

Universal Tier Tools

Facilitation Guide for Question D2: If the
Universal Tier is Not Sufficient, What
Needs Must Be Addressed?



Table of Contents

Introduction	6
Step 1: Classwide Intervention Determination (K-6)	8
Overview	8
Sub-Steps	8
Sub-Step 1. – Analyze universal screening assessment results, determine percentage of students proficient.	9
Sub-Step 2. If class-wide intervention is needed, select/develop class-wide intervention.	11
Sub-Step 3. Develop implementation plan.	12
Sub-Step 4. Implement class-wide intervention.	13
Sub-Step 5. Monitor impact of class-wide intervention on student learning	14
Step 2. Examine Universal tier beliefs (Prek, K-6)	16
Step 3. Plan to Improve and Maintain Consensus	19
Step 4: Identify current universal tier practices (PreK)	21
Step 4 Completion Checklists (Pre-K)	25
Step 4: Identify current universal tier practices (K-6)	30
Step 4 Completion Checklists (K-6)	34
Step 5: Prioritize Universal Tier practices that require further examination	39
Tips/Considerations for Prioritizing Universal Tier Practices	39
Record your building block priorities	40
Step 6: Identify barriers to implementation of Universal Tier desired practices & Step 7: Prioritize list of needs for the Universal Tier	42
Identifying Barriers Overview	42
Importance of Identifying Barriers: An Example	42
Sub-Steps for Identifying Barriers	44
Sub-Steps	44
Identifying Barriers Worksheet	44
Appendix A. Pre-K Level 1 Questions Worksheets	50
1. Instructional Time/Opportunities	51
Overview	51
Sub-Steps	51
2. Curriculum/ Instructional Materials & Environment	54

<u>Overview</u>	54
<u>Sub-Steps</u>	54
3. <u>Literacy Instructional Strategies & Differentiation</u>	58
<u>Overview</u>	58
<u>Sub-Steps</u>	58
4. <u>Play and Literacy</u>	62
<u>Overview</u>	62
<u>Sub-Steps</u>	62
5. <u>Assessment for Learning</u>	66
<u>Overview</u>	66
<u>Sub-Steps</u>	66
6. <u>Collaborative Literacy Support</u>	73
<u>Overview</u>	73
<u>Sub-Steps</u>	73
<u>Appendix B. Pre-K Level 2 Questions Worksheets</u>	80
1. <u>Instructional Time/Opportunities</u>	81
<u>Overview</u>	81
<u>Sub-Steps</u>	81
2. <u>Curriculum/ Instructional Materials & Environment</u>	86
<u>Overview</u>	86
<u>Sub-Steps</u>	86
3. <u>Literacy Instructional Strategies & Differentiation</u>	92
<u>Overview</u>	92
<u>Sub-Steps</u>	92
4. <u>Play and Literacy</u>	97
<u>Overview</u>	97
<u>Sub-Steps</u>	97
5. <u>Assessment for Learning</u>	102
<u>Overview</u>	102
<u>Sub-Steps</u>	102
6. <u>Collaborative Literacy Support</u>	107
<u>Overview</u>	107
<u>Sub-Steps</u>	107
<u>Appendix C. Pre-K Level 3 Questions Worksheets</u>	113
<u>Appendix D. Pre-K Level 4 Questions Worksheets</u>	116

<u>Appendix E. K-6 Level 1 Questions Worksheets</u>	119
1. <u>Instructional Time/Opportunities</u>	120
<u>Overview</u>	120
<u>Sub-Steps</u>	120
2. <u>Standards & the Enacted Curriculum</u>	126
<u>Overview</u>	126
<u>Sub-Steps</u>	126
3. <u>Instructional Practices</u>	129
<u>Overview</u>	129
<u>Sub-Steps</u>	129
4. <u>Instructional Materials</u>	144
<u>Overview</u>	144
<u>Sub-Steps</u>	144
5. <u>Assessment for Learning</u>	149
<u>Overview</u>	149
<u>Sub-Steps</u>	149
6. <u>Collaborative Literacy Supports</u>	154
<u>Overview</u>	154
<u>Sub-Steps</u>	154
<u>Appendix F. K-6 Level 2 Questions Worksheets</u>	160
1. <u>Instructional Time/Opportunities</u>	161
<u>Overview</u>	161
<u>Sub-Steps</u>	161
2. <u>Standards & the Enacted Curriculum</u>	164
<u>Overview</u>	164
<u>Sub-Steps</u>	164
3. <u>Instructional Practices</u>	168
<u>Overview</u>	168
<u>Sub-Steps</u>	168
4. <u>Instructional Materials</u>	172
<u>Overview</u>	172
<u>Sub-Steps</u>	172
5. <u>Assessment for Learning</u>	177
<u>Overview</u>	177
<u>Sub-Steps</u>	177

<u>6. Collaborative Literacy Supports</u>	182
<u>Overview</u>	182
<u>Sub-Steps</u>	182
<u>Appendix G. K-6 Level 3 Questions Worksheets</u>	187
<u>Appendix H. K-6 Level 4 Questions Worksheets</u>	190
<u>Appendix I. Identifying Barriers Coaching Guide</u>	193
<u>Consensus</u>	194
<u>Identifying Potential Barriers</u>	194
<u>Prioritizing Barriers</u>	195
<u>Verifying Prioritized Barriers</u>	195
<u>Appendix J. Identifying Barriers Tools for Deeper Discussion</u>	197
<u>Tools for Deeper Discussion</u>	198

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this facilitation guide is to help preschool programs, schools, districts, Area Education Agencies (AEAs), and the Iowa Department of Education partner to answer the following question:

If the Universal Tier is insufficient, what are the needs that must be addressed?

This is known as “Question D2”, which is part of a larger set of collaborative inquiry questions that schools can use to facilitate the implementation of Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS). Preschool programs, schools and districts partner with the AEAs and Department of Education to work on Question D2 if Question D1 is answered “No” using universal screening data:

Question D1: Is the Universal Tier sufficient?

It is important that Question D2 be addressed so the preschool or school can run efficiently enough to support 100% of learners to reach proficiency. This guide has been developed to help facilitate this very important partnership. There are seven steps that preschool programs and schools follow to answer Question D2:

Step 1	• If less than 60% of students are proficient on universal screening, develop and execute a plan to implement a class-wide intervention and continue to Step 2 once the plan has been developed. Otherwise, go directly to Step 2.
Step 2	• Examine beliefs of staff and administrator(s) about purpose and characteristics of the Universal Tier.
Step 3	• If beliefs of staff and/or administrators about purposes and characteristics of the Universal Tier don't meet criteria, identify and implement actions to increase consensus and continue to Step 4.
Step 4	• Identify current reality of Universal Tier practices compared to desired state.
Step 5	• Prioritize Universal Tier practices that require further examination.
Step 6	• Identify barriers to implementation of Universal Tier desired practices.
Step 7	• Prioritize list of needs for the Universal Tier that come out of Steps 3-6.

By following these steps, preschools, schools, and districts can collect the information they need to answer Question D3:

Question D3: How will Universal Tier needs be addressed?

In other words, following Steps 1-7 of Question D2 needs to lead to the development of an action plan. The focus of that action plan will be to remove barriers to the implementation of key practices that are research-based.

In this Facilitation Guide, you will find information and resources to complete Steps 1-7 of Question D2.. Use this guide to give you the information you need to develop an effective action plan.

STEP 1: CLASSWIDE INTERVENTION DETERMINATION (K-6)

The purpose of this step is to determine if Universal Tier needs are so great to meet the needs of the students in the school (Kindergarten and above) that a class-wide intervention in the Universal Tier is needed.

Classwide Intervention is defined in Early Literacy Guidance (279.68) as

An intervention/program that includes one or more foundational literacy skills (print concepts, phonological awareness, alphabet knowledge, phonics/decoding, irregular/sight words, fluency, oral language, vocabulary, comprehension, spelling and writing) implemented to an entire class of students. This would be implemented in addition to core literacy instruction.

OVERVIEW

The Step: If less than 60% of students are proficient on universal screening, develop and execute a plan to implement a class-wide intervention and continue to Step 2 once the plan has been developed. Otherwise, go directly to Step 2.

Potential Data Source(s):

- Universal screening assessments

SUB-STEPS

1. Analyze universal screening assessment results, determine percentage of students proficient.
2. If class-wide intervention is needed, select/develop class-wide intervention.
3. Develop implementation plan.
4. Implement class-wide intervention.
5. Monitor impact of class-wide intervention on student learning.

IF CLASS-WIDE INTERVENTION IS NEEDED, SCHOOLS SHOULD COMPLETE UP TO SUB-STEP 3 BEFORE MOVING ON TO STEP 2. SUB-STEPS 4 & 5 SHOULD OCCUR CONCURRENTLY WITH STEP 2.

SUB-STEP 1. – ANALYZE UNIVERSAL SCREENING ASSESSMENT RESULTS, DETERMINE PERCENTAGE OF STUDENTS PROFICIENT.

Notes:

Click here to enter text.

Think about...

This is about figuring out if there are enough students needing additional assistance that a class-wide intervention is needed.

Do you have the universal screening results readily available for analysis?

Use the following protocol to complete Sub-Step 1.

All Students

Determine the percentage of your population that meets or exceeds the screening cut scores.

	Building	Expectation
% Meeting Benchmarks	Click here to enter text.	60%

Notes:

Click here to enter text.

Description of Possible Results	Action Taken ("x")
If at least 60% of students meet benchmarks, conduct grade-level analyses below.	Click here to enter text.
If fewer than 60% of students meet benchmarks, go directly to Sub-Step 2 in this section of the Facilitation Guide.	Click here to enter text.

Grade Level

Determine the percent of students who meet benchmarks at each grade level. PreK is included as a consideration to the system; not for classwide intervention determination.

	PreK	K	1	2	3	4	5	6
% Meeting Benchmarks	Click here to enter text.							

Notes:

Click here to enter text.

Description of Possible Results	Action Taken (enter "x" in one box below)
<p>If all of the grade levels have at least 60% of students meeting benchmarks, the building leadership team will decide if the school will engage in class-wide intervention or not.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If school decides to engage in class-wide intervention, go directly to Sub-Step 2 in this section of the Facilitation Guide. • If school decides <u>not</u> to engage in class-wide intervention, go directly to Step 2 in the Facilitation Guide. • 	Click here to enter text.
<p>If any of the grade levels have fewer than 60% of students meeting benchmarks, the building leadership team will decide how to engage in class-wide intervention. Go directly to Sub-Step 2 in this section of the Facilitation Guide.</p>	Click here to enter text.

Notes:

Click here to enter text.

SUB-STEP 2. IF CLASS-WIDE INTERVENTION IS NEEDED, SELECT/DEVELOP CLASS-WIDE INTERVENTION.

Notes:

[Click here to enter text.](#)

Think about...

This is about figuring out what will be used to implement class-wide intervention.

Class-wide interventions should address a wide range of knowledge and skills, grounded in the Iowa Core standards.

Building leadership team should involve teachers in this step.

Intervention and content specialists, as well as educators that understand research-based practices, would be very helpful in this work.

Make sure all necessary grade levels are addressed by the intervention(s)

Class-wide Intervention Selection Checklist:

- Develop a list of potential research- and/or evidence-based class-wide interventions (If there is a list provided by the Department of Education, consult that list).
- Determine which intervention(s) would work best to meet the needs of your students.
- Secure the resources needed to obtain the intervention(s)
- Obtain the intervention(s)

Name of Intervention(s):

[Click here to enter text.](#)

SUB-STEP 3. DEVELOP IMPLEMENTATION PLAN.

Notes:

Click here to enter text.

Think about...

This is about figuring out the logistics of implementing the class-wide intervention systemically.

How will you ensure that all teachers that will implement the class-wide intervention

- have access to the materials?
- are sufficiently trained?
- have enough time scheduled?

Example Implementation Plan

Grade	Name of Intervention(s)	Schedule (Frequency, Duration, & Location)	Person(s) Responsible to Deliver	Progress Monitoring (Assessment & Schedule)	Comments
K	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.
1	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.
2	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.
3	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.
4	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.
5	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.
6	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.

ONCE A PLAN HAS BEEN DEVELOPED, YOU SHOULD COMPLETE BOTH OF THE FOLLOWING ACTIONS:

- ***GO TO SUB-STEP 4, AND***
- ***GO TO STEP 2. UNIVERSAL TIER BELIEFS***

SUB-STEP 4. IMPLEMENT CLASS-WIDE INTERVENTION.

Notes:

Click here to enter text.

Think about...

This is about using the implementation plan and intervention(s) with whole classrooms.

How will you ensure that all teachers

- have ongoing implementation support?
- are monitoring implementation fidelity
- collaboratively using progress monitoring data to make instructional decisions?

Class-wide Intervention Implementation Checklist:

- Have materials for the session ready before the session begins
- Use implementation fidelity checklist to ensure all parts of the intervention are implemented
- Collect progress monitoring data according to schedule from plan
- Regularly use implementation fidelity and progress monitoring data to engage in collaborative instructional decision making

SUB-STEP 5. MONITOR IMPACT OF CLASS-WIDE INTERVENTION ON STUDENT LEARNING.

Notes:

[Click here to enter text.](#)

Think about...

This is about figuring out the impact the class-wide intervention has on overall proficiency on universal screening assessments.

The goal of class-wide intervention is to ensure that more than 60% of students are on track for proficiency.

When will the next set of universal screening assessment data be available?

Class-wide Intervention Impact Checklist:

- Schedule a date for data review.
- Complete the protocol found in Sub-Step 1 above.
- Determine whether or not to continue implementing class-wide intervention(s).

STEP 2. EXAMINE UNIVERSAL TIER BELIEFS (PREK, K-6)

If less than 80% of students are on track to be proficient, it is important to determine what administrators and staff believe about the purpose of the Universal Tier. Although a preschool or school may have consensus about implementing a Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS), sometimes opinions might change when improving the Universal Tier becomes the top priority.

If there is not a critical mass of consensus (e.g., at least 80% of staff), implementing changes is likely to be more difficult. It is therefore important to keep an eye on consensus, either formally or informally, throughout the process of working on improving the Universal Tier.

It is the responsibility of the leadership team to ensure that consensus is monitored and addressed as needed. Resources for doing consensus work include the Consensus Toolkit developed for Collaborating for Iowa's Kids (C4K), as well as tools from organizations like Learning Forward (<http://learningforward.org/>, keyword search "consensus"; membership required).

Notes:

[Click here to enter text.](#)

Think about...

It may be helpful to start by having a conversation in a staff meeting, or sending out a survey, using questions like the ones listed in the table below.

It is not necessary for all staff to "Strongly Agree" with all of the statements to have sufficient consensus.

If many staff disagree with one or more of the statements, it may be helpful to understand why and provide them with information about why those statements are important.

Scale: 1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Neutral, 4 = Agree, 5 = Strongly Agree

Statement	Circle Your Level of Agreement	Comments
1. I believe that ALL can achieve grade level standards	1 2 3 4 5	Click here to enter text.
2. The Universal Tier should be effective enough to result in at least 80% of children/students attaining proficiency	1 2 3 4 5	Click here to enter text.
3. General education teachers should implement differentiated and flexible instructional practices to address the needs of a full range of learners	1 2 3 4 5	Click here to enter text.
4. Professional learning should be driven by student instructional needs	1 2 3 4 5	Click here to enter text.
5. The purpose of assessment is to generate and measure effectiveness of instruction	1 2 3 4 5	Click here to enter text.
6. Teachers (and other professional staff) should receive ongoing embedded professional development, coaching, and support	1 2 3 4 5	Click here to enter text.
7. Data should used to make decisions about necessary changes to the Universal Tier to increase the percent of students achieving grade level standards	1 2 3 4 5	Click here to enter text.
8. The school staff employs a process to select evidence-based practices for the Universal Tier	1 2 3 4 5	Click here to enter text.
9. Staff should regularly seek ideas and strategies from colleagues	1 2 3 4 5	Click here to enter text.
10. Staff work together to develop and evaluate programs and projects	1 2 3 4 5	Click here to enter text.

STEP 3. PLAN TO IMPROVE AND MAINTAIN CONSENSUS

If you find in Step 2 that there is not a critical mass of consensus around the purposes and characteristics of the universal tier in your program/school, it is important to develop a plan to improve and maintain an adequate level of consensus.

Notes:

[Click here to enter text.](#)

Think about...

Your plan does not have to be long or elaborate. It needs be a plan that you will be able to implement.

How clear and consistent with staff has the leadership team been about universal tier non-negotiables?

Consensus Improvement Plan Checklist:

- Generate list of beliefs and practices where there is a lack of sufficient consensus.
- Communicate list of negotiables and non-negotiables in each concern area
- Design/select and implement process to generate consensus
- Determine and implement method of ongoing monitoring of consensus

ONCE A PLAN HAS BEEN DEVELOPED, YOU SHOULD COMPLETE BOTH OF THE FOLLOWING ACTIONS:

- START WORK TO IMPLEMENT THE PLAN, AND***
- GO TO STEP 4. IDENTIFY CURRENT UNIVERSAL TIER PRACTICES***

STEP 4: IDENTIFY CURRENT UNIVERSAL TIER PRACTICES (PREK)

Step 4 is where you start digging into the infrastructure and practices of the universal tier. This is organized into areas called **Building Blocks**. The Building Blocks are thematically-organized and focused on what happens in classrooms. The Building Blocks focus on specific aspects of curriculum, instruction, and assessment, which need to function well together to provide a high-quality educational experience for learners. The Building Blocks are:



Using the Building Blocks to examine current universal tier infrastructure and practices, preschools will need to ask critical questions, and gather information about those questions. Each Building Block has a series of questions, called **Leveled Questions**, which go with them. The table below contains the questions that preschools need to ask. Some things to know when reading this table:

- ✓ Preschools should answer all Level 1 Questions first before moving on to Level 2 Questions
- ✓ For those practices not in place at Level 1, the preschool needs to sustain implementation of those practices before moving on to a Level 2 Question
- ✓ Preschools should answer the questions from left-to-right across the table.

Levels	1. Instructional Time/ Opportunities	2. Curriculum/ Instructional Materials & Environment	3. Literacy Instructional Strategies & Differentiation	4. Play and Literacy	5. Assessment for Learning	6. Collaborative Literacy Support
Level 1	Is there a clear schedule and lesson plans that are connected?	Do you have evidence-based curricula that addresses all of the Iowa Early Learning Standards area of Communication, Language, and Literacy?	Do teaching staff use evidence-based instructional strategies to promote children's growth and development in all of the Iowa Early Learning Standards area of Communication, Language, and Literacy?	Do teaching staff provide opportunities for open-ended, child-initiated, indoor and outdoor play to promote children's growth and development in all of the Iowa Early Learning Standards area of Communication, Language, and Literacy?	Do teaching staff collect daily evidence to determine progressions of children's growth and development based on curriculum goals grounded in the Iowa Early Learning Standards area of Communication, Language, and Literacy?	Are families and other caregivers offered a variety of opportunities-- at home, in the classroom, and in the wider community--to be engaged as partners in their child's literacy skill acquisition?
Level 2	Are literacy opportunities planned for at least 60 minutes daily per half day program (90 minutes for a full day program)?	Are all of the classrooms offering a literacy-rich environment that includes instructional materials and activities that promote the Language, Communication, and Literacy area of the Iowa Early Learning Standards?	Do teaching staff differentiate by providing flexible, small group literacy instruction to meet the group and individual interests, strengths, and needs focusing on the Iowa Early Learning Standards?	Is there intentional planning for early literacy learning during child-initiated play?	Are the collected data being organized, analyzed and used to make changes in practices at the classroom level that advance children's growth and development?	Does the program have a collaborative team that includes teachers, administrators, families, and other community partners (e.g., librarians, child care providers, etc.) that meets at least monthly and as part of its work promotes individual child literacy outcomes?

Levels	1. Instructional Time/ Opportunities	2. Curriculum/ Instructional Materials & Environment	3. Literacy Instructional Strategies & Differentiation	4. Play and Literacy	5. Assessment for Learning	6. Collaborative Literacy Support
Level 3	Do all children, regardless of skill level, get an equitable amount of time for literacy knowledge and skill development?	Is there ongoing, purposeful planning and implementation of lesson plans that engage children in the literacy rich environment that addresses the Iowa Early Learning Standards area of Communication, Language, and Literacy?	Do teaching staff collect and use fidelity data to assess the quality of the implementation of instructional strategies?	Do teaching staff demonstrate intentional teaching that promotes early literacy learning during child-initiated play?	Are data being used to address individual children's growth and development based on interests, strengths and needs?	Do all collaborative team members use child outcome data to inform their work and reinforce the shared responsibility for individual child success?
Level 4	Are at least 80% of the children engaged at least 80% of instructional time in the Universal tier?	Do the literacy materials and environment extend and challenge children's learning in response to individual and group interests, strengths, and needs?			Are data being used from across classrooms to make changes in system supports for teaching staff and administrators?	Do all teaching staff collect and use family data to inform teaching practices and make recommendations for at-home and in-community activities?

Some things to remember while using the Building Blocks and Leveled Questions at the preschool level:

- ✓ This work should be done collaboratively between the preschool, AEA supports and/or other community-based supports, and the Department of Education.
- ✓ It is the responsibility of the leadership team to make sure this work occurs, but not to do all of the work themselves.
- ✓ It is highly likely that at least one of the areas below will not be in place. If you do not find evidence of missing practices, you should revisit the questions and continue to examine the evidence until areas of needed improvement are determined.

