantial attention to literature throughout K–12, as half of the required work in K–5 and the core of the work of 6–12 ELA.

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INSTRUCTIONAL PRACTICE GUIDE

ELA / LIT
SUBJECT

K–2
GRADES

READING / LISTENING COMPREHENSION
GUIDE TYPE

Date

Teacher Name

School

Grade / Class Period / Section

Topic / Lesson / Unit

Learning Goal

Standard(s) Addressed in this Lesson

Observer Name

About The Instructional Practice Guide

Content-specific feedback is critical to teacher professional development. The Instructional Practice Guide (IPG) is a K–12 classroom observation rubric that prioritizes what is observable in and expected of classroom instruction when instructional content is aligned to college- and career-ready (CCR) standards, including the Common Core State Standards (CCSS), in ELA/literacy (corestandards.org/ELA-Literacy). It purposefully focuses on the limited number of classroom practices tied most closely to content of the lesson.[1]

Designed as a developmental rather than an evaluation tool, the IPG supports planning, reflection, and collaboration, in addition to coaching. The IPG encompasses the three Shifts by detailing how they appear in instruction:[2]

Complexity: Practice regularly with complex text and its academic language.

Evidence: Ground reading, writing, and speaking in evidence from text, both literary and informational.

Knowledge: Build knowledge through content-rich nonfiction.

This rubric is divided into the Core Actions teachers should be taking. Each Core Action consists of indicators which further describe teacher and student behaviors that exemplify CCR-aligned instruction.

Using The Instructional Practice Guide

The K–2 ELA/literacy IPG is intended for use with reading and listing comprehension lessons; refer to the Foundational Skills collection (achievethecore.org/foundational-skills) for support with foundational skills instruction and observation. For each observation, you should make note of what you see and hear. It may be helpful to supplement what you've recorded with further evidence from artifacts such as lesson plans, tasks, or 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 you observe only a portion of a lesson. In those cases you should expect to not observe some of the indicators and to leave some of the tool blank. Whenever possible, share evidence you collected during the observation in a follow-up discussion.

After discussing the observed lesson, use the Beyond the Lesson Discussion Guide to put the content of the lesson in the context of the broader instructional plan. The questions in the Beyond the Lesson Discussion Guide help delineate what practices are in place, what has already occurred, and what opportunities might exist to incorporate the Shifts into the classroom during another lesson, further in the unit, or over the course of the year.

To further support content-specific planning, practice, and observation, explore the collection of free IPG companion tools, resources, and professional development modules at achievethecore.org/instructional-practice.

CORE ACTIONS AND INDICATORS

For the complete Instructional Practice Guide, go to achievethecore.org/instructional-practice.

Core Action 1

Focus each lesson on a high-quality text (or multiple texts).

A. A majority of the lesson is spent listening to, reading, writing, or speaking about text(s)

   Name of Text: _____

   Type of Text(s) (circle):   Informational   /   Literary   /   Other Media or Format

B. The anchor text(s) are at or above the complexity level expected for the grade and time in the school year.

   Quantitative Measure(s) used: _____

   Quantitative Score(s): _____

   Approximate Grade Band: _____

   To approximate the grade band for the text, consider the quantitative measure or score, the qualitative features, and the related task.

C.   The text(s) exhibit exceptional craft and thought and/or provide meaningful information in the service of building knowledge; where appropriate, the texts are richly illustrated.

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.

A. Questions and tasks address the text by attending to its particular qualitative features: its meaning/purpose and/or language, structure(s), or knowledge demands.

B. Questions and tasks require students to use evidence from the 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).

C. Questions and tasks attend to the words (academic vocabulary), phrases, and sentences within the text.

D. Questions and tasks are sequenced to build knowledge by guiding students to delve deeper into the text and graphics.

Core Action 3

Provide all students with opportunities to engage in the work of the lesson.

A. The teacher poses questions and tasks for students to do the majority of the work: speaking/listening, reading, and/or writing.
   Students do the majority of the work of the lesson.

B. The teacher cultivates reasoning and meaning making by allowing students to productively struggle.
   Students persevere through difficulty.

