### Foundational Skills Classroom Observation Tool

**Standard Alignment:** The observed instruction and student task work is aligned to a foundational skills standard(s).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Instruction meets the demands of the standard(s).</th>
<th>Explicit whole-group instruction is aligned to grade-level standards. Student task work or small-group instruction is aligned to grade-level standards OR additional K–2 foundational skills standards based on assessment data.</th>
<th>4 — Fully meets</th>
<th>3 — Mostly meets</th>
<th>2 — Partially meets</th>
<th>1 — Does not meet</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**Criteria 1: Systematic and Explicit Approach.** The school/district/network uses a systematic, explicit program that addresses the foundational skills outlined in the standard(s) (e.g., phonological awareness, phonics).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A. The teacher is using a systematic, explicit program for instruction.</th>
<th>The teacher is using a systematic, explicit program for instruction.</th>
<th>1 — Yes</th>
<th>0 — No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**Program:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>B. The lesson from the systematic, explicit program is being enacted with integrity.</th>
<th>There is evidence that the teacher is following the scripted lesson from the curriculum to facilitate whole-group instruction or using small-group guidance from the curricular materials to drive small-group instruction. The teacher is using the language of an aligned curriculum during instruction as well as curricular materials (e.g., anchor charts, letter/sound cards/task sheets, and decodable readers provided by the curriculum).</th>
<th>4 — The lesson is enacted as intended and may also include adjustments that enhance the lesson.</th>
<th>3 — The lesson is mostly enacted as intended.</th>
<th>2 — The lesson is partially enacted as intended; adjustments detract from the lesson focus.</th>
<th>1 — The lesson is not based on a systematic, explicit program.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**Criteria 2: Quality Instruction.** Foundational skills instruction is explicit and provides adequate and appropriate time for teacher direction and student practice. Abundant practice materials are readily available and can be used by students independently and/or with support. The instruction and materials provide opportunities for practice both in and out of context as grade appropriate. The teacher has created an environment where students feel safe to take risks, make mistakes, and interact with their teacher and peers.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A. The teacher provides explicit and accurate foundational skills instruction through the use of modeling, explanations, visuals, and/or examples.</th>
<th>While the teacher is following the lesson script, instructional techniques such as accurate pronunciation of sounds (phonemes), clear use of visual aids that all students can access, articulation of objectives to students, and accurate modeling of blending, segmenting, and other content-specific tasks are evident.</th>
<th>The teacher provides clear and accurate models, visuals, and examples as outlined in the lesson script (and additional techniques if needed) to make the foundational skills instruction more explicit.</th>
</tr>
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</table>

**Practice opportunities should provide students with the opportunity to practice targeted skill(s) both in and out of context in a variety of ways through whole-group, small-group, and/or independent practice, for instance:**

- Providing oral, manipulative, and written practice with targeted skills.
- Using letter tiles to create words with the targeted skill followed by decoding words on a task sheet or in a decodable reader.
- Forming letters in the air, with a dry erase marker, and with a crayon or pencil on a task sheet.

**Note:** *In-context practice is applicable once students have learned enough sound-spelling patterns and high-frequency words to read decodable text.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>B. Opportunities are provided for all students to practice the newly acquired skills in a variety of ways both in and out of context, and students are fully engaged in the practice.</th>
<th>There are a variety of opportunities for students to practice the targeted skills both in and out of context.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

- Out of context: Tasks such as letter tile work, games, puzzles, music, movement, worksheets, or other discrete oral or written tasks.
- In context: Tasks occur in the context of phonetically controlled text.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>i: Clear and accurate pronunciation of sounds:</th>
<th>1 — Yes</th>
<th>0 — No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ii: Clear and accurate models:</td>
<td>1 — Yes</td>
<td>0 — No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>iii: Clear use of visual aids:</td>
<td>1 — Yes</td>
<td>0 — No</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>i. Out of context:</th>
<th>1 — Yes</th>
<th>0 — No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ii: In context:</td>
<td>1 — Yes</td>
<td>0 — No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>iii. Students are attentive, focused, and engaged in the practice opportunities provided.</td>
<td>4 — Most students</td>
<td>3 — Many students</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Nomenclature and general structure inspired by Student Achievement Partners’ Instructional Practice Guides for math and English language arts.
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**C.** The balance of time spent on lesson component(s) and student practice opportunities is adequate and appropriate.

