

Teacher _____

Classroom Literacy Guide

Observation Date: _____ Before Reading _____ During Reading _____ After Reading _____ Observer _____

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Observation Date: _____ Before Reading _____ During Reading _____ After Reading _____ Observer _____

| Component I. Classroom Climate | = Observed + = Commendation / = Needs Improvement | | | | Blank = Not Observed | | | | Comments |
|--|---|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|----------------------|---------------------|---------------------|--|----------|
| | Teacher Observation | Teacher Observation | Teacher Observation | Teacher Observation | Teacher Observation | Teacher Observation | Teacher Observation | | |
| A. Many different types of authentic reading materials such as magazines, newspapers, novels, and nonfiction works are displayed and are available for student to read independently and use for models for writing. | | | | | | | | | |
| B. The classroom has a reading area such as a corner or classroom library, where students are encouraged to go to read for enjoyment. | | | | | | | | | |
| C. An area is available for small-group instruction. | | | | | | | | | |
| D. The teacher reinforced effort and provided recognition for the attainment of specific goals. | | | | | | | | | |
| E. Active participation and social interaction are integral parts of reading instruction and include positive interdependence, group processing, appropriate use of social skills, face-to-face interaction, and individual and group accountability. | | | | | | | | | |
| F. The classroom environment indicates that reading and writing are valued and actively promoted (e.g., purposeful writing is displayed, journals are maintained, Word Walls are used, book talks and read-alouds by teacher occur regularly). | | | | | | | | | |
| G. The literacy tasks the students were asked to perform during the lesson were meaningful and relevant . | | | | | | | | | |
| H. An area is available where students can access technological resources (e.g., computer, Internet, listening center). | | | | | | | | | |

| Component II. Before Reading/Writing | = Observed + = Commendation / = Needs Improvement | | | | Blank = Not Observed | | | | Comments |
|---|---|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|----------------------|---------------------|---------------------|--|----------|
| | Teacher Observation | Teacher Observation | Teacher Observation | Teacher Observation | Teacher Observation | Teacher Observation | Teacher Observation | | |
| A. The teacher used cues, higher order questions, and higher order advance organizers to focus the students on what is important and establish a mental set for new learning . | | | | | | | | | |
| B. During the prereading discussion, the teacher asked the students to preview the text , e.g., by reading the title of the selection, reading headings, looking at the illustrations, noting important text structures, and discussing the possible contents of the text. | | | | | | | | | |

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| C. Students were prompted to activate their background knowledge through the use of the K-W-L charts, anticipation guides, webs, and graphic organizers. | | | | | |
| D. By generating a discussion about the topic, the teacher stimulated the students' curiosity about and created interest . | | | | | |
| E. Teacher scaffolded understanding of new vocabulary words that were central to the understanding of the text without pre-teaching vocabulary. | | | | | |
| F. The students were prompted to state or write and to clearly explain predictions or hypotheses related to the topic of the reading selection. | | | | | |
| G. Before reading/writing occurred, the teacher helped the student identify the type of text that was to be read/written to determine what his/her purpose is for reading/writing it. | | | | | |
| H. The instructional objective for the lesson was clearly identified for the student along with how that objective related to previous lessons. | | | | | |
| I. The teacher modeled appropriate step(s) in the writing process. | | | | | |
| J. The teacher continually assessed students prereading/prewriting discussion and made appropriate adjustments. | | | | | |

| Component III. During Reading/Writing | Teacher Observation | Teacher Observation | Teacher Observation | Teacher Observation | Comments |
|--|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|-----------------|
| | | | | | |
| A. At appropriate points during reading, the students were asked to evaluate their initial predictions or hypotheses . | | | | | |
| B. The students were asked to identify or read aloud portions of the text that confirmed or disproved their predictions or hypotheses . | | | | | |
| C. The comprehension discussion focused on the established purposes for reading. | | | | | |
| D. An appropriate mix of factual and higher level thinking questions was incorporated into the comprehension discussion. | | | | | |
| E. During the lesson, the teacher modeled fluent reading . | | | | | |
| F. The teacher prompted the students to adjust their reading rate to fit the material. | | | | | |
| G. The teacher monitored the students and gave proper assistance and feedback during literacy activities. | | | | | |
| H. The teacher modeled and prompted the use of new vocabulary . | | | | | |
| I. The students were prompted to use a variety of word study strategies (e.g., words within words, context, syllabication) to decode unknown words and get their meaning. | | | | | |
| J. The students were prompted to use appropriate comprehension monitoring and fix-up strategies during reading (e.g., paraphrasing, rereading, using context, asking for help). | | | | | |

