Effective Elementary Reading Programs
Assessment and Planning Instrument

Virginia Department of Education
Office of Elementary Instructional Services

Assessment and Planning Instrument
for
Effective Elementary Reading Programs

School: _____

Date:_____

Position (check one)   Grades Taught (if applicable)

_____Administrator   _____Kindergarten

_____Classroom Teacher   _____First Grade

_____ Reading Specialist   _____Second Grade

                                          _____Third Grade

                                          _____Fourth Grade

                                          _____Fifth Grade

_____Years of Teaching Experience   _____Years at This School

Directions

Based on your knowledge of the school's reading program (e.g., goals, assessments, materials, time) use the following criteria to evaluate your impressions of the implementation of the schoolwide reading program.

Check either yes or no for each item. For each item checked yes, provide brief comments to support your answer. The criteria is organized into the following categories:

        A. Administration/Organization/Communication
        B. Goals/Objectives/Priorities
        C. Assessment
        D. Instructional Practices and Materials
        E. Differentiated Instruction/Grouping/Scheduling
        F. Instructional Time
        G. Professional Development

Assessment and Planning Instrument for Effective Elementary Reading Programs

A. Administration/Organization/Communication – Strong instructional leadership maintains a focus on high-quality instruction, organizes and allocates resources to support reading, and establishes mechanisms to communicate reading progress and practices.

Evaluation Criteria	Documentation of Evidence
1. Administrators are knowledgeable of the Virginia English Standards of Learning.	Yes ___ No ___
2. Administrators are knowledgeable of the dimensions of reading: phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary development, and comprehension.	Yes ___ No ___
3. Administrators are knowledgeable of current scientifically-based reading research. a) Preventing Reading Difficulties In Young Children b) Starting Out Right c) Report of the National Reading Panel d) Every Child Reading: An Action Plan e) Every Child Reading: A Professional Development Guide f) Teaching Reading Is Rocket Science g) Put Reading First – The Research Building Blocks for Teaching Children to Read.	Yes ___ No ___
4. Administrators work with staff to create a coherent schoolwide plan for reading instruction and institute practices to support the school's reading goals.	Yes ___ No ___

Evaluation Criteria	Documentation of Evidence	
A. Administration/Organization/Communication continues – Strong instructional leadership maintains a focus on high-quality instruction, organizes and allocates resources to support reading, and establishes mechanisms to communicate reading progress and practices.		
Evaluation Criteria	**Documentation of Evidence**	
5. Administrators maximize and protect instructional time and organize resources and personnel to support reading instruction, practice, and assessment.	Yes ___ No ___	
6. Grade-level teams are established and supported to analyze reading performance and plan instruction.	Yes ___ No ___	
7. Time is allocated for educators to analyze, plan, and refine instruction.	Yes ___ No ___	
8. Time is allocated for educators to make instructional decisions that improve the coordination of instruction from one grade level to the next.	Yes ___ No ___	
9. Concurrent instruction (e.g., Title I, Early Intervention Reading Initiative, and special education) is coordinated with and supplements regular classroom reading instruction.	Yes ___ No ___	
10. A communication plan for reporting and sharing student performance with teachers, parents, and other stakeholders is in place.	Yes ___ No ___	

B. Goals, Objectives, Priorities – Goals for reading achievement are clearly defined, anchored to research, prioritized in terms of importance to student learning, commonly understood by users, and consistently employed as instructional guides by all teachers of reading.

Evaluation Criteria		Documentation of Evidence
1. This school has a written schoolwide literacy plan that has clearly defined and measurable goals and objectives for each grade level.	Yes ___ No ___	
2. Goals and objectives are based in part on analysis of available data.	Yes ___ No ___	
3. Goals and objectives are prioritized and organized by the dimensions of reading: phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension.	Yes ___ No ___	
4. Goals and objectives are commonly understood and consistently used by teachers and administration with and between grades to evaluate and communicate student learning and improve practice.	Yes ___ No ___	
5. The schoolwide literacy plan guides instructional and curricular decisions (e.g., time allocation, curriculum program adoptions, and materials).	Yes ___ No ___	

C. Assessment – Instruments and procedures for assessing reading achievement are clearly specified, measure important skills, provide reliable and valid information about student performance, and inform instruction in important, meaningful, and maintainable ways.