C. The teacher expects evidence and precision from students and probes students' answers accordingly.
   Students provide text evidence to support their ideas and display precision in their oral and/or written responses.

D. The teacher creates the conditions for student conversations where students are encouraged to talk about each other's thinking.
   Students talk and ask questions about each other's thinking, in order to clarify or improve their understanding.

E. The teacher deliberately checks for understanding throughout the lesson and adapts the lesson according to student understanding.
   When appropriate, students refine written and/or oral responses.

F. When appropriate, the teacher explicitly attends to strengthening students' language and reading foundational skills.
   Students demonstrate use of language conventions and decoding skills, activating such strategies as needed to read, write, and speak with grade-level fluency and skill.

Name: _____   Date: _____   Observer Name: _____

CORE ACTION 1: Focus each lesson on a high-quality text (or multiple texts).

INDICATORS / NOTE EVIDENCE OBSERVED OR GATHERED FOR EACH INDICATOR	RATING
A. A majority of the lesson is spent listening to, reading, writing, or speaking about text(s). Name of Text: _____ Type of Text(s) (circle): Informational / Literary / Other Media or Format	Yes- The lesson is focused on a text or multiple texts. No- There is no text under consideration in this lesson.
B. The anchor text(s)[3] are at or above the complexity level expected for the grade and time in the school year.[4] Quantitative Measure(s) used: _____ Quantitative Score(s): _____ Approximate Grade Band: _____ To approximate the grade band for the text, consider the quantitative measure or score, the qualitative features,[5] and the related task.	Yes- The anchor text(s) are at or above both the qualitative and quantitative complexity expected for the grade and time in the school year. No- The anchor text(s) are below the qualitative and/or quantitative complexity expected for the grade and time in the school year. N/A- Anchor text not observed
C. The text(s) exhibit exceptional craft and thought and/or provide meaningful information in the service of building knowledge; where appropriate, the texts are richly illustrated.	Yes- The text(s) exhibits exceptional craft and thought and/or provides meaningful information in the service of building knowledge. No- The text(s) does not exhibit exceptional craft and thought and/or provide meaningful information in the service of building knowledge.

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Name:

Date:

Observer Name:

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[6] / NOTE EVIDENCE OBSERVED OR GATHERED FOR EACH INDICATOR	RATING
A. Questions and tasks address the text by attending to its particular qualitative features: its meaning/purpose and/or language, structure(s), or knowledge demands. ☐ NOT OBSERVED	4- Most questions and tasks attend to the qualitative features of the text to build understanding. 3- Many questions and tasks attend to the qualitative features of the text to build understanding. 2- Few questions and tasks attend to the qualitative features of the text to build understanding. 1- Questions and tasks do not attend to the qualitative features of the text to build understanding. N/A- There is no text present in the lesson.
B. Questions and tasks require students to use evidence from the 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). ☐ NOT OBSERVED	4- Most questions and tasks require students to cite evidence from the text. 3- Many questions and tasks require students to cite evidence from the text. 2- Few questions and tasks require students to cite evidence from the text. 1- Questions and tasks can be answered without evidence from the text. N/A- There is no text present in the lesson.
C. Questions and tasks attend to the words (academic vocabulary), phrases, and sentences within the text. ☐ NOT OBSERVED	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. 3- Vocabulary questions and tasks mostly focus students on the words that matter most and how they are used in the text. 2- Vocabulary questions and tasks rarely focus students on the words that matter most and how they are used in the text. 1- No questions and tasks focus students on the words that matter most and how they are used in the text. N/A- There is no text present in the lesson.
D. Questions and tasks are sequenced to build knowledge by guiding students to delve deeper into the text and graphics. ☐ NOT OBSERVED	4- Most questions and tasks are intentionally sequenced to support building knowledge. 3- Some questions and tasks are intentionally sequenced to support building knowledge. 2- Few questions and tasks are intentionally sequenced to support building knowledge. 1- Questions and tasks seem random and are not intentionally sequenced to support building knowledge. N/A- There is no text present in the lesson.

