



New York State  
EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

Knowledge > Skill > Opportunity

# **New York State Education Department Prekindergarten–3rd Grade Literacy Instructional Best Practices**



# The University of the State of New York

## Regents of The University

LESTER W. YOUNG, JR., Chancellor, B.S., M.S., Ed.D.

JUDITH CHIN, Vice Chancellor B.S., M.S. in Ed.

ROGER TILLES, B.A., J.D.

CHRISTINE D. CEA, B.A., M.A., Ph.D.

WADE S. NORWOOD, B.A.

JAMES E. COTTRELL, B.S., M.D.

CATHERINE COLLINS, R.N., N.P., B.S., M.S. in Ed., Ed.D.

LUIS O. REYES, B.A., M.A., Ph.D.

SUSAN W. MITTLER, B.S., M.S.

FRANCES G. WILLS, B.A., M.A., M.Ed., C.A.S., Ph.D.

ARAMINA VEGA FERRER, B.A., M.S. in Ed., Ph.D.

SHINO TANIKAWA, B.A., M.S.

ROGER P. CATANIA, B.A., M.A., M.S., C.A.S., Ph.D.

ADRIAN I. HALE, A.S., B.A.

HASONI L. PRATTS, B.S., M.P.A.

PATRICK A. MANNION, B.A., M.B.A.

SEEMA RIVERA, B.A., M.S., Ph.D.

Beechhurst

Little Neck

Manhasset

Staten Island

Rochester

New York

Buffalo

New York

Ithaca

Ossining

Bronx

Manhattan

Saranac Lake

Rochester

Brooklyn

Fayetteville

Slingerlands



**Commissioner of Education and President of The University**

DR. BETTY A. ROSA

**Senior Deputy Commissioner, Education Policy**

DR. JEFFREY MATTESON

**Deputy Commissioner, P-12 Instructional Support**

ANGELIQUE JOHNSON-DINGLE

**Deputy Commissioner, P-12 Operational Support**

JASON HARMON

**Assistant Commissioner, Office of Standards and Instructional Programs**

DR. SANTOSHA OLIVER

The State Education Department does not discriminate on the basis of race, creed, color, national origin, religion, age, sex, military, marital status, familial status, domestic violence victim status, carrier status, disability, genetic predisposition, sexual orientation and criminal record in its recruitment, educational programs, services, and activities. NYSED has adopted a web accessibility policy, and publications designed for distribution can be made available in an accessible format upon request. Inquiries regarding this policy of nondiscrimination should be directed to the Office of Human Resources Management, Room 528 EB, Education Building, Albany, New York 12234.



# Contents



|                          |    |
|--------------------------|----|
| Acknowledgements .....   | 3  |
| Introduction .....       | 4  |
| Phonemic Awareness ..... | 9  |
| Phonics .....            | 14 |
| Vocabulary .....         | 21 |
| Reading Fluency .....    | 29 |
| Comprehension .....      | 35 |
| Oral Language .....      | 42 |
| Appendix .....           | 50 |

# Acknowledgements

The New York State Education Department (NYSED or “the Department”) would like to acknowledge and thank the following individuals of the Prekindergarten-3rd grade Instructional Best Practices workgroup for their support and input on the development of NYSED's Prekindergarten-3rd grade Instructional Best Practices:

**Angelique Johnson-Dingle, Deputy Commissioner P-12 Instructional Support**

**Erik Sweet, Executive Director, Office of Early Learning, NYSED**

**Lori Smart, Director, Office of Early Learning, NYSED**

**Dr. Paulette Coppin, Supervisor, Office of Early Learning, NYSED**

**Tanya Amodio-Kovacs, Supervisor, Office of Early Learning, NYSED**

Anne Botticelli, Chief Academic Officer, Buffalo Public Schools

Carrie Waloven, Staff Development Specialist, Citi BOCES

Catherine Coons, Associate, Office of Standards and Instruction, NYSED

Christina Ryan, Associate, Office of Early Learning, NYSED

Laura McDaniel, Director of Curriculum and Instructional Data: Capital Region BOCES

Madison Ramnes, Associate, Office of Early Learning, NYSED

Mary Sandoval, Associate, Office of Early Learning, NYSED

Noelle Lake, Associate, Office of Early Learning, NYSED

Samantha Chobot, Assistant, Office of Early Learning, NYSED

Tiffany Koo, Associate, Office of Early Learning, NYSED

Menya Cole, Program Associate Literacy, WestEd

Linda Friedrich, PhD, Director Literacy, Region 2 Comprehensive Center

Katie Grogan, PhD, Senior Research Associate Literacy, Region 2 Comprehensive Center

Robin Sayers, PhD, Research Associate, Region 2 Comprehensive Center

Stephanie Smyka, Coordinator of Curriculum, Instruction, and Professional Development at Monroe 2-Orleans BOCES



# Introduction to the Prekindergarten–3rd Grade Literacy Instructional Best Practices

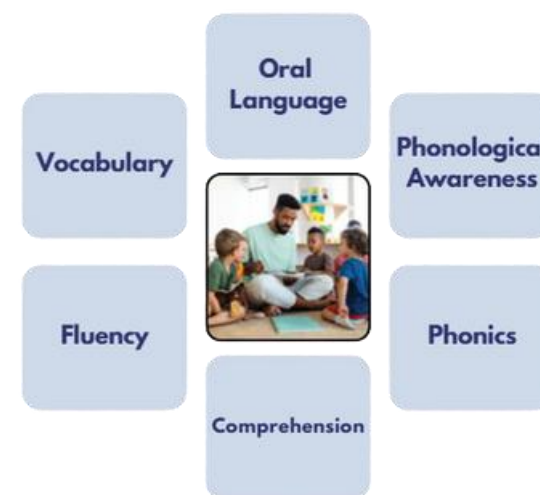
## Introduction

Welcome to the Prekindergarten–3rd Grade Literacy Instructional Best Practices! This evidence-based guide is a tool to be utilized when reviewing local school district literacy curriculum and instruction for evidence- and scientifically-based reading instruction prior to submitting the attestation required per Education Law 818. The purpose of this guide is to help facilitate discussions among district leaders, building leaders, literacy leaders, and teachers to reflect on the instructional best practices and literacy curriculum for students in prekindergarten through third grade. The instructional best practices should be used by literacy leaders to talk with school building leaders about literacy instruction at the local level and what adjustments may be needed. The included Prekindergarten–3rd grade Literacy Instructional Best Practices and interventions align with the requirement of literacy instruction based on the body of research known as the Science of Reading.

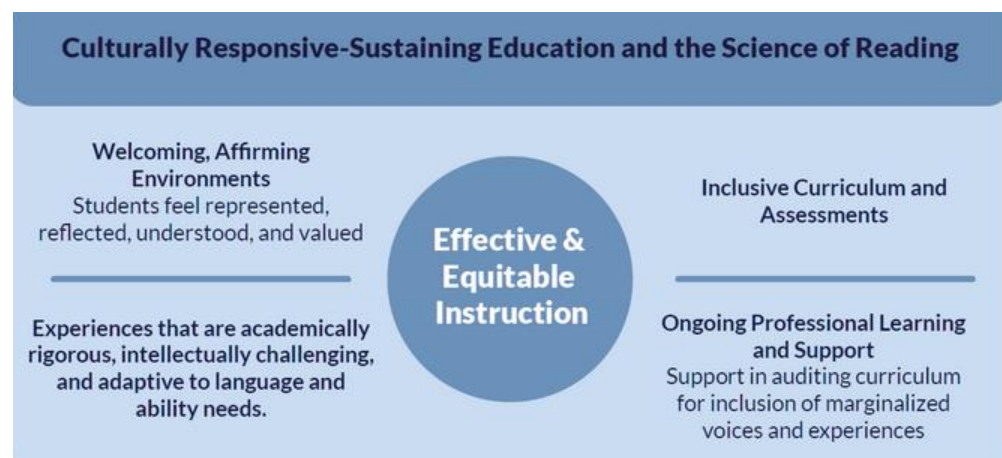
## Evidence-Based and Scientifically-Based Culturally Responsive Literacy Instruction

The New York State Education Department is dedicated to providing all students with access to high quality literacy education, which is culturally responsive and follows evidence-based practices, commonly referred to as the Science of Reading. Therefore, this guide identifies best practices in literacy instruction that are aligned to the New York State Next Generation English Language Arts Standards and integrates the four principles identified in the Culturally Responsive-Sustaining Education Framework (CR-SE).

For further information regarding the Science of Reading, please see the [NYSED Literacy Briefs](#), authored by Dr. Nonie Lesaux (Professor of Education and Human Development at the Harvard Graduate School of Education) and Katie C. Carr, M.Ed.



Evidence- and scientifically-based reading instruction includes attention to the following reading skills and competencies: phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, comprehension, and oral language. A systematic, explicit, responsive, and cumulative approach ensures that every student can develop strong reading skills. By integrating diverse cultural perspectives and materials, the Department aims to promote inclusive learning environments where every student feels valued and represented. Through these efforts, the Department strives to close achievement gaps, foster a love of reading, and prepare students for lifelong success.



# Diverse Learners

As diversity across New York State’s student population continues to grow, it is essential for educators to ensure that all students’ strengths and needs are considered when designing and implementing evidence-based writing instruction. Multilingual learners and/or students with disabilities bring a variety of experiences with them to school and require intentional support in their instruction to become empowered, proficient writers. In order to provide comprehensive writing instruction, evidence grounded in second language acquisition and special education must also be considered and applied when designing and implementing responsive writing instruction.

## **Linguistically Diverse Learners**

Multilingual\* and Emergent Multilingual Learners\* face the challenge of acquiring literacy in a language that they may not already speak. Effective support involves instruction that considers English development while respecting students' skills in their home language\* and their cultural background. Prior schooling, home language literacy, and English proficiency are key factors in designing literacy instruction for multilingual learners. Educators supporting multilingual learners should:

- Connect to students’ experiences by using culturally relevant resources that reflect their experiences and identities. This includes the use of diverse authors, objects, and pictures.
- Teach instructional language and vocabulary development clearly, by previewing key words, teaching contextualized vocabulary, and using visuals.
- Provide individualized feedback that is considerate of the child’s language development stage, cultural context, and individual needs.
- Understand the key similarities and differences between a child’s home language and English (e.g., phonology, grammar, vocabulary) and leverage the use of cognates to bridge language gaps and enhance language acquisition.
- Develop oral language alongside English decoding skills.
- Evaluate both writing development and language proficiency levels.
- Employ text sets for language and knowledge building and use graphic organizers to support comprehension.
- Encourage home language discussions with same language peers to support building context knowledge.
- Allow students to write in their home language (L1\*) when appropriate and provide authentic writing (e.g., writing about personal experiences) and publishing opportunities.
- Explicitly model writing to support students with sentence construction and paragraph development.
- Design lessons that explicitly connect writing skills with content-area learning (e.g., science and social studies).
- Model writing by scaffolding instruction leading to independent practice.
- Provide opportunities for students to engage in the writing process, work flexibly between the different stages of writing, and focus on the writing process rather than the final product.
- Provide opportunities for students to engage in active, inquiry-based, collaborative learning where students' curiosities can guide further discussion and inquiry.



# Diverse Learners

## Students with Disabilities

Students with disabilities must have access to the general education curriculum (i.e., curriculum that is based on the New York State Learning Standards for the grade in which a student is enrolled). Meaningful access to the general education curriculum means that a student with a disability has the appropriate supports, services, and accommodations to address the student's disability in consideration of the content of the curriculum, instructional materials, how the curriculum is taught to the student, the physical environment, and how the student's learning is measured. Understanding the principals of evidence-based literacy instruction, educators supporting students with disabilities should use the most effective educational practices to ensure all students are taught to read and write.

- Build a comprehensive Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) for literacy to ensure access to evidence-based practices at every Tier of support (Tier 1, Tier 2, and Tier 3) so that students with disabilities have maximum access to highly effective instruction and the opportunity to participate in the least restrictive environment.
- Provide explicit instruction in all literacy (Reading and Writing) skills. Teachers should provide learners with explicit and consistent demonstrations and descriptions, and intentionally scaffold the steps or processes needed to understand literacy content and concepts. As a student's understanding and accuracy increases, scaffolds are reduced until the student models the skill independently and fluently.
- Design, provide, and assess the effectiveness of specially-designed instruction to provide students with disabilities with access to participate and progress in the general education curriculum.
- Facilitate capacity building and effective implementation of evidence-based learning practices that meet the needs of students with disabilities.
- Ensure that students with disabilities are being given the accommodations and supports needed to ensure success in writing, including assistive technology and any other supports listed on their individualized education programs (IEPs).