To answer the Leveled Questions in each Building Block, a set of processes and tools has been included in **Appendices A-D** of the Facilitation Guide. The processes and tools include:

- ✓ A description of the Leveled Question
- ✓ An overview that includes potential sources of evidence
- ✓ Sub-Steps to follow
- ✓ Things to consider, called **Think abouts**
- ✓ Places to take notes and record information about collected evidence
- ✓ A definition of the desired state of practice, labeled **Criteria**
- ✓ Places to document whether or not criteria were met
- ✓ Directions for next steps, including a prompt to proceed to **Step 5. Identify Barriers.**

STEP 4 COMPLETION CHECKLISTS (PRE-K)

Complete the following checklists, in order from Level 1 Questions to Level 4 Questions across school years. Keep this to help you keep track of your work. Completing these checklists will likely take several years.

Level 1 Questions Checklist		
Start Date: Click here to enter text.	End Date: Click here to enter text.	
Leadership Team Members: Click here to enter text.		
Check When Complete	Worksheet Name	Worksheet Location
<input type="checkbox"/>	1. Instructional Time/Opportunities	Appendix A
<input type="checkbox"/>	2. Curriculum/ Instructional Materials & Environment	
<input type="checkbox"/>	3. Literacy Instructional Strategies & Differentiation	
<input type="checkbox"/>	4. Play and Literacy	
<input type="checkbox"/>	5. Assessment for Learning	
<input type="checkbox"/>	6. Collaborative Literacy Support	

REMEMBER THAT LEVEL 2 QUESTIONS SHOULD NOT BE EXAMINED UNTIL PRACTICES RELATED TO THE LEVEL 1 QUESTIONS HAVE BEEN RESOLVED AND ARE IN PLACE

Level 2 Questions Checklist		
Start Date: Click here to enter text.	End Date: Click here to enter text.	
Leadership Team Members: Click here to enter text.		
Check When Complete	Worksheet Name	Worksheet Location
<input type="checkbox"/>	1. Instructional Time/Opportunities	Appendix B
<input type="checkbox"/>	2. Curriculum/ Instructional Materials & Environment	
<input type="checkbox"/>	3. Literacy Instructional Strategies & Differentiation	
<input type="checkbox"/>	4. Play and Literacy	
<input type="checkbox"/>	5. Assessment for Learning	
<input type="checkbox"/>	6. Collaborative Literacy Support	

REMEMBER THAT LEVEL 3 QUESTIONS SHOULD NOT BE EXAMINED UNTIL PRACTICES RELATED TO THE LEVEL 2 QUESTIONS HAVE BEEN RESOLVED AND ARE IN PLACE

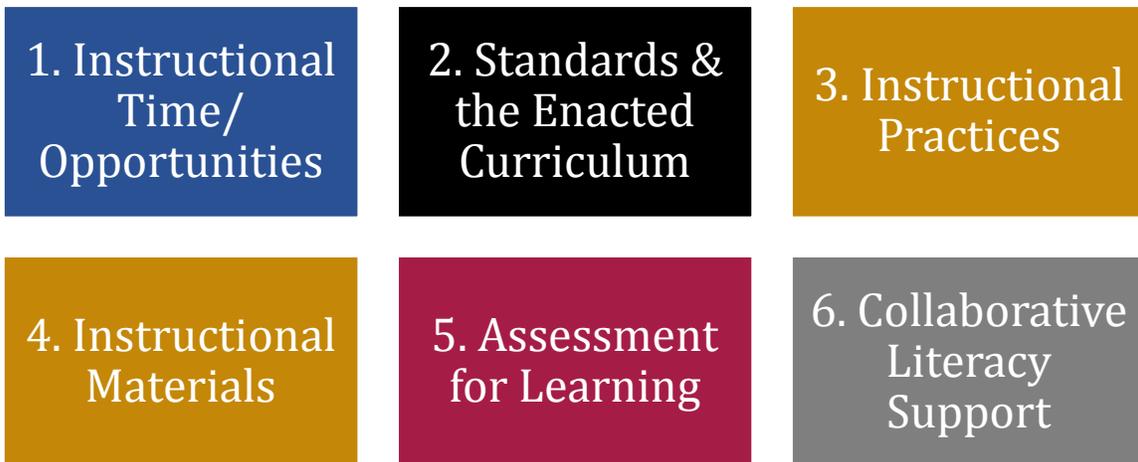
Level 3 Questions Checklist		
Start Date: Click here to enter text.	End Date: Click here to enter text.	
Leadership Team Members: Click here to enter text.		
Check When Complete	Worksheet Name	Worksheet Location
<input type="checkbox"/>	1. Instructional Time/Opportunities	Appendix C
<input type="checkbox"/>	2. Curriculum/ Instructional Materials & Environment	
<input type="checkbox"/>	3. Literacy Instructional Strategies & Differentiation	
<input type="checkbox"/>	4. Play and Literacy	
<input type="checkbox"/>	5. Assessment for Learning	
<input type="checkbox"/>	6. Collaborative Literacy Support	

REMEMBER THAT LEVEL 4 QUESTIONS SHOULD NOT BE EXAMINED UNTIL PRACTICES RELATED TO THE LEVEL 3 QUESTIONS HAVE BEEN RESOLVED AND ARE IN PLACE

Level 4 Questions Checklist		
Start Date: Click here to enter text.	End Date: Click here to enter text.	
Leadership Team Members: Click here to enter text.		
Check When Complete	Worksheet Name	Worksheet Location
<input type="checkbox"/>	1. Instructional Time/Opportunities	Appendix D
<input type="checkbox"/>	2. Curriculum/ Instructional Materials & Environment	
<input type="checkbox"/>	3. Literacy Instructional Strategies & Differentiation	
<input type="checkbox"/>	4. Play and Literacy	
<input type="checkbox"/>	5. Assessment for Learning	
<input type="checkbox"/>	6. Collaborative Literacy Support	

STEP 4: IDENTIFY CURRENT UNIVERSAL TIER PRACTICES (K-6)

Step 4 is where you start digging into the infrastructure and practices of the universal tier. This is organized into areas called **Building Blocks**. The Building Blocks are thematically-organized and focused on what happens in classrooms. The Building Blocks focus on specific aspects of curriculum, instruction, and assessment, which need to function well together to provide a high-quality educational experience for learners. The Building Blocks are:



Using the Building Blocks to examine current universal tier infrastructure and practices, preschools will need to ask critical questions, and gather information about those questions. Each Building Block has a series of questions, called **Leveled Questions**, which go with them. The table below contains the questions that preschools need to ask. Some things to know when reading this table:

- ✓ Schools should answer all Level 1 Questions first before moving on to Level 2 Questions
- ✓ For those practices not in place at Level 1, the school needs to sustain implementation of those practices before moving on to a Level 2 Question
- ✓ Schools should answer the questions from left-to-right across the table.

Levels	1. Instructional Time/ Opportunities	2. Standards & the Enacted Curriculum	3. Instructional Practices	4. Instructional Materials	5. Assessment for Learning	6. Collaborative Literacy Support
Level 1	Is there 60-120 minutes of instructional time scheduled and protected for Universal Tier literacy learning?	Do administrators and teachers regularly engage in Professional Learning focused on the Iowa Core Literacy Standards?	Do teachers have sufficient knowledge of researched-based, high leverage instructional practices to deliver the Iowa Core ELA standards?	Do all teachers have access to universal materials that are reflective of the Shifts and major features of the Iowa Core ELA standards?	Are teachers collecting daily evidence of student learning based on the Learning Goal & Success Criteria?	Is there a culture and set of processes in place for collaboration among administration, teaching staff, and parents that addresses achievement in reading and language arts skills?
Level 2	Is at least 95% of the scheduled literacy learning time used as instructional time?	Are students getting the opportunity to learn all of the Iowa Core Literacy Standards?	Are research-based, high leverage instructional practices being implemented?	Do all teachers have access to Universal Tier materials that are researched-based and provide instructional supports that are responsive to varied student learning needs?	Have teachers outlined ELA learning progressions and collected daily evidence of student learning based on the Learning Goal & Success Criteria to design instruction?	Do all team members, including parents and administrators, have access to data and utilize the data for student learning?
Level 3	Are at least 80-90% of the students engaged with the learning goals and success criteria of the Iowa Core ELA standards for at least 80-90% of instructional time?	Does the distribution of emphasis (e.g., allocation of time) spent on the Iowa Core standards match the distribution of emphasis called for in the Iowa Core standards?	Do teachers match the high leverage instructional practices to the learning needs of students?	Do all teachers have access to Universal Tier materials that are aligned to the full breadth and depth of the Iowa Core ELA standards?	Are teachers using the collected evidence to differentiate instruction to meet learner needs?	Are teams intentionally collaborating (minimum of 2-3 times monthly) to review/analyze student data to enhance instructional practices and materials at the grade, classroom, or student level?

Levels	1. Instructional Time/ Opportunities	2. Standards & the Enacted Curriculum	3. Instructional Practices	4. Instructional Materials	5. Assessment for Learning	6. Collaborative Literacy Support
Level 4		Does the enacted curriculum reach the maximum levels of cognitive complexity for students?	Do teachers employ the high leverage instructional practices that allow for the maximum level of cognitive complexity for all students?		Are teachers providing students feedback based on the assessment results to move their learning forward?	

Some things to remember while using the Building Blocks and Leveled Questions at the school level:

- ✓ This work should be done collaboratively between the school, AEA supports and/or other community-based supports, and the Department of Education.
- ✓ It is the responsibility of the leadership team to make sure this work occurs, but not to do all of the work themselves.
- ✓ It is highly likely that at least one of the areas below will not be in place. If you do not find evidence of missing practices, you should revisit the questions and continue to examine the evidence until areas of needed improvement are determined.

To answer the Leveled Questions in each Building Block, a set of processes and tools has been included in **Appendices E-H** of the Facilitation Guide. The processes and tools include:

- ✓ A description of the Leveled Question
- ✓ An overview that includes potential sources of evidence
- ✓ Sub-Steps to follow
- ✓ Things to consider, called **Think abouts**
- ✓ Places to take notes and record information about collected evidence
- ✓ A definition of the desired state of practice, labeled **Criteria**
- ✓ Places to document whether or not criteria were met
- ✓ Directions for next steps, including a prompt to proceed to **Step 5. Identify Barriers.**

STEP 4 COMPLETION CHECKLISTS (K-6)

Complete the following checklists, in order from Level 1 Questions to Level 4 Questions across school years. Keep this to help you keep track of your work. Completing these checklists will likely take several years.

Level 1 Questions Checklist		
Start Date: Click here to enter text.	End Date: Click here to enter text.	
Leadership Team Members: Click here to enter text.		
Check When Complete	Worksheet Name	Worksheet Location
<input type="checkbox"/>	1. Instructional Time/Opportunities	Appendix E
<input type="checkbox"/>	2. Standards & the Enacted Curriculum	
<input type="checkbox"/>	3. Instructional Practices	
<input type="checkbox"/>	4. Instructional Materials	
<input type="checkbox"/>	5. Assessment for Learning	
<input type="checkbox"/>	6. Collaborative Literacy Support	

REMEMBER THAT LEVEL 2 QUESTIONS SHOULD NOT BE EXAMINED UNTIL PRACTICES RELATED TO THE LEVEL 1 QUESTIONS HAVE BEEN RESOLVED AND ARE IN PLACE

Level 2 Questions Checklist		
Start Date: Click here to enter text.	End Date: Click here to enter text.	
Leadership Team Members: Click here to enter text.		
Check When Complete	Worksheet Name	Worksheet Location
<input type="checkbox"/>	1. Instructional Time/Opportunities	Appendix F
<input type="checkbox"/>	2. Standards & the Enacted Curriculum	
<input type="checkbox"/>	3. Instructional Practices	
<input type="checkbox"/>	4. Instructional Materials	
<input type="checkbox"/>	5. Assessment for Learning	
<input type="checkbox"/>	6. Collaborative Literacy Support	

REMEMBER THAT LEVEL 3 QUESTIONS SHOULD NOT BE EXAMINED UNTIL PRACTICES RELATED TO THE LEVEL 2 QUESTIONS HAVE BEEN RESOLVED AND ARE IN PLACE

Level 3 Questions Checklist		
Start Date: Click here to enter text.	End Date: Click here to enter text.	
Leadership Team Members: Click here to enter text.		
Check When Complete	Worksheet Name	Worksheet Location
<input type="checkbox"/>	1. Instructional Time/Opportunities	Appendix G
<input type="checkbox"/>	2. Standards & the Enacted Curriculum	
<input type="checkbox"/>	3. Instructional Practices	
<input type="checkbox"/>	4. Instructional Materials	
<input type="checkbox"/>	5. Assessment for Learning	
<input type="checkbox"/>	6. Collaborative Literacy Support	

REMEMBER THAT LEVEL 4 QUESTIONS SHOULD NOT BE EXAMINED UNTIL PRACTICES RELATED TO THE LEVEL 3 QUESTIONS HAVE BEEN RESOLVED AND ARE IN PLACE

Level 4 Questions Checklist		
Start Date: Click here to enter text.	End Date: Click here to enter text.	
Leadership Team Members: Click here to enter text.		
Check When Complete	Worksheet Name	Worksheet Location
<input type="checkbox"/>	1. Instructional Time/Opportunities	Appendix H
<input type="checkbox"/>	2. Standards & the Enacted Curriculum	
<input type="checkbox"/>	3. Instructional Practices	
<input type="checkbox"/>	4. Instructional Materials	
<input type="checkbox"/>	5. Assessment for Learning	
<input type="checkbox"/>	6. Collaborative Literacy Support	

STEP 5: PRIORITIZE UNIVERSAL TIER PRACTICES THAT REQUIRE FURTHER EXAMINATION

Before identifying and removing barriers to missing practices discovered in Step 4, it is important to prioritize areas for further study. Trying to examine too many areas at once will lead to a watering-down of time, resources, and quality of work.

As a preschool/school, you should prioritize one to three areas for further study. If you don't have any areas for further study, go back to Step 4 and re-examine the information you collected. You should have at least one area for further study.

TIPS/CONSIDERATIONS FOR PRIORITIZING UNIVERSAL TIER PRACTICES

- ✓ Are staff likely able to take action on these areas?
- ✓ Do the Building Block have the potential to make a great impact on learner development in the Iowa Early Learning Standards in your program?
- ✓ Would our decision meet the 'stranger test?' Could anyone reviewing our work, understand how and why we identified these Building Blocks prioritized them?
- ✓ To what degree do we have consensus around prioritization?
- ✓ K-6 Only: If Instructional Time/Opportunities is identified as not in place for Level 1, that is your #1 Priority.

Notes:

[Click here to enter text.](#)

RECORD YOUR BUILDING BLOCK PRIORITIES

Use the table below to record the Building Blocks you have prioritized for identifying and removing barriers.

Building Block Priority	Which Leveled Question? (1 through 4)	Reason Selected
Priority #1: Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.
Priority #2: Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.
Priority #3: Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.

STEP 6: IDENTIFY BARRIERS TO IMPLEMENTATION OF UNIVERSAL TIER DESIRED PRACTICES & STEP 7: PRIORITIZE LIST OF NEEDS FOR THE UNIVERSAL TIER

IDENTIFYING BARRIERS OVERVIEW

Once your school has identified and prioritized Universal Tier practices that do not meet criteria using the Leveled Questions in Steps 4 and 5, the next step is to determine what barriers exist in the system. *Identifying barriers* is the name of the process your school will use to figure this out. This approach assumes that teachers, administrators, and other educators that work in a school are talented and motivated professionals that want to implement best practices for the Universal Tier, but there are things in the system that get in the way. The barriers blocking best practice need to be identified so they can be removed. Once barriers to implementation are removed, implementation of the practices defined in the Leveled Questions can occur. *Identifying barriers* and problem validation are effective, research-based practices.

IMPORTANCE OF IDENTIFYING BARRIERS: AN EXAMPLE

The example below illustrates how asking “why” questions can assist in identifying the barriers closest to the desired state (proximal to student learning, in education). It also helps avoid premature action planning and reacting to “symptoms” rather than the most important barriers.

The Lincoln Memorial

There was excessive wear on the Lincoln Memorial from all the cleaning it was getting because of bird droppings. The Park Service experimented with different cleaners and brushes to cut down on the wear. That didn't work so they looked at it differently and asked "Why are we cleaning it so much?" Because of all the bird droppings.

They put up nets to keep the birds out and it worked some but not well enough and the tourists complained about them. They went one step further and asked "Why do we have so many birds coming to this monument?" After studying it they determined it was because of the insects that swarmed the monument in the evenings. They tried different types of insecticides but nothing seemed to work for long. So they asked "Why do we have so many insects swarming the monument?"

They determined the bright lights that illuminated the monument in the evenings were drawing the insects. They found out that by turning on the lights 1 hour later each evening they could eliminate over ninety percent of the insects and the resulting bird droppings. The brushes and cleaners, nets, and insecticides all addressed symptoms of the actual cause. The reason was the lighting and once it was addressed the problem went away.

In this example, if the Park Service had not continued to ask "why" questions until they discovered the actual cause of their problem, they would have continued having the same problem. By the same token, your school needs to go through the process of identifying barriers to implementation to ensure that the best possible potential solutions can be developed.

SUB-STEPS FOR IDENTIFYING BARRIERS

In order to ensure that the missing practices identified in Step 4 are put into place, it is necessary to identify the barriers to those practices being implemented. Once barriers identified, a plan can be developed and implemented to remove those barriers. It is now time for your school to identify barriers to implementation.

SUB-STEPS

Below are the sub-steps you will follow to successfully identify barriers, and to begin the process of planning to remove those barriers.

1. Summarize Current Reality
2. Identify Potential Barriers
3. Prioritize 2-3 Barriers
4. Verify Prioritized Barriers
5. Remove Barriers

IDENTIFYING BARRIERS WORKSHEET

WORKSHEET OVERVIEW

What follows in this section is a worksheet to identify, prioritize, and verify, barriers, as well as begin to plan to remove barriers to implementation of best practices that aren't sufficiently in place from the Leveled Questions. Tips for engaging in this work are listed in the directions for the worksheet. A blank worksheet is provided to record your work. Tools for deeper discussion and a coaching document to address questions or help you if/when you get stuck are also included.

WORKSHEET COMPLETION TIPS

- Achieve, monitor, and maintain staff consensus throughout this process
- Begin with simple, readily available data and add data collection when needed.
- Proceed through the worksheet columns in sequential order.
- Start with Building Block Priority Area#1 and work your way through each subsequent Building Block Priority Area in order.
- Choose the Worksheets that go with your Priority Area(s).
- Focus on barriers staff can take action on, that directly affect the building block, and have the potential to make the greatest impact on student learning.
- See the *Identifying Barriers Coaching Guide* in Appendix I for common pitfalls and suggestions

WORKSHEET DIRECTIONS

Use this table of directions to guide your completion of the worksheet on the next page.

<p style="text-align: center;">1. Leveled Question: Summarize Current Reality</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">2. Identify Potential Barriers</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">3. Prioritize 2-3 Barriers</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">4. Verify Prioritized Barriers</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">5. Remove Barriers (Notes for Action Planning)</p>
<p><i>Key Question: What is our current reality with regard to each building block?</i></p> <p>Do This: Write the Leveled Question and review the description of the desired state from the Overview section of the Leveled Question. Then briefly describe current reality as indicated by presence or absence of evidence for the criteria related to each Building Block, collected for the Leveled Question.</p> <p>Consider: Ensure current reality is accurately reflected through staff and administrator perspectives.</p>	<p><i>Key Question: What might be keeping us from our desired state?</i></p> <p>Do This: Brainstorm a list of potential barriers that staff can take action on, that directly affect the Building Block, and have the potential to make the greatest impact on student learning.</p> <p>After brainstorming, quickly sort the barriers.</p> <p>Consider: Select a method of sorting or coding your barriers. Use the Digging Deeper tools from Appendix J if needed. Other possibilities for a quick sort include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Short- (I) vs. long- (L) term • Simple (S) vs. Complex (C). • Low Cost (LC) vs. High Cost (HC) 	<p><i>Key Question: What are the prioritized barriers?</i></p> <p>Do This: Select barriers from Column 2 that will be the focus for verification and removal.</p> <p>Consider: The barriers selected should be issues staff can take action on, that directly affect the Building Block, and have the potential to make the greatest impact on student learning.</p>	<p><i>Key Question: What is the evidence for our prioritized barriers?</i></p> <p>Do This: List the evidence you have that these are indeed barriers. (How do we know what we know?)</p> <p>If the evidence does not support this as a prioritized barrier, note that here. Proceed to the next prioritized barrier or return to brainstorming and prioritization for the next verification.</p> <p>Consider: If unsure, collect additional evidence to verify the barrier, if existing evidence is absent or inadequate.</p>	<p><i>Key Question: What are some possible actions to remove the prioritized barriers?</i></p> <p>Do This: Brainstorm potential short- and long-term action steps for removing identified barriers.</p> <p>Consider: These can be used to help in the action planning process.</p>

Identifying & Prioritizing Barriers Worksheet

1. Leveled Question: Summarize Current Reality	2. Identify Potential Barriers	3. Prioritize 2-3 Barriers	4. Verify Prioritized Barriers	5. Remove Barriers (Notes for Action Planning)
<p>Building Block Priority #1</p> <p>Leveled Question: Click here to enter text.</p> <p>Current Reality: Click here to enter text.</p>	<p>Click here to enter text.</p>	<p>Potential Barrier #1: Click here to enter text.</p> <p>Potential Barrier #2: Click here to enter text.</p> <p>Potential Barrier #3: Click here to enter text.</p>	<p>Evidence #1: Click here to enter text.</p> <p>Verified (Y or N)?: Click here to enter text.</p> <p>Evidence #2: Click here to enter text.</p> <p>Verified (Y or N)?: Click here to enter text.</p> <p>Evidence #3: Click here to enter text.</p> <p>Verified (Y or N)?: Click here to enter text.</p>	<p>Potential Short-Term Action Steps: Click here to enter text.</p> <p>Potential Long-Term Action Steps:: Click here to enter text.</p>
<p>Building Block Priority #2</p> <p>Leveled Question: Click here to enter text.</p> <p>Current Reality: Click here to enter text.</p>	<p>Click here to enter text.</p>	<p>Potential Barrier #1: Click here to enter text.</p> <p>Potential Barrier #2: Click here to enter text.</p> <p>Potential Barrier #3: Click here to enter text.</p>	<p>Evidence #1: Click here to enter text.</p> <p>Verified (Y or N)?: Click here to enter text.</p> <p>Evidence #2: Click here to enter text.</p>	<p>Potential Short-Term Action Steps: Click here to enter text.</p> <p>Potential Long-Term Action Steps:: Click here to enter text.</p>

1. Leveled Question: Summarize Current Reality	2. Identify Potential Barriers	3. Prioritize 2-3 Barriers	4. Verify Prioritized Barriers	5. Remove Barriers (Notes for Action Planning)
			<p>Verified (Y or N)?: Click here to enter text.</p> <p>Evidence #3: Click here to enter text.</p> <p>Verified (Y or N)?: Click here to enter text.</p>	
<p>Building Block Priority #3</p> <p>Leveled Question: Click here to enter text.</p> <p>Current Reality: Click here to enter text.</p>	<p>Click here to enter text.</p>	<p>Potential Barrier #1: Click here to enter text.</p> <p>Potential Barrier #2: Click here to enter text.</p> <p>Potential Barrier #3: Click here to enter text.</p>	<p>Evidence #1: Click here to enter text.</p> <p>Verified (Y or N)?: Click here to enter text.</p> <p>Evidence #2: Click here to enter text.</p> <p>Verified (Y or N)?: Click here to enter text.</p> <p>Evidence #3: Click here to enter text.</p> <p>Verified (Y or N)?: Click here to enter text.</p>	<p>Potential Short-Term Action Steps: Click here to enter text.</p> <p>Potential Long-Term Action Steps:: Click here to enter text.</p>

Now it is time to take your prioritized barriers and begin work on Question D3:

Question D3: How will Universal Tier needs be addressed?