6. These actions may be viewed over the course of 2–3 class periods.

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Name:

Date:

Observer Name:

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

INDICATORS / 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.

A. The **teacher** poses questions and tasks for students to do the majority of the work: speaking/listening, reading, and/or writing.

   Students do the majority of the work of the lesson.

   4 3 2 1
   ☐ NOT OBSERVED

B. The **teacher** cultivates reasoning and meaning making by allowing students to productively struggle.

   Students persevere through difficulty.

   4 3 2 1
   ☐ NOT OBSERVED

C. The **teacher** expects evidence and precision from students and probes students' answers accordingly.

   Students provide text evidence to support their ideas and display precision in their oral and/or written responses.

   4 3 2 1
   ☐ NOT OBSERVED

D. The **teacher** creates the conditions for student conversations where students are encouraged to talk about each other's thinking.

   Students talk and ask questions about each other's thinking, in order to clarify or improve their understanding.

   4 3 2 1
   ☐ NOT OBSERVED

E. The **teacher** deliberately checks for understanding throughout the lesson and adapts the lesson according to student understanding.

   When appropriate, **students** refine written and/or oral responses.

   4 3 2 1
   ☐ NOT OBSERVED

F. When appropriate, the **teacher** explicitly attends to strengthening students' language and reading foundational skills.[7]

   Students demonstrate use of language conventions and decoding skills, activating such strategies as needed to read, write, and speak with grade-level fluency and skill.

   4 3 2 1
   ☐ NOT OBSERVED

7. This indicator is referring to the foundational skills instruction that might take place in the context of a reading/listening comprehension lesson. Refer to the Foundational Skills Observation Tool (achievethecore.org/foundational-skills-observation) for support with foundational skills instruction and observation.

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 (achievethecore.org/instructional-practice) 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) 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

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

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

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

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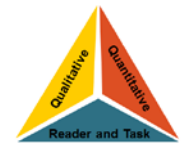**CLASSROOM ENVIRONMENT: IMPORTANT TO CREATING A LITERACY-RICH ENVIRONMENT**

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.)
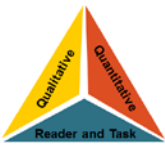
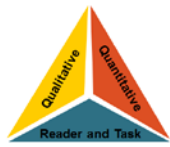# TEXT COMPLEXITY: QUALITATIVE MEASURES RUBRIC
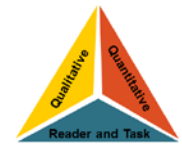# INFORMATIONAL TEXT

Text Title: _____   **Text Author:** _____

PURPOSE			
High	**Middle High**	**Middle Low**	**Low**
☐ Complex, implied, and/or difficult to determine; may have multiple purposes	☐ Implied, but can be inferred; may have multiple purposes	☐ Implied, but easy to identify based on context	☐ Explicitly stated

STRUCTURE			
High	**Middle High**	**Middle Low**	**Low**
☐ **Organization:** highly complex; implicit connections between ideas; conforms to the conventions of a specific content area or discipline	☐ **Organization:** complex; some explicit connections between ideas; may exhibit traits common to a specific content area or discipline	☐ **Organization:** may be complex; largely explicit connections between ideas; generally follows the conventions of the genre	☐ **Organization:** simple; explicit connections between ideas; conforms to the conventions of the genre
☐ **Text Features:** if used, are essential in understanding content	☐ **Text Features:** if used, greatly enhance the reader's understanding of content	☐ **Text Features:** if used, enhance the reader's understanding of content	☐ **Text Features:** if used, help the reader navigate and understand content but are not essential
☐ **Use of Graphics:** if used, interpretation of complex graphics essential to understanding the text; may also provide information not conveyed in the text*	☐ **Use of Graphics:** if used, some graphics are complex and may occasionally be essential to the understanding of the text	☐ **Use of Graphics:** if used, graphics are mostly simple and supplementary to understanding the text	☐ **Use of Graphics:** if used, graphics are simple and unnecessary to understanding the text