# Introduction to the Prekindergarten–3rd Grade Literacy Instructional Best Practices

## How to Use the Guide

This Prekindergarten–3rd Grade Literacy Instructional Best Practices guide serves as a comprehensive resource for educators, providing detailed instructional best practices, and instructional considerations to improve student outcomes in literacy. Instructional practices are the activities and strategies that teachers use on a day-to-day basis to support students and facilitate understanding.

The guide is organized by reading competencies, as stated in the NYSED Literacy Briefs. Within each competency, educators will find a cover page containing definitions and background information on how children grow over time. This page also includes overarching best practices and instructional strategies for teachers to consider utilizing within the standards for their grade.

### Instructional Best Practices: Phonics

PreK

#### Instructional Best Practices

- Introduce letters (graphemes) with the sounds (phonemes) they make.
- Provide opportunities to practice letter identification and sounds.

#### NYS Next Generation ELA Standards

- PKRF3: Demonstrate emergent phonics and word analysis skills.
  - PKRF3a: Demonstrate one-to-one letter-sound correspondence by producing the primary sound of some consonants.

#### Instructional Considerations

★ Please reference the Phonics Introduction on page 14 to include all Instructional Considerations.

- Explain clearly the name of the letter and the sound(s) the letter makes when introducing a letter (for letters that have more than one sound, explain that some letters make more than one sound, and tell children the sounds).
- Plan time intentionally during small-group or center activities or during shared book reading to introduce the target letter and the sound it makes.
- Use materials and activities that allow children to practice identifying letters (graphemes) and their sounds (phonemes).
- Be mindful that individual letter sounds may be pronounced differently depending on the student's dialect or language.
- Some phonemes in the English language may not be present in other home languages or dialects. This may make phonemes difficult to hear, distinguish, pronounce, and place in context.
- Multilingual learners may need additional instruction and support such as modeling and the explicit teaching of letter-sound correspondence.

## Phonics

**Phonics:** The relationship between graphemes (letters) and the phonemes they represent.

### Overarching Best Practices and Instructional Considerations for Phonics

Phonics instruction involves teaching the relationship between graphemes (letters) and phonemes (sounds). Best practices and instructional considerations are tailored to grade level standards and there are some that can be applied to each grade level, spanning prekindergarten to third grade. This page highlights the overarching best practices and instructional considerations for phonics instruction that can span the grade levels.

**Note:** As students advance through each grade, it is understood that the instructional materials and methodologies increase in complexity, gradually encouraging independence and autonomy. Also note that readers develop at different rates and may require the use of best practices and instructional considerations found outside of their designated grade level.



### Instructional Best Practices PreK–3

Teach students letter-sound relations.

### Instructional Considerations PreK–3

- Incorporate multimodal/multisensory\* approaches in phonics instruction.
- Use print throughout the classroom to discuss the target letter or any other letters throughout the day (i.e., schedule, labels, student names, books).
- Talk to children about the letter(s) in the print and the sound the letter makes in the word(s) they encounter.**CR–SE Specific Instructional Considerations**
- Multilingual learners may need additional instruction and support such as modeling and the explicit teaching of letter-sound correspondence.
- Integrate letter or word walls with images representative of various cultures, religions, ethnicities, and ability levels.
- Be aware of the phonemes, affixes, and roots in students' home languages and provide additional instruction and support when modeling or asking students to produce phonemes in the target language\*.
- Integrate letter or word walls with images representative of various cultures, religions, ethnicities, and ability levels.

14

Following the cover page, a dedicated page for individual grade levels, Prekindergarten to 3rd Grade, containing best practices and instructional considerations specific to that grade have been included. It is important to note that the educators will need to reference the cover page and grade specific page when planning instruction. The best practices have been identified from research and name a specific instructional action that teachers must devote intentional and careful attention to in students' literacy development. The instructional considerations expand on these practices with additional information that allow the best practices to be implemented with greater intentionality.

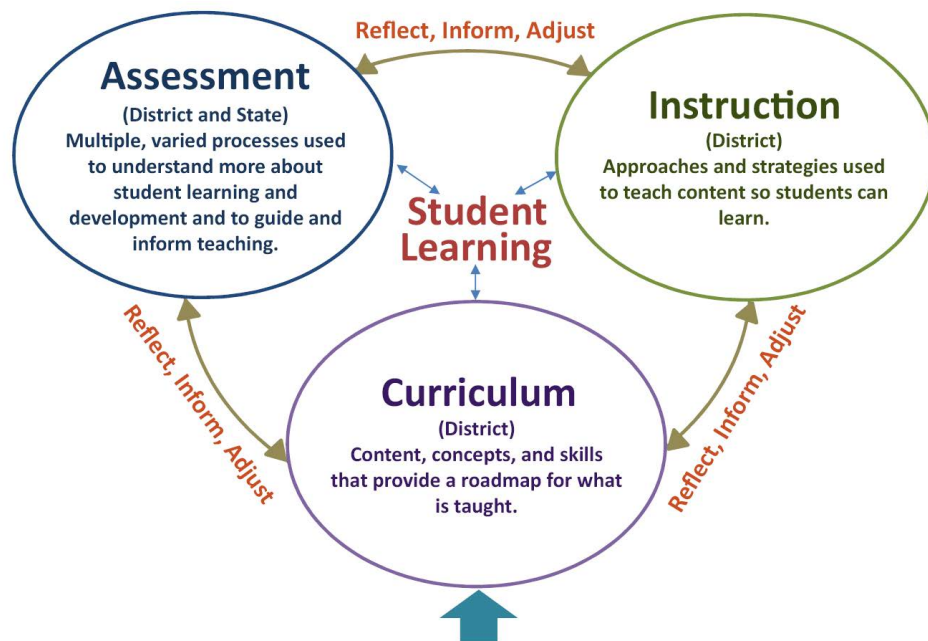
Words noted with an asterisk (\*) are defined in the glossary.



# Introduction to the Prekindergarten–3rd Grade Literacy Instructional Best Practices

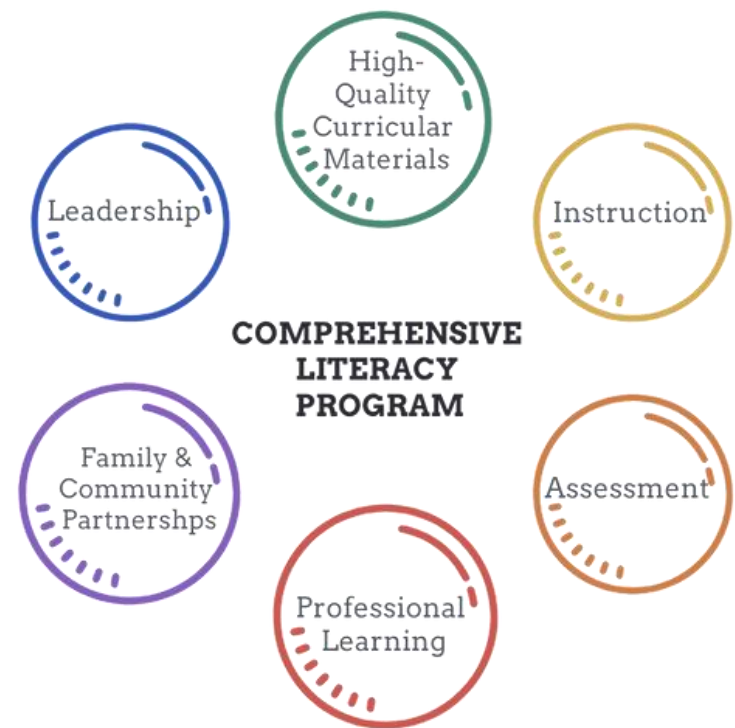
A reflection tool has also been included to facilitate individual and collective reviews of current practices. This offers an opportunity for considering the overall teaching, assessment, environment and planning for literacy instruction throughout the day. Areas marked as "Partially Developed" or "Not Evident" are places to make notes for further learning or curricular modifications. When teachers are equipped with high-quality professional development and resources, it empowers them to implement effective literacy instruction that meets the needs of all learners.

## Implementation of Effective Literacy Instruction That Meets the Needs of All Learners



| Instructional Best Practices: Phonics  |                 |                     |             |
|--|-----------------|---------------------|-------------|
| Use the following statements to reflect on phonics instruction. Areas marked as Partially Developed or Not Evident are places to make notes for further learning/professional development or curricular modifications. |                 |                     |             |
| Statements   | Fully Developed | Partially Developed | Not Evident |
| Phonics instruction is provided in whole and small groups.   |                 |                     |             |
| Phonics is taught in a systematic, explicit and clearly defined sequence.  |                 |                     |             |
| Children have multiple opportunities to participate in a variety of activities and use materials to practice identifying letters and sounds.   |                 |                     |             |
| Action Steps   |                 |                     |             |
|  |                 |                     |             |

## Elements of a Comprehensive Literacy Program

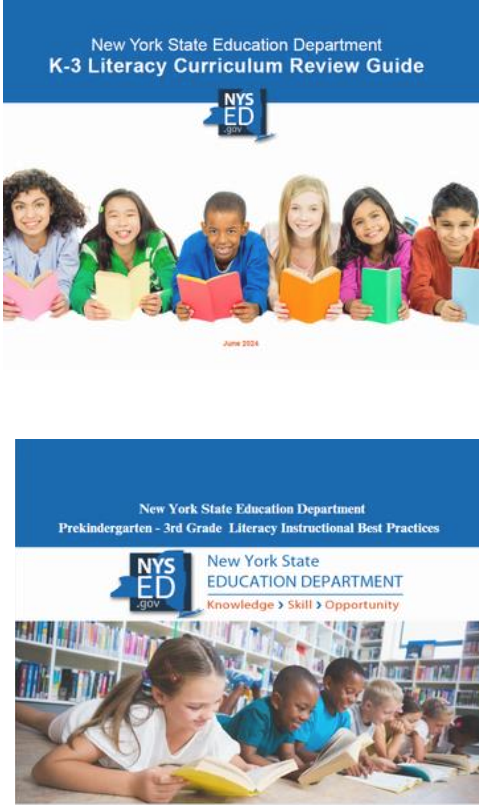


# Introduction to the Prekindergarten–3rd Grade Literacy Instructional Best Practices

## Alignment to Curriculum Review Guide

This tool was created to help educators and administrators reflect on current usage of instructional best practices within the classroom and works in tandem with the New York State Education Department K-3 Literacy Curriculum Review Guide. It is imperative that all students receive high-quality, explicit instruction in literacy, and that both instruction and curricula are grounded in evidence-based and scientific research. The Guide along with this document should not be used to holistically reject or discard entire curricula, nor does the Department require districts to purchase a new vendor-developed curriculum that can meet all expectations. Districts are encouraged to use these tools to reflect on both their current curricula and instruction and on areas that need to be revised, supplemented, or reworked.

## Which Document Should I Use?



| K–3 Literacy Curriculum Review Guide   | Prekindergarten–3rd Grade Literacy Instructional Best Practices   |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Intended to help educators ensure the written curriculum is aligned to evidence-based practices</li><li>• Supports districts in selecting and developing high-quality curricular materials</li><li>• Provides high-level guidance, in the form of guiding questions, criteria, and indicators, to assist districts in choosing or revising K-3 curricular materials to better ensure alignment with evidence-based practices, the New York State Learning Standards, the NYS Culturally Responsive-Sustaining Education Framework, and the New York State Social-Emotional Learning Benchmarks</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Is a required tool to be utilized annually when reviewing curriculum and instruction for evidence and scientifically-based reading instruction prior to submitting the attestation per education law §818</li><li>• Provides detailed best practices and instructional considerations to enhance literacy instruction in classrooms across the state</li><li>• Used to reflect on the instructional best practices and literacy curriculum for students in prekindergarten through third grade, ensuring literacy instruction and interventions align with the Commissioner’s requirement of literacy instruction to be based on the body of research known as the Science of Reading</li></ul> |

# Phonemic Awareness

**Phonemic Awareness:** The ability to notice, think about, and work with phonemes (sounds) in spoken words.

## Overarching Best Practices and Instructional Considerations For Phonemic Awareness

Teaching phonemic awareness involves modeling for students so that they acquire the ability to notice, think about, and manipulate individual sounds in spoken words. Although best practices and instructional considerations are tailored to grade level standards, there are some that can be applied to each grade level spanning prekindergarten to first grade (Please note: phonemic awareness standards end at 1st grade). This page highlights the overarching best practices and instructional considerations that can span the grade levels.

**Note:** As students advance through each grade, it is understood that the instructional materials and methodologies increase in complexity, gradually encouraging independence and autonomy. Also note that readers develop at different rates and may require the use of best practices and instructional considerations found outside of their designated grade level.



### Instructional Best Practices PreK–1

- Develop awareness of the segments of sound in speech.

