

## A quick guide for observing classroom content and practice

Working with appropriate **complex texts**, students should:

### Read About It

1. Literature
2. Informational Text
3. Foundational Skills

### Think About It

4. Higher Order-Reasoning

### Talk About It

5. Comprehension/ Collaboration
6. Presentation

### Write About It

7. Opinion
8. Informative
9. Narrative

In a **Kindergarten classroom**, you should observe the teacher integrating ELA standards with social-emotional learning and other content area standards, as well as students engaging in a variety of the following standards and practices:

With prompting and support, students engage daily with complex literature and informational texts:

- Key Ideas and Details:** ask and answer questions; retell; characters, settings, and major events; connection between two individuals, events, ideas, pieces of information in text
- Craft and Structure:** unknown words, common types of text and characteristics of their structure, purpose of author and illustrator, front/back cover and title
- Integration of Knowledge and Ideas:** relationship between illustration and text, how reasons support author's points

Students engage daily in practices of word reading accuracy and reading fluency:

- Print Concepts:** left to right, top to bottom, page by page; spoken words are represented by sequences of letters; words are separated by spaces; upper/lowercase letters
- Phonological Awareness:** rhyming words; count, say, segment, and blend syllables in spoken words; segment and blend onset-rimes; isolate phonemes; phoneme manipulation
- Phonics and Word Recognition:** one to one letter-sound correspondence, common sight words, long/short vowels with common spellings
- Fluency:** emergent reader texts with purpose and understanding

With prompting and support, students engage daily in higher-order reasoning:

- Ask and answer** questions to get help, information, or for clarification
- Compare and contrast** basic differences between two texts on same topic or compare and contrast adventures and experiences of characters in familiar stories
- Explore** word relationships and nuances in word meanings with support (sorting, relating frequently occurring verbs and adjectives to antonyms, real-life connections between words and their use, and shades of meaning), apply knowledge of vocabulary to reading
- Participate** in shared research and writing projects

Students engage daily in collaborative work:

- Comprehension and Collaboration:** conversations using rules for discussions, multiple exchanges in dialogue
- Presentation:** sufficient description of familiar people, places, things, and events; addition of drawings to descriptions; speak audibly; clear expression of thoughts; appropriate vocabulary; use of words/phrases acquired through conversations, reading, and responding to texts

Using a combination of drawing, dictating, and writing, students engage daily in writing (using standard English grammar and conventions):

- Opinion:** topic or name of book and related opinion/preference
- Informative/Explanatory:** topic and some relevant information
- Narrative:** narration of single event or experience, or several loosely linked events, sequence appropriately, and provide a reaction to what it describes; use rhyming words to create structure in poems

**ELA What to Look For** The example below features three Indicators from the [Standards of Effective Practice](#). These Indicators are just a sampling from the full set of Standards and were chosen because they create a sequence: the educator plans a lesson that sets clear and high **expectations**, the educator then delivers high quality instruction, and finally the educator uses a variety of **assessments** to see if students understand the material or if re-teaching is necessary. This example highlights teacher and student behaviors aligned to the three Indicators that you can expect to see in a rigorous Kindergarten ELA classroom.

**Expectations**  
(Standard II, Indicator E) Plans and implements lessons that set clear and high expectations and also make knowledge accessible for all students.

**What is the teacher doing?**

- Communicating the learning objectives for the lesson orally and visually in student-friendly terms
- Creating culturally responsive lessons that engage and sustain student attention
- Selecting developmentally appropriate complex texts
- Discussing the role of the author in creating a text

**What are the students doing?**

- Persisting when engaging with meaningful literacy tasks
- Using newly learned language when speaking
- Expressing opinions
- Identifying the author of a book

**Instruction**  
(Standard II, Indicator A) Uses instructional practices that reflect high expectations regarding content and quality of effort and work; engage all students; and are personalized to accommodate diverse learning styles, needs, interests, and levels of readiness.

**What is the teacher doing?**

- Designing lessons that integrate standards and strands
- Designing lessons that support successful cooperation in culturally sensitive ways
- Grouping students based on data and adjusting grouping as needed (using both homogenous and heterogeneous grouping)

**What are the students doing?**

- Working cooperatively on a shared activity
- Responding to one another's ideas
- Recognizing types of texts (e.g., stories, poems, nonfiction)
- Listening to comprehend complex texts

**Assessment**  
(Standard I, Indicator B) Uses a variety of informal and formal methods of assessments to measure student learning, growth, and understanding to develop differentiated and enhanced learning experiences and improve future instruction.

**What is the teacher doing?**

- Using multiple formative approaches to assess student learning (e.g., conferences, responses during read-aloud)
- Conducting frequent checks for student understanding and adjusting instruction accordingly
- Using scaffolding as needed and providing multiple opportunities for students to practice new linguistic patterns, features, and vocabulary

**What are the students doing?**

- Responding to teacher feedback to improve their work
- Demonstrating learning in multiple ways (e.g., conferences, responses during read-aloud)
- Engaging in meaningful dictating, drawing, and/or writing
- Using exemplars to inform their work