

Knowledge and Practice Standards Self-Study Checklist

Aligned to the IDA Knowledge and Practice Standards for Teachers of Reading, this checklist can assist teachers in assessing their current knowledge base about the science of reading in order to develop meaningful professional development plans.

Name: _____

Date: _____

Rating Scale: This simple rating scale may help teachers evaluate the amount of knowledge they possess for each of the competencies and identify areas where they may benefit from professional development.

3 – I Know It Well Enough to Use It: I have sufficient understanding and experience to operate at a full professional level with this information and I can generalize basic principles to effectively function in both predictable and new situations with my students.

2 – I Have Some Knowledge: My knowledge is newly developing in this area. I have a general understanding of key principles but limited or no applied experience using this with my students. I am capable of using this with coaching and support, in simple situations.

1 – I Have No Knowledge: I have no understanding of this information and will need to learn more.

Level Identification: Many of the competencies are followed by the designation of Level 1 or Level 2. These designations indicate whether a competency should be met by:

Level 1: teachers or any staff member whose responsibilities include general reading instruction for all students, such as a classroom teacher

Level 2: specialists or any staff member whose responsibilities include delivering reading interventions to struggling readers, such as a therapist, a reading specialist, an intervention teacher, a basic skills instructor, a Learning Disabilities Teacher-Consultant, a special education teacher, etc.

Foundation Concepts of Oral and Written Learning

Rating			Content Knowledge	Application
3	2	1		
			1. Understand and explain the language processing requirements of proficient reading and writing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Phonological (speech sound) processing • Orthographic (print) processing • Semantic (meaning) processing • Syntactic (sentence level) processing • Discourse (connected text level processing) 	a. Explain the domains of language and their importance to proficient reading and writing (Level 1). b. Explain a scientifically valid model of the language processes underlying reading and writing (Level 2).
			2. Understand and explain other aspects of cognition and behavior that affect reading and writing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attention • Executive function • Memory • Processing speed • Graphomotor control 	a. Recognize that reading difficulties coexist with other cognitive and behavioral problems (Level 1). b. Explain a scientifically valid model of other cognitive influences on reading and writing, and explain major research findings regarding the contribution of linguistic and cognitive factors to the prediction of literacy outcomes (Level 2).
			3. Define and identify environmental, cultural, and social factors that contribute to literacy development (e.g., language spoken at home, language and literacy experiences, and cultural values).	Identify (Level 1) or explain (Level 2) major research findings regarding the contribution of environmental factors to literacy outcomes.
			4. Know and identify phases in the typical developmental progression of <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oral language (semantic, syntactic, pragmatic) • Phonological skill • Printed word recognition • Spelling • Reading fluency • Reading comprehension • Written expression 	Match examples of student responses and learning behavior to phases in language and literacy development (Level 1).
			5. Understand and explain the known casual relationships among phonological skill, phonic decoding, spelling, accurate and automatic word recognition, text reading fluency, background knowledge, verbal reasoning skill, vocabulary, reading comprehension, and writing.	Explain how a weakness in each component skill of oral language, reading, and writing may affect other related skills and processes across time (Level 2).

Knowledge and Practice Standards Self-Study Checklist

Rating			Content Knowledge	Application
3	2	1		
			6. Know and explain how the relationships among the major components of literacy development change with reading development (i.e., changes in oral language, including phonological awareness; phonics and word recognition; spelling; reading and writing fluency; vocabulary; reading comprehension skills and strategies; written expression).	Explain how a weakness in each component skill of oral language, reading, and writing may affect other related skills and processes across time (Level 2).
			7. Know reasonable goals and expectations for learners at various stages of reading and writing development.	Given case study material, explain why a student is/is not meeting goals and expectations in reading or writing for his or her age/grade (Level 1).