### Instructional Considerations PreK–1

- Incorporate phonological awareness\* activities into daily routines.
- Use songs, chants, finger plays, poems, etc. to develop phonological and phonemic awareness\*.
- Incorporate multimodal/multisensory\* approaches, such as clapping, stomping, jumping, etc.
- Position students to be sound detectives in the classroom, fostering a curiosity for how language sounds.
- Begin with larger segments of speech, such as words, and gradually working with smaller sound segments, such as syllables, onset-rime, and individual phonemes.
- Provide clear explanations and modeling for each task/activity, especially when it is a new concept.

#### CR-SE Specific Instructional Considerations

- Be mindful that individual letter sounds can vary and may be pronounced differently depending on the student's dialect or language, requiring targeted instruction on specific sounds.
- Some phonemes in the English language may not be present in other home languages or dialects. This may make phonemes difficult to hear, distinguish, pronounce, and place in context.



## Instructional Best Practices

- Develop awareness of the segments of sound in speech.

## NYS Next Generation ELA Standards

- **PKRF2:** Demonstrate an emerging understanding of spoken words, syllables, and sounds (phonemes).
  - **PKRF2a:** Begin to recognize and match spoken words that rhyme (e.g. songs, chants, finger plays).
  - **PKRF2b:** Begin to recognize individual syllables within spoken words (e.g. cup cake, base ball).
  - **PKRF2c:** Isolate and pronounce the initial sounds (phonemes) in spoken one-syllable words (e.g. the /m/ in map).

## Instructional Considerations

★ Please reference the **Phonemic Awareness Introduction on page 9** to include all Instructional Considerations.

- Incorporate phonological awareness\* activities into daily routines.
- Use songs, chants, finger plays, poems, etc. to develop phonological and phonemic awareness.
- Incorporate multimodal/multisensory\* approaches, such as clapping, stomping, jumping, etc.
- Position students to be sound detectives in the classroom, fostering a curiosity for how language sounds.
- Begin with larger segments of speech, such as words, and gradually working with smaller sound segments, such as individual phonemes.
- Provide clear explanations and modeling for each task/activity, especially when it is a new concept.

**Note:** At the prekindergarten level, when teaching letter-sound relations, a teacher might name the letter to connect with the sound but is not asking children to visually identify the letter as this lends itself to phonics instruction.

## Instructional Best Practices

- Teach students to manipulate sounds in speech, focusing on orally blending and segmenting words.

## NYS Next Generation ELA Standards

- **KRF2:** Demonstrate understanding of spoken words, syllables, and sounds (phonemes).
  - **KRF2a:** Recognize and produce spoken rhyming words.
  - **KRF2b:** Blend and segment syllables in spoken words.
  - **KRF2c:** Blend and segment onsets and rimes of spoken words.
  - **KRF2d:** Blend and segment individual sounds (phonemes) in spoken one-syllable words.
  - **KRF2e:** Create new words by manipulating the phonemes orally in one-syllable words.

## Instructional Considerations

★ Please reference the **Phonemic Awareness Introduction on page 9** to include all Instructional Considerations.

- Incorporate phonological and phonemic awareness\* activities into daily routines.
- Use songs, chants, finger plays, poems, etc. to develop phonological awareness and phonemic awareness\*.
- Incorporate multimodal/multisensory\* approaches, such as clapping, stomping, jumping, finger counting, etc. to connect to the sounds in words.
- Teach students to blend and segment by syllables, then into onset and rimes before individual phonemes in spoken words.
- Sort pictures based on number of syllables, rhyming, or beginning, ending and middle sounds.
- Provide time for activities such as using Elkonin sound boxes to focus on beginning, ending and middle sounds in spoken words.

## Instructional Best Practices

- Teach students to manipulate sounds in speech, focusing on orally blending and segmenting words.

## NYS Next Generation ELA Standards

- **1RF2:** Demonstrate understanding of spoken words, syllables, and sounds (phonemes).
  - **1RF2a:** Count, blend and segment single syllable words that include consonant blends.
  - **1RF2b:** Create new words by manipulating individual sounds (phonemes) in spoken one-syllable words.
- **1RF2c:** Manipulate individual sounds (phonemes) in single -syllable spoken words.

## Instructional Considerations

★ Please reference the **Phonemic Awareness Introduction on page 9** to include all Instructional Considerations.

- Incorporate phonological and phonemic awareness\* activities into daily routines.
- Continue to use multimodal/multisensory approaches\* (from previous grade levels) to develop phonological and phonemic awareness\*.
- Teach students to blend and segment by syllables, then into onset and rimes before individual phonemes, including consonant blends in spoken words.
- Sort pictures based on number of syllables or beginning, ending and middle sounds (single phonemes and consonant blends).
- Provide time for activities such as using Elkonin sound boxes to focus on beginning, ending and middle sounds in spoken words that include consonant blends.



# Instructional Best Practices: Phonemic Awareness

Use the following statements to reflect on phonemic awareness instruction. Areas marked as "Partially Developed" or "Not Evident" are places to make notes for further learning/professional development or curricular modifications.

| Statement  | Fully Developed | Partially Developed | Not Evident |
|--|-----------------|---------------------|-------------|
| Instruction allows for phonemic awareness activities to be incorporated into daily routines.   |                 |                     |             |
| Instruction begins with the larger segments of speech and progresses from sentences to words to syllables to onsets and rimes to phonemes. |                 |                     |             |
| Phonemic awareness is explicitly taught with clear, developmentally appropriate examples.  |                 |                     |             |
| Action Steps   |                 |                     |             |
|  |                 |                     |             |

# Phonics

**Phonics:** The relationship between graphemes (letters) and the phonemes they represent.

## Overarching Best Practices and Instructional Considerations for Phonics

Phonics instruction involves teaching the relationship between graphemes (letters) and phonemes (sounds). Best practices and instructional considerations are tailored to grade level standards and there are some that can be applied to each grade level, spanning prekindergarten to third grade. This page highlights the overarching best practices and instructional considerations for phonics instruction that can span the grade levels.

**Note:** As students advance through each grade, it is understood that the instructional materials and methodologies increase in complexity, gradually encouraging independence and autonomy. Also note that readers develop at different rates and may require the use of best practices and instructional considerations found outside of their designated grade level.



## Instructional Best Practices PreK–3

- Teach students letter-sound relations.

## Instructional Considerations PreK–3

- Incorporate multimodal/multisensory\* approaches in phonics instruction.
- Use print throughout the classroom to discuss the target letter or any other letters throughout the day (i.e., schedule, labels, student names, books).
- Talk to children about the letter(s) in the print and the sound the letter makes in the word(s) they encounter.

### CR-SE Specific Instructional Considerations

- Multilingual learners may need additional instruction and support such as modeling and the explicit teaching of letter-sound correspondence.
- Integrate letter or word walls with images representative of various cultures, religions, ethnicities, and ability levels.
- Be aware of the phonemes, affixes, and roots in students' home languages and provide additional instruction and support when modeling or asking students to produce phonemes in the target language\*.

## Instructional Best Practices

- Introduce letters (graphemes) with the sounds (phonemes) they make.
- Provide opportunities to practice letter identification and sounds.

## NYS Next Generation ELA Standards

- **PKRF3:** Demonstrate emergent phonics and word analysis skills.
  - **PKRF3a:** Demonstrate one-to-one letter-sound correspondence by producing the primary sound of some consonants.

## Instructional Considerations

★ Please reference the Phonics Introduction on page 14 to include all Instructional Considerations.

- Explain clearly the name of the letter and the sound(s) the letter makes when introducing a letter (for letters that have more than one sound, explain that some letters make more than one sound, and tell children the sounds).
- Plan time intentionally during small-group or center activities or during shared book reading to introduce the target letter and the sound it makes.
- Use materials and activities that allow children to practice identifying letters (graphemes) and their sounds (phonemes).
- Be mindful that individual letter sounds may be pronounced differently depending on the student's dialect or language.
- Some phonemes in the English language may not be present in other home languages or dialects. This may make phonemes difficult to hear, distinguish, pronounce, and place in context.
- Multilingual learners may need additional instruction and support such as modeling and the explicit teaching of letter-sound correspondence.



## Instructional Best Practices

- Develop an awareness of segments of sounds in speech and how they correspond to letters.
- Use word-building and other activities to link students' knowledge of letter-sound relationships with phonemic awareness.

## NYS Next Generation ELA Standards

- **KRF3:** Know and apply grade-level phonics and word analysis skills in decoding words.
  - **KRF3a:** Demonstrate one-to-one letter-sound correspondence by producing the primary sound or most frequent sound for each consonant.
  - **KRF3b:** Decode short vowel sounds with common spellings.
  - **KRF3c:** Decode some regularly spelled one-syllable words.
  - **KRF3d:** Read common high-frequency words by sight.

## Instructional Considerations

★ Please reference the Phonics Introduction on page 14 to include all Instructional Considerations.

- Present consonants and short vowel sounds represented by single letters first.
- Teach students how CVC (consonant-vowel-consonant) words are composed and how each letter or phoneme in a word contributes to its spelling and pronunciation.
- Practice segmenting familiar one-syllable words into their onsets and rimes.
- Identify the letter or letters that represent each phoneme (e.g., p for /p/ or s and h for /sh/) and subsequently show a memorable picture of a familiar, regular word containing that phoneme (e.g., pig).
- Engage students in guided practice when they are reading decodable words in isolation or in text.

## Instructional Best Practices

- Develop an awareness of segments of sounds in speech and how they correspond to letters.
- Teach students to decode words, analyze word parts, write and recognize words.

## NYS Next Generation ELA Standards

- **1RF3:** Know and apply phonics and word analysis skills in decoding words.
  - **1RF3a:** Know the letter-sound correspondences for common blends and consonant digraphs (e.g. sh, ch, th).
  - **1RF3b:** Decode long vowel sounds in regularly spelled one-syllable words (e.g., final –e conventions and common vowel teams).
  - **1RF3c:** Decode regularly spelled one-syllable words.
  - **1RF3d:** Determine the number of syllables in a printed word by using knowledge that every syllable must have a vowel sound.
  - **1RF3e:** Decode two-syllable words following basic patterns by breaking the words into syllables.
  - **1RF3f:** Recognize and identify root words and simple suffixes (e.g. run, runs, walk, walked).
  - **1RF3g:** Read most common high-frequency words by sight.

## Instructional Considerations

★ Please reference the Phonics Introduction on page 14 to include all Instructional Considerations.

- Model generating each sound in a blend and then ask students to blend the sounds together (a digraph makes a single sound and must be taught as a unit).
- Demonstrate how to blend simple CVC words by sounding out the word (saying each letter or letter combination one by one until the end of the word and then blending them all together again quickly).
- Teach long vowels with silent e, and then two-letter vowel teams.
- Engage students in guided practice when they are reading decodable words in isolation and in text.

## Instructional Best Practices

- Teach students to decode words, analyze word parts, write and recognize words.
- Teach students to blend letter sounds and sound-spelling patterns.
- Teach common sound-spelling patterns.
- Teach students to recognize common word parts.

## NYS Next Generation ELA Standards

- **2RF3:** Know and apply phonics and word analysis skills in decoding words.
  - **2RF3a:** Distinguish long and short vowels when reading regularly spelled one-syllable words (including common vowel teams).
  - **2RF3b:** Decode short and long vowel sounds in two-syllable words.
  - **2RF3c:** Decode regularly spelled two-syllable words.
  - **2RF3d:** Recognize and identify root words and common suffixes and prefixes.
  - **2RF3e:** Read all common high-frequency words by sight.

## Instructional Considerations

★ Please reference the Phonics Introduction on page 14 to include all Instructional Considerations.

- Instruct students in common sound–spelling patterns and common word parts.
- Teach students to blend letter sounds and sound–spelling patterns from left to right within a word.
- Engage students in guided practice when they are reading decodable words in isolation and in text.
- Teach regular and irregular high-frequency words so that students can recognize them efficiently.
- Introduce non-decodable words that are essential to the meaning of the text as whole words.

## Instructional Best Practices

- Teach students to decode words, analyze word parts, write and recognize words.
- Teach students to blend letter sounds and sound-spelling patterns.
- Teach common sound-spelling patterns.
- Teach students to recognize common word parts.

## NYS Next Generation ELA Standards

- **3RF3:** Know and apply grade-level phonics and word analysis skills in decoding words.
  - **3RF3a:** Identify and know the meaning of the most common prefixes and suffixes.
  - **3RF3b:** Decode multi-syllabic words.
  - **3RF3c:** Identify, know the meanings of, and decode words with suffixes.
  - **3RF3d:** Recognize and read grade-appropriate irregularly spelled words.

## Instructional Considerations

★ Please reference the Phonics Introduction on page 14 to include all Instructional Considerations.