LANGUAGE			
High	**Middle High**	**Middle Low**	**Low**
☐ **Conventionality:** contains abstract and/or figurative language or irony	☐ **Conventionality:** occasionally contains abstract and/or figurative language or irony	☐ **Conventionality:** largely contemporary, conversational language	☐ **Conventionality:** contemporary, conversational language
☐ **Clarity:** dense and complex language that is generally unfamiliar, archaic, discipline-specific, or overly academic; language may be ambiguous or purposefully misleading	☐ **Clarity:** somewhat complex language that is occasionally unfamiliar, archaic, discipline-specific, or overly academic	☐ **Clarity:** largely explicit, familiar language; easy-to-understand and rarely archaic, discipline-specific, or overly academic	☐ **Clarity:** clear, explicit, literal, easy-to-understand language

KNOWLEDGE DEMANDS			
High	**Middle High**	**Middle Low**	**Low**
☐ **Subject Matter Knowledge:** requires extensive, perhaps specialized or even theoretical discipline-specific content knowledge	☐ **Subject Matter Knowledge:** requires moderate levels of discipline-specific content knowledge; some theoretical knowledge may enhance understanding	☐ **Subject Matter Knowledge:** everyday, practical knowledge is largely necessary; requires some discipline-specific content knowledge	☐ **Subject Matter Knowledge:** requires only everyday, practical knowledge and familiarity with conventions of the genre
☐ **Intertextuality:** many references to/citations of other texts or outside ideas, theories, etc.	☐ **Intertextuality:** some references to/citations of other texts or outside ideas, theories, etc.	☐ **Intertextuality:** few references to/citations of other texts or outside ideas, theories, etc.	☐ **Intertextuality:** no references to/citations of other texts or outside ideas, theories, etc.

*NOTE: Many books for the youngest students rely heavily on graphics to convey meaning and are an exception to this generalization.

TEXT COMPLEXITY: QUALITATIVE MEASURES RUBRIC
LITERARY TEXT

Text Title: _____   **Text Author:** _____

MEANING

High	Middle High	Middle Low	Low
☐ Multiple levels/layers of complex meaning	☐ Multiple levels/layers of meaning	☐ Single level/layer of complex meaning	☐ Single level/layer of simple meaning

STRUCTURE

High	Middle High	Middle Low	Low
☐ **Narrative Structure:** complex, implicit, and unconventional	☐ **Narrative Structure:** some complexities, more implicit than explicit, some unconventionality	☐ **Narrative Structure:** largely simple structure, more explicit than implicit, largely conventional	☐ **Narrative Structure:** simple, explicit, conventional
☐ **Narration:** many shifts in point of view	☐ **Narration:** occasional shifts in point of view	☐ **Narration:** few, if any, shifts in point of view	☐ **Narration:** no shifts in point of view
☐ **Order of Events:** frequent manipulations of time and sequence (not in chronological order)	☐ **Order of Events:** several major shifts in time, use of flashback	☐ **Order of Events:** occasional use of flashback, no major shifts in time	☐ **Order of Events:** chronological

LANGUAGE

High	Middle High	Middle Low	Low
☐ **Conventionality:** heavy use of abstract and/or figurative language or irony	☐ **Conventionality:** contains abstract and/or figurative language or irony	☐ **Conventionality:** subtle use of figurative language or irony	☐ **Conventionality:** little or no use of figurative language or irony
☐ **Clarity:** generally unfamiliar, archaic, domain-specific, and/or academic language; dense and complex; may be ambiguous or purposefully misleading	☐ **Clarity:** somewhat complex language that is occasionally unfamiliar, archaic, domain-specific, or overly academic	☐ **Clarity:** largely contemporary, familiar, conversational language that is explicit and literal; rarely unfamiliar, archaic, domain-specific, or overly academic	☐ **Clarity:** contemporary, familiar, conversational language that is explicit and literal; easy-to-understand

