

Literacy Observation Tool: K-12 Reading Language Arts Comprehension

Grade Level/Course: _____ Teacher: _____ Date: _____

Purpose

The Iowa Literacy Classroom Observation Tools communicate shared expectations for literacy instruction aligned to Iowa's vision and provide trend-level data on how those expectations are showing up in classrooms. The tools are designed to support continuous improvement, not evaluation.

Instructional Materials

Indicator / Observable Evidence	1 Not Yet	2 Somewhat	3 Mostly	4 Yes	N/A	Evidence / Comments
A. The teacher and students use grade-level, standards-aligned HQIM throughout the lesson/learning experience.						
B. The text(s), task(s), and question(s) are at or above the complexity level expected for the grade and time in the school year.						

Describe the materials being used in the observation. Capture the name of the product, unit, and lesson, or if the materials are teacher-made or come from a different source.

Instructional Practices

Indicator / Observable Evidence	1 Not Yet	2 Somewhat	3 Mostly	4 Yes	N/A	Evidence / Comments
A. The teacher's use of instructional materials provides rigorous expectations for reading, writing, or speaking.						
B. The teacher models written and oral communication skills, dedicating time for students to collaborate, discuss, question, research, or interpret.						
C. The teacher prioritizes thinking by intentionally sequencing text-based questions that engage students in building knowledge and analyzing complexities.						
D. The teacher checks for understanding and provides meaningful, academic feedback to students.						
E. Vocabulary and language study (academic words, syntax) are explicitly integrated into instruction.						
F. The teacher provides opportunities for productive struggle, allowing students to reason and make meaning from complex text.						
G. The teacher implements appropriate scaffolds (e.g., leveraging prior knowledge, fluency practice, academic vocabulary, sentence stems) for students who need additional support.						

Student Engagement

Indicator / Observable Evidence	1 Not Yet	2 Somewhat	3 Mostly	4 Yes	N/A	Evidence / Comments
A. Students do the majority of the work in the lesson— reading, writing, speaking, and reasoning about text.						
B. Students cite evidence from text(s) to support ideas and refine responses orally and in writing.						
C. Students engage in peer-to-peer discussion, responding to and asking questions about each other's thinking.						
D. Students use appropriate strategies and problem-solving skills to persevere when they are stuck.						