- Teach students the meaning of common suffixes, contractions, forms of prefixes, and basic roots, and how to combine them to create words.
- Build morphological knowledge\* by breaking multi-syllabic words into meaningful parts to make them easier to read and understand.
- Demonstrate how to decode multi-syllabic words in isolation and in text.
- Teach regular and irregularly spelled words so that students can recognize them efficiently.



# Instructional Best Practices: Phonics

Use the following statements to reflect on phonics instruction. Areas marked as "Partially Developed" or "Not Evident" are places to make notes for further learning/professional development or curricular modifications.

| Statements   | Fully Developed | Partially Developed | Not Evident |
|--|-----------------|---------------------|-------------|
| Phonics instruction is provided in whole and small groups.   |                 |                     |             |
| Phonics is taught in a systematic, explicit, and clearly defined sequence.   |                 |                     |             |
| Children have multiple opportunities to participate in a variety of activities and use materials to practice identifying letters and sounds. |                 |                     |             |
| Action Steps   |                 |                     |             |
|  |                 |                     |             |

# Vocabulary Development

**Vocabulary Development:** The acquisition of knowledge about the meanings, uses, and pronunciation of words.

## Overarching Best Practices and Instructional Considerations for Vocabulary Development

Teaching vocabulary refers to the acquisition of knowledge about the meanings, uses, and pronunciation of words. While best practices and instructional strategies are customized to align with specific grade-level standards, certain approaches are universally applicable across grade levels, from prekindergarten to third grade. This section outlines the key overarching best practices for vocabulary instruction and instructional strategies that can be implemented across these grades.

**Note:** As students advance through each grade, it is understood that the instructional materials and methodologies increase in complexity, gradually encouraging independence and autonomy. Also note that readers develop at different rates and may require the use of best practices and instructional considerations found outside of their designated grade level.



### Instructional Best Practices PreK–3

- Plan activities to expand and practice vocabulary.
- Introduce words and their meanings.
- Engage students in activities to enhance vocabulary and language skills.
- Teach vocabulary in the context of other reading activities.

### Instructional Considerations PreK–3

- Intentionally select words related to a theme or topic of study, connecting words with a word web, or network of words.
- Intentionally teach word meanings throughout all content areas to build upon prior knowledge and reinforce and review previously learned words.
- Use visuals to support meaning making and vocabulary development.
- Conduct read-aloud sessions that provide opportunities for teaching new vocabulary, asking open-ended questions, and elaborating on student responses.

#### CR-SE Specific Instructional Considerations

- Encourage students to generate culturally significant definitions to support their understanding of new words.

## Instructional Best Practices

- Plan activities to expand and practice vocabulary.

## NYS Next Generation Standards

- **PKL4:** Explore and use new vocabulary in child-centered, authentic, play-based experiences.
- **PKL5:** Explore and discuss word relationships and word meanings.
  - **PKL5a:** Sort common objects into categories (e.g., shapes, foods) for understanding of the concepts the categories represent.
  - **PKL5b:** Demonstrate understanding of frequently occurring words by relating them to their opposites (e.g., hot/cold).
  - **PKL5c:** Use words to identify and describe the world around them.
- **PKL6:** Use words and phrases acquired through language rich experiences, conversations, reading and being read to, responding to texts, and child-centered, play-based experiences.

## Instructional Considerations

★ Please reference the Vocabulary Development Introduction on page 21 to include all Instructional Considerations.

- Intentionally select words related to a theme or topic of study, connecting words with a word web, or network of words.
- Use visuals and physical objects to support meaning making and vocabulary development.
- Plan for purposeful play activities to allow students the opportunity to utilize, explore, and discuss word meanings.
- Narrate what students are doing/experiencing to make connections between new vocabulary and the world around them.
- Read an array of storybooks and informational texts to introduce students to new vocabulary they may not otherwise experience.

## Instructional Best Practices

- Facilitate activities that actively engage students in the development of their vocabulary and language skills.

## NYS Next Generation Standards

- **KL4:** Explore and use new vocabulary and multiple-meaning words and phrases in authentic experiences, including, but not limited to the following:
  - **KL4a:** Identify new meanings for familiar words and apply them accurately.
  - **KL4b:** Use the most frequently occurring inflections and affixes as a clue to the meaning of a word.
- **KL5:** Explore and discuss word relationships and word meanings.
  - **KL5a:** Sort common objects into categories for understanding of the concepts the categories represent.
  - **KL5b:** Demonstrate understanding of frequently occurring verbs and adjectives by relating them to their opposites.
  - **KL5c:** Use words to identify and describe the world, making connections between words and their use.
  - **KL5d:** Explore variations among verbs that describe the same general action by acting out the meanings.
- **KL6:** Use words and phrases acquired through conversations, reading and being read to, and responding to texts.

## Instructional Considerations

★ Please reference the Vocabulary Development Introduction on page 21 to include all Instructional Considerations.

- Intentionally select words related to a theme or topic of study, connecting words with a word web, or network of words.
- Use visuals to support meaning making and vocabulary development.
- Plan for purposeful play activities to allow students the opportunity to utilize, explore, and discuss word meanings.
- Expose students to intentional and incidental vocabulary\* over time through the use of conversations, shared reading\*, activities, and games.



## Instructional Best Practices

- Facilitate activities that actively engage students in the development of their vocabulary and language skills.

## NYS Next Generation Standards

- **1L4:** Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases, choosing flexibly from an array of strategies.
  - **1L4a:** Use sentence-level context as a clue to the meaning of a word or phrase.
  - **1L4b:** Use frequently occurring affixes as a clue to the meaning of a word.
  - **1L4c:** Identify frequently occurring root words (e.g., look) and their inflectional forms (e.g., looks, looked, looking).
- **1L5:** Demonstrate understanding of word relationships and nuances in word meanings.
  - **1L5a:** Sort words into categories (e.g., colors, clothing) to gain a sense of the concepts the categories represent.
  - **1L5b:** Define words by category and by one or more key attributes (e.g., a duck is a bird that swims; a tiger is a large cat with stripes).
  - **1L5c:** Use words for identification and description, making connections between words and their use (e.g., places at home that are cozy).
  - **1L5d:** Distinguish shades of meaning among verbs differing in manner (e.g., look, peek, glance, stare, glare, scowl) and adjectives differing in intensity (e.g., large, gigantic) by defining or choosing them or by acting out the meanings.
- **1L6:** Use words and phrases acquired through conversations, reading and being read to, and responding to texts, including using frequently occurring conjunctions to signal simple relationships (e.g., because).

## Instructional Considerations

★ Please reference the Vocabulary Development Introduction on page 21 to include all Instructional Considerations.

- Intentionally select words related to a theme or topic of study, connecting words with a word web, or network of words.
- Use visuals to support meaning making and vocabulary development.
- Plan for purposeful play activities to allow students the opportunity to utilize, explore, and discuss word meanings.
- Expose students to intentional and incidental vocabulary\* over time through the use of conversations, shared reading\*, activities, and games.
- Sort words with a focus on root words, inflectional forms, affixes, and other categories.

## Instructional Best Practices

- Teach students academic language skills, including the use of inferential language, and vocabulary knowledge.

## NYS Next Generation Standards

- **2L4:** Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases, choosing flexibly from an array of strategies.
  - **2L4a:** Use sentence-level context as a clue to the meaning of a word or phrase.
  - **2L4b:** Determine the meaning of the new word formed when a known prefix is added to a known word (e.g., happy/unhappy, tell/retell).
  - **2L4c:** Use a known root word as a clue to the meaning of an unknown word with the same root (e.g., addition, additional).
  - **2L4d:** Use knowledge of the meaning of individual words to predict the meaning of compound words (e.g., birdhouse, lighthouse, housefly; bookshelf, notebook, bookmark).
  - **2L4e:** Use glossaries and beginning dictionaries to determine or clarify the meaning of words and phrases.
- **2L5:** Demonstrate understanding of word relationships and nuances in word meanings.
  - **2L5a:** Identify real-life connections between words and their use.
  - **2L5b:** Use words for identification and description, making connections between words and their use (e.g., describe foods that are spicy or juicy).
  - **2L5c:** Distinguish shades of meaning among closely related verbs (e.g., toss, throw, hurl) and closely related adjectives (e.g., thin, slender, skinny, scrawny).
- **2L6:** Use words and phrases acquired through conversations, reading and being read to, and responding to texts, including using adjectives and adverbs to describe (e.g., When other kids are happy that makes me happy).

## Instructional Considerations

★ Please reference the Vocabulary Development Introduction on page 21 to include all Instructional Considerations.

- Encourage students to use a range of strategies to determine the meanings of unknown words, including using context clues from surrounding text, analyzing word parts like prefixes and root words, breaking down compound words, and consulting glossaries and dictionaries to clarify word meanings.
- Expose and encourage students to use intentional and incidental vocabulary\* over time through the use of conversations, shared reading\*, activities and games.
- Guide students to deepen their understanding of word relationships by exploring real-life connections, practicing descriptive language, and recognizing subtle differences in meaning among closely related words through direct instruction, shared reading\*, independent reading\*, and writing activities.

## Instructional Best Practices

- Teach students academic language skills, including the use of inferential language, and vocabulary knowledge.

## NYS Next Generation Standards

- **3L4:** Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies, including, but not limited to the following:
  - **3L4a:** Use sentence-level context as a clue to the meaning of a word or phrase.
  - **3L4b:** Determine the meaning of the new word formed when a known affix is added to a known word (e.g., agreeable/disagreeable, comfortable/uncomfortable, care/careless, heat/preheat).
  - **3L4c:** Use a known root word as a clue to the meaning of an unknown word with the same root (e.g., company, companion).
  - **3L4d:** Use glossaries or beginning dictionaries to determine or clarify the precise meaning of key words and phrases.
- **3L5:** Demonstrate understanding of word relationships and nuances in word meanings.
  - **3L5a:** Distinguish the literal and nonliteral meanings of words and phrases in context (e.g., take steps).
  - **3L5b:** Use words for identification and description, making connections between words and their use (e.g., describe people who are friendly or helpful).
  - **3L5c:** Distinguish shades of meaning among related words that describe states of mind or degrees of certainty (e.g., knew, believed, suspected, heard, wondered).
- **3L6:** Acquire and accurately use conversational, general academic, and content-specific words and phrases, including those that signal spatial and temporal relationships (e.g., After dinner that night we went out for dessert).

## Instructional Considerations

★ Please reference the Vocabulary Development Introduction on page 21 to include all Instructional Considerations.

- Encourage students to use a range of strategies to determine the precise meanings of unknown words, including using context clues from surrounding text, analyzing word parts like prefixes and root words, breaking down compound words, and consulting glossaries and dictionaries to clarify word meanings.
- Expose and encourage students to use intentional and incidental vocabulary\* over time through the use of conversations, shared reading\*, activities, and games.
- Guide students to deepen their understanding of word relationships by exploring real-life connections, practicing descriptive language, and recognizing subtle differences in meaning among closely related words through direct instruction, shared reading\*, independent reading\*, and writing activities.

# Instructional Best Practices: Vocabulary Development

Use the following statements to reflect on vocabulary development instruction. Areas marked as "Partially Developed" or "Not Evident" are places to make notes for further learning/professional development or curricular modifications.

| Statements  | Fully Developed | Partially Developed | Not Evident |
|---|-----------------|---------------------|-------------|
| Instruction allows for students to practice using new vocabulary words in a variety of settings (Discussions, play, small group, etc.). |                 |                     |             |
| Instruction allow students to learn new vocabulary through a variety of means (Visually, kinesthetically, orally, etc.).                |                 |                     |             |
| Vocabulary is explicitly taught with clear and developmentally appropriate examples (With picture support, when possible).              |                 |                     |             |

## Action Steps



# Reading Fluency

**Reading Fluency:** The ability to read out loud accurately at an appropriate rate, and with appropriate expression (Including proper phrasing, intonation, and pausing).

## Overarching Best Practices and Instructional Considerations for Reading Fluency

Teaching fluency is important for students to become successful readers and is crucial to the comprehension of text. Over time, students' oral reading should become more accurate and expressive. The overarching best practices and instructional considerations listed below retain their efficacy across grade levels and are to be used in tandem with the Standards.

**Note:** As students advance through each grade, it is understood that the instructional materials and methodologies increase in complexity, gradually encouraging independence and autonomy. Also note that readers develop at different rates and may require the use of best practices and instructional considerations found outside of their designated grade level.



### Instructional Best Practices PreK–3

- Model fluent reading on a daily basis.
- Provide daily opportunities for students to practice reading fluency.

### Instructional Considerations PreK–3

- Model reading with proper phrasing, intonation, and expression.
- Offer positive encouragement and feedback to students as they practice reading fluently.
- Incorporate both whole- and small-group opportunities for students to listen to and practice fluent reading on a daily basis.