You will need to develop an action plan to remove those barriers, and to monitor the impact on practice and student outcomes.

APPENDIX A. PRE-K LEVEL 1 QUESTIONS WORKSHEETS

1. INSTRUCTIONAL TIME/OPPORTUNITIES

The focus of this question is about the systemic issues that impact the schedule. This is also making sure purposeful planning occurs to ensure that learners have frequent opportunities to practice and to receive feedback to support growth and development in the Iowa Early Learning Standards area of Communication, Language, and Literacy. Effective literacy instruction requires specific time in which instruction takes place, which can be linked to other activities. The schedule should be constructed with the intentional and explicit purpose of providing opportunities to promote literacy skills.

OVERVIEW

Level 1 Question: Is there a clear schedule and lesson plans that are connected?

Potential Data Source(s):

- Review master schedule
 - Review teacher schedules
 - Lesson plans
-

SUB-STEPS

1. Determine which schedules to review
2. Gather information on lesson plans
3. Review at least five lessons plans per classroom
4. Determine if all classrooms in the program or district meet criteria

Sub-Step 1 – Determine which schedules to review

Notes:

[Click here to enter text.](#)

Think about...

Is there a master schedule that is recognized by the program or district administrators?

Is there a teacher schedule that conforms to the master schedule?

Sub-Step 2 – Gather information on lesson plans

Notes:

[Click here to enter text.](#)

Think about...

Are there daily or weekly lesson plans?

Do the lesson plans include sufficient information to determine if activities address literacy curriculum goals?

Sub-Step 3 – Review at least five lessons plans per classroom

- Randomly select the lesson plans
- Make note if the lessons are clearly connected to the master schedule

Classroom	Notes on Lesson Plans
<i>Example</i>	<i>All five lesson plans reviewed distributed literacy learning opportunities within routines as well as dedicated learning times. Although it could have been clearer, it appears that all lessons connected pretty tightly with the schedule and would provide frequent literacy learning opportunities.</i>
Classroom A	Click here to enter text.
Classroom B	Click here to enter text.
Classroom C	Click here to enter text.
Classroom D	Click here to enter text.
Classroom E	Click here to enter text.
Classroom F	Click here to enter text.

Sub-Step 4 – Determine if all classrooms in the program or district meet criteria

Notes:

[Click here to enter text.](#)

Criteria

100% of classrooms should have all lessons connected to the master schedule.

Yes	No
Continue to next Building Block	Are criteria not met at <input type="checkbox"/> System-Level <input type="checkbox"/> Classroom-Level Transfer results to Step 5: Prioritizing Universal Tier practices. Continue to next Building Block.

If you find that most classrooms in the program do not meet criteria, consider a systems-level action plan to remove barriers. If only a few classrooms do not meet criteria, classroom-level actions may be successful at removing barriers.

2. CURRICULUM/ INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS & ENVIRONMENT

This question is about ensuring a program has one or more curricula that addresses early literacy and that is evidence-based. Effective literacy instruction is based on a clear, written curriculum that is designed to promote growth and development around targeted literacy learning goals. Evidence-based means the curriculum has been examined by researchers and there is some scientific evidence to show their effectiveness. The curricula used should address all the standards and benchmarks the Communication, Language and Literacy area of the Iowa Early Learning Standards. Teachers need to have sufficient professional development about the curriculum and how to use it. Curricula may include supplemental materials. The teacher guides the use of instructional materials across the school day and throughout the year.

OVERVIEW

Level 1 Question: Do you have evidence-based curricula that address the Iowa Early Learning Standards area of Communication, Language, and Literacy?

Potential Data Source(s):

- Research Review
- Alignment Review

SUB-STEPS

1. Determine all curricula used (including supplemental curriculum) in the preschool program.
2. Verify curricula materials are available in the classroom for teaching staff to use on a daily basis.
3. Verify that curricula are evidence-based.
4. Verify that curricula address all the standards and benchmarks from the Communication, Language and Literacy area of the Iowa Early Learning Standards,
5. Verify that the curricula provide a guide for decision making about content, instructional methods, and assessment.
6. Determine if all classrooms in the program or district meet criteria.

Sub-Steps 1-5 – Use the table on the next page to complete Steps 1-5. List all literacy curricula used (including supplemental) and document how it addresses the Iowa Early Learning Standards area of Communication, Language, and Literacy.

Notes:

Click here to enter text.

Think about...

Are all teachers trained to use the materials?

Iowa Administrative Code (281.16.2) defines curriculum as: a research-based or evidence-based written framework that is comprehensive, addresses the needs of the whole child, and provides a guide for decision making about content, instructional methods, and assessment.

The standards and benchmarks from the Communication, Language and Literacy area of the Iowa Early Learning Standards can be found at <https://www.educateiowa.gov/documents/early-childhood/2014/10/iowa-early-learning-standards-2012>

	Literacy Curriculum used -List all used	Are curricula materials available to teaching staff in the classroom on a daily basis? Y/N	Are the listed curricula evidence based? Y/N (Cite source of review information and criteria used in the review)	Do the listed curricula address the relevant benchmarks in the IELS? Y/N (Cite source of review information and criteria used in the review)	Do the listed curricula provide a guide for decision making about content, instructional methods, and assessment? Y/N
Classroom A	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.
Classroom B	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.
Classroom C	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.
Classroom D	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.
Classroom E	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.

Sub-Step 6 – Determine if all classrooms in the program or district meet criteria

Notes:

[Click here to enter text.](#)

Criteria

100% of classrooms should have answered “Yes” in the table for all steps.

Yes	No
Continue to next Building Block	Are criteria not met at <input type="checkbox"/> System-Level <input type="checkbox"/> Classroom-Level Transfer results to Step 5: Prioritizing Universal Tier practices. Continue to next Building Block.

If you find that most classrooms in the program do not meet criteria, consider a systems-level action plan to remove barriers. If only a few classrooms do not meet criteria, classroom-level actions may be successful at removing barriers.

3. LITERACY INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES & DIFFERENTIATION

This question is about using evidence-based instructional strategies that support learning goals from the literacy curriculum (see the Curriculum/Instruction Materials & Environment Building Block), grounded in the Iowa Early Learning Standards area of Communication, Language, and Literacy. **Evidence-based** means the instructional strategies, have been examined by researchers and there is some scientific evidence to show their effectiveness in promoting child growth and development in communication, language and literacy. These strategies should represent a broad repertoire of instructional practices to address all the skill and knowledge areas necessary to provide a foundation for literacy proficiency.

OVERVIEW

Level 1 Question: Do teaching staff use evidence-based instructional strategies to promote children’s growth and development in all of the Iowa Early Learning Standards area of Communication, Language, and Literacy?

Potential Data Source(s):

- Review lesson plans
 - Interview teachers
 - Classroom observation
-

SUB-STEPS

1. Determine literacy strategies used by examining lesson plans, teachers’ notes and classroom observation
2. Categorize evidence-based instructional strategies being used with appropriate Iowa Early Learning Standards and Benchmarks:
3. Gather information on frequency of use in classrooms by recording on the provided form.
4. Determine if all classrooms in the preschool meet criteria.

Sub-Step 1 – Determine literacy strategies used

Notes:

[Click here to enter text.](#)

Think about...

Are there daily or weekly lesson plans?

Do the lesson plans include sufficient information to determine if activities address literacy curriculum goals?

Sub-Step 2 – Categorize evidence-based instructional strategies being used with appropriate Iowa Early Learning Standards and Benchmarks.

Notes:

[Click here to enter text.](#)

Think about...

Examples of evidence-based instructional strategies

Language Understanding and Use:

-Write children’s words and read them back together

-Ask and encourage interesting questions

Early Literacy:

-Interactive/Shared Book Reading

-Story Retelling- with familiar story or book

Early Writing:

-Give children reasons to write and a variety of materials to write with

-Provide models and supports for writing

Other strategies (use in any area):

-Modeling

-Scaffolding

Language Understanding and Use	Early Literacy	Early Writing
Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.
Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.
Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.

Sub-Step 3 - Gather information on frequency of use in classrooms.

Notes:

[Click here to enter text.](#)

Think about...

This is about teachers using a range of evidence-based instructional strategies on a daily basis throughout a week

Using a range of practices is part of good differentiation.

	Language Understanding and Use					Early Literacy					Early Writing				
	M	T	W	Th	F	M	T	W	Th	F	M	T	W	Th	F
<i>Example</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Classroom A	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Classroom B	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Classroom C	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Classroom D	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Classroom E	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Sub-Step 4 – Determine if all classrooms in the program or district meet criteria

Notes:

[Click here to enter text.](#)

Criteria

100% of classrooms should use at least one evidence-based instructional strategy for each of the three Iowa Early Learning Standards (Language Understanding and Use, Early Literacy, Early Writing) daily.

Yes	No
Continue to next Building Block	Are criteria not met at <input type="checkbox"/> System-Level <input type="checkbox"/> Classroom-Level Transfer results to Step 5: Prioritizing Universal Tier practices. Continue to next Building Block.

If you find that most classrooms in the program do not meet criteria, consider a systems-level action plan to remove barriers. If only a few classrooms do not meet criteria, classroom-level actions may be successful at removing barriers.

4. PLAY AND LITERACY

This is about providing children with opportunities to play that address curriculum goals (see Curriculum/Instruction Materials & Environment) Building Block. Play is a natural, authentic way for children to learn. It involves voluntary, intrinsically motivated that are typically done for fun (Garvey, 1990). Play is an activity that involves the interaction of a learner with his/her environment and/or materials. It can also include interaction with other learners, including the teacher. Because play is fundamental and essential in the healthy development of children, and supports growth across all domains, it is a necessary part of literacy instruction. However as schedules and lesson plans are designed, there should be time set aside for open-ended, child-initiated play. That time can also be used to promote development of literacy knowledge and skills through careful planning and powerful interactions (Dombro, Jablon & Stetson, 2011) but only by maintaining the integrity of the play experience. Teachers can emphasize the importance of play in learning by integrating the development of literacy skills and knowledge.

OVERVIEW

Level 1 Question: Do teaching staff provide opportunities for open-ended, child-initiated, indoor and outdoor play to promote children’s growth and development in all of the Iowa Early Learning Standards area of Communication, Language, and Literacy?

Potential Data Source(s):

- Review master schedule
 - Review lesson plans
 - Interview teachers
 - Classroom observation
-

SUB-STEPS

1. Determine if the schedule allows for daily open-ended, indoor and outdoor, child-initiated play.
2. Determine whether children are playing on a daily basis in activities that promote learning or practice of literacy-based skills.
3. Determine if all classrooms in the preschool meet the criteria.

Sub-Step 1 – Determine if the schedule allows for daily open-ended, indoor and outdoor, child-initiated play.

Notes:

[Click here to enter text.](#)

Think about...

Does the curriculum, schedule, and lesson plans include opportunities for open-ended, indoor and outdoor, child-initiated play

Open-ended play allows children to discover, explore, and create with a variety of materials that support learning and few limitations.

Using a range of practices is part of good differentiation.

Sub-Step 2 – Determine whether children are playing on a daily basis in activities that promote learning or practice of literacy-based skills.

Notes:

[Click here to enter text.](#)

Think about...

Weather-related reasons for not playing outside are ok; that should not negatively count in this examination.

Observation should occur for at least one week. Consider randomly selecting days across multiple weeks.

What kind of activities do children engage in that promote learning or practice of literacy-based skills?

Do the play activities children participate in provide opportunities to learn and practice literacy-based skills?

	Open-ended, Indoor & Outdoor, Child Initiated Play?					Notes
	M	T	W	Th	F	
<i>Example</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	<i>Children played on the playground M, W, and F. They played in the gym on T and Th. Children played in the classroom all five days. Time ranged from 5-20 minutes. It was a mixture of child- and adult-initiated each day. It was a mixture of literacy learning and social learning.</i>
Classroom A	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Click here to enter text.
Classroom B	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Click here to enter text.
Classroom C	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Click here to enter text.
Classroom D	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Click here to enter text.
Classroom E	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Click here to enter text.

Sub-Step 3 – Determine if all classrooms in the program or district meet criteria

Notes:

[Click here to enter text.](#)

Criteria

100% of classrooms should provide daily, open-ended, indoor and outdoor, child-initiated play to promote learning in the Iowa Early Learning Standards (Language Understanding and Use, Early Literacy, Early Writing).

Yes	No
Continue to next Building Block	Are criteria not met at <input type="checkbox"/> System-Level <input type="checkbox"/> Classroom-Level Transfer results to Step 5: Prioritizing Universal Tier practices. Continue to next Building Block.

If you find that most classrooms in the program do not meet criteria, consider a systems-level action plan to remove barriers. If only a few classrooms do not meet criteria, classroom-level actions may be successful at removing barriers.

5. ASSESSMENT FOR LEARNING

This question is about teachers collecting evidence of child learning using formative assessment practices. So much of early childhood education is about exposure and experiences related to a variety of topics and skill areas, so assessment in this area is focused on determining how children are developing and how that development matches typical age expectations. Since most goals are not a single achievement but a continuum of development, measuring growth is essential and serves as an indicator of success. Effective literacy instruction is shaped by data about what children are learning. The data measures children's progression of skills based on the Iowa Early Learning Standards (IELS) Communication, Language and Literacy Area. These data should be collected on a daily basis. It is a way to assess each and every child's strengths, interests, and needs. Measuring a child's growth and development is the way we know how they are progressing relative to curriculum goals. Sources of daily assessment information could include written observations, video or audio recordings, work samples, photos, anecdotal records, family information, universal screening and other assessment data. The collection of daily information is not bound to a single test or tool, but rather a planned and ongoing process.

OVERVIEW

Level 1 Question: Do teaching staff collect daily evidence to determine progressions of children's growth and development based on curriculum goals grounded in the Iowa Early Learning Standards area of Communication, Language, and Literacy?

Potential Data Source(s):

- Review documentation
- Review recording tools or system for collecting daily evidence;
- Interview teachers

SUB-STEPS

1. Gather documentation regarding the collection of evidence of children's growth and development?
2. Determine whether documentation to measure progress of children's growth and development addresses all of the benchmarks in the IELS Communication, Language, and Literacy Area.
3. Gather information on the frequency of data being collected.
4. Determine if the criteria for scope and frequency covered by the data collection processes are met for each classroom.

Sub-Step 1 – Gather documentation regarding the collection of evidence of children’s growth and development?

Notes:

[Click here to enter text.](#)

Think about...

Is information about learner development collected?

If so, what kind of information is it?

Is the information linked to the IELS Communication, Language, and Literacy Area?

Sub-Step 2 - Determine whether documentation to measure progress of children’s growth and development addresses all of the benchmarks in the IELS Communication, Language, and Literacy Area.

Use this form to document the frequency of collecting formative assessment data each day for one week. Place a check mark next to the benchmark on the appropriate day if formative assessment data are collected for it that day. Add the number of checkmarks for each benchmark at the end of the week. Complete a form for each classroom separately.

Area 11: Communication, Language, and Literacy						
11.1 Language Understanding and Use	Children understand and use communication and language for a variety of purposes.					
Benchmarks	M	T	W	Th	F	Total
<i>Example: Children understand and use communication and language for a variety of purposes.</i>	✓	✓	☐	✓	☐	Click here to enter text.
Demonstrates a steady increase in listening (receptive language) and speaking (expressive language) vocabulary.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Click here to enter text.

Initiates, listens, and responds in relationship to the topics of conversations with peers and adults.	<input type="checkbox"/>	Click here to enter text.				
Speaks in phrases and sentences of increasing length and complexity.	<input type="checkbox"/>	Click here to enter text.				
Follows oral directions that involve several actions.	<input type="checkbox"/>	Click here to enter text.				
Asks and answers a variety of questions.	<input type="checkbox"/>	Click here to enter text.				
Demonstrates knowledge of the rules of conversations such as taking turns while speaking.	<input type="checkbox"/>	Click here to enter text.				
<i>The child, who is an English language learner, also:</i>						
Uses their home language to communicate with people who speak the same home language.	<input type="checkbox"/>	Click here to enter text.				
Demonstrates receptive (listening) English language skills to be able to comprehend the English language.	<input type="checkbox"/>	Click here to enter text.				
Demonstrates expressive (speaking) English language skills to build speaking capabilities in English.	<input type="checkbox"/>	Click here to enter text.				
Demonstrates engagement in English literacy activities to be able to understand and respond to books, storytelling, and songs presented in English.	<input type="checkbox"/>	Click here to enter text.				

Area 11: Communication, Language, and Literacy						
11.2 Early Literacy	Children engage in early reading experiences.					
Benchmarks	M	T	W	Th	F	Total
Expresses an interest and enjoyment in listening to books and attempts to read familiar books.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Click here to enter text.
Displays book handling knowledge (e.g., turning the book right side up, using left to right sweep, turning one page at a time, and recognizing familiar books by cover).	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Click here to enter text.
Shows an awareness of environmental print such as pointing to familiar words or letters.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Click here to enter text.
Identifies some alphabet letters by their shapes, especially those in his or her own name.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Click here to enter text.
Recognizes the printed form of his or her name in a variety of contexts.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Click here to enter text.
Shows increasing comprehension of a story through retelling the story and/or recognizing story elements such as the plot or characters.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Click here to enter text.
Demonstrates awareness that language is made up of words, parts of words, and sounds in words.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Click here to enter text.

Area 11: Communication, Language, and Literacy						
11.3 Early Writing	Children engage in early writing experiences.					
Benchmarks	M	T	W	Th	F	Total
Attempts to communicate with others using scribbles, shapes, pictures, and/or letters in writing.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Click here to enter text.
Experiments with a variety of writing tools such as pencils, crayons, brushes, and chalk.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Click here to enter text.
Uses expressive (speaking) language to share intended meaning of drawings and writing.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Click here to enter text.
Starts to demonstrate interest in learning to write letters, especially the letters in his/her name.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Click here to enter text.

Sub-Step 3 - Gather information on the frequency of data being collected.

Notes:

[Click here to enter text.](#)

Think about...

How often teachers observe and collect evidence of children’s growth and development based on the Communication, Language and Literacy area of the IELS?

Data on each of the IELS benchmarks does not need to be collected every day; however, documentation needs to be collected for each of the three standards on a daily basis.

The data collected in Step 2 provide specific information about scope and frequency of data collected for the purpose of assessment. Use the form below to summarize your conclusions after analyzing the table above, noting where frequency of data collection is not adequate.

IELS Communication, Language and Literacy Standards	Notes on the frequency of data being collected
11.1 Language understanding & use Children understand and use communication and language for a variety of purposes.	Click here to enter text.
11.2 Early Literacy Children engage in early reading experiences.	Click here to enter text.
11.3 Early Writing Children engage in early writing experiences.	Click here to enter text.

Sub-Step 4 – Determine if all classrooms in the program or district meet criteria

Notes:

[Click here to enter text.](#)

Criteria

100% of classrooms should collect evidence of learner development relative to curriculum goals, grounded in the IELS in Standards (Language Understanding and Use, Early Literacy, Early Writing) on a daily basis.

Yes	No
Continue to next Building Block	Are criteria not met at <input type="checkbox"/> System-Level <input type="checkbox"/> Classroom-Level Transfer results to Step 5: Prioritizing Universal Tier practices. Continue to next Building Block.

If you find that most classrooms in the program do not meet criteria, consider a systems-level action plan to remove barriers. If only a few classrooms do not meet criteria, classroom-level actions may be successful at removing barriers.

6. COLLABORATIVE LITERACY SUPPORT

This question is about the extent to which preschool programs engage families and other caregivers. To foster the literacy development of their children, teachers and preschool programs need to create specific opportunities for engagement by these individuals. Opportunities could be simple strategies for parents such as talking with children, singing songs, and sharing stories. It could involve opportunities or encouragement to read to children, take a child to the library. Family members can be encouraged to co-teach key ideas by reinforcing key vocabulary taught in the classroom. It is important to consider opportunities across settings (home, classroom, wider community). Parent-teacher conferences and other communication should emphasize the shared nature of literacy instruction, the expectation by the program that parents/caregivers will support literacy through suggested opportunities. Teaching staff should offer support and training to family members and caregivers to help them fulfill their role. Opportunities to volunteer in the classroom should also be provided. Attention should also be paid to the literacy level of individual family members and actions taken to refer them to services to support their own literacy development.