KNOWLEDGE DEMANDS

High	Middle High	Middle Low	Low
☐ **Life Experiences:** explores multiple complex, sophisticated themes; multiple perspectives presented; experiences portrayed are not fantasy but are distinctly different to the common reader	☐ **Life Experiences:** explores multiple themes of varying levels of complexity; experiences portrayed are not fantasy but are uncommon to most readers	☐ **Life Experiences:** explores a single complex theme; experiences portrayed are common to many readers or are clearly fantasy	☐ **Life Experiences:** explores a single theme; single perspective presented and everyday experiences are portrayed that are common to most readers or experiences are clearly fantasy
☐ **Cultural/Literary Knowledge:** requires an extensive depth of literary/cultural knowledge; many references/allusions to other texts and/or cultural elements	☐ **Cultural/Literary Knowledge:** requires moderate levels of cultural/literary knowledge; some references/allusions to other texts and/or cultural elements	☐ **Cultural/Literary Knowledge:** requires some cultural/literary knowledge; few references/allusions to other texts and/or cultural elements	☐ **Cultural/Literary Knowledge:** requires only common, everyday cultural/literary knowledge; no references/allusions to other texts and/or cultural elements

What Makes This Text Complex?

1. **Quantitative Measure**
   Go to http://www.lexile.com/ and enter the title of your text in the Quick Book Search in the upper right of home page. Most texts will have a Lexile, measure in this database. For more information on other valid quantitative measures, click here.

   Most of the texts that we read aloud in K–2 should be in the 2–3 or 4–5 band, more complex than the students can read themselves.

2–3 band	420–820L
4–5 band	740–1010L

2. **Qualitative Features**
   Consider the four dimensions of text complexity below. For each dimension, note some examples from the text that make it more or less complex. For more information on these four dimensions, click here.

Meaning/Purpose	Text Structure
Language Features	Knowledge Demands

3. **Reader and Task Considerations**
   What will challenge my students most in this text? What supports can I provide?

   How will this text help my students build knowledge about the world?

The Observation and Feedback Cycle: Best Practices for Low Inference Notes

Observe

The school leader visits the classroom and takes low-inference notes on teacher and student actions.

Best Practices for Observation
1. **Eliminate effects of bias.** Enter the classroom without judgment and work from evidence.
2. **Take low-inference notes.** Write down only what teacher and students say and do.
3. **Look for learning.** Seek evidence of what students know and are able to do.
4. **Remain, review, reflect.** Pause to organize your evidence before rating.

Collecting low inference evidence during an observation

Capturing high-quality notes during the observation is the first step in ensuring that ratings are accurate and feedback aligns to teachers' needed areas of improvement. **Low-inference note-taking is a skill**, not knowledge. Knowing how to do a push-up doesn't mean you can do 25 of them in 60 seconds; it comes with practice. When taking low-inference notes, the school leader describes what is taking place without drawing conclusions or making judgments about what he or she observes. When taking notes on instruction, ask:

- What do you see and hear the teacher and students saying and doing?
- What evidence can you gather of student learning?
- What will students know and be able to do at the end of the lesson?

Common mistakes/pitfalls to avoid

- Distinguish between low-inference statements and opinions. For instance, you can identify key words that give away subjectivity: e.g., *"I think,"* or *"I feel."* Be cognizant of keeping evidence separate from opinions, using this framework:

Evidence	Opinion
- Is observable - Is not influenced by the observer's perspective - Is free of evaluative words - Does not draw conclusions	- Makes inferences - Depends on observer's perspective - Includes evaluative words - Draws conclusions

- Replace vague quantifiers by capturing more specific evidence: e.g., *"a lot of students raised their hands"* vs. *"17 of 20 students raised their hands."*
- Swap Edu-Speak for Evidence. For example, rather than saying, *"You differentiated by scaffolding questions during the mini-lesson,"* identify the actual questions that the teacher asked, such as *"What is the name of this shape? How is it different from a square or rectangle? Where in real life have you seen this shape?"*

Tips for low inference note taking

Where to find the data for student outcomes during an observation:

- Sit with a table/group of students. Write down the questions asked and answers given by the students in that group.
- Copy down what each student has written on their paper VERBATIM into your observation notes (e.g., answer to #2 on handout, response to quick-write prompt). The observer can obtain a handout from the teacher, if available, and record the answers directly onto it.
- Write down the time and circulate in the room. Record the item that all students are working on in that moment. Then, go around a second time.
- Select a problem, determine the correct answer, and tally the number of students who have the correct response written on their papers.
- If recording observation notes using an iPad, use the iPad to take pictures of actual student work during the classroom observation.
- Move around the classroom and identify students performing at high, medium, low levels and strategically capture their work
- Monitor observation notes to ensure that the "student side" is not neglected.
- Ask students to tell you what they are learning/doing, why they are learning, and if they have learned anything new today.
- Collect the lesson plan and/or copies of student work prior to leaving the classroom.