#### CR-SE Specific Instructional Considerations

- Consider potential differences in dialects and pronunciations, fostering an environment of respect and understanding.
- Choose culturally affirming materials that reflect diverse voices and experiences.

## Instructional Best Practices

- Model fluent reading for students by reading with expression, gestures and facial expressions, and intonation in voice.

## NYS Next Generation Standards

- **PKRF4:** Displays emergent reading behaviors with purpose and understanding.

## Instructional Considerations

★ Please reference the Fluency Introduction on page 28 to include all Instructional Considerations.

- Read expressively: vary the pitch of your voice throughout the story to make it more interesting and fit the characters' actions and feelings.
- Provide multiple opportunities each day for students to listen to a skilled reader model fluent reading.
- Model fluency with a variety of texts and genres, as well as poetry, songs, and chants.
- Make time for joyful and engaging reading experiences.



## Instructional Best Practices

- Incorporate daily interactive oral reading structures into whole- and small-group instruction to model and expose students to emergent reading habits and strategies.

## NYS Next Generation Standards

- **KRF4:** Will engage with emergent level texts and read-alouds to demonstrate comprehension.

## Instructional Considerations

★ Please reference the Fluency Introduction on page 28 to include all Instructional Considerations.

- Integrate shared reading\* and echo reading\* into both whole- and small-group instruction, ensuring each student follows along while the teacher reads.
- Encourage students to point to each word as they read.
- Offer positive encouragement and remind readers often of how proud you are of them for practicing reading.

**Note:** Students in kindergarten are at varying stages of development as word readers. As such, the complexity of the texts used to teach a child to read fluently may vary.



## Instructional Best Practices

- Incorporate daily interactive oral reading structures into whole- and small-group instruction to model and expose students to early reading habits and strategies.

## NYS Next Generation Standards

- **1RF4:** Read beginning reader texts, appropriate to individual student ability, with sufficient accuracy and fluency to support comprehension.
  - **1RF4a:** Read beginning reader texts, appropriate to individual student ability, orally with accuracy, appropriate rate, and expression on successive readings.
  - **1RF4b:** Use context to confirm or self-correct word recognition and understanding, rereading as necessary.

## Instructional Considerations

★ Please reference the Fluency Introduction on page 28 to include all Instructional Considerations.

- Integrate shared reading\*, repeated reading\*, and echo reading\* into both whole- and small-group instruction, ensuring each student follows along while the teacher reads.
- Encourage students to point to each word as they read.
- Offer positive encouragement and remind readers often of how proud you are of them for practicing reading.

**Note:** Students in 1st grade are at varying stages of development as word readers, with some students strengthening emergent reading skills and others reading at grade-level or above. As such, the complexity of the texts used to teach a child to read fluently may vary.



## Instructional Best Practices

- Incorporate daily interactive oral reading structures into whole- and small-group instruction to model, practice, and provide feedback to students as they develop reading skills and strategies.

## NYS Next Generation Standards

- **2RF4:** Read grade-level text with sufficient accuracy and fluency to support comprehension.
  - **2RF4a:** Read grade-level text orally with accuracy, appropriate rate, and expression on successive readings.
  - **2RF4b:** Use context to confirm or self-correct word recognition and understanding, rereading as necessary.

## Instructional Considerations

★ Please reference the Fluency Introduction on page 28 to include all Instructional Considerations.

- Ensure that each student reads connected text\* orally every day to support accuracy and fluency.
- Decrease support for expressive reading as students begin to read text in progressively longer phrases.
- Ensure students are reading books at their independent level during independent reading.
- During reading with feedback, ensure students are reading books at their instructional level. Students should not be asked to read frustration-level text without feedback, as it can lead them to practice ineffective word-reading strategies that reduce comprehension.
- Model strategies, scaffold, and provide feedback to support accurate and efficient word identification and appropriate phrasing during the following oral reading practices:
  - Alternated Reading\*
  - Echo Reading\*
  - Repeated Reading\*
  - Simultaneous Reading\*
  - Wide Reading\*

## Instructional Best Practices

- Incorporate daily interactive oral reading structures into whole- and small-group instruction across genres to model, practice, and provide feedback to students as they develop reading skills and strategies.

## NYS Next Generation Standards

- **3RF4:** Read grade-level text with sufficient accuracy and fluency to support comprehension.
  - **3RF4a:** Read grade-level text across genres orally with accuracy, appropriate rate, and expression on successive readings.
  - **3RF4b:** Use context to confirm or self-correct word recognition and understanding, rereading as necessary.

## Instructional Considerations

★ Please reference the Fluency Introduction on page 28 to include all Instructional Considerations.

- Ensure that each student reads connected text orally every day across genres to support accuracy and fluency.
- Decrease support for expressive reading as students begin to read text in progressively longer phrases.
- Ensure students are reading books at their independent level during independent reading.
- During reading with feedback, ensure students are reading books at their instructional level. Students should not be asked to read frustration-level text without feedback, as it can lead them to practice ineffective word-reading strategies that reduce comprehension.
- Model strategies, scaffold, and provide feedback to support accurate and efficient word identification and appropriate phrasing during the following oral reading practices:
  - Alternated Reading\*
  - Echo Reading\*
  - Repeated Reading\*
  - Simultaneous Reading\*
  - Wide Reading\*

# Instructional Best Practices: Fluency

Use the following statements to reflect on fluency instruction. Areas marked as "Partially Developed" or "Not Evident" are places to make notes for further learning/professional development or curricular modifications.

| Statements  | Fully Developed | Partially Developed | Not Evident |
|---|-----------------|---------------------|-------------|
| Students have daily opportunities to listen to a skilled reader model fluent reading. |                 |                     |             |
| Students have opportunities to practice and receive feedback on their reading skills. |                 |                     |             |
| Fluency is modeled and practiced in whole and small groups.                           |                 |                     |             |
| Action Steps  |                 |                     |             |
|   |                 |                     |             |

# Comprehension

**Comprehension:** the understanding of the meaning of texts (in print or other forms) and the context in which words occur.

## Overarching Best Practices and Instructional Considerations for Comprehension

Comprehension is the complex process and ultimate goal of reading. It involves the understanding of the meaning of text and the context in which the words occur. The overarching best practices and instructional considerations listed below retain their efficacy across grade levels and are to be used in tandem with the standards.

**Note:** As students advance through each grade, it is understood that the instructional materials and methodologies increase in complexity, gradually encouraging independence and autonomy. Also note that readers develop at different rates and may require the use of best practices and instructional considerations found outside of their designated grade level.



### Instructional Best Practices PreK–3

- Teach students to activate background knowledge prior to reading.
- Engage in high-quality shared book reading and ensure students connect to texts daily.
- Ask questions and engage students in conversations surrounding text daily.
- Model and explicitly teach comprehension strategies.

### Instructional Considerations PreK–3

- Select texts that intentionally support the objectives of the lesson.
- Use a variety of texts (picture books, wordless books, fiction, informational texts, and images) to elicit discussion.
- Use a variety of reading opportunities such as interactive read alouds\* and shared reading to facilitate discussions.
- Create opportunities for structured discussions tailored to the specific text.
- Plan intentional stopping points when interacting with a text to promote discussion, build comprehension, and develop vocabulary.
- Encourage students to ask questions while reading to support meaning making.
- Demonstrate how to make connections between the text, the self, and the world.
- Engage students in conversations prior to reading to build background knowledge and activate prior knowledge.

#### CR-SE Specific Instructional Considerations

- Select diverse texts that allow students to see themselves in the story, be exposed new ideas, and connect to the lives of characters.
- Connect the text to students' cultural backgrounds and experiences when activating prior knowledge. Pose text-based questions that encourage students to think about the text through the lens of their own cultural experiences and those of others.

## Instructional Best Practices

- Teach students to activate background knowledge prior to reading.
- Engage in high-quality shared book reading and ensure students connect to texts daily.
- Ask questions and engage students in conversations surrounding text daily.
- Model and explicitly teach comprehension strategies.

## NYS Next Generation Standards

- **PKR1:** Participate in discussions about a text (RI & RL).
- **PKR2:** Retell stories or share information about a text (RI & RL).
- **PKR3:** Develop and answer questions about characters, major events, and pieces of information in a text (RI & RL).
- **PKR4:** Exhibit an interest in learning new vocabulary (RI & RL).
- **PKR5:** Interact with a variety of genres (RI & RL).
- **PKR6:** Describe the role of an author and illustrator (RI & RL).
- **PKR7:** Describe the relationship between illustrations and the text (RI & RL).
- **PKR9:** Make connections between self, text, and the world (RI & RL).

## Instructional Considerations

★ Please reference the **Comprehension Introduction on page 35** to include all Instructional Considerations.

- Model engagement and participation during shared book reading experiences.
- Plan for purposeful play activities to allow children the opportunity to retell stories and explore information from texts.
- Purposefully select text for multiple reads to increase familiarity of content and language.



## Instructional Best Practices

- Teach students to activate background knowledge prior to reading.
- Engage in high-quality shared book reading and ensure students connect to texts daily.
- Ask questions and engage students in conversations surrounding text daily.
- Model and explicitly teach comprehension strategies.

## NYS Next Generation Standards

- **KR1:** Develop and answer questions about a text (RI & RL).
- **KR2:** Retell stories or share key details from a text (RI & RL).
- **KR3:** Identify characters, settings, major events in a story, or pieces of information in a text (RI & RL).
- **KR4:** Identify specific words that express feelings and senses (RI & RL).
- **KR5:** Identify literary and informational texts (RI & RL).
- **KR6:** Name the author and illustrator and define the role of each in presenting the ideas in a text (RI & RL).
- **KR7:** Describe the relationship between illustrations and the text (RI & RL).
- **KR8:** Identify specific information to support ideas in a text (RI & RL).
- **KR9:** Make connections between self, text, and the world (RI & RL).

## Instructional Considerations

★ Please reference the Comprehension Introduction on page 35 to include all Instructional Considerations.

- Model engagement and participation during shared book reading experiences.
- Plan for purposeful play activities to allow children the opportunity to retell stories and explore information from texts.
- Purposefully select text for repeated readings to increase familiarity of content and language. Model the transfer of comprehension skills and/or strategies from the read aloud to other various texts (decodable, shared reading, independent).

## Instructional Best Practices

- Teach students to activate background knowledge prior to reading.
- Engage in high-quality shared book reading and ensure students connect to texts daily.
- Ask questions and engage students in conversations surrounding text daily.
- Model and explicitly teach comprehension strategies.

## NYS Next Generation Standards

- **1R1:** Develop and answer questions about key ideas and details in a text (RI & RL).
- **1R2:** Identify a main topic or central idea in a text and retell important details (RI & RL).
- **1R3:** Describe characters, settings, and major events in a story, or pieces of information in a text (RI & RL).
- **1R4:** Identify specific words that express feelings and senses (RI & RL).
- **1R5:** Identify a variety of genres and explain major differences between literary texts and informational texts (RI & RL).
- **1R6:** Describe how illustrations and details support the point of view or purpose of the text (RI & RL).
- **1R7:** Use illustrations and details in literary and informational texts to discuss story elements and/or topics (RI & RL).
- **1R8:** Identify specific information an author or illustrator gives that supports ideas in a text (RI & RL).
- **1R9:** Make connections between self and text (texts and other people/world) (RI & RL).

## Instructional Considerations

★ Please reference the **Comprehension Introduction on page 35** to include all Instructional Considerations.

- Teach text structure using a variety of genres (picture books, wordless books, fiction, informational texts, and images) and to distinguish informational text from literary text.
- Facilitate structured discussions regarding point of view, story elements, and purpose, etc. within a variety of genres.
- Model the transfer of comprehension skills/strategies across reading experiences (shared reading, read aloud, small group, 1:1), including reading within other content areas.

## Instructional Best Practices

- Teach students to activate background knowledge prior to reading.
- Engage in high-quality shared book reading and ensure students connect to texts daily.
- Ask questions and engage students in conversations surrounding text daily.
- Model and explicitly teach comprehension strategies.

## NYS Next Generation Standards

- **2R1:** Develop and answer questions to demonstrate an understanding of key ideas and details in a text (RI & RL).
- **2R2:** Identify a main topic or central idea and retell key details in a text; summarize portions of a text (RI & RL).
- **2R3:** In literary texts, describe how characters respond to major events and challenges (RL). In informational texts, describe the connections between ideas, concepts, or a series of events (RI).
- **2R4:** Explain how words and phrases in a text suggest feelings and appeal to the senses (RI & RL).
- **2R5:** Describe the overall structure of a text, including describing how the beginning introduces the text and the ending concludes the text (RI & RL).
- **2R6:** Identify examples of how illustrations, text features, and details support the point of view or purpose of the text (RI & RL).
- **2R7:** Demonstrate understanding of story elements and/or topics by applying information gained from illustrations or text features (RI & RL).
- **2R8:** Explain how specific points the author or illustrator makes in a text are supported by relevant reasons (RI & RL).
- **2R9:** Make connections between self and text (texts and other people/world) (RI & RL).

