

EARLY LITERACY PILOT Foundational Skills Classroom Observation Tool (Based on Student Achievement Partners' [Instructional Practice Guide](#))

Standard Alignment: The observed instruction and student task work meets foundational skills standard(s).		
Indicator	Look-fors	Scale (the degree to which the look-fors are present in instruction)
Instruction meets the demands of the foundational skills standard(s).	Explicit whole-group instruction meets grade-level standards/targeted skills. Student task work or small-group instruction meets grade-level standards OR additional K–2 foundational skills standards based on assessment data.	4 — Fully meets 3 — Mostly meets 2 — Partially meets 1 — Does not meet Standard(s):
Criteria 1: Systematic and Explicit Approach. The school/district/network uses a systematic, explicit, and research-informed program that addresses the foundational skills outlined in the standard(s) (e.g., phonological awareness, phonics).		
A. The teacher is using a systematic, explicit program for foundational skills instruction that is research informed.	The teacher is using a systematic, explicit program for foundational skills instruction. Instruction incorporates research-informed components that are necessary for supporting every student in reaching reading proficiency (e.g., phonological awareness, in-/out-of-context practice with phonics/word recognition, fluency, and related comprehension experiences).	1 — Yes 0 — No Program(s):
B. The lesson from the systematic, explicit program is enacted with integrity.	The teacher leverages curricular materials (e.g., scripted lesson plans, anchor charts, letter/sound cards, vocabulary cards with images, task sheets, decodable readers provided by the curriculum, multilingual resources) for whole-group and small-group instruction.	4 — Fully enacted as intended; adjustments made enhance the lesson focus 3 — Mostly enacted as intended; adjustments made enhance the lesson focus 2 — Partially enacted as intended; adjustments made detract from the lesson focus 1 — Not based on a systematic, explicit program N/A
C. When and if appropriate, complementary materials enhance purpose-driven instruction for students.	If additional complementary resources are used, they reinforce and/or provide access to the curriculum based on students' needs (e.g., sound and/or word cards in another language, handwriting support materials).	When and if appropriate, complementary materials enhance purpose-driven instruction for student(s). 4 — Consistently 3 — Mostly 2 — Rarely 1 — Never N/A

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Criteria 2: Quality Instruction. Foundational skills instruction for every student is explicit and provides adequate and appropriate time for teacher direction and student practice. Abundant practice materials are readily available and can be used independently and/or with support. The instruction and materials provide opportunities for practice both in and out of context as indicated by grade-level standards. The teacher has created an environment where students feel safe to take risks, make mistakes, and interact with their teacher and peers.		
<p>A. The teacher provides explicit and accurate foundational skills instruction, modeling explanations, visuals, and/or examples.</p>	<p>Instruction is explicit, accurate, and accessible to every student.</p> <p>For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sharing objectives and lesson purpose with students • Modeling content-specific tasks accurately, including pronunciation of sounds (phonemes), articulation gestures, blending, segmenting, and letter formation • Using visual aids that every student can access clearly (e.g., examples of words with the target sound/sound pattern, articulation gestures chart) • Making connections to students' primary languages, including English language dialects and varieties <p>See instructional strategies for examples and explanations specific to the needs of multilingual learners.</p>	<p>The teacher provides clear and accurate models, visuals, and examples as outlined in the lesson script (and uses additional techniques if needed) to make the foundational skills instruction more explicit.</p> <p>i: Clear and accurate models: 4 — Consistently 3 — Mostly 2 — Rarely 1 — Never N/A</p> <p>ii: Clear and accurate pronunciation of sounds: 4 — Consistently 3 — Mostly 2 — Rarely 1 — Never N/A</p> <p>iii: Clear use of visual aids: 4 — Consistently 3 — Mostly 2 — Rarely 1 — Never N/A</p> <p>iv. Clear connections to primary languages: 4 — Consistently 3 — Mostly 2 — Rarely 1 — Never N/A</p>
<p>B. The teacher provides opportunities for every student to practice the newly acquired skills in a variety of ways both out of and in context:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Out of context: Students are engaged in tasks such as letter tile work, games, puzzles, music, movement, worksheets, or other discrete oral or written tasks. • In context: Students are engaged in tasks within the context of phonetically controlled text. <p>Students are engaged in the practice opportunities provided.</p>	<p>The teacher provides opportunities for students to practice targeted skill(s) both out of and in context in a variety of ways (e.g., oral, manipulative, and written practice with targeted skills).</p> <p>For example, students:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • use letter tiles to create words with the targeted skill followed by decoding words on a task sheet or in a decodable reader; • format letters in the air, with a dry erase marker, or with a crayon or pencil on a task sheet; and/or • read a decodable aligned to the targeted skill. <p><i>Note: In-context practice is applicable once students have learned enough sound-spelling patterns and high-frequency words to read connected text (e.g., decodables). Targeted skills can also be reinforced during read-alouds and familiar texts (e.g., chants). For example, during the introduction of a read-aloud text, the teacher tells students that the pattern they are learning this week will help them read this text (e.g., two syllable words or vowel team “ie” as in “pie”). As they read, the teacher points out the words and tells students explicit practice will happen during foundational skills instruction.</i></p> <p>See instructional strategies for examples and explanations specific to the needs of multilingual learners.</p>	<p>Teacher-driven practice and student-driven practice are aligned to targeted skills and reflect a variety of opportunities for students to practice the targeted skills both out of and in context.</p> <p>i: Out of context: 4 — Consistently 3 — Mostly 2 — Rarely 1 — Never N/A</p> <p>ii: In context: 4 — Consistently 3 — Mostly 2 — Rarely 1 — Never N/A</p> <p>iii. Students are attentive, focused, and engaged in the practice opportunities provided. 4 — Most students 3 — Many students 2 — Few students 1 — No students</p>
<p>C. The pacing of instruction and student practice opportunities is adequate and appropriate.</p>	<p>There is appropriate pacing of instruction within the skills and the task(s); students have sufficient time to practice targeted skills through reading, writing, speaking, and/or listening.</p>	<p>The pacing of instruction and student practice opportunities is adequate and appropriate.</p> <p>4 — Consistently 3 — Mostly 2 — Rarely 1 — Never</p>

