

Principals as Literacy Leaders

Literacy Practices Guide for the Primary Years

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*with reference to original source material developed by
Associate Professor Deslea Konza, Edith Cowan University,
as part of the Principals as Literacy Leaders (PALL) Pilot Project*

**This guide has been developed to support teacher and
principal/leader reflection about classroom literacy practices.**

**It is recommended that principals/leaders share this document with
teachers prior to observation and refer to it in later discussion.**

Literacy Practices Guide

Foundation – Year 2

Date: _____

Focus is on developing oral language (listening and speaking), phonological awareness, letter-sound knowledge (alphabet and phonics), high-frequency sight words, comprehension, vocabulary and fluency.		
Room Organisation	Teacher Self-reflection	Principal/Leader Reflection
Classroom is well organised and looks interesting		
Layout supports whole group, small group and individual instruction		
Comprehensive class library with print, digital and culturally diverse text types <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Balance of fiction and non-fiction texts 		
Interesting and well-organised reading area		
Environmental print, labelled resources, calendar...		
Accessible reading resources e.g. rhyming/picture dictionary		
Alphabet (with picture support) displayed at eye level		
Alphabet letters available for instruction and practice e.g. magnetic, cards		
Handwriting models displayed at eye level		
High-frequency letter patterns/word families displayed		
High-frequency sight words displayed		
Generative word wall for vocabulary development		
Range of text types available for guided reading e.g. fiction, non-fiction, print, digital		
Take-home texts well organised and ready to go		
Students' work displayed		
Appealing and well-resourced creative play area		
Comments		

Program Planning	Teacher Self-reflection	Principal/Leader Reflection
Content linked to Australian Curriculum outcomes		
Aligned with school-wide literacy plan		
Evidence of year-level collaboration		
Specific information about processes used for collecting evidence and data to inform instruction: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oral language (listening and speaking) • Phonological awareness • Letter-sound knowledge (alphabet and phonics) • High-frequency sight words • Comprehension • Vocabulary • Fluency 		
Prior assessments collated and analysed		
Assessment data used to inform planning		
Range of teaching approaches planned		
Differentiated instruction based on what students need to know next		
Intentional and regular communication with diverse families		
Comments		

Observation Of Reading Lesson	Teacher Self-reflection	Principal/Leader Reflection
Purpose of lesson explained to students		
Teacher reading aloud to class <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Modelling accurate and expressive oral reading 		
Explicit and systematic instruction <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reviewing previous lesson Demonstrating new (or recurring) learning strategies Thinking-aloud processes being used Guiding students' practice Providing opportunities for independent practice Providing prompt process feedback e.g. <i>You did well because you remembered to.... Next time stop and think about....</i> (Not just evaluative feedback e.g. <i>Good girl/boy. Good try</i>) Reviewing of what has been taught and learned 		
Students working in homogenous and heterogeneous groups <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students grouped by reading stage/learning need 		
Students positively engaging with lesson content and tasks		
Students successfully achieving tasks <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Group, pair, individual 		
Variety of levels of oral questioning <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Opportunities provided for students to question 		
Listening and speaking instruction and practice		
Phonological awareness (rhyming, alliteration, segmentation, blending, isolation, manipulation, syllabification, onset-rime) being taught in context while students are reading		
Explicit teaching of letter-sound knowledge (alphabet and phonics)		
Explicit teaching of high-frequency sight words		
Comprehension strategies being taught and practised		
Explicit vocabulary instruction <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Intentional and incidental practice of new and familiar vocabulary 		
Fluency instruction and practice		
Evidence and data collected about students' learning		
Comments		

Observation Of Another Learning Area:	Teacher Self-reflection	Principal/Leader Reflection
Subject-specific vocabulary instruction and practice		
Explicit links being made with what has been taught and learned in reading lessons		

Types of assessments used to gather evidence and data

<p>Formal e. g. reading records, PAT-R, Waddington, Neale Analysis of Reading Ability, SA Spelling Test...</p>	<p>Informal e. g. observation, checklists, anecdotal notes, rubrics, portfolios, interviews, analysis of writing samples...</p>
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Literacy Practices Guide