## Instructional Considerations

★ Please reference the **Comprehension Introduction on page 35** to include all **Instructional Considerations**.

- Model and encourage the use of self-monitoring strategies (questioning, inferencing, retelling, summarizing) during interactive read alouds\*.
- Teach text structure using a variety of genres (picture books, wordless books, fiction, informational texts, and photographs) and to distinguish informational text from literary text.
- Facilitate structured discussions to include point of view, story elements, purpose, etc. within a variety of genres.
- Model the transfer of comprehension skills/strategies across reading experiences (shared reading, read aloud, small group, 1:1), including reading within other content areas.

## Instructional Best Practices

- Teach students to activate background knowledge prior to reading.
- Engage in high-quality shared book reading and ensure students connect to texts daily.
- Ask questions and engage students in conversations surrounding text daily.
- Model and explicitly teach comprehension strategies.

## NYS Next Generation Standards

- **3R1:** Develop and answer questions to locate relevant and specific details in a text to support an answer or inference (RI & RL).
- **3R2:** Determine a theme or central idea and explain how it is supported by key details; summarize portions of a text (RI & RL).
- **3R3:** In literary texts, describe character traits, motivations, or feelings, drawing on specific details from the text (RL). In informational texts, describe the relationship among a series of events, ideas, concepts, or steps in a text, using language that pertains to time, sequence, and cause/effect (RI).
- **3R4:** Determine the meaning of words, phrases, figurative language, and academic and content-specific words (RI & RL).
- **3R5:** In literary texts, identify parts of stories, dramas, and poems using terms such as chapter, scene, and stanza (RL). In informational texts, identify and use text features to build comprehension (RI).
- **3R6:** Discuss how the reader's point of view or perspective may differ from that of the author, narrator or characters in a text (RI & RL).
- **3R7:** Explain how specific illustrations or text features contribute to what is conveyed by the words in a text (e.g., create mood, emphasize character or setting, or determine where, when, why, and how key events occur) (RI & RL).
- **3R8:** Explain how claims in a text are supported by relevant reasons and evidence (RI & RL).
- **3R9:** Recognize genres and make connections to other texts, ideas, cultural perspectives, eras, personal events, and situations (RI & RL).

## Instructional Considerations

★ Please reference the Comprehension Introduction on page 35 to include all Instructional Considerations.

- Guide students on the usage of self-monitoring strategies (questioning, inferencing, retelling, summarizing) during interactive read alouds\*.
- Explain text structure using a variety of genres to distinguish informational from literary text.
- Facilitate structured discussions to include point of view, story elements, purpose, etc. within a variety of genres.
- Prioritize the importance of various reading strategies to develop deeper comprehension.
- Model the transfer of comprehension skills/strategies across reading experiences (shared reading, read aloud, small group, 1:1), including reading within other content areas.

# Instructional Best Practices: Comprehension

Use the following statements to reflect on comprehension instruction. Areas marked as "Partially Developed" or "Not Evident" are places to make notes for further learning/professional development or curricular modifications.

| Statements   | Fully Developed | Partially Developed | Not Evident |
|--|-----------------|---------------------|-------------|
| Instruction effectively teaches and models reading comprehension strategies to enhance understanding and retention of diverse texts.       |                 |                     |             |
| Instruction allows for engaging, high-quality discussions around texts (peer-to-peer, teacher-to-student, whole group, small group).       |                 |                     |             |
| There are opportunities for students to respond to a text in a variety of ways (e.g., drawing, artwork, dramatization, and conversations). |                 |                     |             |
| Action Steps   |                 |                     |             |
|  |                 |                     |             |

# Oral Language

**Oral Language:** Includes speaking and listening, providing the foundation for written language and is the system we use to communicate with others through speaking and listening.

## Overarching Best Practices and Instructional Considerations for Oral Language

Oral language includes speaking and listening, providing the foundation for written language and is the system we use to communicate with others. Oral language builds vocabulary, phonological awareness, comprehension, and sentence structure, all of which are foundational for successful mastery of literacy skills. The overarching best practices and instructional considerations listed below retain their efficacy across grade levels and are to be used in tandem with the Standards. The practices and considerations unique to each grade level can be found on subsequent pages.

**Note:** As students advance through each grade, it is understood that the instructional materials and methodologies increase in complexity, gradually encouraging independence and autonomy. Also note that readers develop at different rates and may require the use of best practices and instructional considerations found outside of their designated grade level.



### Instructional Best Practices PreK–3

- Plan activities to expand and practice language skills.
- Engage students in conversations

### Instructional Considerations PreK–3

- Model conversations by asking questions and listening, encouraging turn taking, and providing feedback.
- Use structured playtime to encourage conversations among students.
- During read aloud sessions, pause to discuss the features of the text, such as illustrations, format, or the storyline.

#### CR-SE Specific Instructional Considerations

- Invite families and community members to speak or read in the classroom as a means to engage students in discussion about topics that are culturally specific and aligned to the classroom curriculum.
- Leverage the tradition of storytelling to support students' narrative language skills.
- Create opportunities for students to collaboratively practice communicating in their target and home language.



## Instructional Best Practices

- Intentionally plan activities to build children's language skills.
- Create a language-rich environment in which students engage in meaningful conversations.

## NYS Next Generation Standards

- **PKSL1:** Participate in collaborative conversations with diverse peers and adults in small and large groups and during play.
  - **PKSL1a:** Follow agreed-upon rules for discussions, including listening to others, taking turns and staying on topic.
  - **PKSL1b:** Participate in conversations through multiple exchanges.
  - **PKSL1c:** Consider individual differences when communicating with others.
- **PKSL2:** Interact with diverse formats and texts.
- **PKSL3:** Identify the speaker.
- **PKSL4:** Describe familiar people, places, things, and events.
- **PKSL5:** Create a visual display.
- **PKSL6:** Express thoughts, feelings, and ideas.

## Instructional Considerations

★ Please reference the Oral Languages Introduction on page 42 to include all Instructional Considerations.

- Use a variety of texts to develop students' language and listening comprehension skills.
- Ensure there is time and space where students can share their thoughts and ideas.
- Provide instructional supports for students related to discussion behaviors, such as listening and taking turns.
- Model how to respond to others and build on their ideas.
- Encourage students to use descriptive language when describing something familiar, such as a favorite toy or recent outing.

## Instructional Best Practices

- Teach students academic language skills, including the use of inferential and narrative language.
- Engage students in conversations that support the use of inferential language.
- Explicitly engage students in developing narrative language skills.

## NYS Next Generation Standards

- **KSL1:** Participate in collaborative conversations with diverse peers and adults in small and large groups and during play.
  - **KSL1a:** Follow agreed-upon rules for discussions, including listening to others, taking turns, and staying on topic.
  - **KSL1b:** Participate in conversations through multiple exchanges.
  - **KSL1c:** Consider individual differences when communicating with others.
- **KSL2:** Participate in a conversation about features of diverse texts and formats.
- **KSL3:** Develop and answer questions to clarify what the speaker says.

### Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas

- **KSL4:** Describe familiar people, places, things, and events with detail.
- **KSL5:** Create and/or utilize existing visual displays to support descriptions.
- **KSL6:** Express thoughts, feelings, and ideas.

## Instructional Considerations

★ Please reference the Oral Languages Introduction on page 42 to include all Instructional Considerations.

- Guide students in creating simple storyboards with pictures to describe an event or sequence of actions (based on a read-aloud or personal experience).
- Discuss how to recognize, respect, and express different feelings and ideas in conversations.
- Instruct students on how to verbalize descriptive details in pictures of familiar people, places, or events and to present that information to their peers.
- Use a variety of texts to develop students' language and listening comprehension skills.

## Instructional Best Practices

- Teach students academic language skills, including the use of inferential and narrative language.
- Engage students in conversations that support the use of inferential language.
- Explicitly engage students in developing narrative language skills.

## NYS Next Generation Standards

### Comprehension and Collaboration

- **1SL1:** Participate in collaborative conversations with diverse peers and adults (e.g., in small and large groups and during play).
  - **1SL1a:** Follow agreed-upon rules for discussions and participate by actively listening, taking turns, and staying on topic.
  - **1SL1b:** Build on others' talk in conversations by responding to the comments of others through multiple exchanges.
  - **1SL1c:** Ask questions to clear up any confusion about topics and texts under discussion.
  - **1SL1d:** Consider individual differences when communicating with others.
- **1SL2:** Develop and answer questions about key details in diverse texts and formats.
- **1SL3:** Develop and answer questions to clarify what the speaker says and identify a speaker's point of view.

### Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas

- **1SL4:** Describe familiar people, places, things, and events with relevant details expressing ideas clearly.
- **1SL5:** Create or utilize existing visual displays to support descriptions to clarify ideas, thoughts, and feelings.
- **1SL6:** Express thoughts, feelings, and ideas clearly, using complete sentences when appropriate to task, situation, and audience.

## Instructional Considerations

★ **Please reference the Oral Languages Introduction on page 42 to include all Instructional Considerations.**

- Discuss how to recognize, respect, and express different feelings and ideas in conversations.
- Organize small group discussions where students can talk about a shared topic.
- Suggest possible sentence starters to help students build on peers' comments during discussions.
- Introduce questioning techniques, such as the 5 Ws (Who, What, When, Where, Why).
- Expose students to different formats (e.g., videos, podcasts, illustrations) to compare the delivery of information.
- Organize simple debates where students listen to a speaker's point of view and then agree or disagree, providing reasons for their opinion.
- Invite families and community members to speak or read in the classroom as a means to engage students in discussion about topics that are culturally specific and aligned to the classroom curriculum.
- Leverage the tradition of storytelling to support students' narrative language skills.
- Create opportunities for students to collaboratively practice communicating in the target language\*.
- Provide students with opportunities to present to their peers.

## Instructional Best Practices

- Teach students academic language skills, including the use of inferential and narrative language.
- Engage students in conversations that support the use of inferential language.
- Explicitly engage students in developing narrative language skills.

## NYS Next Generation Standards

### Comprehension and Collaboration

- **2SL1:** Participate in collaborative conversations with diverse peers and adults in small and large groups and during play.
  - **2SL1a:** Follow agreed-upon rules for discussions and participate by actively listening, taking turns, and staying on topic.
  - **2SL1b:** Build on others' talk in conversations by linking their comments to the remarks of others through multiple exchanges.
  - **2SL1c:** Ask for clarification and further explanation as needed about topics and texts under discussion.
- **2SL1d:** Consider individual differences when communicating with others.
- **2SL2:** Recount or describe key ideas or details of diverse texts and formats.
- **2SL3:** Develop and answer questions about what a speaker says; agree or disagree with the speaker's point of view, providing a reason(s).

### Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas

- **2SL4:** Describe people, places, things, and events with relevant details, expressing ideas and feelings clearly.
- **2SL5:** Include digital media and/or visual displays in presentations to clarify or support ideas, thoughts, and feelings.
- **2SL6:** Express thoughts, feelings, and ideas clearly, adapting language according to context.

## Instructional Considerations

★ Please reference the Oral Languages Introduction on page 42 to include all Instructional Considerations.

- Organize small group discussions where students can talk about a shared topic.
- Use different formats (e.g., videos, podcasts, illustrations) to compare the delivery of information.
- Organize simple debates where students listen to a speaker's point of view and then agree or disagree, providing reasons for their opinion.
- Model and foster respectful dialogue and critical thinking.
- Demonstrate the use of digital tools or other mediums (like simple slideshow software) for students to create presentations, posters, diagrams, or other visual displays that highlight a student's understanding of material.
- Invite families and community members to speak or read in the classroom as a means to engage students in discussion about topics that are culturally specific and aligned to the classroom curriculum.
- Leverage the tradition of storytelling to support students' narrative language skills.
- Create opportunities for students to collaboratively practice communicating in the target language\*.
- Provide students with opportunities to present to their peers.

## Instructional Best Practices

- Teach students academic language skills, including the use of inferential and narrative language.
- Engage students in conversations that support the use of inferential language.
- Explicitly engage students in developing narrative language skills.

