

Environmental Scale for Assessing Implementation Levels

Descriptions of Criteria

Developed by L. Dorn & C. Soffos (2007)

Criterion 1: Creates a Literate Environment

Teachers create a literate environment by providing a wide variety of reading experiences, including rich and diverse opportunities for students to read, discuss, and write texts across the curriculum. Students' learning at various stages in the reading and writing process is celebrated and displayed on walls within and outside classrooms. Classrooms are arranged to promote whole and small group problem-solving discussions. Inquiry-based learning is evident, including relevant and purposeful talk. Respectful talk and attitudes are promoted and used among students, and students' questions are valued by providing additional opportunities for clarifying and seeking information through research.

Criterion 2: Organizes the Classroom

Teachers organize the classroom to meet the needs of diverse learners, including selecting appropriate materials and working with whole group, small group, and individual learners. Classroom schedules are visible, predictable routines are established, and classroom norms are outlined. Children's behaviors include: staying on-task, working independently, assuming responsibility for classroom materials, and respecting the rights of others. Teachers' workspace and materials, including assessment notebooks, are organized and used to document learning and plan for instruction. Students' workspace and materials, including students' logs, are organized and easily accessible. Classroom libraries are well organized and contain an abundant amount of reading material across genres, authors and topics.

Criterion 3: Uses Data To Inform Instruction and To Provide Systemic Interventions

Teachers use assessments to inform instruction and to monitor students' learning. Formal and informal assessments are triangulated, including portfolio-based assessments, observation notes, constructed response measures, observations, anecdotal notes, running records, logs, and norm- and criterion-referenced tests. Data are used to tailor

interventions that provide another layer of support for the most needy students, including classroom interventions and supplemental interventions in one-to-one and small groups. The specialty teachers collaborate and plan with the classroom teachers to ensure consistency of interventions across the school day.

Criterion 4: Uses a Differentiated Approach to Learning

Teachers use a workshop approach to learning across the curriculum, including reading, writing, language, and content workshops. Small group reading and writing instruction is provided to meet the needs of diverse learners; and explicit mini-lessons are tailored to meet the needs of the majority of students across the curriculum. Daily one-to-one conferences are scheduled with students during the workshop framework. Teaching prompts are used to promote problem-solving strategies, higher-order thinking processes, and deeper comprehension. Quality literature is read, enjoyed, and analyzed across the various workshops. A writing continuum is used to meet student needs, plan instruction, and monitor student progress. Writing is taught as a process, including drafting, revising, editing, and publishing processes. Mentor texts and notebooks are used as resources across genres; and inquiry-based learning is promoted and arranged across the content areas.

Criterion 5: Uses Assessment Wall for School-wide Progress Monitoring

Schools use common assessments across grade levels for measuring student achievement. Data on the assessment/intervention wall are used for monitoring program effectiveness and to ensure struggling students are receiving appropriate interventions. Assessment wall data align with results from state assessments.

Criterion 6: Uses Literacy Coach to Support Teacher Knowledge and Reflective Practice

Coach follows guidelines for coordinating, monitoring, and assessing school change: 60% of time coaching and supporting teachers in the classroom; 20% of time teaching students in intervention groups, meeting with administrators, and planning and implementing literacy team meetings, teacher book clubs, and other collaborative learning communities; and 20% of time coordinating and supervising the school's literacy program. Coach uses coaching cycles and a gradual release model to promote self-regulated teachers. Coach coordinates an assessment team, collects school-wide data, assists in data analysis for continuous school improvement, and uses results for school planning.

Criterion 7: Builds Collaborative Learning Communities

School climate promotes collaborative learning with opportunities for teachers to learn from one another, including literacy team meetings, study groups, book clubs, cluster conferences, peer observations, and intervention team meetings. A risk-taking environment is evident as teachers study data to improvement practice.

Criterion 8: Creates and Uses School Plans for Promoting Systemic Change

Teachers collaboratively identify strengths and needs of current literacy practices and create a plan of action, including school plan with timelines and persons responsible for executing the plan. Teachers share with stakeholders and gain support for school improvement initiatives. Data are compiled into a school report and shared with stakeholders.

Criterion 9: Uses Technology for Effective Communication

Teachers network with other professionals through the use of technology including listservs and discussion boards. They use technology to collect, analyze, and store student data and keep current with research and best practices. Coach models effective use of technology through well-designed Powerpoint presentations, Internet searches, and research. Teachers provide opportunities for students to use technology for real world purposes, including word processing, research, and presenting information.

Criterion 10: Advocates and Spotlights School's Literacy Program

Stakeholders, including parents, are informed and engaged in accomplishments of the school's literacy goals. Coach and teachers invite the community into the classrooms and recruit volunteers to assist with the school's literacy initiatives. Coach disseminates information (e.g., brochures, school reports, newsletters) on the school's literacy program to various audiences.

