

# CCSS INSTRUCTIONAL PRACTICE GUIDE

ELA / LIT

SUBJECT

3—5

GRADES

LESSON

GUIDE TYPE

This guide provides concrete examples of what the Core Actions for implementing the Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts and Literacy in grades K—2 look like in daily planning and practice. It is designed as a developmental tool for teachers and those who support teachers.

The Shifts required by the Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts and Literacy are<sup>1</sup>:

1. Regular practice with complex text and its academic language.
2. Reading, writing, and speaking grounded in evidence from text, both literary and informational.
3. Building knowledge through content-rich nonfiction.

Although many indicators will be observable during the course of a lesson, there will frequently be times when a lesson is appropriately focused on a smaller set of objectives. In K—2, for example, the lesson might focus only on foundational reading or reading comprehension or writing. Any particular focus should be communicated between teacher and observer before using the tool.

STUDENT  
ACHIEVEMENT  
PARTNERS

Visit [achievethecore.org/coaching-tool](http://achievethecore.org/coaching-tool) to use the digital version of the Instructional Practice Guide.

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Date

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Teacher Name

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School

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Observer Name

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Grade / Class Period / Section

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Topic / Lesson / Unit

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Standard(s) Addressed in this Lesson

1. Refer to Common Core Shifts at a Glance ([achievethecore.org/ELALitShifts](http://achievethecore.org/ELALitShifts)) and the 3-5 Publishers' Criteria for the Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts and Literacy ([achievethecore.org/publisherscriteria](http://achievethecore.org/publisherscriteria)) for additional information about the Shifts required by the CCSS.

## SUMMARY OF CORE ACTIONS

### Core Action 1

Focus each lesson on a high quality text (or multiple texts).

#### Indicators

- A. A majority of the lesson is spent reading, writing, or speaking about text(s).
  - B. The text(s) are at or above the complexity level expected for the grade and time in the school year.<sup>2</sup>
  - C. The text(s) exhibit exceptional craft and thought and/or provide useful information; where appropriate the texts are richly illustrated.
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### Core Action 2

Employ questions and tasks, both oral and written, that are text specific and reflect the standards.

#### Indicators

- A. Questions and tasks address the text by attending to its particular structure(s), concepts, ideas, and details.
  - B. Questions and tasks require students to use evidence from text to demonstrate understanding and to support their ideas about the text. These ideas are expressed through a variety of means (e.g. drawing, writing, dramatic play, speaking).
  - C. Questions and tasks attend to the words, phrases and sentences within the text.
  - D. Questions are sequenced to build knowledge by guiding students to delve deeper into text and graphics.
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### Core Action 3

Provide all students with opportunities to engage in the work of the lesson.

#### Indicators

- A. The teacher keeps all students persevering with challenging tasks.  

Students habitually display persistence with challenging tasks, particularly when providing textual evidence to support answers and responses, both orally and in writing.
- B. The teacher encourages reasoning and problem solving by posing challenging problems that offer opportunities for productive struggle.  

Students persevere in solving problems in the face of initial difficulty.
- C. The teacher guides students to read with purpose and understanding by making frequent connections between acquisition of foundation skills and making meaning from reading.  

Students demonstrate comprehension while developing foundational skills in reading.
- D. The teacher demonstrates awareness and appropriate action regarding the variations present in student progress toward reading independently.  

When appropriate, students demonstrate progress toward independence in reading and writing.
- E. When appropriate, the teacher explicitly attends to strengthening students' language skills and reading foundations.  

Students demonstrate use of language conventions and decoding skills, activating such strategies as needed to read, write, and speak with grade level fluency and skill.





For each indicator, circle the appropriate rating based on what was observed during the lesson. Provide specific evidence to support the rating.

# Core Action 1

Focus each lesson on a high quality text (or multiple texts).

## Indicators

A. A majority of the lesson is spent reading, writing, or speaking about text(s).

**Yes** The lesson is focused on a text or multiple texts.

**No** There is no text under consideration in this lesson.

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B. The text(s) are above the complexity level expected for the grade and time in the school year<sup>2</sup>.

**Yes** The text(s) are at or above both the qualitative and quantitative complexity expected for the grade and time in the school year.

**No** The text(s) are below both the quantitative and qualitative complexity expected for the grade and time in the school year.

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C. The text(s) exhibit exceptional craft and thought and/or provide useful information; where appropriate the texts are richly illustrated.

**Yes** The quality of the text(s) is high – they are well written and/or provide useful information.

**No** The quality of the text(s) is low – they are poorly written or do not provide useful information.

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2. Refer to [achievethecore.org/ela-literacy-common-core/text-complexity/](http://achievethecore.org/ela-literacy-common-core/text-complexity/) for text complexity resources.

# Core Action 2

Employ questions and tasks, both oral and written, that are text specific and reflect the standards.