## NYS Next Generation Standards

- **3SL1:** Participate and engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions with diverse peers and adults, expressing ideas clearly, and building on those of others.
  - **3SL1a:** Come to discussions having read or studied required material; draw on that preparation and other information known about the topic to explore ideas under discussion.
  - **3SL1b:** Follow agreed-upon norms for discussions by actively listening, taking turns, and staying on topic.
  - **3SL1c:** Ask questions to check understanding of information presented and link comments to the remarks of others.
  - **3SL1d:** Explain their own ideas and understanding of the discussion.
  - **3SL1e:** Consider individual differences when communicating with others.
- **3SL2:** Determine the central ideas and supporting details or information presented in diverse texts and formats (e.g., including visual, quantitative, and oral).
- **3SL3:** Ask and answer questions in order to evaluate a speaker's point of view, offering appropriate elaboration and detail.
- **3SL4:** Report on a topic or text, tell a story, or recount an experience with appropriate facts and relevant, descriptive details, speaking clearly at an understandable pace.
- **3SL5:** Include digital media and/or visual displays in presentations to emphasize certain facts or details.
- **3SL6:** Identify contexts that call for academic English or informal discourse.

## Instructional Considerations

★ **Please reference the Oral Languages Introduction on page 42 to include all Instructional Considerations.**

- Use role-playing exercises to teach about the appropriate types of language for different situations.
- Instruct students how to present information, focusing on pacing, clarity, and the inclusion of relevant details.
- Organize simple debates where students listen to a speaker's point of view and then agree or disagree, providing reasons for their opinion.
- Model and foster respectful dialogue and critical thinking.
- Demonstrate the use of digital tools or other mediums (like simple slideshow software) for students to create presentations, posters, diagrams, or other visual displays that highlight understanding of the material.

# Instructional Best Practices: Oral Language

Use the following statements to reflect on oral language instruction. Areas marked as "Partially Developed" or "Not Evident" are places to make notes for further learning/professional development or curricular modifications.

| Statements  | Fully Developed | Partially Developed | Not Evident |
|---|-----------------|---------------------|-------------|
| Non-teacher-directed settings are utilized to engage children in one-on-one or small group conversations. |                 |                     |             |
| There is consistent use of open-ended, thought-provoking questions.                                       |                 |                     |             |
| Full attention is given to students to respond meaningfully during conversations.                         |                 |                     |             |
| Action Steps  |                 |                     |             |
|   |                 |                     |             |



# Instructional Best Practices: Overarching Reflection Statements for Literacy

Use the following statements to guide reflection on current literacy instruction, teaching, and planning for professional development.

| Guiding Statements   | Fully Developed | Partially Developed | Not Evident |
|--|-----------------|---------------------|-------------|
| The environment is filled with authentic literacy rich materials and experiences.  |                 |                     |             |
| Systematic and explicit methods are used to teach literacy skills.   |                 |                     |             |
| There are opportunities for students to partake in teacher-led, partner, and independent literacy activities.                        |                 |                     |             |
| Activities are adjusted to cater to the varied needs of all students, including those requiring extra support and interventions.     |                 |                     |             |
| Multimodal approaches (visual, auditory, kinesthetic) are applied to teach skills.   |                 |                     |             |
| Progress monitoring occurs continuously which results in student feedback and guides instruction.                                    |                 |                     |             |
| Culturally responsive practices are integrated into literacy instruction to recognize and honor the diverse backgrounds of students. |                 |                     |             |
| Literacy instruction aligns with Language Arts standards and curriculum goals.   |                 |                     |             |
| Action Steps   |                 |                     |             |
|  |                 |                     |             |

# Appendix

|  |    |
|--|----|
| Glossary .....                                 | 51 |
| References .....                               | 53 |
| Resources .....                                | 55 |
| Instructional Best Practices at a Glance ..... | 56 |

## Instructional Best Practices by Grade Level

|                         |    |
|-------------------------|----|
| • Prekindergarten ..... | 58 |
| • Kindergarten .....    | 59 |
| • First Grade .....     | 60 |
| • Second Grade .....    | 61 |
| • Third Grade .....     | 62 |



# Glossary

- **Alternated Reading:** The student and a more experienced reader (often the teacher), take turns reading continuous sections of text.
- **Comprehension:** The understanding of the meaning of texts (in print or other forms) and the context in which words occur.
- **Echo Reading:** A method in which the teacher reads aloud and students echo what is read aloud. The teacher also monitors to ensure each student is following along by looking at the words as they read them.
- **Evidence-Based:** An activity, strategy, or intervention that demonstrates a statistically significant effect on improving student outcomes or other relevant outcomes based on: (1) strong evidence (e.g., experimental studies), (2) moderate evidence (e.g., quasi-experimental studies), or (3) promising evidence (e.g., correlational studies; or (4) a rationale based on high-quality research findings or positive evaluation that such activity, strategy, or intervention is likely to improve student outcomes or other relevant outcomes, and includes ongoing efforts to examine the effects of such activity, strategy, or intervention.
- **Home Language:** A language learned in childhood in the home environment.
- **Intentional Vocabulary:** Involves explicitly teaching specific words through structured methods to enhance understanding and retention.
- **Incidental Vocabulary:** Learning occurs naturally through activities like reading or listening, where new words are acquired unintentionally through repeated exposure.
- **Independent Reading:** Students engage with text independently.
- **Interactive Read Aloud:** A method in which the teacher reads aloud and plans strategic stopping points to facilitate discussion.
- **Morphological Knowledge:** The ability to understand and use word parts like roots, prefixes, and suffixes to help decode and infer the meaning of new words, aiding in reading and literacy.
- **Multimodal/Multisensory:** Multimodal refers to using multiple methods of delivery in education, while multisensory involves engaging multiple senses simultaneously to enhance learning.
- **Oral Language:** Includes speaking and listening, providing the foundation for written language and is the system we use to communicate with others through speaking and listening.

# Glossary

- **Phonemic Awareness:** The ability to notice, think about, and work with phonemes (sounds) in spoken words.
- **Phonics:** The relationship between graphemes (letters) and the phonemes they represent.
- **Phonological Awareness:** An awareness of speech sounds whereas phonemic awareness is the ability to identify and manipulate sounds.
- **Reading Fluency:** The ability to read out loud accurately at an appropriate rate, and with appropriate expression (including proper phrasing, intonation, and pausing).
- **Repeated Reading:** Students read the same text multiple times for mastery. In repeated reading, students are less likely to practice incorrect word reading or to guess unknown words. They are repeatedly exposed to the same words, which should help students recognize them more efficiently.
- **Scientifically-Based:** The instructional method or practice is based on research that involves the application of rigorous, systematic, and objective procedures to obtain reliable and valid knowledge relevant to education.
- **Shared Reading:** Student(s) interact with an experienced reader, often a teacher, around a text. The experienced reader reads aloud to students using texts large enough that children can see (e.g., big books, poems on chart paper) so that they can follow along visually and simultaneously hear a fluent reading of the text.
- **Simultaneous Reading:** The student(s) and teacher read the same text aloud at the same time.
- **Target Language:** A language other than one's native language that is being learned.
- **Vocabulary Development:** The acquisition of knowledge about the meanings, uses, and pronunciation of words.
- **Wide Reading:** Students read many different texts and are exposed to more diverse vocabulary and world knowledge. During wide reading, teachers should:
  - Preempt word-reading challenges presented in new texts by identifying and practicing challenging words with students before they read the full text.
  - Remind students that the purpose of reading is to derive meaning from the text. To support comprehension, regularly ask students a few questions after reading a text.

# References

- Adger, C. T., Wolfram, W., & Christian, D. (2007). Dialects in schools and communities (2nd ed.). Routledge.
- August, D., Shanahan, T., & Escamilla, K. (2009). English language learners: Developing literacy in second-language learners—Report of the National Literacy Panel on Language-Minority Children and Youth. Journal of Literacy Research, 41(4), 432–452.
- Bialystok, E. (2001). Bilingualism in development: Language, literacy, and cognition. Cambridge University Press.
- Bishop, R. S. (1990). Mirrors, windows, and sliding glass doors. Perspectives: Choosing and Using Books for the Classroom, 6(3), ix–xi.
- Boykin, A. W., & Noguera, P. (2011). Creating the opportunity to learn: moving from research to practice to close the achievement gap. Alexandria, VA: ASCD
- Burchinal, M. R., Krowka, S., Newman-Gonchar, R., Jayanthi, M., Gersten, R., Wavell, S., ... & Rosen, E. (2022). Preparing Young Children for School. Educator's Practice Guide. WWC 2022009. What Works Clearinghouse. <https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/PracticeGuide/30>
- Duke, N. K., Pearson, P. D., Strachan, S. L., & Billman, A. K. (2011). Essential elements of fostering and teaching reading comprehension. What research has to say about reading instruction, 4(1), 286-314.
- Foorman, B., Beyler, N., Borradaile, K., Coyne, M., Denton, C. A., Dimino, J., ... & Wissel, S. (2016). Foundational Skills to Support Reading for Understanding in Kindergarten through 3rd Grade. Educator's Practice Guide. NCEE 2016-4008. What Works Clearinghouse. <https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/PracticeGuide/21>
- Gay, G. (2010). Culturally responsive teaching: theory, research, and practice. New York, NY: Teachers College Press.
- González, N., Moll, L. C., & Amanti, C. (Eds.). (2005). Funds of knowledge: Theorizing practices in households, communities, and classrooms. Routledge.
- García, O., & Wei, L. (2014). Translanguaging: Language, bilingualism and education. Palgrave Macmillan.
- Gay, G. (2018). Culturally responsive teaching: Theory, research, and practice (3rd ed.). Teachers College Press.

# References

- Hollie, S. (2011). Culturally and linguistically responsive teaching and learning: Classroom practices for student success. Teacher Created Materials.
- Koda, K. (2007). Reading and language learning: Cross-linguistic constraints on second-language reading development. Language Learning, 57(S1), 1–44.
- Kress, G. (2010). Multimodality: A social semiotic approach to contemporary communication. Routledge.
- Ladson-Billings, G. (1995) But that's just good teaching! The case for culturally relevant pedagogy. Theory into Practice, 34(3), 159-165
- Lee, C. D. (2007). Culture, literacy, and learning: Taking bloom in the midst of the whirlwind. Teachers College Press.
- Love, B. L. (2019). We want to do more than survive: Abolitionist teaching and the pursuit of educational freedom. Beacon Press.
- Marzano, R. J. (2004). Building background knowledge for academic achievement: Research on what works in schools. ASCD
- Moll, L. C., Amanti, C., Neff, D., & González, N. (1992). Funds of knowledge for teaching: Using a qualitative approach to connect homes and classrooms. Theory into Practice, 31(2), 132–141.
- Muhammad, G. (2020). Cultivating genius: An equity framework for culturally and historically responsive literacy. Scholastic.
- Paris, D., & Alim, H. S. (Eds.). (2017). Culturally sustaining pedagogies: Teaching and learning for justice in a changing world. Teachers College Press.
- Shanahan, T., Callison, K., Carriere, C., Duke, N. K., Pearson, P. D., Schatschneider, C., & Torgesen, J. (2010). Improving Reading Comprehension in Kindergarten through 3rd Grade: IES Practice Guide. NCEE 2010-4038. What Works Clearinghouse.
- Swain, M. (2000). The output hypothesis and beyond: Mediating acquisition through collaborative dialogue. In J. P. Lantolf (Ed.), Sociocultural theory and second language learning (pp. 97-114). Oxford University Press.
- **Note: Instructional considerations and best practices were taken from only strong or moderately evidenced examples from the Institute of Education Sciences.**



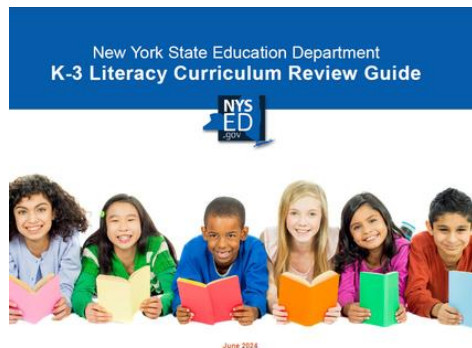
# Resources



[Literacy Briefs | New York State Education Department \(nysed.gov\)](#)



[CR-SE Framework Briefs | New York State Education Department \(nysed.gov\)](#)



[NYSED K-3 Literacy Curriculum Review Guide](#)



[Next Generation ELA Standards at a Glance | New York State Education Department \(nysed.gov\)](#)