How do I capture as much evidence as possible?

- Set up a coding system (T= teacher, S= student, HU= hands up)
- Time transitions, each section of the lesson, work time, etc.
- Copy objective or aim, or make a note if it is not posted
- Draw circles to represent groups of students or teacher interaction with students

Diagram of groups of students
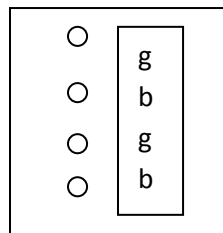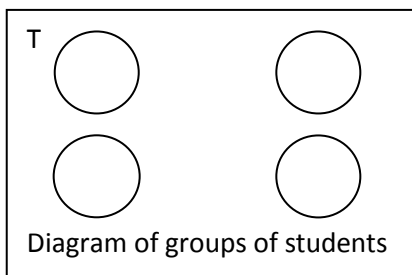
- If you notice a trend, create a tally on the side, so you can capture other evidence that may be occurring while also documenting the trend. For example, Jane is the only one responding to the teacher's questions. You may capture several instances verbatim, but you can also capture how many times it occurs if you can't capture everything Jane said.

  Use tallies or shorthand in the diagram or a chart:

  | Jane is called on | 卌 | |
  | Times teacher provides feedback to front table | ||| |

- Quality over quantity: collect a full interaction.
    - *When teacher did __, student __. When student said __, teacher said__.*

Low-Inference Note-Taking Samples: Strong versus Weak

Strong example of low-inference notes:

Time	Teacher Actions	Student Actions
1:00	Teacher says to walking students, "You need to be on the rug in 3-2-1."	Twenty-four students on the carpet facing the front of the room. 3 students walking around the classroom. As teacher said "one" students joined classmates.
1:01	Teacher asked "How many days are there in the week?" Teacher repeated question and then said, "Anyone?" Teacher asked kids to stand and lead them in "The Days of the Week" song.	5-6 kids spoke to each other when teacher spoke. She called on Terrence who said "7." 16 of the 27 kids stood up for the song.
1:02	Teacher asked "What day comes after Saturday?"	Steven shouted out, "Monday!" Most students laughed – 2 boys physically rolled around and knocked over 2 girls. Steven walked away from the group, and sat in the opposite corner of the classroom.
1:03	Teacher said, "OK boys and girls if you hear my voice clap once, If you hear my voice clap twice."	After two claps, all but 2 boys were quiet and looking at her.

Weak example of low-inference notes:

Time	Teacher Actions	Student Actions
1:00		Students on carpet during mini-lesson. Lots of students walking around the classroom while the teacher tried to get their attention.
1:01	Teacher asked questions about the calendar.	Many students were not listening while the teacher reviewed the days of the week.
1:02		Steven called out over and over again when you asked the question about the days of the week.
1:03		Steven walked away from the group and the class fell apart.
1:04	Mini-lesson is not successful. Little student learning accomplished as teacher has no classroom management skills.	
1:05	Poor classroom management continues through sloppy transitions from carpet to desks.	Several students are talking to one another.
1:06	The teacher seemed to be okay with this.	A few students go to the round table. Some start reading and some don't.

Lesson Plan Analysis

Lesson: _____

Use this document to record information/evidence from the sample lesson plan. Evidence should consider the Core Actions. You may also record potential questions you have beyond the lesson. Evidence recorded will be integrated into the Feedback Summary worksheet.

