
School Leader's Literacy Walkthrough



Kindergarten, First, Second, and Third Grades

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Introduction

The **School Leader's Literacy Walkthrough** is designed to assist school leaders in observing specific research-based practices during literacy instruction (or students' independent use or application of those practices). This tool is based on rigorous research that indicates the most effective way to teach reading (see Foorman & Connor, 2011, and Foorman & Wanzek, 2015, for reviews) and is aligned to contemporary state standards. **This tool is not meant to be used in the evaluation of teachers.** Instead, the tool is intended to help school leaders enhance literacy instruction knowledge, communicate with teachers their expectations about literacy instruction, and establish consistent language regarding literacy content and instructional strategies. Further, the use of this tool can be the basis of productive communication and collaboration among school leaders and teachers and inform professional learning needs to improve student achievement in literacy.

Overview of the Tool

The tool includes three sections:

- ✓ **Pre-Walkthrough Meeting Guide:** The purpose of this one-page guide is to facilitate a productive conversation between the school leader who will conduct the walkthrough and the teacher who will be observed. The goal is for both the school leader and teacher to understand expectations as well as the context of the classroom and lesson prior to the walkthrough.
- ✓ **Checklist:** The checklist contains five pages—each focuses on a literacy component (i.e., Foundational Literacy Skills, Comprehension, Writing, Language, and Speaking & Listening) as well as the classroom environment. The checklist is used during the walkthrough.
- ✓ **Post-Walkthrough Meeting Guide:** This one-page guide allows the school leader to reflect on the walkthrough by answering four key questions. Additional questions are used to guide a collaborative conversation with the teacher. Lastly, an action plan is identified.

Using the Tool

This tool can be used for frequent 5-15-minute walkthroughs. It is designed to focus on either one literacy component (e.g., Foundational Skills) or multiple literacy components (e.g., Comprehension and Language). Skills/concepts demonstrated by the student that should be observed are listed on the tool. When students apply a skill/concept listed, the box next to that skill is checked.

Space is provided for the school leader to record evidence in the form of notes and reflections. These comments are paramount to the effective use of this tool. Comments made regarding Teacher Instruction, Student Learning, Instructional Materials, and the Classroom Environment will help guide the post-walkthrough meeting with the teacher. Examples of topics in which to focus comments include explicit instruction, differentiation, and pacing for Teacher Instruction; student engagement for Students; alignment to learning objective, accessibility, and organization for Instructional Materials; and classroom management and arrangement (e.g., small group/whole group) and transitions for Classroom Environment.

It is important to note that the skills and concepts listed on the tool are expected to be mastered by the end of the school year. Therefore, not every skill/concept will be observed during every walkthrough. Also, it is appropriate to see different instructional practices during each walkthrough throughout the year. A school leader may even plan to observe a specific literacy component (e.g., Writing) and inform the teacher prior to the pre-walkthrough meeting so the timing of the walkthrough will coincide with that component of instruction.

Pre-Walkthrough Meeting Guide

Teacher:	Date/Time:
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Pre-Walkthrough Guiding Questions	Pre-Walkthrough Notes
1. Does the teacher have a copy of the Walkthrough tool and has the school leader provided an overview of it?	
2. Which of the following reading components will be observed during the walkthrough?	
<input type="checkbox"/> Foundational Reading Skills <input type="checkbox"/> Reading Comprehension <input type="checkbox"/> Writing <input type="checkbox"/> Language <input type="checkbox"/> Speaking & Listening	
3. Which standard(s) is this lesson designed to help students attain? What is the lesson's specific learning objective?	
4. What prior knowledge/skill is related to the learning objective of this lesson? Which data were used to determine this (if appropriate)?	
5. Are there any specific instructional strategies that will be implemented? Are any of the instructional strategies aligned with professional learning/instructional coaching?	
6. Which instructional materials will be used?	
7. What format/classroom organization will be used (e.g., whole group, small group)?	
8. How will students be asked to demonstrate that they have achieved the learning objective?	
9. How will the outcomes of this lesson and student learning impact subsequent instruction?	
10. How will instruction be differentiated to meet the needs of all learners?	
11. Does the teacher have any questions?	

The walkthrough will take place:

Date:	Time:
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The post-walkthrough meeting will take place:

Date:	Time:
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Post-Walkthrough Meeting Guide

Teacher:	Date/Time:
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School Leader Reflection Questions	Evidence/Reflection Notes
1. Which skills/concepts demonstrated by the students were a focus of the teacher's instructional practices?	
2. Did the teacher implement instructional practices in addition to those that would support skills/concepts on the checklist?	
3. Which instructional practice(s) can be continued/refined/scaffolded to achieve literacy learning goals (i.e., student mastery of skills and concepts listed on the checklist)?	
4. What coaching strategies can support the teacher's use or enhancement of the above noted key instructional practices?	
<input type="checkbox"/> Demonstration Lesson <input type="checkbox"/> Analysis of student work and data <input type="checkbox"/> Co-teaching <input type="checkbox"/> Subsequent teacher observation <input type="checkbox"/> Collaborative planning <input type="checkbox"/> Other	

Reflection and Planning Meeting

Meeting Date:	Meeting Time:
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School Leader & Teacher Discussion Questions	Meeting Notes
1. How do you think the lesson went? Which data demonstrated that students achieved the learning objective? (Mention strengths noted for question #1 in table above.)	
2. Did you implement instructional practices in addition to those that would support skills/concepts on the checklist? (Mention instructional practices noted for question #2 in table above.)	
3. What are the next learning goals for students to continue to make progress?	
4. What support do you need? (Mention coaching strategies from #4 in the table above.)	

Action Planning

Teacher Next Steps	Due Date	School Leader Next Steps	Due Date

Follow up on:

Date:	Time:
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