OVERVIEW

Level 1 Question: Are families and other caregivers offered a variety of opportunities--at home, in the classroom, and in the wider community--to be engaged as partners in their child's literacy skill acquisition?

Potential Data Source(s):

- Review preschool literacy and/or collaboration plans
- Review meeting minutes and sign-in sheets
- Leadership team discussion
- Interview teachers, parents/caregivers

SUB-STEPS

1. Inventory all current and potential opportunities to support literacy development the program can provide to parents and family members.
2. Complete the *Literacy Support Opportunities Checklist*.
3. Determine how teaching staff communicate with families on a regular basis.
4. Determine whether program collects and uses family engagement data from at home and in classrooms activities that support literacy.
5. Determine if all classrooms in the program or district meet criteria

Sub-Step 1 – Inventory all current and potential opportunities to support literacy development the program can provide to parents and family members.

Notes:

Click here to enter text.

Think about...

Determine if opportunities include all settings (home, caregiver settings, classroom, and community).

Examples:

Home-based: backpack activities, handouts, newsletters, websites, how to talk to children, how to read dialogically with children, literacy-related games, educational media

Classroom-based: family nights focused on literacy, volunteers during center time

Community-based: library story-time, science centers, museums, playdates, family-oriented community events (concerts, festivals, etc.), playgroups.

Opportunity	In-home/ caregiver settings	In classroom	In community
<i>Example: Singing bedtime songs</i>	✓		
Click here to enter text.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Click here to enter text.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Click here to enter text.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Click here to enter text.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Click here to enter text.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Click here to enter text.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Click here to enter text.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Sub-Step 2 - Complete the *Literacy Support Opportunities Checklist*

Notes:

[Click here to enter text.](#)

Think about...

Locate program guidance and policies about parent/caregiver involvement before completing the checklist

Literacy Support Opportunities Checklist

Guidance for programs (check all that apply)

Do you provide guidance for how parents or other family members can do the following?:

- talk regularly with children in extended conversation
- sing songs with child
- share stories with children
- spend time asking questions and listening to children
- read to children in engaging ways
- get a library card
- visit the library regularly
- reinforce key vocabulary words used in the classroom
- play word games
- support ongoing use and development in home language (if not English)

Program policies (check all that apply)

Does your program have policies that do the following?:

- encourage parents to volunteer in the classroom
- require some minimum level of regular communication with parents
- communicate with parents about the assessment results
- systematically gather information about families including their literacy skills

Sub-Step 3 - Determine how teaching staff communicate with families on a regular basis

Notes:

Click here to enter text.

Think about...

Locate documentation of all communication methods before completing the checklist

Communication (check all that apply)

Does your communication with parents and other families members include the following?:

Communication Method	Used by teacher/ program	Include messages about family role in supporting literacy?	Include messages about literacy opportunities?
a regularly updated website	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
at least one home visit	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
at least two parent-teacher conferences	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
a weekly note or email sent home	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
a verbal exchange with each parent at drop-off or pick-up at least once a month	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other: Click here to enter text.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Sub-Step 4 - Determine whether program collects and uses family engagement data from at home and in classrooms activities that support literacy.

Notes:

[Click here to enter text.](#)

Think about...

Locate documentation of all family engagement data before completing the checklist

Determining and using engagement data (check all that apply)

- Does your program determine the level of engagement of parents in supporting literacy
 - when they volunteer in the classroom?
 - at home?
- Do your program use the engagement information to identify families where engagement is low and support those families to be more involved?

Sub-Step 5 – Determine if all classrooms in the program or district meet criteria

Notes:

[Click here to enter text.](#)

Criteria

The program meets the 100% of the minimum number of parent/caregiver engagement opportunities (items checked requirements).

Checklist Section	Minimum number of items checked
Guidance for programs	5
Program policies	2
Communication	3 items, all using both messages of literacy involvement and literacy opportunities.
Determining and using engagement data	1

Yes	No
Continue to next Building Block	<p>Are criteria not met at</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> System-Level <input type="checkbox"/> Classroom-Level <p>Transfer results to Step 5: Prioritizing Universal Tier practices.</p> <p>Continue to K-6 if applicable. Otherwise continue to Step 5.</p>

If you find that most classrooms in the program do not meet criteria, consider a systems-level action plan to remove barriers. If only a few classrooms do not meet criteria, classroom-level actions may be successful at removing barriers.

APPENDIX B. PRE-K LEVEL 2 QUESTIONS WORKSHEETS

1. INSTRUCTIONAL TIME/OPPORTUNITIES

This question is about: 1) ensuring that the time scheduled for literacy activities meets a minimum standard; and 2) maintaining fidelity to the amount of time scheduled for literacy activities in the classroom. Learning requires repeated exposure and opportunities to practice and use new skills. Literacy activities are defined as activities embedded throughout the day that allow children opportunities to have experiences with all of the Iowa Early Learning Standards for Communication, Language and Literacy. Programs should not take time away from literacy activities and instruction to do other things such as assemblies, fire drills, specials (music, physical education, etc.), or other actions. Nor should this time be reduced because of late starts or early dismissals.

OVERVIEW

Level 2 Question: Are literacy opportunities planned for at least 60 minutes daily per half day program (90 minutes for a full day program)?

Potential Data Source(s):

- Review master schedule
- Review teacher schedules
- Lesson plans
- Interview teachers
- Classroom observation

SUB-STEPS

1. Gather scheduling information.
2. Record literacy scheduling results on the data collection form.
3. Observe classroom for embedded literacy activities--child-guided and adult-guided.
4. Determine if all preschool classrooms in the program or district meet criteria.

Sub-Step 1 – Gather scheduling information.

Notes:

[Click here to enter text.](#)

Think about...

Information may be found in the master schedule, individual classrooms schedules, or lesson plans.

What happens to the literacy block schedule in the following situations?

- Late start/early dismissal
- Assemblies
- Daily Announcements
- Specials (parties, field trips, etc.)
- Drills (fire, tornado, disaster)

Sub-Step 2 – Record literacy scheduling results on the data collection form.

Notes:

[Click here to enter text.](#)

Think about...

Have you captured all instances of literacy learning opportunities?

The purpose is to assess how much time is provided for literacy in schedules and lesson plans.

Literacy learning opportunities include activities embedded throughout the day that allow children opportunities to have experiences with all of the Iowa Early Learning Standards for Communication, Language and Literacy

Classroom	Minutes / Day	Notes on scheduled literacy learning opportunities
<i>Example</i>	<i>60 min / part-day* Jones</i>	<i>Literacy activities are often embedded in other learning activities, but 15 minutes / day are exclusively for shared book reading.</i>
Classroom A	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.
Classroom B	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.
Classroom C	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.
Classroom D	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.
Classroom E	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.
Classroom F	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.

*for full-day programs use 90 minutes.

Sub-Step 3 – Observe classroom for embedded literacy activities--child-guided and adult-guided.

Notes:

Click here to enter text.

Think about...

Are both kinds of activities (child-guided and adult-guided) should be planned and supported during the classroom day?

Literacy is promoted in the classroom through a wide variety of books, pictures, and literacy materials that are available for a substantial portion of the day based on the schedule or made clear in the lesson plans (i.e., where children are and what they are doing).

Classroom	Number of child-guided literacy activities	Number of adult-guided literacy activities	Descriptions
<i>Example</i>	3	3	<i>Child-guided: Acting out a story with flannel board Adult-guided: Reading a book to a small group of children</i>
Classroom A	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.
Classroom B	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.
Classroom C	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.
Classroom D	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.
Classroom E	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.
Classroom F	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.

Sub-Step 4 –Determine if all preschool classrooms in the program or district meet criteria.

Notes:

[Click here to enter text.](#)

Criteria

100% of classrooms 90 minutes / day (Full Day Programs);

60 minutes / day (Half / Partial Day Programs)

Yes	No
Continue to next Building Block	Are criteria not met at <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> System-Level <input type="checkbox"/> Classroom-Level Transfer results to Step 5: Prioritizing Universal Tier practices. Continue to next Building Block.

If you find that most classrooms in the program do not meet criteria, consider a systems-level action plan to remove barriers. If only a few classrooms do not meet criteria, classroom-level actions may be successful at removing barriers.

2. CURRICULUM/ INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS & ENVIRONMENT

This question is about literacy instruction that includes a literacy rich classroom environment that promotes literacy learning. The Early Learning Standards should drive the selection of developmentally appropriate material and activities. The environment needs to support the development of skills for all children through intentional planning and implementation. A literacy rich environment includes: access to a variety of books, writing materials in all centers and writing opportunities throughout the program day, print rich environment, display of the alphabet at eye level, access to a library center with books within a child’s reach, and rich conversations throughout the program day. The materials in the classroom need to be in good condition, varied, and there needs to be enough materials to rotate in and out of the classroom as children’s wants and needs dictate. Materials should also be developmentally, individually and culturally appropriate so they fit the population of children in the classroom.

OVERVIEW

Level 2 Question: Are all of the classrooms offering a literacy-rich environment that includes instructional materials and activities that promote the language, communication, and literacy area of the Iowa Early Learning Standards?

Potential Data Source(s):

- Program Standards reports and/or portfolios
- Early Childhood Environmental Rating Scales-R (ECERS-R) or ECERS-E-literacy
- Curriculum checklists
- Classroom observation
- Lesson Plans
- Fidelity Checklists

SUB-STEPS

1. Determine all data sources needed to assess a classroom for offering a literacy-rich classroom environment
2. Use the data sources to assess classroom environment, materials, and activities
3. Determine if all preschool classrooms in the program or district meet criteria.

Sub-Step 1 – Determine all data sources needed to assess a classroom for offering a literacy-rich classroom environment

Notes:

[Click here to enter text.](#)

Think about...

Possible sources of data on materials/environment:

- Iowa Quality Preschool Program Standards (IQPPS) verification/desk audit information or NAEYC accreditation visit information (e.g., reports, portfolio items, etc.)
- Early Childhood Environmental Rating Scales (ECERS)
- Early Language and Literacy Classroom Observation (ELLCO)
- Teacher Interview
- Creative Curriculum Literacy Checklist
- Developmentally Appropriate Practice (DAP) materials
- Fidelity Implementation Tools

Sub-Step 2 – Use the data sources to assess classroom environment, materials, and activities

Notes:

[Click here to enter text.](#)

Think about...

Are the materials adequate to support a literacy-rich environment?

How literacy-rich is the classroom environment?

How broadly do literacy activities address the Iowa Early Learning Standards for Communication, Language and Literacy?

Assessing Literacy Materials
 (Indicate “Yes” if most materials meet the criteria.)

Literacy Instructional Materials:						
	Good Condition	Good Variety	Sufficient Quantity	Age Appropriate	Culturally Appropriate	Individually Appropriate
<i>Example:</i>	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	N
Classroom A	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.
Classroom B	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.
Classroom C	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.
Classroom D	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.
Classroom E	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.

Notes:

Click here to enter text.

Assessing Literacy Richness
 (Indicate “Yes” if most materials meet the criteria.)

	Posted Alphabet (at child’s eye level)	Child Name Labels	Item Labels	Writing samples
<i>Example</i>	<i>Y</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>Y</i>	<i>N</i>
Classroom A	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.
Classroom B	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.
Classroom C	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.
Classroom D	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.
Classroom E	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.

Notes:

Click here to enter text.

Assessing Literacy Activities (aligned to curricula and IELS)
 (Indicate “Yes” if most of the benchmarks are included)

	Activities Aligned to curriculum	Language Understanding and Use	Early Literacy	Early Writing
<i>Example</i>	<i>Y</i>	<i>Y</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>Y</i>
Classroom A	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.
Classroom B	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.
Classroom C	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.
Classroom D	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.
Classroom E	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.

Notes:

Click here to enter text.

Sub-Step 3 – Determine if all preschool classrooms in the program or district meet criteria.

Notes:

Click here to enter text.

Criteria

- a. Materials criterion: Most are in good condition, good variety, sufficient quantity, developmentally appropriate, age appropriate, culturally appropriate
- b. Literacy richness criterion: Three of the four environmental print items are present
- c. Activities criterion: Most of the activities are aligned to the curriculum and address the Communication, Language and Literacy Area of the IELS.

Yes	No
Continue to next Building Block	Are criteria not met at <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> System-Level <input type="checkbox"/> Classroom-Level Transfer results to Step 5: Prioritizing Universal Tier practices. Continue to next Building Block.

If you find that most classrooms in the program do not meet criteria, consider a systems-level action plan to remove barriers. If only a few classrooms do not meet criteria, classroom-level actions may be successful at removing barriers.

3. LITERACY INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES & DIFFERENTIATION

This question is about differentiated instruction. Differentiation at the universal tier involves minimizing whole group instruction to provide more time for flexible, small group instruction. The focus of small group instruction should span each of the Iowa Early Learning Standards: 1) Language Understanding and Use; 2) Early Literacy; and 3) Early Writing. Small group instruction means using children’s interests, strengths, and needs to form flexible small groups with a variety of intentionally, teacher-planned instruction. Differentiated small group instruction includes instruction that is: a) explicit, intentional, purposeful, and targets important content, b) promotes active child involvement, c) progresses logically so that key concepts and skills are delineated and d) modeled, along with opportunities to respond and practice. While a classroom’s small groups may have a common focus (e.g., phonological awareness), specific lessons may vary to meet varied learner needs. Rotating the entire class through small groups with the same lesson/activity, is not an example differentiation.

OVERVIEW

Level 2 Question: Do teaching staff differentiate by providing flexible, small-group literacy instruction to meet the group and individual interests, strengths, and needs focusing on the Iowa Early Learning Standards?

Potential Data Source(s):

- Classroom schedule
- Lesson plans
- Interviews
- Classroom observation

SUB-STEPS

1. Review class schedules to determine if small group instruction occurs on a daily basis.
2. Review small group lesson plans for a literacy focus on each of the three Iowa Early Learning Standards.
3. Review small group lesson plans to see if they are differentiated and varied.
4. Determine if all preschool classrooms in the program or district meet criteria.

Sub-Step 1 – Review class schedules to determine if small group instruction occurs on a daily basis.

Notes:

Click here to enter text.

Think about...

Where are the schedules kept?
Collect all of them before trying to complete this step.

How will you consistently determine if small group instructional time is part of the schedule? Consider randomly selecting days across multiple weeks.

Record whether or not small group instruction is being provided per classroom session.

	Monday	Tuesday	Wed.	Thurs.	Fri.
<i>Example: Classroom 1</i>	<i>Yes</i>	<i>Yes</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>Yes</i>	<i>No children</i>
Classroom A	Click here to enter text.				
Classroom B	Click here to enter text.				
Classroom C	Click here to enter text.				
Classroom D	Click here to enter text.				
Classroom E	Click here to enter text.				

Sub-Step 2 – Review small group lesson plans for a literacy focus on each of the three Iowa Early Learning Standards.

Notes:

[Click here to enter text.](#)

Think about...

Randomly select at least 5 lesson plans per teacher for this review process.

Does the preschool have a method of documenting, differentiated small group instruction?

If not, can teachers/service providers describe ways they provide differentiated, small group instruction?

Is the small group instructional focus on one of the Iowa Early Learning Standards (i.e., Language Understanding and Use; Early Literacy; Early Writing)?

	Language Understanding and Use					Early Literacy					Early Writing				
	M	T	W	Th	F	M	T	W	Th	F	M	T	W	Th	F
Classroom A	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Classroom B	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Classroom C	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Classroom D	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Classroom E	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Sub-Step 3 - Review small group lesson plans to see if they are differentiated and varied.

Notes:

[Click here to enter text.](#)

Think about...

Key elements of differentiated instruction include:
 a) explicit, intentional, purposeful, and targeting important content,
 b) promotes active child involvement,
 c) progresses logically so that key concepts and skills and competencies are delineated
 d) modeled, along with opportunities to respond and practice.

	Literacy Focus:	Small Group 1	Small Group 2	Small Group 3
<i>Example:</i>	<i>Early Literacy:</i>	<i>Story Retelling Role Play with narration by adult</i>	<i>Story Retelling w/ flannel board</i>	<i>Story Retelling w/ book</i>
Classroom A	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.
Classroom B	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.
Classroom C	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.
Classroom D	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.
Classroom E	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.

Sub-Step 4 – Determine if all preschool classrooms in the program or district meet criteria

Notes:

[Click here to enter text.](#)

Criteria

100% of classrooms are providing flexible, small group instruction to meet the groups interests, strengths, and needs focusing on the Iowa Early Learning Standards (e.g., Language Understanding and Use; Early Literacy; and Early Writing).

Yes	No
Continue to next Building Block	Are criteria not met at <input type="checkbox"/> System-Level <input type="checkbox"/> Classroom-Level Transfer results to Step 5: Prioritizing Universal Tier practices. Continue to next Building Block.

If you find that most classrooms in the program do not meet criteria, consider a systems-level action plan to remove barriers. If only a few classrooms do not meet criteria, classroom-level actions may be successful at removing barriers.

4. PLAY AND LITERACY

Child-initiated play, by definition, are activities children choose to engage in and that give them pleasure. Teaching staff can plan for child-initiated activities by watching, listening and conversing with children as they make their choices to determine children's interests, strengths, and needs. As they watch and listen to children's play, teaching staff can identify specific curriculum goals being addressed. They can add materials that encourage play activities that increase the amount of time children are using literacy-based skills. Additional materials can be used to expand the kinds of choices available to children. The teaching staff can scaffold experiences to increase complexity and difficulty that encourage children to do more of the activity or do more at a deeper level. They should do these things using intentional planning and ensuring they support the learning goals that align with the Iowa Early Learning Standards area of Communication, Language and Literacy. Intentional teaching is playful, thoughtful and purposeful (Epstein, 2014). The goal is to match the experiences children have to the learning goals.

OVERVIEW

Level 2 Question: Is there intentional planning for early literacy learning during child-initiated play?

Potential Data Source(s):

- Master schedule and classroom schedules
- Lesson plans
- Interviews

SUB-STEPS

1. Determine if teaching staff has sufficient planning time.
2. Use lesson plans and assessment documentation for evidence of literacy learning opportunities during open-ended child play.
 - a. Lesson plans should have evidence of regular changes in the environment that expand the choices children have for activities.
 - b. Review assessment documentation for evidence of literacy curriculum goals being addressed through open, ended play.
3. Determine if all preschool classrooms in the program or district meet criteria

Sub-Step 1 –Determine if teaching staff has sufficient planning time.

Notes:

Click here to enter text.

Think about...

Examine master schedule and individual classroom schedules.

How much time is enough time?

Consider asking teachers if they feel like they've had enough time to plan for play.

	Notes
<i>Example</i>	<i>The master and classroom schedules both indicate that instructional planning for this classroom occurs twice a week for a total of 100 minutes. The teacher reported spending 45 of those minutes planning for play. The amount of time spent planning for literacy learning during play varies from week to week. This teacher indicated that she felt this was enough planning time.</i>
Classroom A	Click here to enter text.
Classroom B	Click here to enter text.
Classroom C	Click here to enter text.
Classroom D	Click here to enter text.
Classroom E	Click here to enter text.

Sub-Step 2 –Use lesson plans and assessment documentation for evidence of literacy learning opportunities during open-ended child play.

Notes:

Click here to enter text.

Think about...

Lesson plans should have evidence of regular changes in the environment that expand the choices children have for activities.

Review assessment documentation for evidence of literacy curriculum goals being addressed through open, ended play

	Play and literacy throughout day during center and literacy time?					Notes
	M	T	W	Th	F	
<i>Example</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	<i>Lesson plans indicate that children have playful opportunities to play and learn literacy skills every day of the week during center time and structured literacy learning time. Some days, this lasts longer than others, but it occurs each day.</i>
Classroom A	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Click here to enter text.
Classroom B	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Click here to enter text.
Classroom C	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Click here to enter text.

Classroom D	<input type="checkbox"/>	Click here to enter text.				
Classroom E	<input type="checkbox"/>	Click here to enter text.				

Sub-Step 3 – Determine if all preschool classrooms in the program or district meet criteria

Notes:

[Click here to enter text.](#)

Criteria

100% of classrooms should have adequate time for instructional planning for play and literacy.

100% of classrooms should provide daily, planful literacy learning opportunities during centers and literacy learning time.

Yes	No
Continue to next Building Block	Are criteria not met at <input type="checkbox"/> System-Level <input type="checkbox"/> Classroom-Level Transfer results to Step 5: Prioritizing Universal Tier practices. Continue to next Building Block.

If you find that most classrooms in the program do not meet criteria, consider a systems-level action plan to remove barriers. If only a few classrooms do not meet criteria, classroom-level actions may be successful at removing barriers.

5. ASSESSMENT FOR LEARNING

This question is about organizing and analyzing formative assessment data by summarizing and categorizing information into meaningful patterns that shed light not only on children's growth and development, but also on children's strengths, preferences, interests and areas of concern. Assessment is a critical element in supporting children's growth and development in the classroom. The process of collecting, organizing and analyzing information about children's knowledge, skills and progress provides teachers with an opportunity to know, understand and build relationships with children and their families. The challenge is to organize and analyze systematically the collected data to guide instructional decisions and prepare the learning environment and experiences so they advance children's growth and development. Additionally, the analysis of data will provide teachers with insight into potential changes that may be needed in the other PK Building Blocks: 1) Instructional time/opportunities; 2) Curriculum/instructional materials and environment; 3) Literacy instructional strategies and differentiation; 4) Play and literacy; and 5) Collaborative literacy support.

OVERVIEW

Level 2 Question: Are the collected data being organized, analyzed and used to make changes in practices at the classroom level that advance children's growth and development?

