

Grade 1: English Language Arts Academic Strategies (2022)

The most effective and equitable way to support students in their learning is to ensure that the vast majority of time is spent engaging with grade-level content, remediating with precision, and accelerating as needed. It is entirely possible to hold high expectations for all students while addressing unfinished learning in the context of grade-level work. Since time is a scarce commodity in classroom, strategic instructional and assessment choices are critical.¹

Instruction

It is vitally important that educators are supported to make deliberate instructional choices that allow all students to effectively engage with grade-level work. Instruction must be aligned to a coherent set of learning outcomes, indicating what students should know and be able to do. Dimensions for consideration when planning for instruction include the following:

- **[Delivery](#)** is differentiated relative to explicitness through modeling, systematic instruction with appropriate scaffolding and pacing, and provision of immediate corrective feedback to students with sufficient opportunities to respond.
- **[Grouping](#)** includes whole group, homogeneous small group, partners, heterogeneous mixed ability small group, independent, and one-to-one.
- **[Time](#)** varies relative to a particular area of content, small group instruction versus whole group instruction, and opportunities for students to interact or work independently.
- **[Materials](#)** should be evidence-based and adjusted to meet the needs of students and the purpose of the lesson/activity.
- **[Learning Environment](#)** must be positive and safe and have clearly defined consistent expectations.

Assessment

A highly developed assessment system includes a balanced approach to using formal and informal assessments, classroom-based evidence showing growth over time, and involving students in the evaluation of their own work. The adoption of a systemic approach enhances the use of assessment data to inform teaching and learning practices. This system should include assessment tools that are congruent with the district's goals and curriculum.

Assessments can be done in sync with daily instruction through intentional activities that can collect data, such as phoneme/grapheme activities or assessments, journal writing, and skills-based center activities. For skills harder to assess during instruction, or to work with individual students, there are a variety of assessments that can be done in less than two minutes, such as [Test of Word Reading Efficiency](#), or some that take just a little longer like [Lexplore](#), [DIBELS](#), [FastBridge](#), and more. Continuous progress monitoring will allow the teacher to catch any student before they fall too far behind.

This guidance document is designed to identify key strategies with a focus on English Language Arts instruction and assessment to support PA Academic Standards. This document is in support of the PDE's [Accelerated Learning](#) information and PA Roadmap: [Focus on Effective Instruction](#). For additional support and resources, contact PDE or your local Intermediate Unit.

The resources listed below are provided as options and examples. Pennsylvania does not require, recommend, or endorse any specific program or product. All curricular and instructional decisions are made at the local level.

¹ Adapted from 2020–21 Priority Instructional Content in English Language Arts/literacy and Mathematics, Student Achievement Partners/Achieve the Core. May 2020

The [Pennsylvania State Literacy Plan](#) (PaSLP), offers guidance as to where instruction should occur to meet critical grade level expectations of the standards. This document is designed to help identify and define areas of high-level focus in English Language Arts instruction & assessment. Using the key concepts in the left-hand column, complete a self-check for current instructional & assessment practices. After identifying areas of need, use the right-hand column to select specific strategies/resources that may strengthen the selected concepts.

<p>Reading</p> <p>Developing foundational skills (book handling, print concepts, phonological awareness, phonics/word recognition, & fluency). Developing word recognition skills, vocabulary, & comprehension skills/strategies. Practicing fluency daily focusing on repeated readings & many opportunities to practice reading. Engaging in direct, explicit, systematic, differentiated instruction & interventions. Participating in daily structured language, literacy learning task opportunities, & collaborative learning.</p> <p>Writing</p> <p>Writing daily for different purposes & audiences with guidance. Engaging in systematic & explicit instruction in basic writing skills. Focusing on the writing process as a means of improving writing.</p> <p>Speaking & Listening</p> <p>Engaging daily in one-to-one, small group, & whole class conversations including discussions & collaborative communication. Establishing skills of collaborating, being a good listener, taking turns, & supporting ideas with facts. Developing & asking questions about topics being studied & texts being read.</p> <p>Language</p> <p>Gaining control over many conventions of standard English grammar, usage, & mechanics, as well as learning other ways to use language to convey meaning. Determining or clarifying the meaning of grade-appropriate words encountered through listening & reading. Developing an understanding of new words within context with prompting/support. Acquiring new words with explanations that make understanding more concrete. Encountering new words with high frequency.</p> <p>Classroom/Time Management</p> <p>Setting the tone, establishing a positive environment, & building relationships. Establishing procedures, routines, daily agenda, & call-and-response patterns. Creating a classroom management plan with student input. Preparing students for a substitute & teaching flexibility for an interrupted routine. Modeling ideal behavior, demonstrating good & bad choices. Using positive language, teacher proximity & nonverbal communication. Encouraging initiative, maintaining student attention, & offering praise. Providing suitable work (diagnostic/prescriptive) & visual reminders (anchor charts). Making positive phone calls & sending positive notes. Understanding trauma-informed care.</p>	<p>Instructional Resources</p> <p>Foundational Skills Key Terms Foundational Skills Practice Marzano's Best Practice Instructional Strategies Repeated Reading School Practices to Address Student Learning Loss Foundational Skills to Support Reading for Understanding in Kindergarten Through 3rd Grade Instructional Practice Guide Kindergarten and First Grade</p> <p>Specific documents related to Early Learning and Analysis: OCDEL Professional Learning Organizations Professional Competencies Pennsylvania Learning Standards for Early Childhood Grade 1 TDA Toolkit Close Reading Questions Collaborative Discussions Purposeful Annotations Selecting Complex Texts Reading Elements/Structure Inference/Analysis</p> <p>Assessment Resources</p> <p>Formative Assessment Classroom Diagnostic Tools (CDTs) SAS Assessment Center Doing What Works - Proven Methods IES: Connecting Research, Policy and Practice NWEA PaSLP Toolkit Pennsylvania Evidence Resource Center Using Student Achievement Data WWC Find What Works!</p> <p>Management Resources</p> <p>Effective Lesson Planning, Delivery Techniques & Classroom Management Suggestions 5 Classroom Management Tips That Seem Counterintuitive Effective Classroom Management Strategies to Achieve Your Goals 20 Classroom Management Strategies and Techniques Classroom Management Strategies 27 Classroom Management Strategies The Age-by-Age Guide to Teaching Kids Time Management 5 Time Management Tips for Teachers First Grade Classroom Management Strategies</p>
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