Core Action 1: Focus each lesson on a high-quality text (or multiple texts).
Discussion Questions
What text(s) will be used in the lesson? If multiple texts are used, is it clear which of these texts are anchor or supporting texts?
Is there evidence that the text(s) were evaluated for complexity?
What evidence can be noted for the text(s) exhibiting exceptional craft and thought and/or providing meaningful information in the service of building knowledge? What are the central ideas of the text?
What is the intended learning for the lesson?
Which standard(s) are targeted in this lesson?
Does the lesson plan for a majority of the time to be spent reading, writing, or speaking about the text?

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.

Discussion Questions

How are questions, activities, and tasks designed and sequenced to guide students to the central ideas and development of the text to build knowledge?

How will students be expected to use evidence from this text to demonstrate understanding and support their ideas (e.g., Think, Pair, Share; journal; small group discussion, act it out, etc.)?

Which vocabulary words, phrases, and sentences demand time and attention because they are:
- critical to comprehension *or*
- valuable words for students to know *or*
- related to the central idea of the text?

How are they addressed in the lesson?

If present, what is the culminating task for the lesson? How will students demonstrate understanding of the structure, concepts, ideas, or details of the text?

Core Action 3:
Provide all students with opportunities to engage in the work of the lesson.

Discussion Questions

What scaffolds are planned so that all students will persevere through difficult tasks?

What supports are planned for students who read below grade level?

What extensions are planned for students who read above grade level?

What consideration and opportunities for student progress toward independent reading of this text are built into the lesson?

How are language and foundational skills practice addressed (for grades K-5, if applicable) in the lesson?

Beyond the Lesson
Discussion Questions

Are there indications that this text is one of a sequence designed to build knowledge?

Is there evidence of how this lesson fits within longer-term content goals?

Is there evidence of support for increasing independence in writing or speaking?

Student Work Analysis

Lesson: _____

Use this document to record information/evidence from the sample student work. Evidence should consider the Core Actions. Evidence recorded will be integrated into the Feedback Summary worksheet. ***Before analyzing student work, be sure to have first completed the student assignment.***

General notes and observations about the task:

1. **Does the task attend to any of the following? Note all that apply.**
   - The structure, concepts, ideas, events or details of the text(s)?
   - The words, phrases, and sentences within the text(s)?
   - Understanding the central ideas and development of the text(s)?

2. **How does the task require students to use evidence from anchor text(s) to demonstrate understanding and to support ideas about the text?**

3. **Do the directions, prompts, and/or scoring guidelines for the task adequately provide or indicate opportunities for students to demonstrate the requirements of the targeted standard(s) for the task?**

Analyzing individual student samples (worksheet on back):

1. **What does the student's work demonstrate about his/her understanding of the task?**

2. **What does the student's work demonstrate about the depth of his/her understanding of the text(s) and topic?**

3. **What does the student's work demonstrate about his/her proficiency with the requirements of the targeted standard(s)?**

(See worksheet)

After looking at student work:

1. **On what aspects of the task have students generally performed well?**

2. **Are there common errors made across the collection of student work?**

Student Work Analysis Worksheet

Student Work Sample	What does the student's work demonstrate about the depth of his/her understanding of the text(s) and topic?	What does the student's work demonstrate about his/her understanding of the task?	What does the student's work demonstrate about his/her proficiency with the requirements of the targeted standard?
Student A			
Student B			
Student C			
Student D			

Note: For a collection of more than four samples of student work, print this page multiple times.

Feedback Summary

Lesson: _____

Using the completed Instructional Practice Guide, the Lesson Plan Analysis, and Student Work Analysis, consider the aggregate strengths and considerations for the lesson. Choose relevant Beyond the Lesson questions to guide longer-term reflection.

Evidence of the Shifts and standards-aligned practice	Areas where alignment to the Shifts and standards can improve
Core Action 1: Focus each lesson on a high-quality text (or multiple texts).	
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.	

Evidence of the Shifts and standards-aligned practice	Areas where alignment to the Shifts and standards can improve
Core Action 3: Provide all students with opportunities to engage in the work of the lesson.	
Beyond the Lesson *Choose relevant Beyond the Lesson questions to guide longer-term reflection.*	

Implications and Next Steps