

# INSTRUCTIONAL PRACTICE GUIDE: COACHING

ELA / LIT

SUBJECT

3—12

GRADES

LESSON

GUIDE TYPE

The coaching tool is for teachers, and those who support teachers, to build understanding and experience with Common Core State Standards (CCSS) aligned instruction. Designed as a developmental tool, it can be used for planning, reflection, collaboration, and coaching. The three Shifts in instruction for ELA/Literacy provide the framing for this tool.

1. Regular practice with complex text and its academic language.
2. Reading, writing, and speaking grounded in evidence from text, both literary and informational.
3. Building knowledge through content-rich nonfiction.

The guide provides examples of what implementing the CCSS for English Language Arts and Literacy in grades 3-12 look like in daily planning and practice. It is organized around three Core Actions which encompass the Shifts and instructional practice. Each Core Action consists of individual indicators which describe teacher and student behaviors that exemplify Common Core aligned instruction.

The Core Actions and indicators should be evident in planning and observable in instruction. For each lesson evidence might include a lesson plan, exercises, tasks and assessments, teacher instruction, student discussion and behavior, and student work. Although many indicators will be observable during the course of a lesson, there may be times when a lesson is appropriately focused on a smaller set of objectives or only a portion of a lesson is observed, leaving some indicators blank. Any particular focus should be communicated between teacher and observer before using the tool. Refer to the CCSS Standards for English Language Arts and Literacy ([corestandards.org/ELA-Literacy](http://corestandards.org/ELA-Literacy)) as necessary.

Companion tools for Instructional Practice include:

- Instructional Practice Guide: Coaching (Digital)- a digital version of this print tool, view at [achievethecore.org/coaching-tool](http://achievethecore.org/coaching-tool).
- Instructional Practice Guide: Lesson Planning- designed for teachers to support them in creating lessons aligned to the CCSS, view at [achievethecore.org/lesson-planning-tool](http://achievethecore.org/lesson-planning-tool).

STUDENT  
ACHIEVEMENT  
PARTNERS

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Date

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Teacher Name

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School

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Observer Name

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Grade / Class Period / Section

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Topic / Lesson / Unit

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Standard(s) Addressed in this Lesson

1. Refer to Common Core Shifts at a Glance ([achievethecore.org/ELALitShifts](http://achievethecore.org/ELALitShifts)) and the 3-12 Publishers' Criteria for the Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts and Literacy ([achievethecore.org/publisherscriteria](http://achievethecore.org/publisherscriteria)) for additional information about the Shifts required by the CCSS.

## SUMMARY OF CORE ACTIONS

### Core Action 1

Focus each lesson on a high-quality text (or multiple texts).

#### Indicators

- A. A majority of the lesson is spent reading, writing, or speaking about text(s).
  - B. The text(s) are at or above the complexity level expected for the grade and time in the school year.
  - C. The text(s) exhibit exceptional craft and thought and/or provide useful information.
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### Core Action 2

Employ questions and tasks, both oral and written, that are text specific and reflect the standards.

#### Indicators

- A. Questions and tasks address the text by attending to its particular structure(s), concepts, ideas, and details.
  - B. Questions and tasks require students to use evidence from the text to demonstrate understanding and to support their ideas about the text. These ideas are expressed through both written and oral responses.
  - C. Questions and tasks attend to the words, phrases and sentences within the text.
  - D. Questions are sequenced to build knowledge by guiding students to delve deeper into the text and graphics.
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### Core Action 3

Provide all students with opportunities to engage in the work of the lesson.

#### Indicators

- A. The teacher keeps all students persevering with challenging tasks.  
  
Students habitually display persistence with challenging tasks, particularly when providing textual evidence to support answers and responses, both orally and in writing.
- B. The teacher expects evidence and precision from students and probes students' answers accordingly.  
  
Students habitually display persistence in providing textual evidence to support answers and responses, both orally and in writing.
- C. The teacher encourages reasoning and problem solving by posing challenging questions and tasks that offer opportunities for productive struggle.  
  
Students persevere in solving questions and tasks in the face of initial difficulty.
- D. The teacher demonstrates awareness and appropriate action regarding the variations present in student progress toward reading independently.  
  
When appropriate, students demonstrate progress toward independence in reading and writing.
- E. When appropriate, the teacher explicitly attends to strengthening students' language and reading foundational skills  
  
Students demonstrate use of language conventions and decoding skills, activating such strategies as needed to read, write, and speak with grade level fluency and skill.





For each indicator, circle the appropriate rating based on what was observed during the lesson. Provide specific evidence to support the rating. Refer to questions, comments, and observations recorded in the preceding notes section.

# Core Action 1

Focus each lesson on a high-quality text (or multiple texts).

## Indicators

A. A majority of the lesson is spent reading, writing, or speaking about text(s).

**Yes** The lesson is focused on a text or multiple texts.

**No** There is no text under consideration in this lesson.

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B. The text(s) are at or above the complexity level expected for the grade and time in the school year<sup>2</sup>.

**Yes** The text(s) are at or above both the qualitative and quantitative complexity expected for the grade and time in the school year.

**No** The text(s) are below both the qualitative and quantitative complexity expected for the grade and time in the school year.

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C. The text(s) exhibit exceptional craft and thought and/or provide useful information.