## Indicators

A. Questions and tasks address the text by attending to its particular structure(s), concepts, ideas, and details.

- 4 Most questions and tasks return students to the text to build understanding.
- 3 Many questions and tasks return students to the text to build understanding.
- 2 Few questions and tasks return students to the text to build understanding.
- 1 Questions and tasks do not refer to the text.
- Not Observed

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B. Questions and tasks require students to use evidence from text to demonstrate understanding and to support their ideas about the text. These ideas are expressed through a variety of means (e.g. drawing, writing, dramatic play, speaking).

- 4 Most questions and tasks require students to cite evidence from the text.
- 3 Many questions and tasks require students to cite evidence from the text.
- 2 Few questions and tasks require students to cite evidence from the text.
- 1 Questions and tasks can be answered without evidence from the text.
- Not Observed

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C. Questions and tasks attend to the words, phrases and sentences within the text.

- 4 Vocabulary questions and tasks consistently focus students on the words that matter most and how they are used in the text.
- 3 Vocabulary questions and tasks mostly focus students on the words that matter most and how they are used in the text.
- 2 Vocabulary questions and tasks rarely focus students on the words that matter most and how they are used in the text.
- 1 No questions and tasks focus students on the words that matter most and how they are used in the text.
- Not Observed

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## Core Action 2 (continued)

Employ questions and tasks, both oral and written, that are text specific and reflect the standards.

### Indicators

D. Questions are sequenced to build knowledge by guiding students to delve deeper into text and graphics.

- 4 Most questions are intentionally sequenced to support building knowledge.
- 3 Some questions are intentionally sequenced to support building knowledge.
- 2 Few questions are intentionally sequenced to support building knowledge.
- 1 Questions seem random and are not intentionally sequenced to support building knowledge.

Not Observed

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DRAFT

# Core Action 3

Provide all students with opportunities to engage in the work of the lesson.

## Indicators

A. The teacher keeps all students persevering with challenging tasks.

Students habitually display persistence with challenging tasks, particularly when providing textual evidence to support answers and responses, both orally and in writing.

- 4 The teacher provides students opportunity consistently and most students demonstrate this behavior.
- 3 The teacher provides students opportunity consistently and some students demonstrate this behavior.
- 2 The teacher provides students opportunity inconsistently and few students demonstrate this behavior.
- 1 The teacher does not provide students opportunity and very few students demonstrate this behavior.

Not Observed

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B. The teacher encourages reasoning and problem solving by posing challenging problems that offer opportunities for productive struggle.

Students persevere in solving problems in the face of initial difficulty.

- 4 The teacher provides students opportunity consistently and most students demonstrate this behavior.
- 3 The teacher provides students opportunity consistently and some students demonstrate this behavior.
- 2 The teacher provides students opportunity inconsistently and few students demonstrate this behavior.
- 1 The teacher does not provide students opportunity and very few students demonstrate this behavior.

Not Observed

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C. The teacher guides students to read with purpose and understanding by making frequent connections between acquisition of foundation skills and making meaning from reading.

Students demonstrate comprehension while developing foundational skills in reading.

- 4 The teacher provides students opportunity consistently and most students demonstrate this behavior.
- 3 The teacher provides students opportunity consistently and some students demonstrate this behavior.
- 2 The teacher provides students opportunity inconsistently and few students demonstrate this behavior.
- 1 The teacher does not provide students opportunity and very few students demonstrate this behavior.

Not Observed

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# Core Action 3 (continued)

Provide all students with opportunities to engage in the work of the lesson.

## Indicators

D. The teacher demonstrates awareness and appropriate action regarding the variations present in student progress toward reading independently.

When appropriate, students demonstrate progress toward independence in reading and writing.

- 4 The teacher provides students opportunity consistently and most students demonstrate this behavior.
- 3 The teacher provides students opportunity consistently and some students demonstrate this behavior.
- 2 The teacher provides students opportunity inconsistently and few students demonstrate this behavior.
- 1 The teacher does not provide students opportunity and very few students demonstrate this behavior.

Not Observed

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E. When appropriate, the teacher explicitly attends to strengthening students' language skills and reading foundations.

Students demonstrate use of language conventions and decoding skills, activating such strategies as needed to read, write, and speak with grade level fluency and skill.

- 4 The teacher provides students opportunity consistently and most students demonstrate this behavior.
- 3 The teacher provides students opportunity consistently and some students demonstrate this behavior.
- 2 The teacher provides students opportunity inconsistently and few students demonstrate this behavior.
- 1 The teacher does not provide students opportunity and very few students demonstrate this behavior.

Not Observed

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This tool is for teachers, those providing support to teachers, and all educators working to implement the CCSS for Mathematics – it is not designed for use in evaluation. The guide should be used in conjunction with the CCSS Instructional Practice Guide: Supplement for Reflection Over the Course of the Year. Both tools are available at [achievethecore.org/instructional-practice](http://achievethecore.org/instructional-practice).

For more information on teaching practices, see NCTM's publication *Principles to Actions: Ensuring Mathematical Success for All* for eight Mathematics Teaching Practices listed under the principle of Teaching and Learning. <http://www.nctm.org/principlestoactions>

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