Years 3 - 5

Date: _____

Focus is on continuing to develop and strengthen oral language (listening and speaking), vocabulary, comprehension, vocabulary and fluency. Some students may need continued focus on phonological awareness, letter-sound knowledge (alphabet and phonics), and high-frequency sight words.		
Room Organisation	Teacher Self-reflection	Principal/Leader Reflection
Classroom is well organised and looks interesting		
Layout supports whole group, small group and individual instruction		
Comprehensive class library with print, digital and culturally diverse text types <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Balance of fiction and non-fiction texts • High interest-age, low reading age texts • Texts available for flourishing readers 		
Interesting and well-organised reading area		
Accessible reading resources e.g. dictionary, thesaurus		
Alphabet (with picture support) displayed at eye level		
Handwriting models displayed at eye level		
High-frequency letter patterns/word families displayed		
High-frequency sight words displayed		
Generative word wall for vocabulary development <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Words categorised e.g. grammatical forms, themes 		
Range of text types available for guided reading e.g. fiction, non-fiction, print, digital		
Take home texts available		
Posters on display e. g. text types, editing checklist		
Students' work displayed		
Comments		

Program Planning	Teacher Self-reflection	Principal/Leader Reflection
Content linked to Australian Curriculum outcomes		
Aligned with school-wide literacy plan		
Evidence of year-level collaboration		
<p>Specific information about processes used for collecting evidence and data to inform instruction:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oral language (listening and speaking) • Comprehension • Vocabulary • Fluency <p>For targeted students:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Phonological awareness • Letter-sound knowledge (alphabet and phonics) • High-frequency sight words 		
Prior assessments collated and analysed		
Assessment data used to inform planning		
Range of teaching approaches planned		
Differentiated instruction based on what students need to know next		
Intentional and regular communication with diverse families		
Comments		

Observation Of Reading Lesson	Teacher Self-reflection	Principal/Leader Reflection
Purpose of lesson explained to students		
Teacher reading aloud to class <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Modelling accurate and expressive oral reading 		
Explicit and systematic instruction <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reviewing previous lesson Demonstrating new (or recurring) learning strategies Thinking-aloud processes being used Guiding students' practice Providing opportunities for independent practice Providing prompt process feedback e.g. <i>You did well because you remembered to... Next time stop and think about...</i> (Not just evaluative feedback e.g. <i>Good girl/boy. Good try</i>) Reviewing of what has been taught and learned 		
Key errors to be addressed (but not all of them) are highlighted in students' written work		
Students working in homogenous and heterogeneous groups <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students grouped by reading stage/learning need 		
Students positively engaging with lesson content and tasks		
Students successfully achieving tasks <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Group, pair, individual 		
Variety of levels of oral questioning <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Opportunities provided for students to question 		
Listening and speaking instruction and practice		
Comprehension strategies being taught and practised <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Selective use of templates to show comprehension e.g. graphic organisers 		
Explicit vocabulary instruction <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Intentional and incidental practice of new and familiar vocabulary Highlighting of antonyms and synonyms Explicit strategy instruction for reading multi-syllabic words 		
Fluency instruction and practice		
Targeted students: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Phonological awareness (rhyming, alliteration, segmentation, blending, isolation, manipulation, syllabification, onset-rime) being taught in context while students are reading Explicit teaching of letter-sound knowledge (alphabet and phonics) Explicit teaching of high-frequency sight words 		
Evidence and data collected about students' learning		
Comments		

Observation Of Another Learning Area:	Teacher Self-reflection	Principal/Leader Reflection
Subject-specific vocabulary instruction and practice		
Explicit links being made with what has been taught and learned in reading lessons		

Types of assessments used to gather evidence and data

<p>Formal e. g. reading records, PAT-R, Waddington, Neale Analysis of Reading Ability, SA Spelling Test...</p>	<p>Informal e. g. observation, checklists, anecdotal notes, rubrics, portfolios, interviews, analysis of writing samples...</p>
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Literacy Practices Guide