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<p>D. The teacher looks for and expects precision in student responses and work and provides precise coaching and feedback during the lesson.</p>	<p>The teacher provides on-the-spot feedback, corrections, and mid-lesson adjustments based on student performance (e.g., if students voice an incorrect sound for a phoneme, the teacher models the correct sound), and/or the teacher confirms students' answers.</p> <p>Common areas to look for precision: oral sound production, letter/sound ID, letter formation, encoding of sounds, decoding</p>	<p>Teachers provide precise feedback to students, and students adjust their work accordingly.</p> <p>4 — Consistently 3 — Mostly 2 — Rarely 1 — Never</p>
<p>E. The teacher has established a safe community for learning where students feel comfortable taking risks and interacting with the teacher and their peers.</p>	<p>The teacher encourages all students as they engage in grade-level standards/targeted skills. Students appear eager to participate in class discussion and task work, and they seem comfortable as they communicate with the teacher and their peers (e.g., students are eager to try new things such as reading a decodable, volunteering to segment a word, forming letters or words on a white board).</p>	<p>The teacher has established a safe community of learning where all students are comfortable as they participate in class discussion and learning tasks and interact with the teacher and their peers.</p> <p>4 — Most students 3 — Many students 2 — Few students 1 — No students or little evidence</p>
<p>F. Students from historically marginalized communities consistently receive supportive feedback that affirms their abilities and potential as readers and writers.</p>	<p>The teacher provides supportive feedback that affirms students' abilities and potential as readers and writers.</p> <p>For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adults' language toward and about students is asset based (e.g., "Student can't do 'X' yet"; "We are all readers and writers"). • Students' primary language is described as an asset (e.g., "Being multilingual is a superpower"). • Procedures and routines that support restorative practices are implemented. • The teacher normalizes mistakes, speaking about them as an integral part of the learning process. 	<p>4 — The teacher consistently provides feedback that affirms the abilities and potential of all individual students and includes precision and nuance unique to each student's work.</p> <p>3 — The teacher consistently provides feedback that affirms the abilities and potential of all individual students and extends beyond stating that answers are right or wrong.</p> <p>2 — The teacher provides feedback that affirms the abilities and potential of a limited set of individual students and extends beyond stating that answers are right or wrong.</p> <p>1 — The teacher does not provide feedback that affirms the abilities and potential of individual students beyond stating that answers are right or wrong.</p>
<p>G. The teacher provides opportunities to support comprehension and language development (both oral and written) connected to foundational skills instruction.</p>	<p>The teacher strategically builds comprehension and student use of selected words presented.</p> <p>For example, during oral and/or written practice the teacher:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • describes, shows images of, and/or acts out new vocabulary; • supports students in using new vocabulary in sentences; • prompts students to answer and discuss comprehension questions; and/or • highlights new words that students are learning to read in decodable texts. <p>See instructional strategies for examples and explanations specific to the needs of multilingual learners.</p>	<p>The teacher provides practice opportunities for comprehension and language development (both oral and written) connected to the foundational skills being taught.</p> <p>i. In context: 1 — Yes 0 — No NA</p> <p>ii. Out of context: 1 — Yes 0 — No NA</p>

