

## Teacher Quality Standard I

**Teachers demonstrate mastery of and pedagogical expertise in the content they teach. The elementary teacher is an expert in literacy and mathematics and is knowledgeable in all other content that he or she teaches (e.g., science, social studies, arts, physical education, or world languages). The secondary teacher has knowledge of literacy and mathematics and is an expert in his or her content endorsement area(s).**

*The key to distinguishing the knowledge base of teaching rests at the intersection of content and pedagogy.*

—L. S. Shulman

To teach all students according to today's standards, teachers need to understand subject matter deeply and flexibly so they can help students create useful cognitive maps, relate one idea to another, and address misconceptions. Teachers need to see how ideas connect across fields and to everyday life. This kind of understanding provides a foundation for pedagogical content knowledge that enables teachers to make ideas accessible to others. (Shulman, 1987)

Although Shulman's work dates back to the late 1980s, the importance of teacher content knowledge and pedagogical expertise has never been more important than it is now as teachers ensure students are college and career ready for the demands of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

### Element B: All Teachers

**Teachers demonstrate knowledge of student literacy development in reading, writing, speaking and listening.**

This section describes professional practices that should be demonstrated by ALL TEACHERS, regardless of grade level or subject taught.

*The power of literacy lies not only in the ability to read and write, but rather in an individual's capacity to put those skills to work in shaping the course of his or her own life.*

—Paulo Freire

Professional practices referenced under each element of the Rubric for Evaluating Colorado Teachers are cumulative. Therefore, for teachers to be proficient in demonstrating knowledge of student literacy development, they must implement lesson plans that integrate literacy with the content being taught. Regardless of the content being taught, the teacher makes complex reading accessible to students at all skill levels. Instruction is provided that enhances students' critical thinking, information literacy, and literacy skill development.

#### ACCOMPLISHED AND EXEMPLARY RATING LEVELS

The impact of a proficient implementation of the professional practices in Element B ALL TEACHERS will be students who are able to apply literacy skills to understand complex materials and share their understanding effectively through oral and written communication.



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## PROFESSIONAL PRACTICES: STUDENTS:

Meet or exceed expectations for:

- *Oral communication.*
- *Written communication.*
- *Critical thinking.*
- *Problem solving skills.*
- *Literacy skills.*
- *Apply literacy skills to understand complex materials.*

### Classroom Examples

**Elementary physical education:** Students are learning how to play kickball while working on Colorado Academic Standard 1: Movement Competence and Understanding in Physical Education, Grade Level Expectation 2—Provide and receive feedback to and from peers using the major characteristics of mature locomotor and manipulative skills. *(Implements lesson plans based on: Colorado Academic Standards)*

The 4th-grade teacher begins the lesson by leading a discussion about how knowing the rules keeps the game of kickball safe and fun. He displays a chart with the directions and safety rules. He labels the chart as an example of a “How-to Text or Procedural Text.” Photographs of each direction and rule are included as a support for students who are second-language speakers or on lower reading levels. The teacher makes sure to teach the vocabulary associated with kickball and relates it to the game of baseball to help students make connections. *(Demonstrates an understanding of literacy content and skills. Integrates literacy connections into lessons, regardless of content being taught.)* Before students play the game, he has them share with a partner the directions and rules and reminds them to use the vocabulary associated with kickball in their conversations. The lesson concludes with students labeling a picture of a kickball field; the teacher also has allotted time to answer students’ questions.

**Middle school reading, writing, and communicating:** Students are working on Colorado Academic Standard 2: Reading for All Purposes, Grade Level Expectation 3—Context, grammar, and word choice influence the understanding of literary, persuasive, and informational texts. *(Implements lesson plans based on: Colorado Academic Standards)*

The instructional objective for this 8th-grade lesson is to understand the relationship between Chief Joseph, his people, and the larger white culture. Students use evidence from two texts—Andrew Jackson’s speech to Congress *On Indian Relocation* and Chief Joseph’s *Surrender Speech*—to analyze the attitude or tone toward Indian culture and people that is present in both texts. The teacher leads students through a “close reading” by asking text-dependent questions, such as “What’s the effect of Chief Joseph’s use of repetition of the words “tired” and “heart?” and “Do you think Chief Joseph’s



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surrender is a courageous or cowardly act?” *(The teacher provides instructional support that enhances students’ literacy skill development.)* Similarly, for Jackson’s address, the teacher poses the question “How does Jackson structure his address to persuade Congress to relocate the Indian population?”