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| K. The teacher provided opportunities for students to demonstrate oral reading fluency . | | | | | |
| L. The teacher periodically assessed the students ability to monitor meaning. | | | | | |

| Component IV. After Reading/Writing | = Observed + = Commendation / = Needs Improvement | Blank = Not Observed | Teacher | Teacher | Teacher | Teacher | Comments |
|---|---|----------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-----------------|
| | | | Observation | Observation | Observation | Observation | |
| A. During the postreading discussion, the students were asked to identify sections of the text that substantiated answers to questions and confirmed or disproved their predictions, hypotheses, or conclusions . | | | | | | | |
| B. The teacher asked the students to retell or summarize the material they had read, concentrating on major events or concepts | | | | | | | |
| C. The students were asked to explain their opinions and critical judgments . | | | | | | | |
| D. The teacher had the students provide a written response to the reading (e.g., written retelling, written summarization, written evaluation). | | | | | | | |
| E. Students were prompted to use new vocabulary in written responses by the teacher s examples and modeling. | | | | | | | |
| F. Writing was used as natural extension of reading tasks. | | | | | | | |
| G. The teacher continually monitored students' comprehension and provided appropriate feedback. | | | | | | | |
| H. The students shared and discussed their writing . | | | | | | | |

| Component V. Skill and Strategy Instruction | = Observed + = Commendation / = Needs Improvement | Blank = Not Observed | Teacher | Teacher | Teacher | Teacher | Comments |
|---|---|----------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-----------------|
| | | | Observation | Observation | Observation | Observation | |
| A. The teacher provided a clear explanation about the structure/ purpose of the skill or strategy to be learned and described when and how it could be used. | | | | | | | |
| B. The teacher modeled the use of the skill or strategy so students were able to see how it would be used. | | | | | | | |
| C. Any direct teaching of phonics or a phonemic element was immediately followed by students using the skill in a meaningful context . | | | | | | | |
| D. Explicit skill and strategy instruction was provided and applied in the context of reading/writing. | | | | | | | |
| E. The students were prompted to use before, during, and after reading strategies . | | | | | | | |
| F. Scaffolded skill and strategy instruction moved students toward independent use. | | | | | | | |

| Component VI. Materials and Tasks of the Lesson = Observed + = Commendation / = Needs Improvement Blank = Not Observed | Teacher Observation | Teacher Observation | Teacher Observation | Teacher Observation | Comments |
|---|------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|-----------------|
| A. The selections used for the lesson were appropriate for students of this ability and grade level. | | | | | |
| B. The reading materials represented authentic types (literary, informational, persuasive, practical workplace) of texts. | | | | | |
| C. Reading materials and tasks reflected sensitivity to the diverse learning needs of the students. | | | | | |
| D. The independent work was of the appropriate amount and type for the students and instructional goals. | | | | | |
| E. Homework was assigned either for the purpose of practicing content, skills, or processes with a high degree of familiarity or for the purpose of preparing students for new content or elaboration. | | | | | |
| F. The teacher systematically provided opportunities for students to take notes and time for students to review, revise, and add more to their notes . | | | | | |
| G. Independent work contained open-ended questions that enhanced and extended the students understanding of the selection. | | | | | |
| H. The students identified similarities and differences through comparisons, classifications, metaphors, or analogies. | | | | | |
| I. The students engaged in various modes of reading during the lesson (e.g., silent, oral, guided, shared). | | | | | |
| J. The teacher provided opportunities for the students to read for enjoyment . | | | | | |
| K. Students were prompted to respond personally or creatively to the reading material. | | | | | |
| L. The teacher provided a balance of teacher-initiated and student-initiated activities . | | | | | |
| M. Reading materials and tasks were organized around themes when appropriate. | | | | | |
| N. Models of reflective, transactive, personal expressive, or literary writing were used. | | | | | |

| Component VII. Teacher Practices = Observed + = Commendation / = Needs Improvement Blank = Not Observed | Teacher Observation | Teacher Observation | Teacher Observation | Teacher Observation | Comments |
|--|------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|-----------------|
| A. The teacher focused on reading and writing as meaningful processes . | | | | | |
| B. The instructional techniques used by the teacher and the ways they were executed reflected an awareness of recommended practices . | | | | | |
| C. Students were grouped appropriately and flexibly based on data. | | | | | |
| D. The teacher s management of the lesson provided for active student engagement . | | | | | |
| E. The pace and flow of the various phases of the reading lesson represented effective use of time . | | | | | |

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| F. The teacher s instruction was sensitive to the diversity of students experiences and their social, cultural, ethnic, and linguistic needs. | | | | | |
| G. The teacher actively promoted the integration of the language arts in this lesson. | | | | | |
| H. The teacher encouraged the students to take informed risks and problem-solve . | | | | | |
| I. The teacher s conferences with students were timely, focused, and positive in nature. | | | | | |
| J. Authentic assessment practices were used in this lesson. | | | | | |
| K. The teacher provided timely corrective feedback specific to a criterion or rubric and prompted students to monitor their own progress toward an identified standard. | | | | | |
| L. The students produced non-linguistic representations to elaborate on their knowledge (e.g., creating graphic representations, making physical models, generating mental pictures, drawing pictures and pictographs, or engaging in kinesthetic activity). | | | | | |
| M. The teacher s planned goals, actual instruction, and assessment practices were aligned . | | | | | |

Keys to Checklist

- = Observed** This component was observed and was of **satisfactory** quality.
- + = Commendation** This component was observed and was of **very high** quality.
- / = Needs Improvement** This component was **observed and was in need of improvement**.
- BLANK** This component was **not observed**.

This guide was adapted from a similar one developed in a school district in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania and published in *The Reading Teacher*, v. 53. No.5 February 2000. Information from Robert Marzano’s *What Works in the Classroom* has been integrated into some of the indicators.

It was designed to improve elements of literacy in instruction. While it might be appropriate to use in conjunction with an educator’s professional growth, **it was not designed for use in formal evaluation**.

The guide can be used for self-assessment, collegial observation, or by school or district support staff to determine areas of need.

Seeing all of these indicators in one lesson is not an expectation. The realistic expectation is to see instruction move toward these standards over time.