**Yes** The quality of the text(s) is high – they are well written and/or provide useful information.

**No** The quality of the text(s) is low – they are poorly written or do not provide useful information.

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2. Refer to [achievethecore.org/ela-literacy-common-core/text-complexity/](http://achievethecore.org/ela-literacy-common-core/text-complexity/) for text complexity resources.

# Core Action 2

Employ questions and tasks, both oral and written, that are text specific and reflect the standards.

## Indicators

A. Questions and tasks address the text by attending to its particular structure(s), concepts, ideas, and details.

- 4 Most questions and tasks return students to the text to build understanding.
- 3 Many questions and tasks return students to the text to build understanding.
- 2 Few questions and tasks return students to the text to build understanding.
- 1 Questions and tasks do not refer to the text.

Not Observed.

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B. Questions and tasks require students to use evidence from the text to demonstrate understanding and to support their ideas about the text. These ideas are expressed through both written and oral responses.

- 4 Most questions and tasks require students to cite evidence from the text.
- 3 Many questions and tasks require students to cite evidence from the text.
- 2 Few questions and tasks require students to cite evidence from the text.
- 1 Questions and tasks can be answered without evidence from the text.

Not Observed.

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C. Questions and tasks attend to the words, phrases and sentences within the text.

- 4 Vocabulary questions and tasks consistently focus students on the words, phrases, and sentences that matter most and how they are used in the text.
- 3 Vocabulary questions and tasks mostly focus students on the words that matter most and how they are used in the text.
- 2 Vocabulary questions and tasks rarely focus students on the words that matter most and how they are used in the text.
- 1 No questions and tasks focus students on the words that matter most and how they are used in the text.

Not Observed.

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## Core Action 2 (continued)

Employ questions and tasks, both oral and written, that are text specific and reflect the standards.

### Indicators

D. Questions are sequenced to build knowledge by guiding students to delve deeper into the text and graphics.

- 4 Most questions are intentionally sequenced to support building knowledge.
- 3 Some questions are intentionally sequenced to support building knowledge.
- 2 Few questions are intentionally sequenced to support building knowledge.
- 1 Questions seem random and are not intentionally sequenced to support building knowledge.

Not Observed.

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# Core Action 3

Provide all students with opportunities to engage in the work of the lesson.

## Indicators

A. The **teacher** keeps all students persevering with challenging tasks.

**Students** habitually display persistence with challenging tasks, particularly when providing textual evidence to support answers and responses, both orally and in writing.

- 4 The teacher provides consistent opportunities and most students demonstrate this behavior.
- 3 The teacher provides consistent opportunities and some students demonstrate this behavior.
- 2 The teacher provides consistent opportunities and few students demonstrate this behavior.
- 1 The teacher does not provide students opportunity and very few students demonstrate this behavior.

Not Observed.

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B. The **teacher** expects evidence and precision from students and probes students' answers accordingly.

**Students** habitually display persistence in providing textual evidence to support answers and responses, both orally and in writing.

- 4 The teacher provides consistent opportunities and most students demonstrate this behavior.
- 3 The teacher provides consistent opportunities and some students demonstrate this behavior.
- 2 The teacher provides consistent opportunities and few students demonstrate this behavior.
- 1 The teacher does not provide students opportunity and very few students demonstrate this behavior.

Not Observed.

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C. The **teacher** encourages reasoning and problem solving by posing challenging questions and tasks that offer opportunities for productive struggle.

**Students** persevere in solving questions and tasks in the face of initial difficulty.

- 4 The teacher provides consistent opportunities and most students demonstrate this behavior.
- 3 The teacher provides consistent opportunities and some students demonstrate this behavior.
- 2 The teacher provides consistent opportunities and few students demonstrate this behavior.
- 1 The teacher does not provide students opportunity and very few students demonstrate this behavior.

Not Observed.

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## Core Action 3 (continued)

Provide all students with opportunities to engage in the work of the lesson.

### Indicators

D. The **teacher** demonstrates awareness and appropriate action regarding the variations present in student progress toward reading independently.

When appropriate, **students** demonstrate progress toward independence in reading and writing.

- 4 The teacher provides consistent opportunities and most students demonstrate this behavior.
- 3 The teacher provides consistent opportunities and some students demonstrate this behavior.
- 2 The teacher provides consistent opportunities and few students demonstrate this behavior.
- 1 The teacher does not provide students opportunity and very few students demonstrate this behavior.

Not Observed.

E. When appropriate, the **teacher** explicitly attends to strengthening students' language and reading foundational skills.

**Students** demonstrate use of language conventions and decoding skills<sup>3</sup>, activating such strategies as needed to read, write, and speak with grade level fluency and skill.

- 4 The teacher provides consistent opportunities and most students demonstrate this behavior.
- 3 The teacher provides consistent opportunities and some students demonstrate this behavior.
- 2 The teacher provides consistent opportunities and few students demonstrate this behavior.
- 1 The teacher does not provide students opportunity and very few students demonstrate this behavior.

Not Observed.

3. The CCSS for Reading: Foundational Skills are applicable for grades 3-5 only.

This tool is for teachers, those providing support to teachers, and all educators working to implement the CCSS for ELA/Literacy – it is not designed for use in evaluation. The guide should be used in conjunction with the CCSS Instructional Practice Guide: Supplement for Reflection Over the Course of the Year. Both tools are available at [achievethecore.org/instructional-practice](http://achievethecore.org/instructional-practice).

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