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Criteria 3: Data-Driven Instruction. Student progress is consistently monitored over the course of the lesson and the data collected is used to inform next steps for instruction.		
<p>A. The teacher records evidence of student progress toward mastery of the lesson's targeted skill(s).</p> <p><i>Targeted skills include the primary focus of the lesson and the prerequisite knowledge and skills that are needed to meaningfully engage in the grade-level content.</i></p>	<p>The teacher records evidence of students' progress toward mastery of the targeted skill(s). The teacher records notes on students' auditory, oral, and/or written responses while they are responding to direct instruction and engaging in practice opportunities.</p> <p>Examples of how the data might be collected:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teacher observation and/or anecdotal record systems • Notes/checklists • Assessment forms 	<p>The teacher records evidence of student progress toward mastery of the targeted skill(s).</p> <p>4 — Consistently 3 — Mostly 2 — Rarely 1 — Never</p>
<p>B. The teacher uses data collected within and across lessons to inform the student instructional experience.</p>	<p>The teacher uses data collected within and across lessons as evidenced by scaffolds that have been put in place to help student(s) access grade-level content or by scaffolds that have been removed based on students' demonstrated mastery.</p> <p>For example, the teacher may:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • strategically call on students who need additional practice around a lesson skill; • write a sound pattern symbol beneath targeted words in a decodable reader; • write additional tracing opportunities onto a letter formation task page for a student who has a demonstrated need for more support in forming the letters correctly; and/or • remove practice with Elkonin boxes because students have demonstrated accurate decoding or spelling of a digraph. 	<p>Students' instructional experiences are informed by data collected based on progress toward mastery of the targeted skill(s) within and across previous lessons.</p> <p>4 — Consistently 3 — Mostly 2 — Rarely 1 — Never</p>
Student Mastery: Students master or move toward mastery of the content of the lesson.		
<p>Every student demonstrates progress toward mastery of the targeted skills of the lesson.</p>	<p>Every student demonstrates progress toward mastery of the targeted skills of the lesson. For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Every student uses phonetic spellings in writing. • Every student demonstrates the ability to read the decodable text(s) from the lesson. • Multilingual learners demonstrate increased consistency in articulating sounds that are absent in their primary language(s). 	<p>Students demonstrate progress toward mastery of targeted skill(s).</p> <p>4 — Most students 3 — Many students 2 — Few students 1 — No students or little evidence</p>

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<p>Teacher: Grade: School:</p>	<p>When previewing the lesson script reflect on the following questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify the standard. What are the targeted skills that will be taught during the lesson? • How will the skills be taught? • How will students practice the skills? 				
<p>Standard(s):</p>	<p>Lesson objectives</p>				
<table border="1" style="width:100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <thead> <tr> <th style="width:40%; text-align: center;">Content/task(s)</th> <th style="width:30%; text-align: center;">Teacher</th> <th style="width:30%; text-align: center;">Students</th> </tr> </thead> </table>			Content/task(s)	Teacher	Students
Content/task(s)	Teacher	Students			
<p>Once the lesson is complete, reflect on the following questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What portions of the taught lesson were aligned to the lesson script? • What were points of contrast? • How was the lesson enhanced (with materials outside of the curriculum as appropriate) according to the needs of multilingual learners? • 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? 					
<p>Planning for teacher feedback:</p> <p>Strengths:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Name at least one area of strength in this lesson (grounded in the Foundational Skills Classroom Observation Tool criteria and indicators)? <p>Areas of opportunity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is at least one actionable next step you could provide for the teacher (grounded in the Foundational Skills Classroom Observation Tool criteria and indicators)? 		<p>Potential next steps for teacher support:</p>			