Potential Data Source(s):

- Review documentation data.
- Review lesson plans.
- Analyze child, classroom and program level assessment reports.
- Interview teachers.
- Interview families

SUB-STEPS

1. Determine if the data are organized in a systematic way that allows for easy retrieval and aggregation of data points.
2. Determine if teaching staff have access to the collected data as part of an assessment system.
3. Determine if the data is being analyzed regularly and systematically.
4. Determine if the conclusions from data analysis are being used to change practice.
5. Determine if all classrooms in the program or district meet criteria

Sub-Step 1 – Determine if the data are organized in a systematic way that allows for easy retrieval and aggregation of data points.

Notes:

[Click here to enter text.](#)

Think about...

Describe how the data are being organized to allow for easy retrieval and aggregation of data points.

Data can be organized in a variety of ways to create :

- Numerical Summaries, (e.g., total numbers, frequency count, averages, percentages)
- Narrative Summaries (e.g., anecdotal notes, specific, objective statements often summarized into a single paragraph)
- Visual Summary(e.g., pictures, video, permanent products, graphs, diagrams)
- Assessment Reports (e.g., produced by publishers of online assessment systems)
- Links to other data records:
 - Attendance Records
 - Medications
 - Health Status
 - Family Information
 - Special Needs
 - Diverse Learning

Sub-Step 2 - Determine if teaching staff have access to the collected data as part of an assessment system.

Notes:

[Click here to enter text.](#)

Think about...

Describe the extent to which teachers have access to the data system if one exists.

Note things like whether or not it requires usernames and passwords, or if there is some other way teachers get to the information.

Sub-Step 3 - Determine if the data is being analyzed regularly and systematically.

Notes:

[Click here to enter text.](#)

Think about...

What is the schedule for reviewing child data?

Are formative assessment data part of data discussions?

Data on each of the IELS benchmarks does not need to be collected every day; however, documentation needs to be collected for each of the three standards on a daily basis.

Describe how often data is being analyzed and summarized

Scope of analysis (child, classroom and program)	Type of analysis	Time period (Daily, weekly, monthly, quarterly, annually)	Frequency per time period
<i>Example: Child</i>	<i>Amount of time in writing area</i>	<i>Weekly</i>	<i>2</i>
<i>Example: Classroom</i>	<i>Strengths and needs of all children</i>	<i>Weekly</i>	<i>1</i>
<i>Example: Program</i>	<i>Pct meeting age expectations</i>	<i>Quarterly</i>	<i>1</i>
Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.
Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.
Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.
Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.
Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.
Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.
Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.
Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.
Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.
Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.

Sub-Step 4 –Determine if the conclusions from data analysis are being used to change practice.

Notes:

Click here to enter text.

Think about...

Changes in practice should be about the whole class for this question, not just individual learners.

Sub-Step 5 – Determine if all classrooms in the program or district meet criteria

Notes:

[Click here to enter text.](#)

Criteria

100% of classrooms organize, analyze, and use formative assessment data to make changes in practices at the classroom level

Yes	No
Continue to next Building Block	Are criteria not met at <input type="checkbox"/> System-Level <input type="checkbox"/> Classroom-Level Transfer results to Step 5: Prioritizing Universal Tier practices. Continue to next Building Block.

If you find that most classrooms in the program do not meet criteria, consider a systems-level action plan to remove barriers. If only a few classrooms do not meet criteria, classroom-level actions may be successful at removing barriers.

6. COLLABORATIVE LITERACY SUPPORT

This question is about important people in the lives of preschool learners working together around common goals which are aligned to the Iowa Early Learning Standards and develop activities that support classroom based literacy instruction and provide opportunity to practice and master skills. Teaching and modeling for children the essential skills that prepare them to read is everybody's job. It begins with parents as a child's first and most important teacher. But it also should include other important people in a child's life including other family members, caregivers, and child care providers. It should also include other community members with a vested interest in high literacy such as librarians or literacy volunteers that want to read to children. The foundation for these collaborative approaches to supporting literacy is an active work group that meets on a regular basis and whose membership includes administrators, teachers, family members, and community partners.

OVERVIEW

Level 2 Question: Does the program have a collaborative team that includes teachers, administrators, families, and other community partners (e.g., librarians, child care providers, etc.) that meets at least monthly and as part of its work promotes individual child literacy outcomes?

Potential Data Source(s):

- Review preschool literacy and/or collaboration plans
- Review preschool literacy and/or collaboration plans
- Review meeting minutes and sign-in sheets
- Leadership team discussion
- Interview teachers, parents/caregivers

SUB-STEPS

1. Determine if a work group exists that includes at a minimum a teacher, administrator, family member/caregiver and at least one community partner.
2. Determine the schedule of when the group meets.
3. Determine if work includes goals and tasks relevant to the Iowa Early Learning Standards area of communication, language, and literacy.
4. Determine if all classrooms in the program or district meet criteria

Sub-Step 1 – Determine if a work group exists that includes at a minimum a teacher, administrator, family member/caregiver and at least one community partner.

Notes:

Click here to enter text.

Think about...

Where is team membership information located?

Is there more than one collaborative literacy support team? If so, complete the form below for each team.

Collaborative Literacy Support Team - Membership Roster

Team Member Name	Role (preschool teacher, administrator, family member, community partner)	Phone number	Email
Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.
Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.
Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.
Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.
Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.
Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.

Sub-Step 2 - Determine the schedule of when the group meets.

Notes:

Click here to enter text.

Think about...

Where is the team schedule located?

Are team meeting minutes and sign-up sheets used for the meetings? If so, collect them

Collaborative Literacy Support Team - Meeting Schedule

	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May
Date	Click here to enter text.								
Met? Y/N	Click here to enter text.								

Sub-Step 3 - Determine if work includes goals and tasks relevant to the Iowa Early Learning Standards area of Communication, Language, and Literacy.

Notes:

Click here to enter text.

Think about...

Locate documentation of team goals and tasks.

The purpose isn't to re-create an entire action plan, but instead to determine if the collaborative literacy supports are connected to program goals and the IELS.

Collaborative Literacy Support Team - Goals and Activities

GOAL ONE:	Click here to enter text.
------------------	---------------------------

	Name of Task	Task Description	Who	By When
Task A:	Click here to enter text.			
Task B:	Click here to enter text.			
Task C:	Click here to enter text.			

GOAL TWO:	Click here to enter text.
------------------	---------------------------

	Name of Task	Task Description	Who	By When
Task A:	Click here to enter text.			
Task B:	Click here to enter text.			
Task C:	Click here to enter text.			

GOAL THREE:	Click here to enter text.
--------------------	---------------------------

	Name of Task	Task Description	Who	By When
Task A:	Click here to enter text.			
Task B:	Click here to enter text.			
Task C:	Click here to enter text.			

Sub-Step 4 – Determine if all classrooms in the program or district meet criteria

Notes:

[Click here to enter text.](#)

Criteria

The collaborative literacy team at least monthly.

Required team members attend at least 80% of meetings throughout the school year.

Yes	No
Continue to next Building Block	Are criteria not met at <input type="checkbox"/> System-Level <input type="checkbox"/> Classroom-Level Transfer results to Step 5: Prioritizing Universal Tier practices. Continue to K-6 if applicable. Otherwise continue to Step 5.

If you find that most classrooms in the program do not meet criteria, consider a systems-level action plan to remove barriers. If only a few classrooms do not meet criteria, classroom-level actions may be successful at removing barriers.

APPENDIX C. PRE-K LEVEL 3 QUESTIONS WORKSHEETS

Coming Soon

APPENDIX D. PRE-K LEVEL 4 QUESTIONS WORKSHEETS

Coming Soon

APPENDIX E. K-6 LEVEL 1 QUESTIONS WORKSHEETS

1. INSTRUCTIONAL TIME/OPPORTUNITIES

This question is about systemic issues that impact the schedule. The goal is for the literacy learning schedule to include a sufficient amount of available time. **Available time** is the scheduled amount of time (hours, minutes) that can potentially be used for literacy learning time during the school day. Available time must be protected. **Protected time** means that time is not taken out of literacy learning time for things like assemblies, specials or other actions that will reduce time available for literacy instructional time. This is different than uninterrupted time. **Uninterrupted time** means that literacy learning occurs in a continuous block of time (for example, 90 straight minutes). Protected time allows for instructional time to be split into multiple instructional blocks (for example, two 45-minute blocks). High levels of available time provide teachers and students more chances to engage in learning of the Iowa Core Literacy standards.

OVERVIEW

Level 1 Question: Is 60-120 minutes of instructional time scheduled and protected for Universal Tier literacy learning?

Potential Data Source(s):

- Review master schedule
- Review teachers' schedule
- Interview teachers

SUB-STEPS

1. Determine which schedules to review
2. Record results on the data collection form.
3. Determine if all classrooms in the building meet criteria.
4. Gather data on protected time.
5. Determine if criteria for protected time is met.

Sub-Step 1 – Determine which schedules to review

Notes:

Click here to enter text.

Think about...

Does the building have a master schedule designating literacy instruction time?

Do you need to request individual teacher schedules?

Sub-Step 2 - Record results on the data collection form

Notes:

Click here to enter text.

	K	1	2	3	4	5	6
<i>Example</i>	<i>90 min/day</i>	<i>90 min/day</i>	<i>120 min/day</i>	<i>120 min/day</i>	<i>90 min/day</i>	<i>90 min/day</i>	<i>90 min/day</i>
Classroom A	Click here to enter text.						
Classroom B	Click here to enter text.						
Classroom C	Click here to enter text.						
Classroom D	Click here to enter text.						
Classroom E	Click here to enter text.						

Sub-Step 3 - Determine if all classrooms in the school meet criteria

Notes:

[Click here to enter text.](#)

Criteria

Kindergarten – Grade 3
90 - 120 minutes/day (including writing and spelling)

Grades 4 – 6
60 - 90 minutes/day (including writing and spelling)

Yes	No
Continue to next Sub-Step 4..	Are criteria not met at <input type="checkbox"/> System-Level <input type="checkbox"/> Classroom-Level Transfer results to Step 5: Prioritizing Universal Tier practices. Continue to next Building Block.

If you find that most classrooms in the program do not meet criteria, consider a systems-level action plan to remove barriers. If only a few classrooms do not meet criteria, classroom-level actions may be successful at removing barriers.

Sub-Step 4 –Gather data on protected time.

Notes:

[Click here to enter text.](#)

Think about...

This is about how the school prioritizes time, not individual teacher decisions.

This means time is not taken out of literacy learning time for things like assemblies, specials or other actions.

What happens to the literacy instructional time in the following situations:

- Late start/early dismissal
- Assemblies
- Daily announcements
- Special or large projects

Grade	Protected Time
<i>Example</i>	<i>Nothing is scheduled on top of literacy time. Every once in a while a drill occurs during literacy time. Overall, the time is well protected.</i>
K	Click here to enter text.
1	Click here to enter text.
2	Click here to enter text.
3	Click here to enter text.
4	Click here to enter text.
5	Click here to enter text.
6	Click here to enter text.

Sub-Step 5 - Determine if all classrooms in the school meet criteria

Notes:

[Click here to enter text.](#)

Criteria

Kindergarten – Grade 6

There should be no activities or events that regularly take time away from literacy learning time at any grade level.

Yes	No
Continue to next Building Block	Are criteria not met at <input type="checkbox"/> System-Level <input type="checkbox"/> Classroom-Level Transfer results to Step 5: Prioritizing Universal Tier practices. Continue to next Building Block.

If you find that most classrooms in the program do not meet criteria, consider a systems-level action plan to remove barriers. If only a few classrooms do not meet criteria, classroom-level actions may be successful at removing barriers.



If criteria are not met for this question, do not proceed to examine any additional Building Blocks until **a plan is developed** to resolve the scheduled, protected time issue.

2. STANDARDS & THE ENACTED CURRICULUM

This is about the school (or the district) having and implementing a plan for all educators to engage in regular professional learning about the structure/design of the Iowa Core Literacy standards, as well as the knowledge and skills defined in the standards. To successfully implement the Iowa Core literacy standards, educators must first know and understand what is in the standards. Effective professional learning of the Iowa Core literacy standards must be grounded in the Iowa Professional Development Model (IPDM), and include the following components: theory, demonstration, practice, observation, reflection, collaboration, mentoring, and peer coaching.

OVERVIEW

Level 1 Question: Do administrators and teachers regularly engage in Professional Learning focused on the Iowa Core Literacy Standards?

Potential Data Source(s):

- Review district and/or building professional learning plans
- Interview administrators and/or teachers

SUB-STEPS

1. Determine which plan(s) to review
2. Discuss professional learning practices with administrators and teachers
3. Record results on the data collection form
4. Determine if Iowa Core professional learning practices in the building meet criteria

Sub-Step 1 – Determine which plan(s) to review

Notes:

[Click here to enter text.](#)

Think about...

Can this information be found in the district's Iowa Core Implementation Plan? A different plan?

Is the plan up-to-date for the current school year?

Sub-Step 2 - Discuss professional learning practices with administrators and teachers

Notes:

Click here to enter text.

Think about...

Can educators clearly describe what professional learning on the Iowa Core they engage in?

Does professional learning occur more than once or twice per during the school year (or summer)?

Do educators feel like it's enough?

Sub-Step 3 – Record results on the data collection form

Grade Level	Frequency of Professional Learning Opportunities	Notes on Professional Learning Opportunities
<i>Example</i>	<i>Once/month</i>	<i>The teachers in this grade level work in a PLC once a month to share examples of standards-based lessons. They indicate they wish they could do this more frequently.</i>
K	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.
1	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.
2	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.
3	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.
4	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.
5	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.

Sub-Step 4 - Determine if Iowa Core professional learning practices in the building meet criteria

Notes:

[Click here to enter text.](#)

Criteria

Kindergarten – Grade 6

There should be regularly-occurring learning opportunities focused on the Iowa Core at each grade level.

Yes	No
Continue to next Building Block.	Are criteria not met at <input type="checkbox"/> System-Level <input type="checkbox"/> Classroom-Level Transfer results to Step 5: Prioritizing Universal Tier practices. Continue to next Building Block.

If you find that most classrooms in the program do not meet criteria, consider a systems-level action plan to remove barriers. If only a few classrooms do not meet criteria, classroom-level actions may be successful at removing barriers.

3. INSTRUCTIONAL PRACTICES

The purpose of this question is to determine the extent to which teachers are knowledgeable about research-based, high-leverage instructional practices. **Instructional Practices** are those research based approaches, applications, and or routines that fuel effective and efficient classroom interaction. They are the practices that highly effective teachers have been observed using in their classrooms. They are the research based practices with effect sizes that link to student achievement. Good instructional practice/design is, in part, about the quality of teaching and is the key to effective delivery of content.

OVERVIEW

Level 1 Question: Do teachers have sufficient knowledge of research-based, high leverage instructional practices?

Potential Data Source(s):

- Instructional Practices Guides:
<http://achievethecore.org/page/969/instructional-practice-guide-list-pg>
- 17 Principles of Effective Instruction Checklist and Implementation Form:
<https://www.aft.org//sites/default/files/periodicals/Rosenshine.pdf>
- CORE K-5 and 6-12 (only what applies to 6th grade) CCSS ELA Instructional Rubrics 2013 Consortium on Reading Excellence in Education:
http://www.corelearn.com/files/ObservationRubrics_CCSS.zip
- Professional development plans

SUB-STEPS

1. Determine which tool to use with educators in the building
2. Collect the knowledge and skill information from staff
3. Record results on the data collection form for Instructional Practices
4. Determine if the knowledge level of research-based, high leverage instructional practices standards meets criteria.

Sub-Step 1 –Determine which tool(s) to use with educators in the building.

Notes:

[Click here to enter text.](#)

Think about...

As a leadership team, determine which tool will give you the most accurate information about the knowledge of research-based, high-leverage instructional practices.

The Potential Resources listed above will provide background information about instructional frameworks. Forms for gathering teacher knowledge information are found in Sub-Step 2 below.

Sub-Step 2 – Collect the knowledge and skill information from staff

Notes:

[Click here to enter text.](#)

Think about...

How current is administrator and staff professional learning on research-based, high-leverage instructional practices?

How will you gather information from all staff with the selected tool?

Achieve the Core Instructional Practices Guide (K-2): Knowledge of Literacy Instructional Practices Survey - This survey was developed based on the Achieve the Core Instructional Practices Guides for **implementing** Instructional Practices that is suggested in the Level 2 Question for the Instructional Practices Building Block.

Directions: Complete this tool either as an individual teacher or as a group at a grade level. This tool is used to establish your level of knowledge about the following highly effective and research-based instructional practices that must be in place to support high student achievement. Knowledge of these practices will be of vital use as you implement the Iowa Core ELA standards and assist all learners in accessing them.

Read about each practice and then mark the column that best describes your current level of knowledge. Be honest in your responses. These data will be used to provide you with support to implement the listed instructional practices. Use the following scale: 1 = Not knowledgeable about practice; 2 = I have heard of this practice; 3 = Somewhat knowledgeable about, I could give a short explanation; 4 = Knowledgeable about and I could give a clear explanation of it; 5 = Very knowledgeable about- I could demonstrate how to do this.

Name: [Click here to enter text.](#)

Date Completed: [Click here to enter text.](#)

Grade Level: [Click here to enter text.](#)

Job/Role: [Click here to enter text.](#)

Literacy Instructional Practice	1	2	3	4	5	Comments
Core Action 1 for Reading/Listening Comprehension:		Focus each lesson on a high-quality text (or multiple texts)				
1. A majority of the lesson is spent listening to, reading, writing, or speaking about text(s).	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Click here to enter text.
2. The text(s) are above the complexity level expected for the grade and time in the school year.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Click here to enter text.
3. The text(s) exhibit exceptional craft and thought and/or provide useful information; where appropriate the texts are richly illustrated.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Click here to enter text.
Core Action 1 for Foundational Skills:		Ensure that instruction and materials explicitly and systematically provide all students with the opportunity to master foundational skills.				
4. The foundational skills being taught are aligned to the standards for this grade.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Click here to enter text.
5. Instruction and materials address foundational skills by attending to phonological	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Click here to enter text.

awareness, concepts of print, letter recognition, phonetic patterns and word structure. (Note: not all elements will be addressed in each lesson.).						
6. Instruction and materials provide sufficient opportunities for all students to practice reading and writing newly acquired foundational skills.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Click here to enter text.
7. Instruction and materials connect acquisition of foundational skills to making meaning from reading.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Click here to enter text.
8. Instruction and materials provide opportunities for students to demonstrate understanding of the skills being taught through frequent monitoring of student progress.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Click here to enter text.
Core Action 2:			Employ questions and tasks, both oral and written, that are text specific and reflect the standards.			
9. Questions and tasks address the text by attending to its particular structure, concepts, ideas, events and details.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Click here to enter text.
10. 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).	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Click here to enter text.
11. Questions and tasks attend to the words, phrases and sentences within the text.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Click here to enter text.
12. Questions are sequenced to build knowledge by guiding students to delve deeper into text and graphics.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Click here to enter text.
Core Action 3			Provide all students with opportunities to engage in the work of the lesson.			
13. The teacher keeps all students persevering with challenging tasks.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Click here to enter text.

14. The teacher encourages reasoning and problem solving by posing challenging questions and tasks that offer opportunities for productive struggle.	<input type="checkbox"/>	Click here to enter text.				
15. The teacher guides students to read with purpose and understanding by making frequent connections between acquisition of foundational skills and making meaning from reading.	<input type="checkbox"/>	Click here to enter text.				
16. The teacher demonstrates awareness and appropriate action regarding the variations present in student progress toward reading independently.	<input type="checkbox"/>	Click here to enter text.				
17. The teacher focuses on explicitly and systematically strengthening students' reading foundational skills.	<input type="checkbox"/>	Click here to enter text.				

Achieve the Core Instructional Practices Guide (3-12): Knowledge of Literacy Instructional Practices Survey - This survey was developed based on the Achieve the Core Instructional Practices Guides for **implementing** Instructional Practices that is suggested in the Level 2 Question for the Instructional Practices Building Block.

Directions: Complete this tool either as an individual teacher or as a group at a grade level. This tool is used to establish your level of knowledge about the following highly effective and research-based instructional practices that must be in place to support high student achievement. Knowledge of these practices will be of vital use as you implement the Iowa Core ELA standards and assist all learners in accessing them.

Read about each practice and then mark the column that best describes your current level of knowledge. Be honest in your responses. These data will be used to provide you with support to implement the listed instructional practices. Use the following scale: 1 = Not knowledgeable about practice; 2 = I have heard of this practice; 3 = Somewhat knowledgeable about, I could give a short explanation; 4 = Knowledgeable about and I could give a clear explanation of it; 5 = Very knowledgeable about- I could demonstrate how to do this.

Name: [Click here to enter text.](#)

Date Completed: [Click here to enter text.](#)

Grade Level: [Click here to enter text.](#)

Job/Role: [Click here to enter text.](#)

Literacy Instructional Practice	1	2	3	4	5	Comments
Core Action 1 for Reading/Listening Comprehension:		Focus each lesson on a high-quality text (or multiple texts)				
1. A majority of the lesson is spent reading, writing, or speaking about text(s).	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Click here to enter text.
2. The text(s) are at or above the complexity level expected for the grade and time in the school year.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Click here to enter text.
3. The text(s) exhibit exceptional craft and thought and/or provide useful information.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Click here to enter text.
Core Action 2:		Employ questions and tasks, both oral and written, that are text specific and reflect the standards.				
4. Questions and tasks address the text by attending to its particular structure, concepts, ideas, events and details.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Click here to enter text.
5. Questions and tasks require students to use evidence from the text to demonstrate understanding and to support their ideas about the text.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Click here to enter text.

