

A quick guide for observing classroom content and practice

In grade 1, instructional time should focus on 10 critical areas:

Read About It

- Literature
- Informational Text
- Foundational Skills

Think About It

- Higher-Order Reasoning

Talk About It

- Comprehension/ Collaboration
- Presentation

Write About It

- Opinion
- Informative
- Narrative
- Poems

During a **1st grade ELA instructional block**, you should observe the teacher integrating the grade level ELA standards and students engaging in a variety of the following standards and practices:

Students engage daily in literature and informational texts at proper complexity range:

- Key Ideas and Details:** ask and answer questions, central message or lesson; description of characters, settings, and main events; main topic; connection between two individuals, events, ideas, and pieces of information
- Craft and Structure:** words and phrases that suggest feelings and appeal to senses, unknown words and phrases, major differences between literature and informational text, narrator at different points in a text, use of text features to locate information, information provided by pictures versus words in text
- Integration of Knowledge and Ideas:** illustrations and words to describe characters, setting, or events; key ideas; common characters in folktales and fairy tales; reasons to support author’s ideas

Students engage daily in practices of word reading accuracy and reading fluency:

- Print Concepts:** features of print/sentence (first word, capitalization, ending punctuation)
- Phonological Awareness:** long versus short vowel sounds in spoken, single-syllable words, orally blending of phonemes (including consonant blends), phoneme isolation, and segmentation of spoken single-syllable words into phonemes
- Phonics and Word Recognition:** word analysis, including decoding of words with common consonant digraphs, final –e, common vowel team, one and two syllables, inflectional endings, and irregularly spelled words; knowledge that every syllable must have a vowel sound
- Fluency:** accurate/fluent reading to support comprehension, rereading as necessary

Students engage daily in higher-order reasoning:

- Ask and answer** questions to gather additional information/clarify what is not understood
- Compare and contrast** adventures and experiences of characters in stories, and basic similarities and differences between two texts on same topic
- Demonstrate understanding** of word relationships and nuances in word meanings with guidance and support (sorting, categorization of words by 1+ key attributes, real-life connections between words and their use, and shades of meaning among verbs differing in manner)
- Participate** in shared research and writing projects

Students engage daily in collaborative work:

- Comprehension and Collaboration:** conversations using rules for discussions, building on others’ talk, asking for clarification, describe key text/media details aloud, ask and answer questions to clarify what speaker says
- Presentation:** clear description of people, places, things, and events using relevant details, addition of drawings or visual displays to descriptions when appropriate, use of complete sentences, command of standard English grammar, usage, and its conventions

Students engage daily in writing (using standard English grammar, conventions):

- Opinion:** topic or name of book, related opinion and reasons, conclusion
- Informative/Explanatory:** topic, related facts, conclusion
- Narrative:** a recount of two or more sequenced events (what happened) using temporal words, conclusion
- Poems:** poems with rhyme and repetition



ELA What to Look For Guide

The practices below, which fall under Standards I and II of the MA Model Teacher Rubric, should be evident in planning and instruction. Any particular lesson will demonstrate some of the practices, not all. For each lesson, artifacts or observables might include: lesson plan, tasks and assessments, teacher instruction, student discussion and behavior, or student work.

Student Practices

Standards-based Learning

- Read and comprehend complex texts (or excerpts) from a variety of text structures.
- Use newly learned vocabulary when speaking.
- Apply grade level phonics/word analysis skills when reading.
- Engage in meaningful writing that is aligned with grade level standards.

Ownership of Learning

- Question, contribute, and collaborate throughout the lesson.
- Ask clarifying and open-ended questions of their teacher(s) and peers to examine their thinking and develop a deeper understanding of content.
- Demonstrate ability to independently sustain interaction in order to complete tasks (e.g., during whole group, small group, centers, etc.).

Teacher Practices

Standards-based Instruction

- Communicate standards (objectives) in a clear, explicit way.
- Communicate and support language objectives for English Language Learners (ELLs) in a clear, explicit way.
- Teach standards in context and integrate the standards throughout the day.
- Explicitly connect previously taught objectives to current lesson.
- Provide mentor texts, exemplars, and rubrics.

Research-based Instruction

- Provide multiple authentic opportunities for students to practice new skills and vocabulary.
- Provide explicit and systematic instruction, modeling, checking for understanding, and independent practice, with immediate and corrective feedback.

Use of Data to Inform Instruction

- Differentiate materials, instruction, objectives, and/or content—based on student needs, data, ELL status, IEPs, etc.—to support students in meeting/exceeding grade-level curriculum expectations.
- Group students based on data and adjust grouping as needed.

NOTES