Evaluation Criteria	Documentation of Evidence
1. A schoolwide assessment system and database is established and maintained for documenting student performance and monitoring progress.	Yes ___ No ___
2. Measures assess student performance on prioritized goals and objectives.	Yes ___ No ___
3. Measures have established technical adequacy (i.e., reliability and validity).	Yes ___ No ___
4. All users receive training and follow-up on measurement administration, scoring, and data interpretation.	Yes ___ No ___
5. These assessment and evaluations are used with all students: Screening Assessments 1. At kindergarten and first grade, every student is screened for phonemic awareness, alphabetic knowledge, and understanding of basic language concepts. 2. At the beginning of the year all students are screened to determine independent and instructional reading levels.	Yes ___ No ___

C. Assessment continues –Instruments and procedures for assessing reading achievement are clearly specified, measure important skills, provide reliable and valid information about student performance, and inform instruction in important, meaningful, and maintainable ways.

Evaluation Criteria		Documentation of Evidence
5. Continues Informal Assessments On a regular basis, students are informally assessed for word knowledge, spelling, reading rate and accuracy, and story retellings. End-of-year Assessments Every student is assessed at the end of the school year to inform parents, teachers, and district administrators about student progress.		
6. Measures are administered formatively throughout the year to document and monitor student reading performance (i.e., quarterly for all students).	Yes ___ No ___	
7. Student performance data are analyzed and summarized in meaningful formats and routinely used by grade-level teams to evaluate and adjust instruction.	Yes ___ No ___	
8. The building has a "resident" expert to maintain the assessment system and ensure measures are collected reliably, data are scored and entered accurately, and feedback is provided in a timely fashion.	Yes ___ No ___	

D. Instructional Programs and Materials – The instructional programs and materials have documented efficacy, are drawn from research-based findings and practices, align with state standards and benchmarks, and support the full range of learners.

Evaluation Criteria	Documentation of Evidence
1. A validated process based on scientifically-based criteria is used to select instructional materials. Yes ___ No ___	
2. The core instructional program adopted and implemented school-wide: a) is research-based, b) is aligned with the Virginia English Standards of Learning, c) supports the school's goals and objectives, and d) has documented evidence of improving student achievement. Yes ___ No ___	
3. Research-based criteria are used to establish systematic instruction and sufficient practice in the components of reading. Yes ___ No ___ **A. Phonemic Awareness - Kindergarten and First Grade** The ability to hear, identify, and manipulate individual sounds in spoken language. • identify phonemes • categorize phonemes • blend phonemes into words • segment words into phonemes • delete or add phonemes to form new words, and • substitute phonemes to make new word. Yes ___ No ___	

Evaluation Criteria		Documentation of Evidence
D. Instructional Programs and Materials continues – The instructional programs and materials have documented efficacy, are drawn from research-based findings and practices, align with state standards and benchmarks, and support the full range of learners.		
B. Alphabetic Knowledge - **Kindergarten** The ability to recognize, name, and write letters.	Yes ___ No ___	
C. Phonics Instruction - Kindergarten, First, and Second Grades Teaches students how to decode and encode words. • students learn the relationships between the letters of written language and the sounds of spoken language • instruction leads to an understanding of the alphabetic principle – the systematic predictable relationships between written letters and spoken sounds • instruction is systematic - the plan of instruction includes a selected set of letter-sound relationships that are organized into a logical sequence • instruction is explicit - the programs provide teachers with precise directions for the teaching of these relationships, and • ample opportunities are provided for students to apply what they are learning about letters and sounds to the reading of words, sentences, and stories.	Yes ___ No ___	

Evaluation Criteria	Documentation of Evidence
D. Instructional Programs and Materials continues – The instructional programs and materials have documented efficacy, are drawn from research-based findings and practices, align with state standards and benchmarks, and support the full range of learners.	