These ideas are expressed through both written and oral responses.						
6. Questions and tasks attend to the words, phrases and sentences within the text.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Click here to enter text.
7. Questions are sequenced to build knowledge by guiding students to delve deeper into text and graphics.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Click here to enter text.
Core Action 3			Provide all students with opportunities to engage in the work of the lesson.			
8. The teacher keeps all students persevering with challenging tasks.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Click here to enter text.
9. The teacher expects evidence and precision from students and probes students' answers accordingly.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Click here to enter text.
10. The teacher encourages reasoning and problem solving by posing challenging questions and tasks that offer opportunities for productive struggle.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Click here to enter text.
11. The teacher demonstrates awareness and appropriate action regarding the variations present in student progress toward reading independently.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Click here to enter text.
12. When appropriate, the teacher explicitly attends to strengthening students' language and reading foundational skills.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Click here to enter text.

Consortium on Reaching Excellence in Education (CORE): Knowledge of Literacy Instructional Practices Survey - This survey was developed based on the CORE (Consortium on Reaching Excellence in Education) rubric for **implementing** Instructional Practices that is suggested in the Level 2 Question for the Instructional Practices Building Block.

Directions: Complete this tool either as an individual teacher or as a group at a grade level. This tool is used to establish your level of knowledge about the following highly effective and research-based instructional practices that must be in place to support high student achievement. Knowledge of these practices will be of vital use as you implement the Iowa Core ELA standards and assist all learners in accessing them.

Read about each practice and then mark the column that best describes your current level of knowledge. Be honest in your responses. These data will be used to provide you with support to implement the listed instructional practices. Use the following scale: 1 = Not knowledgeable about practice; 2 = I have heard of this practice; 3 = Somewhat knowledgeable about, I could give a short explanation; 4 = Knowledgeable about and I could give a clear explanation of it; 5 = Very knowledgeable about- I could demonstrate how to do this.

Name: [Click here to enter text.](#)

Date Completed: [Click here to enter text.](#)

Grade Level: [Click here to enter text.](#)

Job/Role: [Click here to enter text.](#)

Literacy Instructional Practice	1	2	3	4	5	Comments
1. I know how to develop and ask text dependent questions that progress from details, events, characters, and also move to drawing inferences.	<input type="checkbox"/>	Click here to enter text.				
2. I know how to provide teach explicitly and model how to find main idea/message, locate key details and determine the theme in a variety of genre.	<input type="checkbox"/>	Click here to enter text.				
3. I know how to move from modeling to guided practice for find main idea/message, locate key details and determine the theme and writing a summary in a variety of genre	<input type="checkbox"/>	Click here to enter text.				
4. I know how to provide supportive feedback to students while they are in the “you do it stage”.	<input type="checkbox"/>	Click here to enter text.				
5. I know how to provide the appropriate type of modeling/student support depending on the phase or stage of acquisition that a learner is in.	<input type="checkbox"/>	Click here to enter text.				

6. I know how and when to provide ample and appropriate practice opportunities for: reading in appropriate text, additional text, and varied genre.	<input type="checkbox"/>	Click here to enter text.				
7. I know how to select and then explicitly teach them, model them, and provide practice with appropriate graphic organizers and signal words that aid in teaching theme, setting, and plots to stories.	<input type="checkbox"/>	Click here to enter text.				
8. I know how to identify grade – appropriate domain-specific vocabulary words, and I am knowledgeable in how to provide explicit teaching of them, and build in practice.	<input type="checkbox"/>	Click here to enter text.				
9. I know how to explicitly teach, model , provide practice and supportive feedback on describing and /or explaining relationships between two or more characters, events, etc. and the use of evidence from the text.	<input type="checkbox"/>	Click here to enter text.				
10. (Grades 3-6) I know about the 7 key comprehension strategies that have been found to be most effective and how to bundle them for highest impact.	<input type="checkbox"/>	Click here to enter text.				
11. (Grades 3-6) I know how to select the appropriate comprehension strategy to teach explicitly, how to model, and how to then have students generalize it over to their reading.	<input type="checkbox"/>	Click here to enter text.				
Foundational Skills K-5						
12. (Grades K-1) I know how to explicitly teach about print concepts during shared reading and writing activities.	<input type="checkbox"/>	Click here to enter text.				
13. (Grades K-1) I know how to embed the learning of print concepts during shared and independent reading and writing activities.	<input type="checkbox"/>	Click here to enter text.				

14. (Grades K-1) I know how to craft opportunities that engage students in practice with feedback that pertains to print concepts.	<input type="checkbox"/>	Click here to enter text.				
15. (Grades K-1) I know how to explicitly teach phonological awareness skills at the word, syllable, and phoneme levels.	<input type="checkbox"/>	Click here to enter text.				
16. (Grades K-1). I know how to provide multiple opportunities for all students to practice and receive feedback on phonological awareness skills at the word, syllable, and phoneme levels	<input type="checkbox"/>	Click here to enter text.				
17. (Grades K-1) I know how to embed instruction on phonological awareness skills at the word, syllable, and phoneme levels in a natural and playful manner.	<input type="checkbox"/>	Click here to enter text.				
18. (Grades K-5) I know how to explicitly (I do, we do, you do) and systematically (research – based routines and sequence) teach phonics with sufficient blending practice beginning with not-to-one letter-sound and moving up to multi-letter sound spellings, syllabication patterns, and roots and affixes.	<input type="checkbox"/>	Click here to enter text.				
19. (Grades K-2) I know how to select decodable text that will provide sufficient levels of practice so that mastery of decoding patterns is attained	<input type="checkbox"/>	Click here to enter text.				
20. (Grades K-5) I know how to select connected text that will provide sufficient levels of practice to develop effortless reading.	<input type="checkbox"/>	Click here to enter text.				
21. (Grades K-5) I know how to provide multiple opportunities for students to respond both orally and in writing and receive supportive feedback about the content that they are reading.	<input type="checkbox"/>	Click here to enter text.				

22. (Grades K-5) I know how to monitor an individual students oral reading and provide supportive feedback in accuracy, pace, prosody, and self-monitoring.	<input type="checkbox"/>	Click here to enter text.				
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Rosenshine’s 17 Principles of Effective Instruction: Knowledge of Literacy Instructional Practices Survey - This survey was developed based on Rosenshine’s 17 principles of effective instruction, found in Principles of Instruction- Research-Based Strategies That All Teachers Should Know, American Educator, Spring 2012. By Barak Rosenshine.

Directions: Complete this tool either as an individual teacher or as a group at a grade level. This tool is used to establish your level of knowledge about the following highly effective and research-based instructional practices that must be in place to support high student achievement. Knowledge of these practices will be of vital use as you implement the Iowa Core ELA standards and assist all learners in accessing them.

Read about each practice and then mark the column that best describes your current level of knowledge. Be honest in your responses. These data will be used to provide you with support to implement the listed instructional practices. Use the following scale: 1 = Not knowledgeable about practice; 2 = I have heard of this practice; 3 = Somewhat knowledgeable about, I could give a short explanation; 4 = Knowledgeable about and I could give a clear explanation of it; 5 = Very knowledgeable about- I could demonstrate how to do this.

Name: [Click here to enter text.](#)

Date Completed: [Click here to enter text.](#)

Grade Level: [Click here to enter text.](#)

Job/Role: [Click here to enter text.](#)

Literacy Instructional Practice	1	2	3	4	5	Comments
1. Begin a lesson with a short review of previous learning.	<input type="checkbox"/>	Click here to enter text.				
2. Present new material in small steps with student practice after each step.	<input type="checkbox"/>	Click here to enter text.				
3. Limit the amount of material students receive at one time.	<input type="checkbox"/>	Click here to enter text.				
4. Give clear and detailed instructions and explanations.	<input type="checkbox"/>	Click here to enter text.				
5. Ask large number of questions and check the responses of all students.	<input type="checkbox"/>	Click here to enter text.				
6. Provide teacher modeling of steps and think aloud.	<input type="checkbox"/>	Click here to enter text.				
7. Provide a high level of active practice for all students.	<input type="checkbox"/>	Click here to enter text.				
8. Guide students as they begin to practice.	<input type="checkbox"/>	Click here to enter text.				
9. Provide models of worked out problems or situations.	<input type="checkbox"/>	Click here to enter text.				
10. Check for student understanding, all student responses.	<input type="checkbox"/>	Click here to enter text.				
11. Ask students to explain what they have learned.	<input type="checkbox"/>	Click here to enter text.				

12. Provide systematic feedback and corrections that is timely.	<input type="checkbox"/>	Click here to enter text.				
13. Provide many examples.	<input type="checkbox"/>	Click here to enter text.				
14. Extend the time needed for explanations.	<input type="checkbox"/>	Click here to enter text.				
15. Reteach material when necessary.	<input type="checkbox"/>	Click here to enter text.				
16. Prepare students for independent practice through use of scaffolding.	<input type="checkbox"/>	Click here to enter text.				
17. Monitor students as they begin independent practice.	<input type="checkbox"/>	Click here to enter text.				

Sub-Step 3 - Record results on the data collection form for Instructional Practices.

Notes:

Click here to enter text.

Think about...

Transfer the results from each of the surveys to the table below.

Have data been collected for every classroom?.

Grade Level	% of teachers knowledge of at least 50% of instructional practices	Notes
K	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.
1	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.
2	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.
3	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.
4	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.
5	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.
6	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.

Sub-Step 4 - Determine if the knowledge level of research-based, high leverage instructional practices standards meets criteria.

Notes:

[Click here to enter text.](#)

Criteria

Kindergarten – Grade 6

80% of teachers indicate that their knowledge of research-based, high leverage instructional practices is sufficient.

Yes	No
Continue to next Building Block.	Are criteria not met at <input type="checkbox"/> System-Level <input type="checkbox"/> Classroom-Level Transfer results to Step 5: Prioritizing Universal Tier practices. Continue to next Building Block.

If you find that most classrooms in the program do not meet criteria, consider a systems-level action plan to remove barriers. If only a few classrooms do not meet criteria, classroom-level actions may be successful at removing barriers.

4. INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS

This question is about all teachers having access to the instructional materials that are used at the Universal Tier, as well as the ongoing training and support needed to implement them. It is about the resources, texts and materials the school/district has identified as being the elements of their Universal Tier, and that these are available for use school wide. This also means that the materials address the Shifts and major features of the Iowa Core, so all teachers are using universal instructional materials that facilitate implementation of the Iowa Core. Students engaging in learning grounded in the Iowa Core will be on track to be college- and career-ready as they progress through the school system.

OVERVIEW

Level 1 Question: Do all teachers have access to universal materials that are reflective of the Shifts and major features of the Iowa Core literacy standards?

Potential Data Source(s):

- Reviews using the Iowa Literacy EQuIP Rubric
- Reviews using the Publisher’s Criteria Rubric/Instructional Materials Evaluation Tool (IMET)

SUB-STEPS

1. Complete the inventory of materials tool.
2. Compare the information on the inventory with the Iowa EQuIP Rubric and or the Publisher’s Criteria/Instructional Materials Evaluation Tool (IMET).
3. Determine if criteria for providing access to universal materials that are reflective of the Shifts and major features of the Iowa Core literacy standards is met.

Sub-Step 1 – Complete the inventory of materials tool.

Notes:

[Click here to enter text.](#)

Think about...

As you complete the inventory, establish a work group with the external coach, internal coach, building administrator, representatives from each grade level, and special education.

Sub-Step 2 – Compare the information on the inventory with the Iowa EQuIP Rubric and or the Publisher’s Criteria/Instructional Materials Evaluation Tool (IMET).

Notes:

[Click here to enter text.](#)

Think about...

Have your curriculum materials already been reviewed by someone else (e.g., reviews done in another state, another district, or the DE)? If so, you could use information from those reviews instead of conducting your own review.

For materials that have not yet been reviewed, conduct a local review

Compare the inventory to the list of materials using the Iowa EQuIP Rubric and/or Publisher’s Criteria/IMET.

Curriculum Materials Inventory

Materials or Approach	Area Addressed by Materials/Approach (see key)									Who is Trained to Use Them?	Use of Material/ Approach			Grades Levels						
	PC	PA	P/WR	F	L	RIT	RL	SL	W		Universal	Targeted	Intensive	K	1	2	3	4	5	6
<i>Example: Catchy Name Literacy Curriculum</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	<i>Ms. Smith, Mr. Jones</i>	x			x	x	x	x			
Click here to enter text.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Click here to enter text.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Click here to enter text.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Click here to enter text.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Click here to enter text.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Click here to enter text.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Click here to enter text.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Click here to enter text.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Click here to enter text.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Click here to enter text.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Click here to enter text.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Click here to enter text.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Key to Areas- From the Iowa Core Literacy Standards:																				
RL= Reading Literature						PA= Phonological Awareness						W= Writing								
RIT= Reading Informational Text						P/WR= Phonics & Word Recognition						SL= Speaking & Listening								
PC= Print Concepts						F= Fluency						L= Language								

***Instructional Materials Comparison to Iowa EQIP and Publisher's/IMET Criteria
Comparison Data Collection Form***

Compare materials all teachers in a grade level have access to using the following:

E = Exceeds Criteria **M**= Meets Criteria **Check Mark** = Does not meet Criteria **N** = Not Reviewed

Program /Material	Reviewed? (Y/N)	Meets or Exceeds Criteria for Research-Based?						
		K	1	2	3	4	5	6
<i>Example: Catchy Name Literacy Curriculum</i>	<i>Y</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>E</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>N</i>
Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.
Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.
Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.
Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.
Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.
Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.

Sub-Step 3 - Determine if criteria for providing access to universal materials that are reflective of the Shifts and major features of the Iowa Core literacy standards is met.

Notes:

[Click here to enter text.](#)

Criteria

Kindergarten – Grade 6

100% of teachers at each grade level in the building should have access for use to curriculum materials that meet or exceed the Publisher’s Criteria/IMET or the Iowa EQUIP Rubric criteria by.

All teachers should be trained to implement those materials.

Yes	No
Continue to next Building Block.	Are criteria not met at <input type="checkbox"/> System-Level <input type="checkbox"/> Classroom-Level Transfer results to Step 5: Prioritizing Universal Tier practices. Continue to next Building Block.

If you find that most classrooms in the program do not meet criteria, consider a systems-level action plan to remove barriers. If only a few classrooms do not meet criteria, classroom-level actions may be successful at removing barriers.

5. ASSESSMENT FOR LEARNING

This question is about whether or not teachers are using high-quality formative assessment practices to collect evidence of student learning. At this level, formative assessment includes providing students with clear learning targets, examples of strong and weak work, and performance criteria to clarify what meaning those learning goals looks like. This is not bound to a single test or tool, but rather a thoughtful, ongoing, process used on a daily basis. Teachers are also to collect evidence of student learning using this framework.

OVERVIEW

Level 1 Question: Are teachers collecting daily evidence of student learning based on the Learning Goals and Success Criteria?

Potential Data Source(s):

- Review manual or other document containing lists of learning goals and success criteria
- Interview teachers

SUB-STEPS

1. Determine location of documentation of Learning Goals and Success Criteria
2. Record results on the data collection form
3. Determine if all grade levels in the building meet criteria
4. Gather information on frequency of use in classrooms
5. Determine if criteria for frequency of use is met for each classroom

Sub-Step 1 – Determine location of documentation of Learning Goals and Success Criteria.

Notes:

[Click here to enter text.](#)

Think about...

Does the school have Learning Goals and Success Criteria established?

Are the Learning Goals and Success Criteria established centrally or by each teacher?

Sub-Step 2 - Record results on the data collection form.

	K	1	2	3	4	5	6
<i>Example</i>	<i>Yes</i> <i>Jones</i>	<i>Yes</i> <i>Smith</i>	<i>No</i> <i>Wilson</i>	<i>Yes</i> <i>Ellis</i>	<i>No</i> <i>Natchez</i>	<i>Yes</i> <i>Davis</i>	<i>Yes</i> <i>Ward</i>
Classroom A	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.				
Classroom B	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.				
Classroom C	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.				
Classroom D	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.				
Classroom E	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.				
Classroom F	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.				

Sub-Step 3 - Determine if all grade levels in the building meet criteria

Notes:

[Click here to enter text.](#)

Criteria

Kindergarten – Grade 6

Learning Goals and Success Criteria should exist and be documented for each grade level in the school

Yes	No
Continue to Sub-Step 4.	Are criteria not met at <input type="checkbox"/> System-Level <input type="checkbox"/> Classroom-Level Transfer results to Step 5: Prioritizing Universal Tier practices. Continue to next Building Block.

If you find that most classrooms in the program do not meet criteria, consider a systems-level action plan to remove barriers. If only a few classrooms do not meet criteria, classroom-level actions may be successful at removing barriers.

Sub-Step 4 - Gather information on frequency of use in classrooms

Notes:

Click here to enter text.

Think about...

This is about teachers using the pre-defined Learning Goals and Success Criteria every day

Not every Learning Goal/Success Criteria need to be used every day, but some of them should be used every day

Observation of practice is ideal but may not be possible. Discussing this practice with teachers may be more realistic.

Grade Level	Notes on Assessment for Learning practices in classrooms
<i>Example</i>	<i>The teacher does have goals for most of her lessons, but not always learning criteria. She indicated that she would like to see how other teachers do this.</i>
K	Click here to enter text.
1	Click here to enter text.
2	Click here to enter text.
3	Click here to enter text.
4	Click here to enter text.
5	Click here to enter text.
6	Click here to enter text.

Sub-Step 5 - Determine if criteria for frequency of use is met for each classroom

Notes:

[Click here to enter text.](#)

Criteria

Kindergarten – Grade 6

Learning Goals and Success Criteria should be used in every classroom on a daily basis.

Yes	No
Continue to next Building Block.	Are criteria not met at <input type="checkbox"/> System-Level <input type="checkbox"/> Classroom-Level Transfer results to Step 5: Prioritizing Universal Tier practices. Continue to next Building Block.

If you find that most classrooms in the program do not meet criteria, consider a systems-level action plan to remove barriers. If only a few classrooms do not meet criteria, classroom-level actions may be successful at removing barriers.

6. COLLABORATIVE LITERACY SUPPORTS

This question is about whether or not there is a culture in the school to collaborate internally and also with parents/guardians on improving literacy outcomes for individual students and the whole school. This includes the processes, tools, and structures for collaboration, and the feelings and beliefs of both educators and parents/guardians.

OVERVIEW

Level 1 Question: Is there a culture and set of processes in place for collaboration among administration, teaching staff, and parents that addresses achievement in reading and language arts skills?

Potential Data Source(s):

- Review district or building professional learning plan
- Leadership team discussion
- Interview teachers

SUB-STEPS

1. Determine location of documentation of collaboration structures
2. Record results on the data collection form
3. Determine if collaboration structures meet criteria
4. Gather information on collaborative culture
5. Determine if criteria for collaborative culture is met

Sub-Step 1 – Determine location of documentation of collaboration structures.

Notes:

[Click here to enter text.](#)

Think about...

Does the school use professional learning communities or a similar structure?

Are all staff involved?

Is the focus on Literacy and the Iowa Core?

Sub-Step 2 - Record results on the data collection form

Group	Notes on collaboration structures
Classroom Teaching Staff	Click here to enter text.
Literacy Support Staff (Title 1, SPED, coaches, etc.)	Click here to enter text.
Building Administration	Click here to enter text.
Specials staff	Click here to enter text.
Parents	Click here to enter text.
Other:	Click here to enter text.
Other:	Click here to enter text.

Sub-Step 3 - Determine if collaboration structures meet criteria.

Notes:

[Click here to enter text.](#)

Criteria

All identified groups should be involved in collaboration about improving literacy outcomes focused on the Iowa Core.

Yes	No
Continue to Sub-Step 4.	Are criteria not met at <input type="checkbox"/> System-Level <input type="checkbox"/> Classroom-Level Transfer results to Step 5: Prioritizing Universal Tier practices. Continue to Step 5.

If you find that most classrooms in the program do not meet criteria, consider a systems-level action plan to remove barriers. If only a few classrooms do not meet criteria, classroom-level actions may be successful at removing barriers.

Sub-Step 4 - Gather information on collaborative culture

Group	Notes on collaboration culture
Classroom Teaching Staff	Click here to enter text.
Literacy Support Staff (Title 1, SPED, coaches, etc.)	Click here to enter text.
Building Administration	Click here to enter text.
Specials staff	Click here to enter text.
Parents	Click here to enter text.
Other:	Click here to enter text.
Other:	Click here to enter text.

Sub-Step 5 - Determine if criteria for frequency of use is met for each classroom.

Notes:

[Click here to enter text.](#)

Criteria

All identified groups should feel that there is a collaborative culture focused on improving literacy outcomes focused on the Iowa Core.

Yes	No
Continue to Step 5.	Are criteria not met at <input type="checkbox"/> System-Level <input type="checkbox"/> Classroom-Level Transfer results to Step 5: Prioritizing Universal Tier practices. Continue to Step 5.

If you find that most classrooms in the program do not meet criteria, consider a systems-level action plan to remove barriers. If only a few classrooms do not meet criteria, classroom-level actions may be successful at removing barriers.

APPENDIX F. K-6 LEVEL 2 QUESTIONS WORKSHEETS

1. INSTRUCTIONAL TIME/OPPORTUNITIES

This question is about how the scheduled time for literacy learning is used by teachers and students. The goal is for all of the scheduled literacy learning time to be spent in instructional time. **Instructional time** is the amount of time, during the available and scheduled time, that is spent on learning and instruction. This is in contrast to non-instructional time like recess, transitions, classroom disruptions, and student wait time (Gettinger & Miller, 2014). This means that non-instructional activities (e.g., transitions, down time) as well as non-task related behavior by students are kept to a minimum. High levels of instructional time provide teachers and students more chances to engage in learning of the Iowa Core Literacy standards.

OVERVIEW

Level 2 Question: Is at least 95% of the scheduled literacy learning time used as instructional time?