# Instructional Best Practices at a Glance

| The Big Six Literacy Pillars | NYS Prekindergarten–3rd Grade Literacy Instructional Best Practices   | Grades   |
|------------------------------|---|--|
| <b>Phonemic Awareness</b>    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop awareness of the segments of sound in speech.</li> <li>• Teach students to manipulate sounds in speech, focusing on orally blending and segmenting words.</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• PreK-1</li> <li>• K-1</li> </ul>  |
| <b>Phonics</b>               | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teach students letter-sound relations.</li> <li>• Introduce letters (graphemes) with the sounds (phonemes) they make.</li> <li>• Provide opportunities to practice letter identification and sounds.</li> <li>• Use word-building and other activities to link students’ knowledge of letter–sound relationships with phonemic awareness.</li> <li>• Develop an awareness of segments of sounds in speech and how they correspond to letters.</li> <li>• Teach students to decode words, analyze word parts and write and recognize words.</li> <li>• Teach students to blend letter sounds and sound-spelling patterns.</li> <li>• Teach common sound-spelling patterns.</li> <li>• Teach students to recognize common word parts.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• PreK-3</li> <li>• PreK</li> <li>• PreK</li> <li>• K</li> <li>• K-1</li> <li>• 1-3</li> <li>• 2-3</li> <li>• 2-3</li> <li>• 2-3</li> </ul> |
| <b>Vocabulary</b>            | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Plan activities to expand and practice vocabulary.</li> <li>• Introduce words and their meanings.</li> <li>• Engage students in activities to enhance vocabulary and language skills.</li> <li>• Teach vocabulary in the context of other reading activities.</li> <li>• Facilitate activities that actively engage students in the development of their vocabulary and language skills.</li> <li>• Teach students academic language skills, including the use of inferential language, and vocabulary knowledge.</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• PreK-3</li> <li>• PreK-3</li> <li>• PreK-3</li> <li>• PreK-3</li> <li>• K-1</li> <li>• 2-3</li> </ul>                                     |

# Instructional Best Practices at a Glance

| The Big Six Literacy Pillars | NYS Prekindergarten–3rd Grade Literacy Instructional Best Practices   | Grades  |
|------------------------------|---|---|
| <b>Fluency</b>               | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Model fluent reading on a daily basis.</li> <li>• Provide daily opportunities for students to practice reading fluency.</li> <li>• Model fluent reading for students by reading with expression, gestures and facial expressions, and intonation in voice.</li> <li>• Incorporate daily interactive oral reading structures into whole- and small-group instruction to model and expose students to early reading habits and strategies.</li> <li>• Incorporate daily interactive oral reading structures into whole- and small-group instruction to model, practice, and provide feedback to students as they develop reading skills and strategies.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• PreK-3</li> <li>• PreK-3</li> <li>• PreK</li> <li>• K-1</li> <li>• 2-3</li> </ul>                                |
| <b>Comprehension</b>         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teach students to activate background knowledge prior to reading.</li> <li>• Engage in high-quality shared book reading and ensure students connect to texts daily.</li> <li>• Ask questions and engage students in conversations surrounding text daily.</li> <li>• Model and explicitly teach comprehension strategies.</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• PreK-3</li> <li>• PreK-3</li> <li>• PreK-3</li> <li>• PreK-3</li> </ul>  |
| <b>Oral Language</b>         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Plan activities to expand and practice language skills.</li> <li>• Engage students in conversations.</li> <li>• Intentionally plan activities to build children's language skills.</li> <li>• Create a language-rich environment in which students engage in meaningful conversations.</li> <li>• Teach students academic language skills, including the use of inferential and narrative language.</li> <li>• Engage students in conversations that support the use of inferential language.</li> <li>• Explicitly engage students in developing narrative language skills.</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• PreK-3</li> <li>• PreK-3</li> <li>• PreK</li> <li>• PreK</li> <li>• K-3</li> <li>• K-3</li> <li>• K-3</li> </ul> |

# Instructional Best Practices for Prekindergarten

Review the following overarching and grade level specific instructional best practices to reflect on instruction in your classroom.

| Literacy Pillar           | Instructional Best Practices  |
|---------------------------|---|
| <b>Phonemic Awareness</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop awareness of the segments of sound in speech.</li> </ul>   |
| <b>Phonics</b>            | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teach students letter-sound relations.</li> <li>• Introduce letters (graphemes) with the sounds (phonemes) they make.</li> <li>• Provide opportunities to practice letter identification and sounds.</li> </ul>  |
| <b>Vocabulary</b>         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introduce words and their meanings.</li> <li>• Engage students in activities to enhance vocabulary and language skills.</li> <li>• Teach vocabulary in the context of other reading activities.</li> <li>• Plan activities to expand and practice vocabulary.</li> </ul>   |
| <b>Fluency</b>            | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Model fluent reading on a daily basis.</li> <li>• Provide daily opportunities for students to practice reading fluency.</li> <li>• Model fluent reading for students by reading with expression, gestures and facial expressions, and intonation in voice.</li> </ul>  |
| <b>Comprehension</b>      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teach students to activate background knowledge prior to reading.</li> <li>• Engage in high-quality shared book reading and ensure students connect to texts daily.</li> <li>• Ask questions and engage students in conversations surrounding text daily.</li> <li>• Model and explicitly teach comprehension strategies.</li> </ul> |
| <b>Oral Language</b>      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Plan activities to expand and practice language skills.</li> <li>• Engage students in conversations.</li> <li>• Intentionally plan activities to build children's language skills.</li> <li>• Create a language-rich environment in which students engage in meaningful conversations.</li> </ul>                                    |

# Instructional Best Practices for Kindergarten

Review the following overarching and grade level specific instructional best practices to reflect on instruction in your classroom.

| Literacy Pillar           | Instructional Best Practices   |
|---------------------------|--|
| <b>Phonemic Awareness</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop awareness of the segments of sound in speech.</li> <li>• Teach students to manipulate sounds in speech, focusing on orally blending and segmenting words.</li> </ul>  |
| <b>Phonics</b>            | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teach students letter-sound relations.</li> <li>• Develop an awareness of segments of sounds in speech and how they correspond to letters.</li> <li>• Use word-building and other activities to link students' knowledge of letter-sound relationships with phonemic awareness.</li> </ul>  |
| <b>Vocabulary</b>         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Plan activities to expand and practice vocabulary.</li> <li>• Introduce words and their meanings.</li> <li>• Engage students in activities to enhance vocabulary and language skills.</li> <li>• Teach vocabulary in the context of other reading activities.</li> <li>• Facilitate activities that actively engage students in the development of their vocabulary and language skills.</li> </ul>   |
| <b>Fluency</b>            | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Model fluent reading on a daily basis.</li> <li>• Provide daily opportunities for students to practice reading fluency.</li> <li>• Incorporate daily interactive oral reading structures into whole and small group instruction to model and expose students to emergent reading habits and strategies.</li> </ul>  |
| <b>Comprehension</b>      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teach students to activate background knowledge prior to reading.</li> <li>• Engage in high-quality shared book reading and ensure students connect to texts daily.</li> <li>• Ask questions and engage students in conversations surrounding text daily.</li> <li>• Model and explicitly teach comprehension strategies.</li> </ul>  |
| <b>Oral Language</b>      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Plan activities to expand and practice language skills.</li> <li>• Engage students in conversations.</li> <li>• Teach students academic language skills, including the use of inferential and narrative language.</li> <li>• Engage students in conversations that support the use of inferential language.</li> <li>• Explicitly engage students in developing narrative language skills.</li> </ul> |

# Instructional Best Practices for First Grade

Review the following overarching and grade level specific instructional best practices to reflect on instruction in your classroom.

| Literacy Pillar           | Instructional Best Practices   |
|---------------------------|--|
| <b>Phonemic Awareness</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop awareness of the segments of sound in speech.</li> <li>• Teach students to manipulate sounds in speech, focusing on orally blending and segmenting words.</li> </ul>  |
| <b>Phonics</b>            | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teach students letter-sound relations.</li> <li>• Develop an awareness of segments of sounds in speech and how they correspond to letters.</li> <li>• Teach students to decode words, analyze word parts and write and recognize words.</li> </ul>  |
| <b>Vocabulary</b>         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Plan activities to expand and practice vocabulary.</li> <li>• Introduce words and their meanings.</li> <li>• Engage students in activities to enhance vocabulary and language skills.</li> <li>• Teach vocabulary in the context of other reading activities.</li> <li>• Facilitate activities that actively engage students in the development of their vocabulary and language skills.</li> </ul>   |
| <b>Fluency</b>            | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Model fluent reading on a daily basis.</li> <li>• Provide daily opportunities for students to practice reading fluency.</li> <li>• Incorporate daily interactive oral reading structures into whole and small group instruction to model and expose students to early reading habits and strategies.</li> </ul>   |
| <b>Comprehension</b>      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teach students to activate background knowledge prior to reading.</li> <li>• Engage in high-quality shared book reading and ensure students connect to texts daily.</li> <li>• Ask questions and engage students in conversations surrounding text daily.</li> <li>• Model and explicitly teach comprehension strategies.</li> </ul>  |
| <b>Oral Language</b>      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Plan activities to expand and practice language skills.</li> <li>• Engage students in conversations.</li> <li>• Teach students academic language skills, including the use of inferential and narrative language.</li> <li>• Engage students in conversations that support the use of inferential language.</li> <li>• Explicitly engage students in developing narrative language skills.</li> </ul> |

# Instructional Best Practices for Second Grade

Review the following overarching and grade level specific instructional best practices to reflect on instruction in your classroom.

| Literacy Pillar           | Instructional Best Practices   |
|---------------------------|--|
| <b>Phonemic Awareness</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>As there are no standards to address phonemic awareness in second grade, please look to first grade as well as the overarching best practices for students who may need additional instruction in this area.</li> </ul>   |
| <b>Phonics</b>            | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Teach students letter-sound relations.</li> <li>Teach students to decode words, analyze word parts and write and recognize words.</li> <li>Teach students to blend letter sounds and sound-spelling patterns.</li> <li>Teach common sound-spelling patterns.</li> <li>Teach students to recognize common word parts.</li> </ul>   |
| <b>Vocabulary</b>         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Plan activities to expand and practice vocabulary.</li> <li>Introduce words and their meanings.</li> <li>Engage students in activities to enhance vocabulary and language skills.</li> <li>Teach vocabulary in the context of other reading activities.</li> <li>Teach students academic language skills, including the use of inferential language, and vocabulary knowledge.</li> </ul>     |
| <b>Fluency</b>            | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Model fluent reading on a daily basis.</li> <li>Provide daily opportunities for students to practice reading fluency.</li> <li>Incorporate daily interactive oral reading structures into whole and small group instruction to model, practice, and provide feedback to students as they develop reading skills and strategies.</li> </ul>  |
| <b>Comprehension</b>      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Teach students to activate background knowledge prior to reading.</li> <li>Engage in high-quality shared book reading and ensure students connect to texts daily.</li> <li>Ask questions and engage students in conversations surrounding text daily.</li> <li>Model and explicitly teach comprehension strategies.</li> </ul>  |
| <b>Oral Language</b>      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Plan activities to expand and practice language skills.</li> <li>Engage students in conversations.</li> <li>Teach students academic language skills, including the use of inferential and narrative language.</li> <li>Engage students in conversations that support the use of inferential language.</li> <li>Explicitly engage students in developing narrative language skills.</li> </ul> |



# Instructional Best Practices for Third Grade

Review the following overarching and grade level specific instructional best practices to reflect on instruction in your classroom.

| Literacy Pillar           | Instructional Best Practices   |
|---------------------------|--|
| <b>Phonemic Awareness</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• As there are no standards to address phonemic awareness in third grade, please look to first grade as well as the overarching best practices for students who may need additional instruction in this area.</li> </ul>  |
| <b>Phonics</b>            | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teach students letter-sound relations.</li> <li>• Teach students to decode words, analyze word parts and write and recognize words.</li> <li>• Teach students to blend letter sounds and sound-spelling patterns.</li> <li>• Teach common sound-spelling patterns.</li> <li>• Teach students to recognize common word parts.</li> </ul>   |
| <b>Vocabulary</b>         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Plan activities to expand and practice vocabulary.</li> <li>• Introduce words and their meanings.</li> <li>• Engage students in activities to enhance vocabulary and language skills.</li> <li>• Teach vocabulary in the context of other reading activities.</li> <li>• Teach students academic language skills, including the use of inferential language, and vocabulary knowledge.</li> </ul>     |
| <b>Fluency</b>            | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Model fluent reading on a daily basis.</li> <li>• Provide daily opportunities for students to practice reading fluency.</li> <li>• Incorporate daily interactive oral reading structures into whole and small group instruction across genres to model, practice, and provide feedback to students as they develop reading skills and strategies.</li> </ul>  |
| <b>Comprehension</b>      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teach students to activate background knowledge prior to reading.</li> <li>• Engage in high-quality shared book reading and ensure students connect to texts daily.</li> <li>• Ask questions and engage students in conversations surrounding text daily.</li> <li>• Model and explicitly teach comprehension strategies.</li> </ul>  |
| <b>Oral Language</b>      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Plan activities to expand and practice language skills.</li> <li>• Engage students in conversations.</li> <li>• Teach students academic language skills, including the use of inferential and narrative language.</li> <li>• Engage students in conversations that support the use of inferential language.</li> <li>• Explicitly engage students in developing narrative language skills.</li> </ul> |