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Criterion 1: Creates a Literate Environment	Proficiency Levels		
	Meeting	Approaching	Below
1. Reading responses through writing or art are displayed on walls and in hallways			
2. Writing drafts are organized in writing portfolios, and final drafts are displayed on walls and in hallways.			
3. Variety of reading materials is enjoyed, discussed and analyzed across the curriculum.			
4. Co-constructed language charts embrace student language and are displayed on walls and in students' notebooks.			
5. Tables, clusters of desks, and work areas are arranged to promote collaborative learning and problem solving.			
6. Problem-solving is collaborative (pairs or groups) and talk is purposeful.			
7. Engagement is maintained by meaningfulness and relevance of the task.			
8. Respectful talk and attitudes are promoted and used among all learners.			
9. Elaborated discussions around specific concepts are promoted and students' thinking is valued and discussed.			
10. Environment is conducive to inquiry-based learning and learners are engaged in constructive interactions around purposeful literacy events.			
Criterion 2: Organizes the Classroom	Proficiency Levels		
	Meeting	Approaching	Below
1. Teachers' schedules are displayed and routines are clearly established.			
2. Classroom space is carefully considered and designed for whole group, small group and individual teaching and learning.			
3. Teachers' workspace and instructional materials are organized for teaching across the curriculum.			
4. Students' materials are organized and easily accessible.			
5. Students' logs are organized and reflect integrated learning across the curriculum.			
6. Classroom libraries contain an abundant amount of reading material across genres, authors and topics.			
7. Literature for read aloud, familiar/independent reading material, big books, charts, poetry, and poetry notebooks are organized and accessible.			
8. Book tubs housed in classroom library are clearly labeled according to genre, topic and/or by author.			
9. Literacy corner tasks are organized and are designed to meet the needs of groups and individual learners.			
10. Summative and formative assessments are organized for instructional purposes and documentation.			

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Criterion 3: Uses Data to Inform Instruction and To Provide Research-Based Interventions	Proficiency Levels		
	Meeting	Approaching	Below
1. Summative and formative assessments are used to determine where to begin instruction.			
2. Data are used across the curriculum to monitor student progress and to guide and plan instruction.			
3. Summative and formative assessments are used to tailor in-class interventions to meet the needs of struggling learners.			
4. Data are used to plan a Comprehensive Intervention Model (CIM), including Reading Recovery in first grade and small groups for other needy readers across grades.			
5. Teachers collaborate with intervention teacher/s around student/s progress and collaboratively develop a plan of action.			
Criterion 4: Uses a Differentiated Approach to Learning	Proficiency Levels		
	Meeting	Approaching	Below
1. Schedules include a workshop approach to learning across the curriculum.			
2. Explicit mini-lessons are tailored to meet the needs of the majority of students across the curriculum.			
3. Daily small group reading and writing instruction is provided to meet the diverse needs of students.			
4. Daily one-to-one reading and writing conferences are scheduled with students.			
5. Prompts are used to activate successful problem-solving strategies, higher order thinking, and deeper comprehension.			
6. Writing is taught as a process, including composing, drafting, revising, editing, and publishing.			
7. A writing continuum is used to meet student needs, plan instruction, and monitor progress over time.			
8. Quality literature is read, enjoyed and analyzed across the various workshops.			
9. Mentor texts and notebooks are used as resources across genres.			
10. Inquiry based learning opportunities are promoted and arranged across the content areas.			
Criterion 5: Uses Intervention Wall for School-wide Progress Monitoring	Proficiency Levels		
	Meeting	Approaching	Below
1. Common assessments are developed and used across grade levels for measuring student achievement			
2. Data on the assessment/intervention wall are used for progress monitoring school-wide program effectiveness			
3. Data on the assessment/intervention wall are used to ensure struggling students are receiving appropriate interventions.			

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Criterion 6: Uses Literacy Coaches to Support Teacher Knowledge and Reflective Practice	Proficiency Levels		
	Meeting	Approaching	Below
1. Coach supports teachers in classrooms 60% of the time; teaches students, networks with other coaches, plans team meetings, meets with principal 20% of the time; and coordinates the school’s literacy program 20% of time.			
2. Coach applies scaffolding techniques through a gradual release model to promote self-regulated teachers.			
3. Coach collects data from teachers and assists in data analysis for assessing program effectiveness in the school.			
4. Coach guides teachers in analyzing data for assessing teaching and learning across various curricular areas.			
5. Coach organizes an assessment team in school to assess students’ strengths quickly and place in classroom according to needs.			
Criterion 7: Builds Collaborative Learning Communities	Proficiency Levels		
	Meeting	Approaching	Below
1. Teachers engage in professional study groups, grade level planning, peer observations, and team meetings.			
2. Teachers engage in Intervention Team Meetings to support struggling learners.			
3. Teachers use reflection logs to reflect on learning during and after team meetings and to engage in problem-solving discussions.			
Criterion 8: Creates and Uses School Plans for Promoting Systemic Change	Proficiency Levels		
	Meeting	Approaching	Below
1. Coach and teachers collaboratively identify strengths and needs of current literacy practices and create a plan of action (school plan with timelines and persons responsible for executing the plan)			
2. Coach and teacher share plan with stakeholders and gains support for school improvement initiatives.			
3. Coach compiles data into a school report and shares results with stakeholders.			
Criterion 9: Uses Technology for Effective Communication	Proficiency Levels		
	Meeting	Approaching	Below
1. Teachers network with other professionals through the use of technology including list serves and discussion boards.			
2. Teachers use technology to collect, analyze and store student data and keep current with research and best practices.			
3. Teachers provide opportunities for students to use technology for real world purposes, including word processing, research and presenting information.			

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Criterion 10: Advocates and Spotlights School's Literacy Program	Proficiency Levels		
	Meeting	Approaching	Below
1. Stakeholders, including parents, are informed and engaged in accomplishments of the school's literacy goals.			
2. Coach and teachers invite the community into the classrooms and recruit volunteers to assist with the school's literacy initiatives.			
3. Coach disseminates information on the school's literacy program to various audiences (brochures, school reports, newsletters, etc.).			

Dorn, L. & Soffos, C. (2007). *Environmental Scale for Assessing Implementation Levels (ESAIL)*. Center for Literacy. University of Arkansas at Little Rock. Partnerships in Comprehensive Literacy (PCL) model. Scale may be reproduced for use with schools.