Knowledge of the Structure of Language

Rating			Content Knowledge	Application
3	2	1		
Phonology (The Speech Sound System)				
			1. Identify, pronounce, classify, and compare the consonant and vowel phonemes of English.	a. Identify similar or contrasting features among phonemes (Level 1). b. Reconstruct the consonant and vowel phoneme inventories and identify the feature differences between and among phonemes (Level 2).
Orthography (The Spelling System)				
			2. Understand the broad outline of historical influences on English spelling patterns, especially Anglo-Saxon, Latin (Romance), and Greek.	Recognize typical words from the historical layers of English (Anglo-Saxon, Latin/Romance, Greek) (Level 1).
			3. Define grapheme as a functional correspondence unit or representation of a phoneme.	Accurately map graphemes to phonemes in any English word (Level 1).
			4. Recognize and explain common orthographic rules and patterns in English.	Sort words by orthographic "choice" pattern; analyze words by suffix ending patterns and apply suffix ending rules (Level 1).
			5. Know the difference between "high frequency" and "irregular" words.	Identify printed words that are the exception to regular patterns and spelling principles; sort high frequency words into regular and exception words (Level 1).
			6. Identify, explain, and categorize six basic syllable types in English spelling.	Sort, pronounce, and combine regular written syllables and apply the most productive syllable division principles (Level 1).
Morphology				
			7. Identify and categorize common morphemes in English, including Anglo-Saxon compounds, inflectional suffixes, and derivational suffixes; Latin-based prefixes, roots, and derivational suffixes; and Greek based combining forms.	a. Recognize the most common prefixes, roots, suffixes, and combining forms in English content words, and analyze words at both the syllable and morpheme level (Level 1). b. Recognize advanced morphemes (e.g., chameleon or assimilated + prefixes) (Level 2).
Semantics				
			8. Understand and identify examples of meaningful word relationships or semantic organization.	Match or identify examples of word associations, antonyms, synonyms, multiple meanings and uses, semantic overlap, and semantic feature analysis (Level 1).
Syntax				
			9. Define and distinguish among phrases, dependent clauses, and independent clauses in sentence structure.	Construct and deconstruct simple, complex, and compound sentences (Level 1).
			10. Identify the parts of speech and the grammatical role of a word in a sentence.	a. Identify the basic parts of speech and classify words by their grammatical role in a sentence (Level 1). b. Identify advanced grammatical concepts (e.g., infinitives, gerunds) (Level 2).
Discourse				
			11. Explain the major differences between narrative and expository discourse.	Classify text by genre; identify features that are characteristic of each genre, and identify graphic organizers that characterize typical structures (Level 1).
			12. Identify and construct expository paragraphs of varying logical structures (e.g., classification, reason, sequence).	Identify main idea sentences, connecting words, and topics that fit each type of expository paragraph organization (Level 2).
			13. Identify cohesive devices in text and inferential gaps in the surface language of text.	Analyze text for the purpose of identify the inferences that students must make to comprehend (Level 2).

Knowledge and Practice Standards Self-Study Checklist

Structured Language Teaching: Phonology

Rating			Content Knowledge	Application
3	2	1		
			1. Identify the general and specific goals of phonological skill instruction.	Explicitly state the goal of any phonological awareness teaching activity (Level 1).
			2. Know the progression of phonological skill development (i.e., rhyme, syllable, onset-rime, phoneme differentiation).	a. Select and implement activities that match a student's developmental level of phonological skill (Level 1). b. Design and justify the implementation of activities that match a student's developmental level of phonological skill (Level 2).
			3. Identify the differences among various phonological manipulations, including identifying, matching, blending, segmenting, substituting, and deleting sounds.	Demonstrate instructional activities that identify, match, blend, segment, substitute, and delete sounds (Level 1).
			4. Understand the principles of phonological skill instruction: brief, multisensory, conceptual, and auditory-verbal.	a. Successfully produce vowel and consonant phonemes (Level 1). b. Teach articulatory features of phonemes and words; use minimally contrasting pairs of sounds and words in instruction; support instruction with manipulative materials and movement (Level 2).
			5. Understand the reciprocal relationships among phonological processing, reading, spelling, and vocabulary.	a. Direct students' attention to speech sounds during reading, spelling, and vocabulary instruction using a mirror, discussion of articulatory features, and so on as scripted or prompted (Level 1). b. Direct students' attention to speech sounds during reading, spelling, and vocabulary instruction without scripting or prompting (Level 2).
			6. Understand the phonological features of a second language or dialect, such as Spanish, and how they may interfere with English pronunciation and phonics.	Explicitly contrast first and second language phonological systems, as appropriate, to anticipate which sounds may be most challenging for the second language learner (Level 2).