There is appropriate pacing of instruction within the skills and the task(s) provided with sufficient time for students to practice targeted skills through reading, writing, speaking, and/or listening.

The lesson in its entirety is appropriately paced giving students ample time for both instruction and application of the targeted skills.

- 4 — Consistently
- 3 — Mostly
- 2 — Rarely
- 1 — Never

**D.** The teacher looks for and expects precision in student responses and work and provides precise coaching and feedback during the lesson.

The teacher provides on-the-spot feedback, corrections, and/or mid-lesson adjustments based on student performance, or the teacher confirms student answers (e.g., if students voice an incorrect sound for a phoneme, the teacher models the correct sound and students respond by modeling the correct pronunciation).

Common areas to look for precision:
- Oral production
- Letter ID
- Letter formation
- Encoding of sounds
- Decoding

Feedback is provided to students, and students adjust their work accordingly.

- 4 — Consistently
- 3 — Mostly
- 2 — Rarely
- 1 — Never

**E.** The teacher has established a safe community for learning where students feel comfortable taking risks and interacting with the teacher and peers.

The teacher encourages all students as they engage in grade-level content. Students appear eager to participate in class discussion and task work, and they seem comfortable as they communicate with the teacher and peers (e.g., kids are eager to try new things such as reading a decodable, volunteering to segment a word, forming letters or words on a white board).

There is evidence that all students are comfortable in the learning environment as they participate in class discussion and learning tasks and interact with the teacher and peers.

- 4 — Most students
- 3 — Many students
- 2 — Few students
- 1 — No students or little evidence

**Criteria 3: Data-Driven Instruction. Student progress is consistently monitored and the data collected is used to inform next steps for whole-group, small-group, and individual instruction.**

**A.** The teacher is monitoring the progress of each student on a regular basis.

There are data collecting systems in place: teacher observation and/or anecdotal record systems (e.g., notes/checklists, assessment forms, caregiver progress monitoring forms, systems for collecting/grading independent work).

i. There is evidence that the teacher monitors student progress on a regular basis.

- 1 — Yes
- 0 — No

ii. The teacher is monitoring the progress of each student over the course of the lesson.

- 4 — Consistently
- 3 — Mostly
- 2 — Rarely
- 1 — Never

**B.** The teacher is using data collected to inform instructional moves for whole-group, small-group, and independent work.

There is evidence that a student has received some form of scaffolding (if needed) to help them access grade-level content (e.g., the sound pattern symbol is written beneath targeted words in a decodable reader, additional tracing opportunities are written onto a letter formation task page for a student who is struggling to form the letters correctly). Small groups or individual students are working on varying skills or taskwork based on their needs.

There is evidence that the teacher uses data collected from regular assessment to inform facilitation of instruction.

i. Whole group: 1 — Yes 0 — No

ii. Small group: 1 — Yes 0 — No

iii. Independent work: 1 — Yes 0 — No

**Student Mastery: Did students master or move towards mastery of the content of the lesson?**

Students exhibit a strong grasp of the content of the lesson.

Evidence within student work samples indicates that students are grasping the content within the lesson (e.g., oral and written taskwork, ability to read decodable text from the lesson, caregiver feedback forms regarding student progress).

Students exhibit a strong grasp of the content of the lesson.

- 4 — Most students
- 3 — Many students
- 2 — Few students
- 1 — No students or little evidence

Nomenclature and general structure inspired by Student Achievement Partners’ Instructional Practice Guides for math and English language arts.
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teacher:</th>
<th>Unit/lesson:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Grade:</td>
<td>Objective/standard(s):</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Who is participating?</th>
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<td></td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Content/task(s):</th>
<th>Teacher/student evidence:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

### Reflection questions:
- What portions of the taught lesson were aligned to the lesson script?
- What were points of contrast?
- How did the points of alignment and contrast impact the student learning experience surrounding the targeted skill(s)?
- How did the points of alignment and contrast impact the equitable learning experience for all students?

### Key takeaways:

Nomenclature and general structure inspired by Student Achievement Partners’ Instructional Practice Guides for math and English language arts.