

Best Practice Evidence Walk: Language Arts

Adapted from work by S. Beers and J. Carr

Shift #1 LA: Building Knowledge by Balancing Informational and Literary Texts		
Common Core Shift	Implementation Indicator	Classroom Observation
<p>Informational text in schools comprises:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 50% = elementary 55% = middle schools 70% = high schools <p>Informational texts are selected to help students deepen their understanding of topics</p>	<p>Students are reading:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Literature/Literary text. 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Informational text: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Historical material <input type="checkbox"/> Scientific material <input type="checkbox"/> Critical analysis, argument <input type="checkbox"/> Technical manuals <input type="checkbox"/> Biography, autobiography 	

Shift #2 LA: Content-Area Literacy		
Common Core Shift	Implementation Indicator	Classroom Observation
<p>All content-area teachers explicitly teach reading and writing strategies essential to learning and communicating in their discipline.</p> <p>Students are asked questions that give them the opportunity to share evidence from text.</p> <p>Students write frequently about what they are reading and learning, drawing from evidence in the text.</p>	<p>Students are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Receiving instruction on reading and writing strategies. 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sharing evidence from text in response to questions. 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Writing about what they are reading and learning, drawing evidence from the text. 	

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Shift #3 LA: Regular Practice with Complex Text		
Common Core Shift	Implementation Indicator	Classroom Observation
<p>All students are engaged with the same grade-appropriate, high-quality text (read complex texts from a wide variety of text structures (narrative, cause and effect, compare and contrast, etc.)</p> <p>Students are required to think critically about the text.</p> <p>Instruction is often centered on multiple close readings to develop deep understanding.</p>	<p>Students are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engaging with the same grade-appropriate, high-quality text. 	<p>Not Evident Little Evidence Some Evidence Evident</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Experiencing scaffolding to help them understand complex text based on their individual needs. 	<p>Not Evident Little Evidence Some Evidence Evident</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Learning reading strategies embedded in the activity of reading rather than as a separate body of material. 	<p>Not Evident Little Evidence Some Evidence Evident</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Thinking critically about the text. 	<p>Not Evident Little Evidence Some Evidence Evident</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engaging in close reading to develop deep understanding. 	<p>Not Evident Little Evidence Some Evidence Evident</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reading text structures: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Narrative <input type="checkbox"/> Compare and contrast <input type="checkbox"/> Cause and effect <input type="checkbox"/> Problem/Solution 	<p>Not Evident Little Evidence Some Evidence Evident</p>

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Shift #4 LA: Focus on Text-Based, Text-Specific Questions		
Common Core Shift	Implementation Indicator	Classroom Observation
<p>Students are engaged in text-based conversations to closely analyze text, using evidence from the text to back up their claims and conclusions.</p> <p>The majority of text-based questions are focused on conversations and writing and require students to use information from text in their answers.</p> <p>Questions are of high value – they are worth thinking about and answering.</p>	<p>Students are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engaging in rich conversations taking place based on text. 	<p>A horizontal scale with four vertical tick marks labeled 'Not Evident', 'Little Evidence', 'Some Evidence', and 'Evident'. A blue line is drawn below the scale, and a vertical blue line is drawn at the 'Some Evidence' position.</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Closely analyzing text with evidence to back up their claims and conclusions. 	<p>A horizontal scale with four vertical tick marks labeled 'Not Evident', 'Little Evidence', 'Some Evidence', and 'Evident'. A blue line is drawn below the scale, and a vertical blue line is drawn at the 'Some Evidence' position.</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Responding to text-based questions asked by the teacher, and/or <input type="checkbox"/> Responding to text-based questions asked by students 	<p>A horizontal scale with four vertical tick marks labeled 'Not Evident', 'Little Evidence', 'Some Evidence', and 'Evident'. A blue line is drawn below the scale, and a vertical blue line is drawn at the 'Some Evidence' position.</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Using information from text in their answers. 	<p>A horizontal scale with four vertical tick marks labeled 'Not Evident', 'Little Evidence', 'Some Evidence', and 'Evident'. A blue line is drawn below the scale, and a vertical blue line is drawn at the 'Some Evidence' position.</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Responding to questions with nontrivial inferences from evidence in the text. 	<p>A horizontal scale with four vertical tick marks labeled 'Not Evident', 'Little Evidence', 'Some Evidence', and 'Evident'. A blue line is drawn below the scale, and a vertical blue line is drawn at the 'Some Evidence' position.</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Receiving background knowledge to illuminate the text and not replace it. 	<p>A horizontal scale with four vertical tick marks labeled 'Not Evident', 'Little Evidence', 'Some Evidence', and 'Evident'. A blue line is drawn below the scale, and a vertical blue line is drawn at the 'Some Evidence' position.</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Exploring how specific words, details, structure, and organization of text affect the meaning of the text. 	<p>A horizontal scale with four vertical tick marks labeled 'Not Evident', 'Little Evidence', 'Some Evidence', and 'Evident'. A blue line is drawn below the scale, and a vertical blue line is drawn at the 'Some Evidence' position.</p>