Structured Language Teaching: Phonics and Word Recognition

Rating			Content Knowledge	Application
3	2	1		
			1. Know or recognize how to order phonics concepts from easier to more difficult.	Plan lessons with a cumulative progression of word recognition skills that build one on another (Level 1).
			2. Understand principles of explicit and direct teaching, model, lead, give guided practice, and review.	Explicitly and effectively teach (e.g., information taught is correct, students are attentive, teacher checks for understanding, teacher scaffolds students' learning) concepts of word recognition and phonics; apply concepts to reading single words, phrases, and connected text (Level 1).
			3. State the rationale for multisensory and multimodal techniques.	Demonstrate the simultaneous use of two or three learning modalities (to include listening, speaking, movement, touch, reading, and/or writing) to increase engagement and enhance memory (Level 1).
			4. Know the routines of a complete lesson format, from the introduction of a word recognition concept to fluent application in meaningful reading and writing.	Plan and effectively teach all steps in a decoding lesson, including single-word reading and connected text that is read fluently, accurately, and with appropriate intonation and expression (Level 1).
			5. Understand research-based adaptations of instruction for students with weaknesses in working memory, attention, executive function, or processing speed.	Adapt the pace, format, content, strategy, or emphasis of instruction according to students' pattern of response (Level 2).

Structured Language Teaching: Fluent, Automatic Reading of Text

Rating			Content Knowledge	Application
3	2	1		
			1. Understand the role of literacy in word recognition, oral reading, silent reading, comprehension of written discourse, and motivation to read.	Assess students' fluency rate and determine reasonable expectations for reading fluency at various stages of reading development, using research-based guidelines and appropriate state and local standards and benchmarks (Level 1).

Knowledge and Practice Standards Self-Study Checklist

Rating			Content Knowledge	Application
3	2	1		
			2. Understand reading fluency as a stage of normal reading development, as the primary symptom of some reading disorders; and as a consequence of practice and instruction.	Determine which students need a fluency-oriented approach to instruction, using screening, diagnostic, and progress-monitoring assessments (Level 2).
			3. Define and identify examples of text at a student's frustration, instructional, and independent reading level.	Match students with appropriate texts as informed by fluency rate to promote ample independent oral and silent reading (Level 1).
			4. Know sources of activities for building fluency in component reading skills.	Design lesson plans that incorporate fluency-building activities into instruction at sub-word and word levels (Level 1).
			5. Know which instructional activities and approaches are most likely to improve fluency outcomes.	Design lesson plans with a variety of techniques to build reading fluency, such as repeated readings of passages, alternate oral reading with a partner, reading with a tape, or rereading the same passage up to three times (Level 1).
			6. Understand techniques to enhance student motivation to read.	Identify student interests and needs to motivate independent reading (Level 1).
			7. Understand appropriate uses of assistive technology for students with serious limitations in reading fluency.	Make appropriate recommendations for use of assistive technology in general education classes for students with different reading profiles (e.g., dyslexia versus language disabilities) (Level 2).

Structured Language Teaching: Vocabulary

Rating			Content Knowledge	Application
3	2	1		
			1. Understand the role of vocabulary development and vocabulary knowledge in comprehension.	Teach word meanings directly using contextual examples, structural (morpheme) analysis, antonyms and synonyms, definitions, connotations, multiple meanings, and semantic feature analysis (Levels 1 and 2).
			2. Understand the role and characteristics of direct and indirect (contextual) methods of vocabulary instruction.	Lesson planning reflects: a. Selection of material for read-alouds and independent reading that will expand students' vocabulary. b. Identification of words necessary for direct teaching that should be known before the passage is read. c. Repeated encounters with new words and multiple opportunities to use new words orally and in writing. d. Recurring practice and opportunities to use new words in writing and speaking (Levels 1 and 2).
			3. Know varied techniques for vocabulary instruction before, during, and after reading.	
			4. Understand that word knowledge is multifaceted.	
			5. Understand the sources of wide differences in students' vocabularies.	