Additionally, the teacher models how to annotate a text, identifying adjectives and verbs that Jackson uses to describe Native Americans or the concept of Indian relocation. She poses the question, “In what ways does Jackson argue that this relocation is beneficial for the Indian population?” *(The teacher provides instructional support that enhances students’ literacy skill development. The teacher provides instructional support that enhances students’ information literacy.)* The teacher’s questions lead from a general understanding to more inferential connections that students make between both texts. She then asks students to compare the two texts and explain the attitudes toward the Indian population developed by both authors. *(The teacher provides instructional support that enhances students’ critical thinking and reasoning.)*

**Middle school social studies:** Students are working on Colorado Academic Standard 2: Geography, Grade Level Expectation 1—Use geographic tools to analyze patterns in human and physical systems. *(Implements lesson plans based on: Colorado Academic Standards)*

Eighth-grade students are learning about Westward Expansion as a means of exploring two essential questions: How is human activity limited by the environment? How has the environment influenced human activity? The teacher begins the lesson by posing the essential questions to students and facilitating a Socratic Seminar. She guides the discussion by asking students to think of examples, both within and outside of social studies, where human activity has been limited by the environment and where the environment has influenced human activity. She connects this idea to climate and weather and the human impact on the environment. She asks students to recall the literary texts *Call of the Wild* and *To Build a Fire* by Jack London and information from a video presented in language arts. *(Integrates literacy connections into lessons, regardless of content being taught.)* She encourages students to build on each other’s ideas and ask clarifying and probing questions. *(Provides instruction that enhances students’: Critical thinking and reasoning.)*

After the Socratic Seminar, students read a selection of primary documents on Westward Expansion that express the passionate belief that America is headed toward a prosperous future. To support reading comprehension, the teacher asks students to apply the school-wide literacy strategy “Claim, Evidence, So what?” to each document, identifying the claim in the document, providing evidence that supports the claim, and giving a short analysis about why the claim matters within the context of the text.



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*(Demonstrates an understanding of literacy content and skills. Makes complex reading accessible to students by: Integrating literacy skills and knowledge into lessons. Provides instruction that enhances students': Information literacy. Literacy skill development.)* As an exit ticket, students respond, individually, to the two essential questions from the beginning of class, drawing upon evidence from the discussion and the texts.

**High school history:** Students are working on Colorado Academic Standard 1: History, Grade Level Expectation 3 The significance of ideas as powerful forces throughout history. *(Implements lesson plans based on: Colorado Academic Standards)*

Students are learning about immigration in the 1860s using primary sources from the period, along with current news articles about immigrants and refugees. *(Integrates literacy connections into lessons, regardless of content being taught.)* Student tasks include researching the impact of immigration on their community and communicating their findings through graphs and tables. Students also select someone they know who has immigrated to the United States to interview. Using information from the news articles, research, and interviews, students make comparisons between immigrants of the 1860s and those of today (e.g., reasons for immigrating, countries of origin, experiences). *(Provides instruction that enhances students': Critical thinking and reasoning. Information literacy. Literacy skill development.)*

### *Planning/Coaching Questions*

- How will I integrate literacy into the content I teach?
- How will I select a range of texts with different levels of complexity for instructional use that will ensure all students have access to complex texts?
- How will I provide content that requires students to read text of varying complexity, is relevant, and addresses students' needs?
- How will I provide instruction that enhances students' critical thinking and reasoning?
- How will I provide instruction on information literacy?
- How will I develop students' literacy skills?



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