Years 6 - 7

Date: _____

<p>Focus is on broadening and strengthening oral language (listening and speaking), comprehension, vocabulary and fluency.</p> <p>Some students may need continued focus on phonological awareness, letter-sound knowledge (alphabet and phonics), and high-frequency sight words.</p>		
Room Organisation	Teacher Self-reflection	Principal/Leader Reflection
Classroom is well organised and looks interesting		
Layout supports whole group, small group and individual instruction		
Comprehensive class library with print, digital and culturally diverse text types <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Balance of fiction and non-fiction texts • High interest-age, low reading age texts • Texts available for flourishing readers 		
Interesting and well-organised reading area		
Accessible reading resources e.g. dictionary, thesaurus		
Alphabet (with picture support) displayed at eye level		
Handwriting models displayed at eye level		
High-frequency letter patterns/word families displayed		
High-frequency sight words displayed		
Generative word wall for vocabulary development <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Words categorised e.g. grammatical forms, themes • Interesting words displayed • Word origins (etymology) and affixes highlighted 		
Range of text types available for guided reading e.g. fiction, non-fiction, print, digital		
Take home texts available		
Posters on display e. g. text types, editing checklist, research processes		
Students' work displayed		
Comments		

Program Planning	Teacher Self-reflection	Principal/Leader Reflection
Content linked to Australian Curriculum outcomes		
Aligned with school-wide literacy plan		
Evidence of year-level collaboration		
<p>Specific information about processes used for collecting evidence and data to inform instruction:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oral language (listening and speaking) • Comprehension • Vocabulary • Fluency <p>For targeted students:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Phonological awareness • Letter-sound knowledge (alphabet and phonics) • High-frequency sight words 		
Prior assessments collated and analysed		
Assessment data used to inform planning		
Range of teaching approaches planned		
Differentiated instruction based on what students need to know next		
Intentional and regular communication with diverse families		
Comments		

Observation Of Reading Lesson	Teacher Self-reflection	Principal/Leader Reflection
Purpose of lesson explained to students		
Teacher reading aloud to class <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Modelling accurate and expressive oral reading 		
Explicit and systematic instruction <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reviewing previous lesson • Demonstrating new (or recurring) learning strategies • Thinking-aloud processes being used • Guiding students' practice • Providing opportunities for independent practice • Providing prompt process feedback e.g. <i>You did well because you remembered to.... Next time stop and think about....</i> (Not just evaluative feedback e.g. <i>Good girl/boy. Good try.</i>) • Reviewing of what has been taught and learned 		
Key errors to be addressed (but not all of them) are highlighted in students' written work		
Students working in homogenous and heterogeneous groups <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students grouped by reading stage/learning need 		
Students positively engaging with lesson content and tasks		
Students successfully achieving tasks <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Group, pair, individual 		
Variety of levels of oral questioning <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opportunities provided for students to question • Students asked to support their assertions 		
Listening and speaking instruction and practice		
Comprehension strategies being taught and practised <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Selective use of templates to show comprehension e.g. graphic organisers 		
Explicit vocabulary instruction <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intentional and incidental practice of new and familiar vocabulary • Highlighting of antonyms and synonyms • Explicit strategy instruction for reading multi-syllabic words 		
Fluency instruction and practice		
Targeted students: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Phonological awareness (rhyming, alliteration, segmentation, blending, isolation, manipulation, syllabification, onset-rime) being taught in context while students are reading • Explicit teaching of letter-sound knowledge (alphabet and phonics) • Explicit teaching of high-frequency sight words 		

Observation Of Reading Lesson (cont.)	Teacher Self-reflection	Principal/Leader Reflection
Evidence and data collected about students' learning		
Comments		
Observation Of Another Learning Area:	Teacher Self-reflection	Principal/Leader Reflection
Subject-specific vocabulary instruction and practice		
Explicit links being made with what has been taught and learned in reading lessons		

Types of assessments used to gather evidence and data

<p>Formal</p> <p>e. g. reading records, PAT-R, Waddington, Neale Analysis of Reading Ability, SA Spelling Test...</p>	<p>Informal</p> <p>e. g. observation, checklists, anecdotal notes, rubrics, portfolios, interviews, analysis of writing samples...</p>
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