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Shift #5 LA: Focus on Writing Arguments and Writing from Sources		
Common Core Shift	Implementation Indicator	Classroom Observation
<p>Students are required to use more than one source of information in their writing, in addition to writing in response to a single text.</p> <p>Evidence from text is required in writing assignments and oral discussions.</p> <p>There is a consistent and prevalent focus on argument, opinion, and informative writing.</p> <p>The majority of writing emphasizes the use of evidence to inform or make an argument:</p> <p>Elementary: 30% = argument 35% = explain or inform 35% = narrative</p> <p>Middle School: 35% = argument 35% = explain or inform 30% = narrative</p> <p>High School: 40% = argument 40% = explain or inform 20% = narrative</p>	<p>Students are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Receiving instruction on how to support a claim or conclusion. 	<p>A horizontal scale with four vertical tick marks labeled 'Not Evident', 'Little Evidence', 'Some Evidence', and 'Evident'. A blue line is drawn below the scale, and a vertical blue line is drawn at the 'Some Evidence' position.</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Using more than one source of information in their writing, in addition to writing in response to a single text. 	<p>A horizontal scale with four vertical tick marks labeled 'Not Evident', 'Little Evidence', 'Some Evidence', and 'Evident'. A blue line is drawn below the scale, and a vertical blue line is drawn at the 'Some Evidence' position.</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engaging in <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Short research projects. <input type="checkbox"/> Sustained research. 	<p>A horizontal scale with four vertical tick marks labeled 'Not Evident', 'Little Evidence', 'Some Evidence', and 'Evident'. A blue line is drawn below the scale, and a vertical blue line is drawn at the 'Some Evidence' position.</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Independently conducting research without direction from the teacher. 	<p>A horizontal scale with four vertical tick marks labeled 'Not Evident', 'Little Evidence', 'Some Evidence', and 'Evident'. A blue line is drawn below the scale, and a vertical blue line is drawn at the 'Some Evidence' position.</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Writing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Argument or opinion pieces. <input type="checkbox"/> Narrative pieces. <input type="checkbox"/> Informational pieces 	<p>A horizontal scale with four vertical tick marks labeled 'Not Evident', 'Little Evidence', 'Some Evidence', and 'Evident'. A blue line is drawn below the scale, and a vertical blue line is drawn at the 'Some Evidence' position.</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reading and analyzing a text to respond to a prompt. 	<p>A horizontal scale with four vertical tick marks labeled 'Not Evident', 'Little Evidence', 'Some Evidence', and 'Evident'. A blue line is drawn below the scale, and a vertical blue line is drawn at the 'Some Evidence' position.</p>

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Shift #6 LA: Academic Language		
Common Core Shift	Implementation Indicator	Classroom Observation
<p>Teachers instruct students on how to use context clues in the text to determine the meaning of words.</p> <p>Teachers provide students with direct instruction and support for understanding words students may not be able to figure out on their own using solely the text.</p> <p>Instruction causes students to think about words – why and how specific words are used, how words change the meaning of text, varied meanings based on context, and word choices.</p>	<p>Students are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Focusing on words that are prevalent in complex texts across content areas to make meaning from text. 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Focusing on content-specific words to make meaning from text. 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Receiving instruction on how to use context clues in the text to determine the meaning of words. 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Receiving direct instruction and support for understanding words they may not be able to figure out on their own using solely the text 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Applying appropriate academic vocabulary in writing and in discussions. 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Being provided varied contexts and different meanings for the same word to learn word meaning. 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discussing why and how specific words are used and how words change the meaning of text and vary meanings based on context and word choice. 	