Structured Language Teaching: Text Comprehension

Rating			Content Knowledge	Application
3	2	1		
			1. Be familiar with teaching strategies that are appropriate before, during, and after reading and that promote reflective reading.	a. State purpose for reading, elicit or provide background knowledge, and explore key vocabulary (Level 1). b. Query during text reading to foster attention to detail, inference-making, and mental model construction (Level 1). c. Use graphic organizers, note-taking strategies, retelling and summarizing, and cross-text comparisons (Level 1).
			2. Contrast the characteristics of major text genres, including narration, exposition, and argumentation.	Lesson plans reflect a range of genres, with emphasis on narrative and expository texts (Level 1).
			3. Understand the similarities and differences between composition and text comprehension, and the usefulness of writing in building comprehension.	Model, practice, and share written responses to text; foster explicit connections between new learning and what was already known (Level 1).
			4. Identify in any text the phrases, clauses, sentences, paragraphs and "academic language" that could be a source of miscomprehension.	Anticipate confusions and teach comprehension of figurative language, complex sentence forms, cohesive devices, and unfamiliar features of text (Level 2).

Knowledge and Practice Standards Self-Study Checklist

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3	2	1		
			5. Understand levels of comprehension including the surface code, text base, and mental model (situation model).	Plan lessons to foster comprehension of the surface code (the language), the text base (the underlying ideas), and a mental model (the larger context for the ideas) (Level 2).
			6. Understand factors that contribute to deep comprehension, including background knowledge, vocabulary, verbal reasoning ability, knowledge of literary structures and conventions, and use of skills and strategies for close reading of text.	Adjust the emphasis of lessons to accommodate learners' strengths and weaknesses and pace of learning (Level 2).

Structured Language Teaching: Handwriting, Spelling, and Written Expression

Rating			Content Knowledge	Application
3	2	1		
Handwriting				
			1. Know research-based principles for teaching letter naming and letter formation, both manuscript and cursive.	Use multisensory techniques to teach letter naming and letter formation in manuscript and cursive forms (Level 1).
			2. Know techniques for teaching handwriting fluency.	Implement strategies to build fluency in letter formation, and copying and transcription of written language (Level 1).
Spelling				
			3. Recognize and explain the relationship between transcription skills and written expression.	Explicitly and effectively teach (e.g., information taught is correct, students are attentive, teacher checks for understanding, teacher scaffolds students' learning) concepts related to spelling (e.g., a rule for adding suffixes to base words) (Level 1).
			4. Identify students' levels of spelling development and orthographic knowledge.	Select materials and/or create lessons that address students' skill levels (Level 1).
			5. Recognize and explain the influences of phonological, orthographic, and morphemic knowledge on spelling.	Analyze a student's spelling errors to determine his or her institutional needs (e.g., development of phonological skills versus learning spelling rules versus application of orthographic or morphemic knowledge in spelling) (Level 2).
Written Expression				
			6. Understand the major components and processes of written expression and how they interact (e.g., basic writing/transcription skills versus text generation).	Integrate basic skill instruction with composition in writing lessons (Levels 1 and 2).
			7. Know grade and developmental expectations for students' writing in the following areas: mechanics and conventions of writing, composition, revision, and editing processes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Select and design activities to teach important components of writing, including mechanics/conventions of writing, compositions, and revision and editing processes. b. Analyze students' writing to determine specific instructional needs. c. Provide specific, constructive feedback to students targeted to students' most critical needs in writing. d. Teach research-based writing strategies such as those for planning, revising, and editing text. e. Teach writing (discourse) knowledge, such as the importance of writing for the intended audience, use of formal versus informal language, and various schemas for writing (e.g., reports versus narratives versus arguments) (Levels 1 and 2).
			8. Understand appropriate uses of assistive technology in written expression.	Make appropriate written recommendations for the use of assistive technology in writing (Levels 1 and 2).