Potential Data Source(s):

- Observations
- Lesson plans/unit plans
- Interview teachers

SUB-STEPS

1. Determine data source for focus of instructional time.
2. Record results on the data collection form.
3. Determine if all classrooms in the school meet criteria.

Sub-Step 1 –Determine data source for focus of instructional time.

Notes:

[Click here to enter text.](#)

Think about...

Observations are the most direct and likely accurate source of data. However, research indicates it could take 10-20 separate observation sessions to obtain accurate results. If that is not feasible, do as many as possible.

Observations don't have to be done by administrators. Consider other teachers or AEA staff.

Sub-Step 2 - Record results on the data collection form

Notes:

Click here to enter text.

	K	1	2	3	4	5	6
<i>Example</i>	95%	97%	93%	82%	95%	94%	91%
Classroom A	Click here to enter text.						
Classroom B	Click here to enter text.						
Classroom C	Click here to enter text.						
Classroom D	Click here to enter text.						
Classroom E	Click here to enter text.						
Classroom F	Click here to enter text.						

Sub-Step 3 - Determine if all classrooms in the school meet criteria

Notes:

[Click here to enter text.](#)

Criteria

Do 80% of all classrooms demonstrate that at least 95% of the literacy instructional time is focused on learning and instruction?

Yes	No
Continue to next Building Block.	Are criteria not met at <input type="checkbox"/> System-Level <input type="checkbox"/> Classroom-Level Transfer results to Step 5: Prioritizing Universal Tier practices. Continue to next Building Block.

If you find that most classrooms in the program do not meet criteria, consider a systems-level action plan to remove barriers. If only a few classrooms do not meet criteria, classroom-level actions may be successful at removing barriers.

2. STANDARDS & THE ENACTED CURRICULUM

This is about all students, regardless of their grade and instructional level, have the opportunity to learn all of the Iowa Core literacy standards during the school year. Opportunity to learn is not just what standards are listed on a syllabus, or covered in instructional materials. It's the knowledge and skills students actually engage with day in and day out. **Curriculum is enacted once it has actually been taught.** As such, information collected about the extent to which students had the opportunity to learn the Iowa Core literacy standards needs to be collected in real-time or after instruction has been delivered. One popular way of gathering information on opportunity to learn is using curriculum alignment processes and tools. As opportunity to learn increases, so do student outcomes.

OVERVIEW

Level 2 Question: Are students getting the opportunity to learn all of the Iowa Core Literacy Standards?

Potential Data Source(s):

- Teacher surveys or logs
- Classroom observations

SUB-STEPS

1. Determine which curriculum alignment processes/tools to use
2. Gather curriculum alignment data
3. Record results on the data collection form
4. Determine if opportunity to learn criteria are met

Sub-Step 1 – Determine which curriculum alignment processes/tools to use

Notes:

[Click here to enter text.](#)

Think about...

Do the processes and tools you're considering include both quantitative and qualitative data summaries?

Will you use time sampling or whole-year data collection?

Examples of processes and tools that can be used to collect **enacted curriculum** alignment data include the Iowa Curriculum Alignment Toolkit (I-CAT), My instructional Learning Objectives Guidance System (MyiLOGs), and the Surveys of Enacted Curriculum (SEC).

Sub-Step 2 - Gather curriculum alignment data

Notes:

[Click here to enter text.](#)

Think about...

Is there a plan in place to ensure all staff are trained on how to use the tools?

Is there a plan in place to ensure that data are collected for every classroom?

Sub-Step 3 – Record results on the data collection form

Notes:

Click here to enter text.

Think about...

Use reports from tools if available

Record quantitative results

Cognitive complexity and emphasis are not considerations for this question. Those will come in Levels 3 and 4.

	K	1	2	3	4	5	6
<i>Example</i>	83%	90%	95%	74%	90%	99%	100%
Classroom A	Click here to enter text.						
Classroom B	Click here to enter text.						
Classroom C	Click here to enter text.						
Classroom D	Click here to enter text.						
Classroom E	Click here to enter text.						
Classroom F	Click here to enter text.						

Sub-Step 4 - Determine if opportunity to learn criteria are met

Notes:

[Click here to enter text.](#)

Criteria

Kindergarten – Grade 6

Students should receive the opportunity to learn 100% of the Iowa Core literacy standards.

Yes	No
Continue to next Building Block.	Are criteria not met at <input type="checkbox"/> System-Level <input type="checkbox"/> Classroom-Level Transfer results to Step 5: Prioritizing Universal Tier practices. Continue to next Building Block.

If you find that most classrooms in the program do not meet criteria, consider a systems-level action plan to remove barriers. If only a few classrooms do not meet criteria, classroom-level actions may be successful at removing barriers.

3. INSTRUCTIONAL PRACTICES

The purpose of this question is to determine the extent to which teachers are implementing research-based, high-leverage instructional practices. **Instructional Practices** are those research based approaches, applications, and or routines that fuel effective and efficient classroom interaction. They are the practices that highly effective teachers have been observed using in their classrooms. They are the research based practices with effect sizes that link to student achievement. Good instructional practice/design is, in part, about the quality of teaching and is the key to effective delivery of content.

OVERVIEW

Level 2 Question: Are research-based, high leverage instructional practices being implemented?

Potential Data Source(s):

- Instructional Practices Guides:
<http://achievethecore.org/page/969/instructional-practice-guide-list-pg>
- 17 Principles of Effective Instruction Checklist and Implementation Form:
<https://www.aft.org//sites/default/files/periodicals/Rosenshine.pdf>
- CORE K-5 and 6-12 (only what applies to 6th grade) CCSS ELA Instructional Rubrics 2013 Consortium on Reading Excellence in Education:
http://www.corelearn.com/files/ObservationRubrics_CCSS.zip
- Peer observations, videos, walk- throughs

SUB-STEPS

1. Determine which tool(s) to use with educators in the building.
2. Collect the information from staff about implementation of instructional practices
3. Record results on the data collection form for level of implementation of research-based, high leverage instructional practices.
4. Determine if the implementation level of research-based, high leverage instructional practices that aid students in accessing and achieving the Iowa Core ELA standards meet the criteria.

Sub-Step 1 –Determine which tool(s) to use with educators in the building.

Notes:

[Click here to enter text.](#)

Think about...

You should select a tool that corresponds to the tools you used for the Level 1 Question.

This step is about taking the knowledge from professional learning experiences and changing practices in the classroom.

Are the practices evident, observable, and in use in the classroom with regularity?

Sub-Step 2 – Collect the information from staff about implementation of instructional practices

Notes:

[Click here to enter text.](#)

Think about...

Research indicates it could take 10-20 separate observation sessions to obtain accurate results. If that is not feasible, do as many as possible.

Observations don't have to be done by administrators. Consider other teachers or AEA staff.

Sub-Step 3 - Record results on the data collection form.

Notes:

Click here to enter text.

Think about...

Are the observed instructional practices research-based, high leverage practices.

Although not related to answering the question, best practice is to discuss the results of the observation as soon after it occurs as possible.

Grade Level	% of teachers meeting rubric criteria	Notes
K	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.
1	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.
2	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.
3	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.
4	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.
5	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.
6	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.

Sub-Step 4 - Determine if the implementation level of research-based, high leverage instructional practices meet the criteria.

Notes:

[Click here to enter text.](#)

Criteria

Kindergarten – Grade 6

80% of teachers are implementing research-based, high leverage instructional practices with fidelity.

Yes	No
Continue to next Building Block.	Are criteria not met at <input type="checkbox"/> System-Level <input type="checkbox"/> Classroom-Level Transfer results to Step 5: Prioritizing Universal Tier practices. Continue to next Building Block.

If you find that most classrooms in the program do not meet criteria, consider a systems-level action plan to remove barriers. If only a few classrooms do not meet criteria, classroom-level actions may be successful at removing barriers.

4. INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS

This question is about all teachers having access to the instructional materials that are research-based, so all teachers are using universal instructional materials that are highly likely to meet a wide range of student needs, and result in students successfully meeting reading benchmarks for their grade level. Students engaging in learning grounded in research-based materials have a greater chance to be on track to reach established benchmarks, enjoy reading, and will be college- and career-ready as they progress through the school system.

OVERVIEW

Level 2 Question: Do all teachers have access to Universal Tier materials that are researched-based and provide instructional supports that are responsive to varied student learning needs?

Potential Data Source(s):

- The materials the district employs to deliver the content in the Iowa Core
- The Materials Inventory used for Level 1 Question
- Research review by external group on the materials that you use (e.g., FCRR and the What Works Clearinghouse, journal reviews, those provided by the publisher, etc.)
- Consumer's Guide to Evaluating a Core Reading Program Grades K-3: A Critical Elements Analysis:
http://oregonreadingfirst.uoregon.edu/downloads/instruction/curriculum_review/consumers_guide_core_rev.doc
- Any additional district level research review

SUB-STEPS

1. Review inventory of materials tool from Level 1 Question. Update if needed.
2. Determine source of research review.
3. Access any/all review data for your materials in regards to them being research-based
4. Compare list of school's instructional materials to research reviews.
5. Determine if criteria for having Universal Tier ELA materials that are research-based meets the criteria.

Sub-Step 1 – Review inventory of materials tool from Level 1 Question.

Notes:

[Click here to enter text.](#)

Think about...

Have any universal instructional materials been added to your school since you last completed the materials inventory?

If so, remember to also check them for Shifts and key features.

Sub-Step 2 – Determine source of research review.

Notes:

[Click here to enter text.](#)

Think about...

Do you know where you can find reviews of research for your universal instructional materials? If not, consult your AEA the Iowa Department of Education.

Does the research review include the criteria and review process used?

Here are examples where you can go to :

- Florida Center for Reading Research
- What Works Clearinghouse
- Guidance for the Reading First Program

Sub-Step 3 - Access any/all review data for your materials in regards to them being research-based

Notes:

[Click here to enter text.](#)

Think about...

Make sure all team members have time to study the data before they have to use them for decision making.

Are both quantitative and qualitative review data provided?

Sub-Step 4 - Compare list of school's instructional materials to research reviews.

Notes:

[Click here to enter text.](#)

Think about...

Does your team know how to interpret the research reviews?

Does your team know how to compare the inventory list of materials to the research reviews?

***Instructional Materials and Practices Comparison to Research-Based Criteria
Comparison Data Collection Form***

Compare materials all teachers in a grade level have access to using the following:

E = Exceeds Research-Based Criteria **M**= Meets Research-Based Criteria

Check Mark = Does not meet Research-Based Criteria **N** = Not Reviewed

Program /Material	Reviewed? (Y/N)	Meets or Exceeds Criteria for Research-Based?						
		K	1	2	3	4	5	6
<i>Example: Catchy Name Literacy Curriculum</i>	<i>Y</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>E</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>N</i>
Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.
Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.
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Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.
Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.

Sub-Step 5 - Determine if criteria for having Universal Tier ELA materials that are research-based meets the criteria.

Notes:

[Click here to enter text.](#)

Criteria

Kindergarten – Grade 6

100% of the universal instructional materials meet or exceed the criteria for being researched- based

Yes	No
Continue to next Building Block.	Are criteria not met at <input type="checkbox"/> System-Level <input type="checkbox"/> Classroom-Level Transfer results to Step 5: Prioritizing Universal Tier practices. Continue to next Building Block.

If you find that most classrooms in the program do not meet criteria, consider a systems-level action plan to remove barriers. If only a few classrooms do not meet criteria, classroom-level actions may be successful at removing barriers.

5. ASSESSMENT FOR LEARNING

This question is about whether or not teachers are using high-quality formative assessment practices to design instruction. At this level, formative assessment includes not only learning goals and success criteria, but the collection of student learning based on learning progressions. **Learning progressions** describe a developmental sequence of increasing learning targets, grounded in the learning goals and success criteria. This is not bound to a single test or tool, but rather a thoughtful, ongoing, process used on a daily basis. Teachers are also to collect evidence of student learning, grounded in learning progressions, using this framework.

OVERVIEW

Level 2 Question: Have teachers outlined ELA learning progressions and collected daily evidence of student learning based on the learning goals and success criteria to design instruction?

Potential Data Source(s):

- Developed Learning Goals and Success Criteria
 - Classroom Formative Assessments
 - Collaborative Team meeting agendas/notes
 - Teacher lesson plans
 - Interview teachers
-

SUB-STEPS

1. Determine location of documentation of Learning Goals, Success Criteria and Learning Progressions.
2. Record and analyze evidence teachers are using learning progressions and collected learning data to design instruction.
3. Determine if all classrooms in the building meet criteria

Sub-Step 1 – Determine location of documentation of Learning Goals, Success Criteria and Learning Progressions.

Notes:

[Click here to enter text.](#)

Think about...

Have learning progressions been identified by grade level, standard and time of year?

Are the Learning Goals and Success Criteria established centrally or by each teacher?

Sub-Step 2 - Record and analyze evidence teachers are using learning progressions and collected learning data to design instruction.

Notes:

[Click here to enter text.](#)

Think about...

Review information collected about formative assessment practices collected for the Level 1 Question.

Are any teachers unsure about whether or not they engage in the formative assessment practices found in the form below? If so, they should omit a numerical rating and make a note in the Comments section.

Directions: On this form indicate by grade level how teachers view their **USE** of the following Assessment for Learning Practices in their classrooms. This form can be completed for each classroom or one for each grade level. Check the box for the rating that best describes the use of using learning progressions to evaluate student work for instructional decision making.

Use the following scale: 1 = Not a Practice Used, 2 = Rarely, 3 = Occasionally, 4 = Frequently, 5 = Very Frequently.

Name: [Click here to enter text.](#)

Grade Level: [Click here to enter text.](#)

Date Completed: [Click here to enter text.](#)

Assessment for Learning Practice	1	2	3	4	5	Comments
Development and adherence to learning goals	<input type="checkbox"/>	Click here to enter text.				
Development and use of success criteria	<input type="checkbox"/>	Click here to enter text.				
Development and use of learning progressions	<input type="checkbox"/>	Click here to enter text.				
Daily collection of learning evidence for all students based on learning progressions	<input type="checkbox"/>	Click here to enter text.				
Collected evidence is used to design instruction	<input type="checkbox"/>	Click here to enter text.				

Directions: On this form, record the results from using the previous form. This form will allow you to see the results for your entire building. Enter the numerical rating for each Assessment for Learning practice, for each grade level. If multiple teachers completed the form for a grade level, enter the median score.

Summary Table

Assessment for Learning Practice	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	Comments
Development and adherence to learning goals	Click here to enter text.							
Development and use of success criteria	Click here to enter text.							
Development and use of learning progressions	Click here to enter text.							
Daily collection of learning evidence for all students based on learning progressions	Click here to enter text.							
Collected evidence is used to design instruction	Click here to enter text.							

Sub-Step 3 - Determine if all classrooms in the building meet criteria

Notes:

[Click here to enter text.](#)

Criteria

Kindergarten – Grade 6

80% of classrooms are using learning progressions and formative assessment data to design instruction.

Yes	No
Continue to next Building Block.	Are criteria not met at <input type="checkbox"/> System-Level <input type="checkbox"/> Classroom-Level Transfer results to Step 5: Prioritizing Universal Tier practices. Continue to next Building Block.

If you find that most classrooms in the program do not meet criteria, consider a systems-level action plan to remove barriers. If only a few classrooms do not meet criteria, classroom-level actions may be successful at removing barriers.

6. COLLABORATIVE LITERACY SUPPORTS

This question is about whether or not there is adequate access to student learning data, that consistent data-based instructional decisions are being made, and the feelings and beliefs of both educators and parents/guardians. Instructional decisions should be driven by student learning needs using consistent and accurate data. Collective, shared responsibility for this work between school and home provides those at school and home with the information they need to support student learning in both environments. Teamwork is the key to success.

OVERVIEW

Level 2 Question: Do all team members, including parents and administrators, have access to data and utilize it so that there is a shared responsibility for student learning?

Potential Data Source(s):

- Table for Data Access and Utilization
- Interviews

SUB-STEPS

1. As a team gather information on data access, data-based decision making processes, and shared responsibility.
2. Record data on the form.
3. Determine if the level of data access and utilization, and shared responsibility meets criteria.

Sub-Step 1 – As a team gather information on data access, data-based decision making processes, and shared responsibility.

Notes:

[Click here to enter text.](#)

Think about...

Sharing of student learning data and all related student information should meet all Federal and state regulations regarding access.

Where and how are student learning data stored?

Who has access to these data?

Is there a documented data-based decision making manual or guide for the school/district? If so, how often is it used?

Do all staff and parents there is shared responsibility to use data to make instructional decisions?

Sub-Step 2 - Record data on the form

Directions: On this form, record the results of examining collaborative data practices. Enter a “Yes” or “No” to best indicate whether the practice is in place school-wide. Place any additional information in the Comments column of the table.

Collaborative Data Practices	Classroom Teaching Staff	Literacy support staff	Building Admins	Specials Staff	Parents	Comments
Access to Data	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.
Data -Based Decision Making	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.
Shared Responsibility	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.

Sub-Step 3 - Determine if the level of data access and utilization, and shared responsibility meets criteria.

Notes:

[Click here to enter text.](#)

Criteria

100% of school staff and parents have access to student learning data, engage in data-based decision making, and feel shared responsibility to engage in this work.

Yes	No
Continue to Step 5.	Are criteria not met at <input type="checkbox"/> System-Level <input type="checkbox"/> Classroom-Level Transfer results to Step 5: Prioritizing Universal Tier practices. Continue to Step 5.

If you find that most classrooms in the program do not meet criteria, consider a systems-level action plan to remove barriers. If only a few classrooms do not meet criteria, classroom-level actions may be successful at removing barriers.

APPENDIX G. K-6 LEVEL 3 QUESTIONS WORKSHEETS

Coming Soon

APPENDIX H. K-6 LEVEL 4 QUESTIONS WORKSHEETS

Coming Soon

APPENDIX I. IDENTIFYING BARRIERS COACHING GUIDE

CONSENSUS

Coaching Questions

- To what degree do we have consensus around current reality?
- Do staff feel they have a voice? Is our leadership team *doing to* staff or *doing with* staff?
- Do we have consensus by those affected that these barriers need to be removed? Do we have consensus that removing these barriers will increase student learning?

Challenge: *Low consensus/Low morale/Low personal ownership or efficacy/sabotage*

Troubleshooting Tip(s): *Explore the following questions*

- Did we establish clear boundaries for non-negotiables and when stakeholders will have a voice?
- Did we explain, even with non-negotiables, what we wanted to change and Why we wanted to change it, from an evidence-based perspective?
- Did we allow for creative input, a vision and examples of effectiveness, and connect to role identification/self-efficacy in our change vision?

IDENTIFYING POTENTIAL BARRIERS

Coaching Questions

- To what degree do we have consensus around potential barriers?
- Which barriers could be removed in the short term/immediately? Which might be longer term/more complex?
- Would our system function best with staff input on prioritization? Have our priorities been identified through evidence or opinion?
- Have we taken steps to hear all voices or just the loudest ones?
- How much can we handle now? What can we get traction on?

Challenge: *We are stuck! What should we look at, what is all this data telling us?*

Troubleshooting Tip(s): *Explore the following questions*

- What do we already have/know?
- What can we collect easily (survey, interview)?
- What do we need to validate/verify; observe?
- What else do we need to know--question driven?

PRIORITIZING BARRIERS

Coaching Questions

- If previous work and conversations have been based on existing data or easy to collect data, consider additional verification--how do we know what we know?
- Is the barrier creating or contributing to a sizable gap between desired state and current state? Is it worth spending time to remove it?
- Would our barriers and prioritization meet the 'stranger test?' Could anyone reviewing our work, understand how we identified barriers and prioritized them?
- Have we used multiple sources of data, including both subjective and objective data?
- To what degree do we have consensus around prioritization?

Challenge: *We are overwhelmed! What should we do? Where do we start?*

Troubleshooting Tip(s): *Try the following strategies*

- Do something. Don't worry about whether or not it's the perfect place to start. Plan, Do, Evaluate, and see what direction to go next. As Michael Fullan says "Ready, Fire, Aim."
- Prioritize a 'quick win'

Challenge: *Our biggest barriers are beyond our control or hard to influence (e.g., poverty, home language, attendance)*

Troubleshooting Tip(s): *Review the following information below, share with staff*
Curriculum and instruction have a significant impact on students, despite other challenges. How we respond to our student needs through instruction and curriculum can have a bigger impact on student results immediately, even while we may work to influence social factors in the lives of our students.

VERIFYING PRIORITIZED BARRIERS

Coaching Questions

- Have we communicated "What and Why" to our faculty, regarding barrier identification and prioritization?
- Is the selection and prioritization of barrier(s) evidence-based?
- Is the potential barrier (still) present or not? Is it still a priority?
- Is the potential barrier still in our top 3 priorities?
- Do we need additional verification or validation?
- Did we jump from brainstorming to action planning, or did we fully engage in verification and evidence collection/review?
- To what degree do we agree these are evidence based barriers and that we are going to work on them?

- Are there any key stakeholder groups that require some consensus building?
(Communication with key stakeholders may be part of our action plan)
- Stakeholders may include: parents, board members, guidance staff, AEA teams, para-educators, support staff including lunch, custodial, secretarial, and any other stakeholders important in your system.

APPENDIX J. IDENTIFYING BARRIERS TOOLS FOR DEEPER DISCUSSION

TOOLS FOR DEEPER DISCUSSION

Identifying barriers can be a difficult process. It requires us to dig deeper to understand why practices are not in place, instead of immediately jumping to potential solutions. This is the process detailed in Steps 6 and 7 of this Facilitation Guide. If the information provided in Steps 6 and 7 is not enough to help you move forward with this work, the tools in this Appendix may be helpful to you. These tools are intended to be used as optional resources to help you complete Step 6 and 7. They can provide additional structure and guidance. If you use any of these tools, make sure to document the results in Steps 6 and 7.

The Five Whys?