Evaluation Criteria	Documentation of Evidence	
D. <u>Decodable Text</u> - Kindergarten and First Grade Text in which a large proportion of words (80%) comprised sounds-symbol relationships that have already been taught. • instruction provides practice with specific decoding skills, and • instruction bridges learning phonics and applying phonics in independent reading of text.	Yes ___ No ___	
E. <u>Fluency</u> - First, Second, and Third Grades The ability to read a text accurately and quickly. • students understand what they read • fluent reading is modeled, and • students engage in repeated oral reading of text at the students' independent reading level.	Yes ___ No ___	
F. <u>Vocabulary</u> - All Grades The words we must know in order to communicate effectively. • students engage in oral language, listen to adults read to them, and read extensively on their own • students are explicitly taught both individual words and word learning strategies, and • word strategies are taught: how to use dictionaries and other reference aids; how to use information about word parts to figure out the meanings of words in text, and how to use context clues to determine word meaning.	Yes ___ No ___	

Evaluation Criteria	Documentation of Evidence

D. Instructional Programs and Materials continues – The instructional programs and materials have documented efficacy, are drawn from research-based findings and practices, align with state standards and benchmarks, and support the full range of learners.

Evaluation Criteria	Documentation of Evidence
G. Comprehension Instruction - All Grades The ability to gain and use meaning from text. • Instruction is purposeful and active • Instruction is explicit and includes: direct explanation, modeling, guided practice, and application, and • Comprehension strategies include: monitoring, graphic and semantic organizers, answering questions, generating questions, recognizing story structure, and summarizing.	Yes ___ No ___
4. The core instructional program provides a balance of text types (i.e., predictable, decodable, quality children's literature; narrative and expository).	Yes ___ No ___
5. The instructional program includes daily reading aloud by the teacher and discussion of both fiction and nonfiction.	Yes ___ No ___
6. Programs with documented evidence of improving student achievement are in place for intervention and remediation of students who do not demonstrate adequate knowledge or progress from the core program.	Yes ___ No ___
7. All programs and materials are implemented with a high level of consistency and conformity.	Yes ___ No ___

E. Differentiated Instruction/Grouping/Scheduling – Instruction optimizes learning for all students by tailoring instruction to meet current levels of knowledge and prerequisite skills and organizing instruction to enhance student learning.

Evaluation Criteria	Documentation of Evidence
1. Instruction at all grades is provided in flexible homogeneous groupings to maximize student performance.	Yes ___ No ___
2. Tutoring is used judiciously to supplement (not supplant) explicit teacher-directed instruction.	Yes ___ No ___
3. Group size, instructional time, and instructional programs are determined by and adjusted according to learner performance (i.e., students with greatest needs are in groups that allow more frequent monitoring and opportunities to respond and receive feedback).	Yes ___ No ___
4. Cross-class and cross-grade grouping is used when appropriate to maximize learning opportunities.	Yes ___ No ___

F. Instructional Time – A sufficient amount of time is allocated for instruction and the time allocated is used effectively.

Evaluation Criteria		Documentation of Evidence
1. The school literacy plan allows for a set amount of daily uninterrupted time for reading instruction and reading practice.	Yes ___ No ___	
2. The school literacy plan establishes a system for coordinating resources, both people and materials, to ensure optimal use of the time.	Yes ___ No ___	
3. Students in grades K-3 receive a minimum of 30 minutes of small-group teacher-directed reading instruction daily.	Yes ___ No ___	
4. Additional instructional time is allocated to students who fail to make adequate reading progress.	Yes ___ No ___	

Evaluation Criteria	Documentation of Evidence
G. Professional Development – Adequate and ongoing professional development is available to support reading achievement.	

Evaluation Criteria	Documentation of Evidence
1. Teachers and instructional staff have thorough understanding and working knowledge of grade-level instructional priorities and effective practices.	Yes ___ No ___
2. Ongoing staff development is established to support teachers and instructional staff in the assessment and instruction of instructional priorities.	Yes ___ No ___
3. Staff development efforts are explicitly linked to scientifically validated programs and practices as outlined in consensus documents of research such as: a) Preventing Reading Difficulties In Young Children b) Starting Out Right c) Report of the National Reading Panel d) Every Child Reading: An Action Plan e) Every Child Reading: A Professional Development Guide f) Teaching Reading Is Rocket Science g) Put Reading First - The Research Building Blocks for Teaching Children to Read.	Yes ___ No ___

References:

Burns, M. Susan, Peg Griffin, and Catherine E. Snow. <u>Starting Out Right</u>. Washington: National Academy Press, 1999.

<u>Every Child Reading: An Action Plan</u>. Washington: Learning First Alliance, 1998.

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Snow, Catherine E., M. Susan Burns, and Peg Griffin. <u>Preventing Reading Difficulties in Young Children.</u> Washington: National Academy Press, 1998.

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