Interpretation and Administration of Assessments for Planning Instruction

Rating			Content Knowledge	Application	Observable Competencies for Teaching Students with Dyslexia and Related Difficulties
3	2	1			
			1. Understand the differences among screening, diagnostic, outcome, and progress-monitoring assessments.	Match each type of assessment and its purpose (Level 1).	Administer screenings and progress monitoring assessments (Level 1).
			2. Understand basic principles of test construction, including reliability, validity, and norm-referencing, and know the most well-validated screening tests designed to identify students at risk for reading difficulties.	Match examples of technically adequate, well-validated screening, diagnostic, outcome, and progress-monitoring assessments (Level 1).	Explain why individual students are or are not at risk in reading based on their performance on screening assessments (Level 1).

Knowledge and Practice Standards Self-Study Checklist

Rating			Content Knowledge	Application	Observable Competencies for Teaching Students with Dyslexia and Related Difficulties
3	2	1			
			3. Understand the principles of progress-monitoring and the use of graphs to indicate progress.	Using case study data, accurately interpret progress-monitoring graphs to decide whether or not a student is making adequate progress (Level 1).	Display progress-monitoring data in graphs that are understandable to students and parents (Level 1).
			4. Know the range of skills typically assessed by diagnostic surveys of phonological skills, decoding skills, oral reading skills, spelling, and writing.	Using case study data, accurately interpret subtest scores from diagnostic surveys to describe a student's patterns of strengths and weaknesses and instructional needs (Level 2).	Administer educational diagnostic assessments using standardized procedures (Level 2).
			5. Recognize the content and purposes of the most common diagnostic tests used by psychologists and educational evaluators.	Find and interpret appropriate print and electronic resources for evaluating tests (Level 1).	Write reports that clearly and accurately summarize a student's current skills in important component areas of reading and reading comprehension (Level 2).
			6. Interpret measures of reading comprehension and written expression in relation to an individual child's component profile.	Using case study data, accurately interpret a student's performance on reading comprehension or written expression measures and make appropriate instructional recommendations.	Write appropriate, specific recommendations for instruction, and educational programming based on assessment data (Level 2).

Knowledge of Dyslexia and Other Learning Disorders

Rating			Content Knowledge	Application
3	2	1		
			1. Understand the most common intrinsic differences between good and poor readers (i.e., cognitive, neurological, and linguistic).	a. Recognize scientifically accepted characteristics of individuals with poor word recognition (e.g., overdependence on context to aid word recognition, inaccurate non-word reading) (Level 1). b. Identify student learning behaviors and test profiles typical of students with dyslexia and related learning difficulties (Level 2).
			2. Recognize the tenets of the NICHD/IDA definition of dyslexia.	Explain the reasoning or evidence behind the main points in the definition (Level 1).
			3. Recognition that dyslexia and other reading difficulties exist on a continuum of severity.	Recognize level of instructional intensity, duration, and scope appropriate for mild, moderate, and severe reading disabilities (Level 1).
			4. Identify the distinguishing characteristics of dyslexia and related reading and learning disabilities (including developmental language comprehension disorder, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, disorders of written expression or dysgraphia, mathematics learning disorder, nonverbal learning disorders, etc.).	Match symptoms of the major subgroups of poor readers as established by research, including those with dyslexia, and identify typical case study profiles of those individuals (Level 2).
			5. Identify how symptoms of reading difficulty may change over time in response to development and instruction.	Identify predictable ways that symptoms might change as students move through the grades (Level 2).
			6. Understand federal and state laws that pertain to learning disabilities, especially reading disabilities and dyslexia.	a. Explain the most fundamental provisions of federal and state laws pertaining to the rights of students with disabilities, especially students' rights to a free, appropriate public education, an individualized educational program, services in the least restrictive environment, and due process (Level 1). b. Appropriately implement federal and state laws in identifying and serving students with learning disabilities, reading disabilities, and dyslexia (Level 2).

Adapted from: Moats et al. (2010). Knowledge and Practice Standards for Teachers of Reading. International Dyslexia Association.
<https://dyslexiaida.org/knowledge-and-practices/>