Adapted by Iowa Support System for Schools and Districts in Need of Assistance

See Also: *The Handbook for SMART School Teams*, p 135.

See Also: *School Leader's Guide to Root Cause Analysis – Using Data to Dissolve Problems*, pp 86-88.

“The Five Whys” strategy is designed to help us “dig deeper.” This tool can assist us in identifying, prioritizing, and verifying barriers (validating the cost-benefit of addressing the problem). After identifying a problem statement, ask yourself “why” several times. While five is not a sacred number, it does encourage us to go beyond the obvious symptoms and reach the underlying barrier(s). Make sure to verify your “barrier(s)” with evidence.

Steps of “The Five Whys”

1. Identify a perceived problem, situation, or topic that is to be studied or looked at closely.
2. Ask “why?” this condition exists.
3. Each time the question “Why?” is answered, ask “Why?” of that statement.
4. Continue asking “Why?” until you feel comfortable you have determined the barrier.
5. Seek to verify your “barrier” with evidence.

What is the perceived problem/situation/topic to be looked at closely?

Why? Click here to enter text.

What is the perceived problem/situation/topic to be looked at closely?

According to teacher feedback, we have 90 minutes of literacy instruction on the schedule, but it doesn't always happen.

Why? We have to work our literacy block around shared specials teachers and we are expected to fit in time that is cut.

Why? Because we think teachers should have autonomy and manage their own time, but they say it can't always get done.

Why? Because moving one thing, like 15 minutes of literacy block affects many others like Title and Spec Ed.

Why? Because our teachers don't want to have to fight or negotiate for time that changes day by day or week by week, depending on the special. It is easier to give up 10 or 15 minutes here and there.

Why? A master schedule would be uncomfortable and take away autonomy. It might make people unhappy.

Fishbone – The Cause and Effect Diagram

Source: *Iowa Support System for Schools and Districts in Need of Assistance (adapted)*

See Also: *Iowa Evaluator Approval Training Program (adapted)*

See Also: *The Handbook for SMART School Teams, pp 136-137*

What Is It?

The Fishbone – Cause and Effect Diagram is a visual of the critical elements that may contribute to the barriers standing between desired state and current reality. It is based upon the work in 1943 of Professor Kaoru Ishikawa of Tokyo.

It is used to provide a visual that organizes a lot of information and assists in narrowing or focusing that information. It is used to identify barriers, prioritize barriers, or verify barriers. It is extremely helpful in finding a barrier that is worth the costs and benefits to address, that staff can take action on, and that has the potential to have the greatest impact on student achievement.

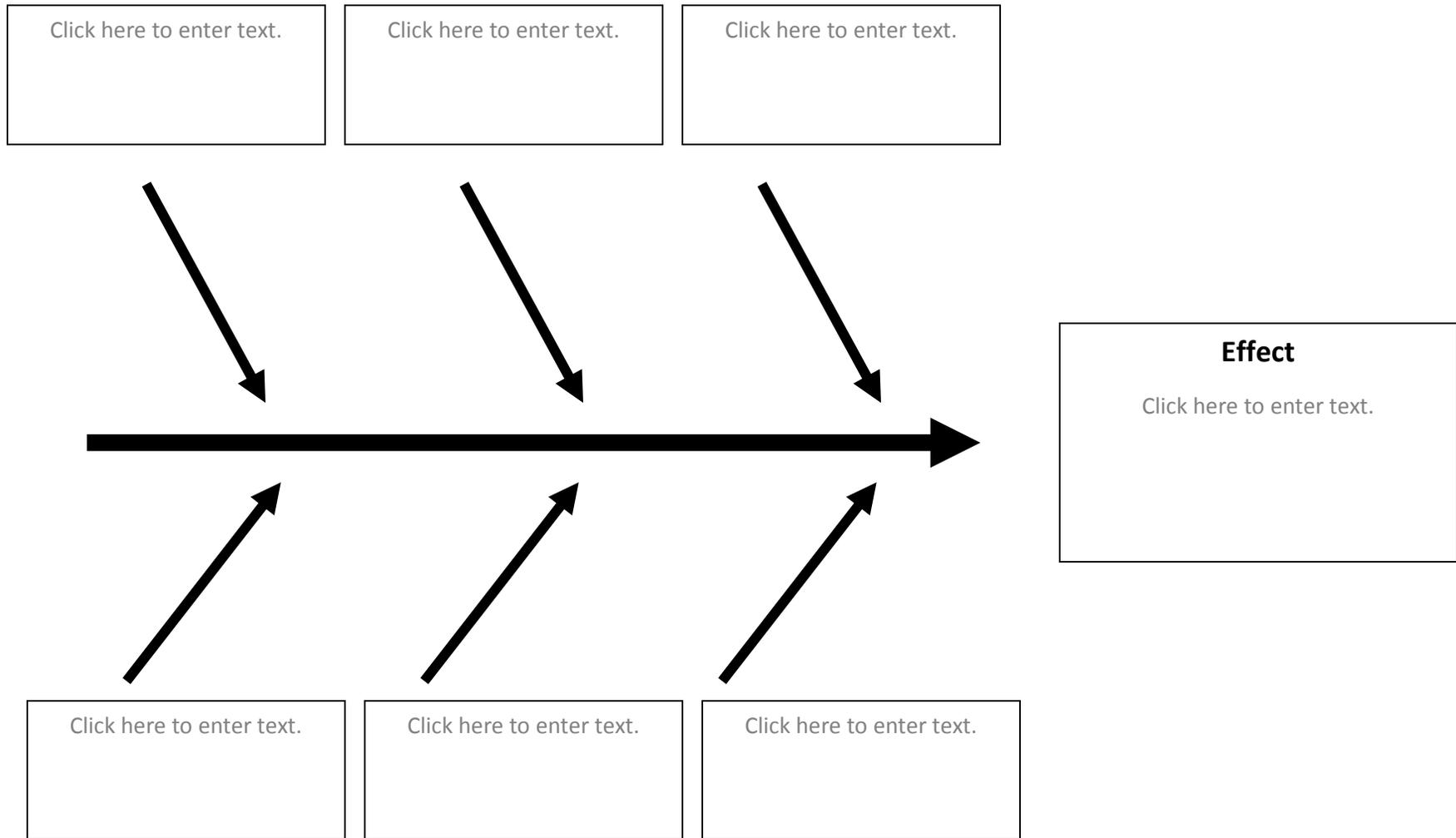
How Do You Use It?

1. Identify the barrier as it is presently perceived and as accurately as possible. (Do you have 90 minutes of protected literacy instruction? Is there a clear schedule and lesson plans connected?) Place that information in the “eye” of the fishbone, marked “Effect.”
2. Brainstorm/Review the evidence for possible causes; evidence will likely come from the review of the Building Blocks
 - a. Review master schedule
 - b. Review teacher schedules
 - c. Review lesson plans
 - d. Survey teachers
3. Analyze data
 - a. Is there a master schedule?
 - b. Do all classrooms meet criteria?
 - c. Does data suggest a classroom, grade level, building, or district concern?
4. Brainstorm/Review the evidence that suggests the barrier. For example, if you have determined that lesson plans (literacy activities are implied but not explicit) may be a barrier, then determine reasons for this cause. Has the expectation for literacy activities in lesson plans been communicated with examples and non-examples? Are both new and veteran staff informed of expectations?

You may want to dig deeper into each barrier. You may want to note additional reasons, or “cause of the causes” below the appropriate barrier. Add “bones” to the fish or use bullets under each cause. You can even prioritize these if you desire.

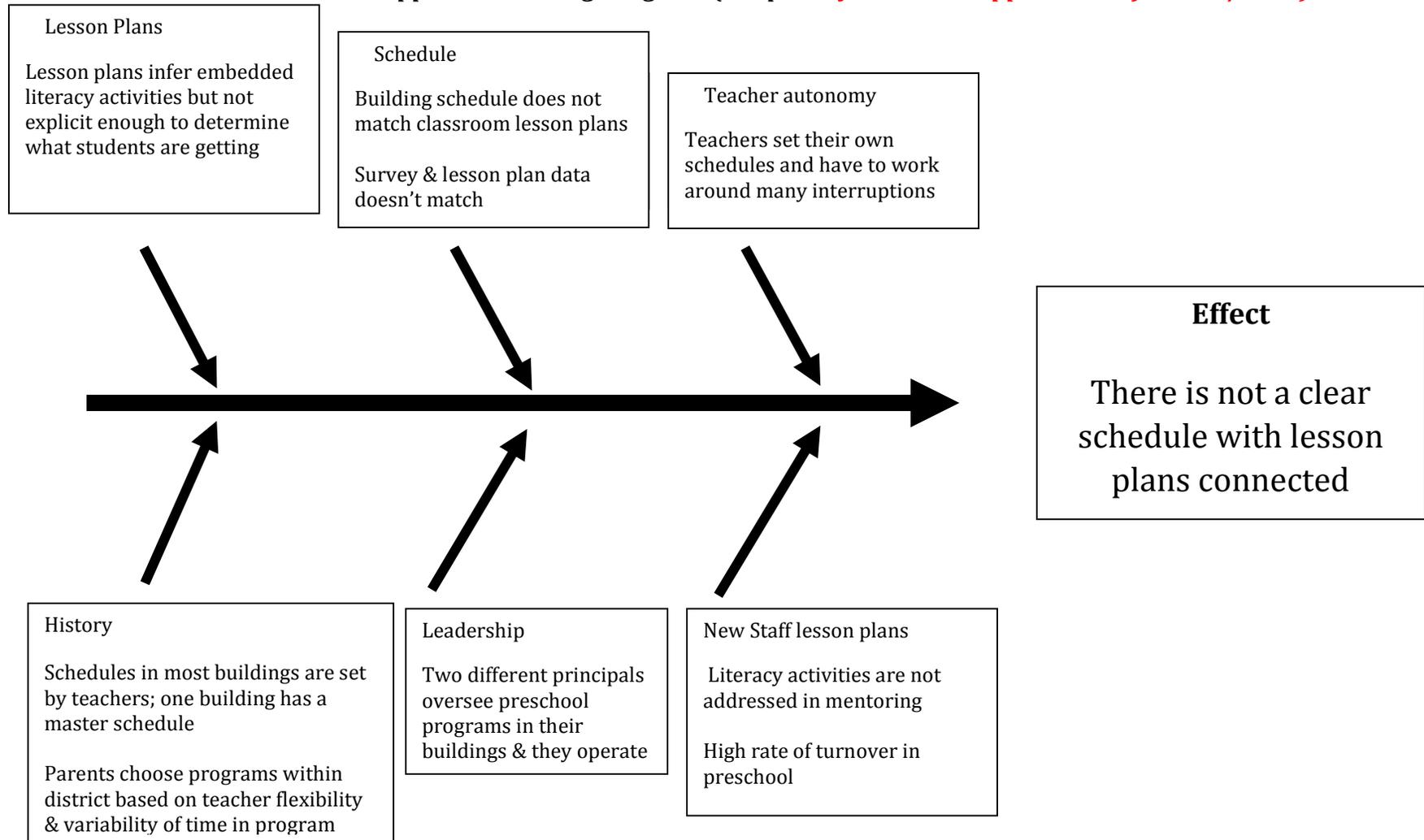
Fishbone - The Cause and Effect Diagram

Source: Iowa Evaluator Approval Training Program (adapted by the Iowa Support Team for SINA/DINA)



Fishbone – The Cause and Effect Diagram

Source: Iowa Evaluator Approval Training Program (adapted by the Iowa Support Team for SINA/DINA)



Force Field Analysis

Source: School Leader's Guide to Root Cause Analysis Using Data to Dissolve Problems

Paul G. Preuss, pp 88-89 (adapted by Iowa Support System for Schools and Districts in Need of Assistance)

What Is It?

Force Field Analysis was developed in 1951 by Kurt Lewin of the University of Iowa; it is a useful tool for brainstorming barriers (those forces that keep us from desired state) and identifying what it takes to remove barriers at a system level. Driving forces are those that pressure us to change toward a new desired state. The restraining forces are those that keep us in our current reality.

If we want to move toward the desired state, we must either increase the driving forces or decrease/eliminate the restraining forces. While increasing driving forces can be desirable, it often causes the pressure of restraining forces to increase. If we decrease, or eliminate, the restraining forces, the system is more apt to move toward the desired state without having to increase the driving forces.

You will always want to check your barriers with the evidence. Once the barrier(s) are verified within current reality, they should become the focus of actions to attain the desired state.

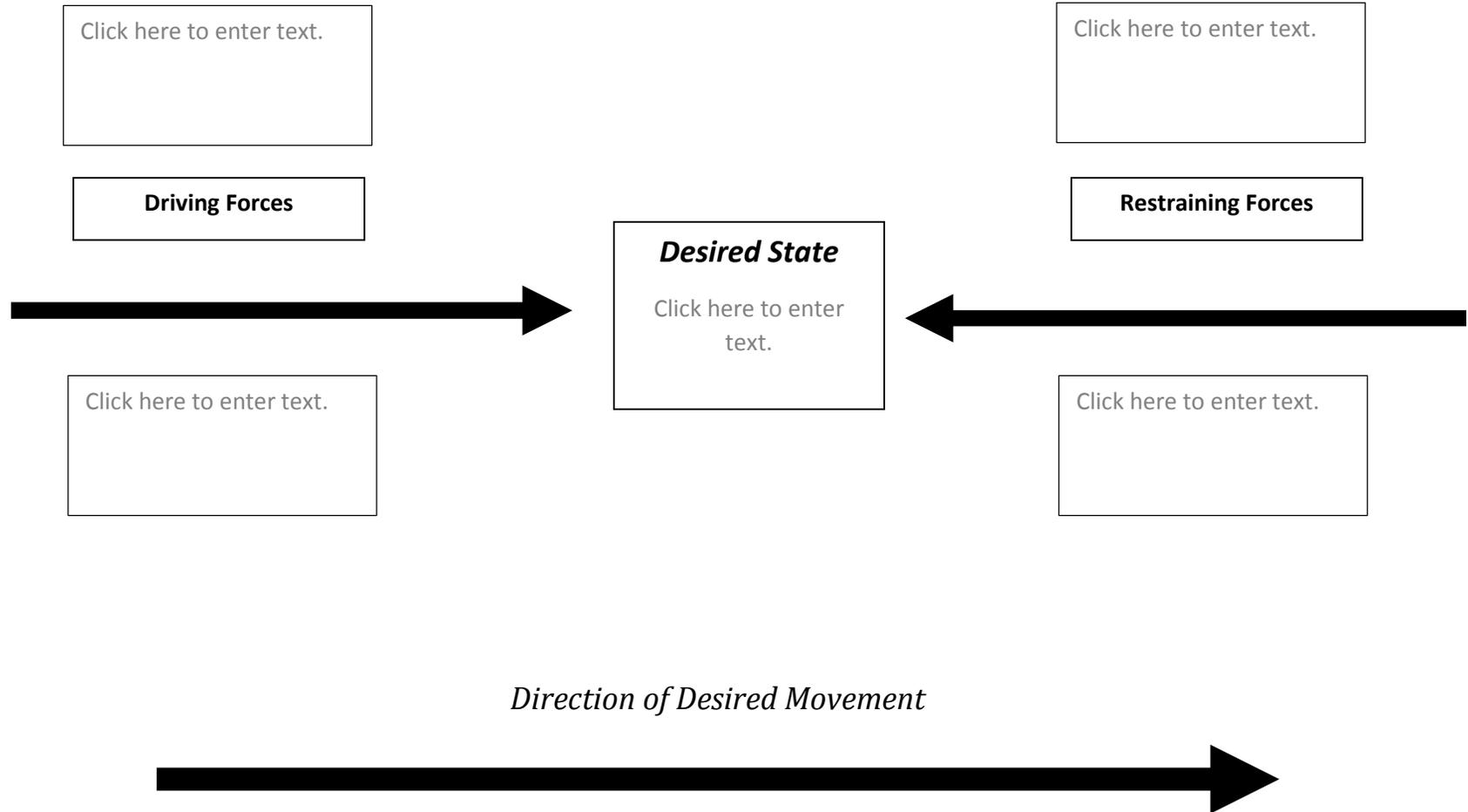
The force field analysis is also a good tool to communicate to your stakeholders what the leadership team and building is doing to achieve the desired state.

How Do You Use It?

1. Define the desired state. (Provided in the Facilitation Guide)
2. Brainstorm the driving forces (barriers).
3. Brainstorm the restraining forces (barriers).
4. Verify the barriers with evidence, or data.
5. *Determine the actions that will be taken to reach the desired state. You want to take advantage of the driving forces, but focus on the elimination or decrease of restraining forces. You may want to prioritize the actions to increase the chances that the desired change will take place and/or to assure that needed resources for the actions are available. *Action Planning is subsequent activity in the facilitation guide.

Force Field Analysis

Source: School Leader's Guide to Root Cause Analysis Using Data to Dissolve Problems, Paul G. Preuss, pp 88-89
(adapted by Iowa Support System for Schools and Districts in Need of Assistance)



Force Field Analysis: Example

Source: School Leader's Guide to Root Cause Analysis Using Data to Dissolve Problems, Paul G. Preuss, pp 88-89
(adapted by Iowa Support System for Schools and Districts in Need of Assistance)

Most area districts are prioritizing 90 minutes protected time

School board/community wants better performance in literacy

Sanctions from legislation (ELI) if not successful

Fear of loss of classroom autonomy

Teachers see no sense of urgency

Distrust of data that indicates need for change in practice.

Driving Forces

Desired State

90 minutes of protected literacy

Restraining Forces



We want to do what's best for our kids.

We have substantial materials to work through during literacy block.(new series)

We adjust schedule to prioritize literacy for regularly scheduled late starts

We lack effective instructional strategies.

Professional development is missing.

We have not addressed early out shortened days



Direction of Desired Movement

Relations Diagram

Source: The Handbook for SMART School Teams, p 138 (adapted)

What Is It?

The Relations Diagram is a pictorial tool that helps identify the most important barrier to desired state, particularly for complex problems. It helps you study the relationships among aspects of the problem. By identifying the relationship, a team knows how to prioritize barriers.

This is a good tool to use when you need to analyze and understand a complex issue; it is also good to use when trying to identify barriers and prioritize a barrier with the greatest impact on student achievement and on which staff can take action.

How Do You Use It?

1. Use the desired state to clarify the issue or problem statement; you may even want to make it in the form of a question and place it in the center of the chart paper or marker board.
 - For example, “Do all teachers have access to evidence-based curriculum materials that address the Iowa Early Learning Standards in Communication, Language, and Literacy?”
 - For example, “Do administrators and teachers regularly engage in professional learning focused on the Iowa Core Standards?”
2. Identify/Brainstorm as many possible barriers that might be contributing to the problem or issue.
 - For example . . .
 - According to a materials inventory, our materials are not available to teachers who support students with targeted needs.
 - According to a research review our materials are not independently validated as effective by someone other than the publisher.
 - According to an alignment review, our materials have gaps in meeting the Iowa Early Learning Standards in Communication, Language, and Literacy.
 - Professional learning plans do not exist or do not connect to the Iowa Core.
 - Professional learning in the Iowa Core is not aligned by grade level nor vertically.
 - There is no plan to monitor professional development implementation in the classroom.
 - No feedback exists for teachers to know if they are implementing Iowa Early Learning Standards or Iowa Core effectively.
 - Our professional learning plan does not account for staff turnover from within or externally.
3. On your chart paper, write each potential barrier on an invisible circle around the identified problem.

4. Analyze the relationships by looking at each potential barrier in relationship to the other barriers. Ask yourself the question, “Does this ‘barrier’ influence the other barriers, or is this ‘barrier’ influenced by the other barriers?” Draw an arrow in the appropriate direction from one “barrier” to the other “barrier.” The arrow head should go toward the barrier which is the effect and away from the barrier which is the cause or the influence.
 - For example . . .
 - Materials lack alignment to the Iowa Early Learning Standards → We prioritized ‘power standards’ and omitted the importance of some skills
 - Materials lack alignment to the Iowa Early Learning Standards → Each teacher pulls the materials they like to use (common materials unavailable) with no oversight or alignment examination
 - Professional Learning plans do not connect to the Iowa Core → We have ‘too much’ to do; or we have not made connections to Iowa Core explicit.
5. Continue to analyze relationships until every barrier has been compared to every other barrier
6. Count the number of arrows going in and out of each category.
 - For example . . .
 - ‘Professional Learning plans do not connect to the Iowa Core’ has 4 “in” arrows and 1 “out” arrow.
 - ‘Materials lack alignment to the Iowa Early Learning Standards in Communication, Language, and Literacy’ has 3 “in” arrows and 1 “out” arrow.
 - Teacher pulls the materials they like to use (common materials not available) without alignment examination has 0 “in” arrows, and 5 “out” arrows.
 - Our Professional Learning plan does not make explicit connections to Iowa Core has 2 “in” arrows, 6 “out” arrows
7. Prioritize the barriers. The barriers with the greatest number of arrows going in are effects; the barriers with the greatest number of arrows going out may be prioritized as more likely to impact student achievement (cause/greater influence).
 - For example . . .
 - Teachers pull materials they like to use (common materials not available) without alignment examination is prioritized as a barrier to ‘Access to evidence-based curriculum materials that address the Iowa Early Learning Standards in Communication, Language, and Literacy.’ (5 out arrows)
 - ‘Materials lack alignment to the Iowa Early Learning Standards in Communication, Language, and Literacy’ is listed as an effect of other barriers (3 in arrows)
8. Action planning is subsequent to identifying, prioritizing, and verifying barriers in the facilitation guide.

Tips:

- This activity does not need to be completed in one day. Think time, research time, or evidence collection for each category may result in better analysis of the barriers and relationships.

- Using the “Five Whys” technique can also assist in barrier identification and prioritization.
- Revisiting the diagram later is a good check for progress.
- Narrowing the potential causes to less than eight will make the process more manageable.

