



## PreK-3 Observation Look Fors

Our collective goal is to ensure our students graduate ready for college and career. This will require a comprehensive, integrated approach to literacy instruction that ensures that students become college and career ready readers, writers, and communicators. To achieve this, students must receive literacy instruction aligned to each of the elements of effective literacy program seen in the figure to the right.

This planning and coaching tool is for teachers and those who support teachers in Shelby County to build their understanding and experience with College and Career Ready (CCR)<sup>1</sup> instruction aligned to the Comprehensive Literacy Improvement Plan. Designed as a developmental tool, it can be used for planning, reflection, collaboration, and coaching.



The three CCR shifts in instruction for ELA/Literacy provide the framing for this tool:

- (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.

The Core Actions and indicators should be evidenced in planning and observable in instruction. For each lesson, evidence might include a lesson plan, exercises, tasks and assessments, teacher instruction, student discussion and behavior, and student work. Although many indicators will be observable during the course of a lesson, there may be times when a lesson is appropriately focused on a smaller set of objectives or only a portion of a lesson is observed, leaving some indicators blank.

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<sup>1</sup> You can see more information about the College and Career Ready Standards and Shifts here: [http://www.tncore.org/english\\_language\\_arts/standards\\_and\\_shifts.aspx](http://www.tncore.org/english_language_arts/standards_and_shifts.aspx)



## Systems & Routines

Indicator	Evidence Observed
A. The teacher has a dedicated literacy block that lasts for the required number of minutes (50 minutes for PreK, 120 minutes for Kindergarten-3 <sup>rd</sup> Grade) during which students access core/Tier 1 content.	
B. The teacher maximizes time <sup>2</sup> by employing the <a href="#">PreK-3 CLIP instructional design</a> , including the whole group-small group – whole group structure and the required number of minutes for each component of the instructional design.	
C. The teacher gradually releases responsibility throughout the lesson, modeling new skills before giving students the opportunity to practice together and independently.	
D. The teacher provides the conditions for all students to focus on the text, and students clearly know the routines and procedures in the classroom.	

### Core Action 1: Focus each lesson on a high quality text (or multiple texts).

*This core action is aligned to Shift 1 (Regular practice with complex text and its academic language) and Shift 3 (Building knowledge through content-rich non-fiction).*

Indicator	Evidence Observed
A. A majority of the lesson is spent reading, speaking, or writing about text(s).	
B. The text(s) are at or above the complexity level expected for the grade and time in the school year.	
C. The text(s) exhibit exceptional craft and thought and/or provide useful information.	
D. Texts are selected strategically to develop a coherent body of knowledge.	

Core Action 1 for Foundational Skills: Ensure that Instruction and materials explicitly and systematically provide all students with the opportunity to master foundational skills.

Indicator	Evidence Observed
A. The foundational skills being taught are aligned to the standards for this grade.	
B. Instruction and materials address foundational skills by attending to phonological awareness, concepts of print, letter recognition, phonetic patterns, and word structure.	
C. Instruction and materials provide sufficient opportunities for all students to practice reading and writing newly acquired foundational skills.	
D. Instruction and materials connect acquisition of foundational skills to making meaning from reading.	
E. Instruction and materials provide opportunities for students to demonstrate understanding of the skills being taught through frequent monitoring of student progress.	
F. The teacher effectively uses small group instruction/guided reading time to differentiate for students to ensure that all students master foundational skills.	
G. The teacher effectively uses small group instruction/stations to differentiate for students to ensure that all students master foundational skills.	

<sup>2</sup> TEACH 7 on the TEM Observation rubric



## Core Action 2: Employ questions and tasks that are text-dependent and text-specific.

*This core action is aligned to Shift 2 (Reading, writing, and speaking grounded in evidence from the text) and Shift 3 (Building knowledge through content-rich non-fiction)*

Indicator	Evidence Observed
A. Questions and tasks address the text by attending to its particular structure, concepts, ideas, events 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.	
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.	
E. The teacher sets clear text-based objectives for literacy throughout the lesson.	
F. The teacher implements specific literacy stations, including the required PreK-3 literacy stations (phonics/word work, comprehension, vocabulary.)	

## Core Action 3: Provide all students with opportunities to engage in the work of the lesson.

*This core action is aligned to Shift 1 (Regular practice with complex text and its academic language), Shift 2 (Reading, writing, and speaking grounded in evidence from the text), and Shift 3 (Building knowledge through content-rich non-fiction)*

Indicator	Notes
A. The teacher keeps all students persevering with challenging tasks.	
B. The teacher encourages reasoning and problem solving by posing challenging questions and tasks that offer opportunity for productive struggle.	
C. The teacher guides students to read with purpose and understanding by making frequent connections between acquisition of foundational skills and making meaning from reading.	
D. The teacher demonstrates awareness and appropriate action regarding the variations present in student progress towards reading independently.	
E. The teacher focuses on explicitly and systematically strengthening students' foundational reading skills.	
F. The teacher provides differentiated support for students throughout the course of the lesson, particularly in small-group instruction.	
G. The teacher allows all students to synthesize their learning in the closing of the lesson, assessing students' understanding of the text and mastery of specific skills during the lesson closing.	

## PreK-3 Instructional Design

We have the opportunity to build a strong foundation for reading in our PreK-3 students. To ensure that time for literacy instruction is used well, we have developed the PreK-3 CLIP instructional design. It clearly lays out how to leverage time and effective lesson design in the literacy block.

The purpose of this instructional design is to ensure that **all** PreK-3 students receive the high-quality instruction to meet our vision for effective literacy instruction. This instructional design is *not* intended to replace teachers’ professional judgment about how to spend time with their particular students, but is intended to ensure that all teachers can clearly define how a strong literacy block is paced and the components of a strong literacy block.

All PreK teachers should ensure that their literacy (reading) block is 50 minutes long; all kindergarten to third grade teachers should ensure that their literacy (reading and writing) block is 120 minutes long. Teachers should use **the gradual release of responsibility model** (“I do, we do, they do, you do”) **to ensure that students have the opportunity to read, write, and think about complex texts while also receiving explicit, systematic foundational skills instruction done in service of building students’ reading comprehension**, as described in our vision for effective literacy instruction and the [PreK-3 Observation Look Fors](#).

PreK-3 students should generally have the following experiences:



Reading Appropriately Complex Texts <sup>3</sup>		Writing About Texts (and ELA) <sup>4</sup>
<b>Tier 1, Grade-Level Instruction for All Students</b>		
<b>Whole Group</b>	Collaborative reading of texts sequenced to build student knowledge; explicit instruction on reading foundational skills	Modeled and shared writing; modeling writing skills
<b>Small Group</b>	Homogeneous and heterogeneous groupings; practice and apply skills to read appropriately complex texts	Independent and group writing; practice and apply skills
<b>Whole Group</b>	Closure and assessment	Closure, assessment, sharing of student work

<sup>3</sup> The reading block should last for approximately 90 minutes in K-3 classrooms and for approximately 50 minutes in PreK classrooms.

<sup>4</sup> The writing block should last for approximately 30 minutes in K-3 classrooms.