

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 21st century.

Element B: Elementary and Secondary Teachers

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

This section describes professional practices that should be demonstrated by ELEMENTARY TEACHERS responsible for teaching language arts and/or reading and SECONDARY TEACHERS responsible for teaching English, language arts and/or reading.

Professional practices appearing 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 integrate literacy skills into instruction that is purposeful, explicit, and systematic. Literacy instruction also must be based on student needs, intensive, and of sufficient duration to accelerate student learning. The elementary teacher also will emphasize literacy connections to other subject areas, and the secondary teacher will provide opportunities for students to apply literacy skills.

NOTE: For Element B: Elementary Teachers and Secondary Teachers, the professional practices are referenced together. When a practice or content refers to only one level, it is appropriately designated.



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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

ACCOMPLISHED AND EXEMPLARY RATING LEVELS

The impact of a proficient implementation of the professional practices referenced in Element B, ELEMENTARY and SECONDARY TEACHERS will be students who are able to apply literacy skills to new and unfamiliar material, including communication with others in a manner that exceeds the teacher's expectations for their age, grade, and ability level.

PROFESSIONAL PRACTICES: STUDENTS:

Apply literacy skills (*reading, writing, speaking, and listening*):

- *To new/unfamiliar material.*
- *While communicating during unstructured time. (ELEMENTARY TEACHERS)*
- *While communicating during the school day. (SECONDARY TEACHERS)*

Exceed teacher's expectations for students of the age, grade, and/or ability levels in:

- *Reading.*
- *Writing.*
- *Speaking.*
- *Listening.*

Classroom Examples

Early childhood: Students are working on Colorado Academic Standard 1: Oral Expression and Listening, Grade Level Expectation 3—Vocal sounds produce words and meaning to create early knowledge of phonemic awareness. (*Implements lesson plans based on: Colorado Academic Standards*)

The pre-school class is doing a word study on using onsets and rimes to create new words (e.g., use the rime “ip” to make dip, lip, and slip). As the teacher reads a book with “ip” words from the website, *Reading A to Z*, she has students identify the words they hear with the “ip” rime. She also has them listen to how she is able to read without stopping because she knows how to decode the words. After reading the book, the teacher and students review the words and sounds the letters make. (*Integrates literacy skills into lessons, including: Phonological awareness. Fluency.*) Students discuss with their shoulder partner why it is important to know letter sounds. The teacher summarizes the student responses before moving on with the lesson to give the students an opportunity to reflect on what they have learned so far. She then has them create new words using the rime “ip.” During independent



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practice, the teacher works with a group of students that is still learning letter sounds. *(Provides instruction that is: Needs-based. Intensive. Of sufficient duration to accelerate learning. Students apply literacy skills: To new/unfamiliar material.)* The lesson closes with the teacher and students making connections to how they can use their knowledge of letter sounds to read words in the math and science centers. *(Emphasizes literacy connections to other subject areas while teaching, reading, English or language arts.)* (Eagle County Schools Professional Practices Rubric, 2012, p. 25. Used with permission).

Elementary reading, writing, and communicating: Students are working on Colorado Academic Standard 2: Reading for All Purposes, Grade Level Expectation 1—Literary texts are understood and interpreted using a range of strategies. *(Implements lesson plans based on: Colorado Academic Standards)*

Fifth-grade students are comparing different characters' points of view from the novel *Grandpa's Mountain* by Carolyn Reeder. The teacher begins the lesson with a review of previously taught vocabulary and an introduction of new vocabulary. He not only selects the tier-two words students must master, but he also selects words related to the setting of the book which is very different from students' environment. The teacher knows that students will need to apply the strategy of inferring in order to master the learning objective. He models the strategy for students and completes a graphic organizer that includes text evidence, along with what he knows about the characters and his own experiences to make an inference about a character's points of view. He does this for two characters. *(Integrates literacy skills into lessons, including: Vocabulary. Comprehension.)* Before modeling how to compare the character's perspectives, he reviews with students the thinking process applied to infer the two perspectives. After modeling the comparison, he engages students in a guided practice of the same process. *(Engages students in instruction that is: Purposeful. Explicit. Systematic.)* Students then read a different section of the novel and apply the strategy in order to make their own comparisons. As students work independently, the teacher monitors their reading fluency, understanding of vocabulary, and application of the strategy. *(Provides literacy instruction that is: Needs-based. Intensive. Of sufficient duration to accelerate learning. Students apply literacy skills: to new/unfamiliar material.)*

Elementary reading, writing, and communicating: Students are working on Colorado Academic Standard 2: Reading for All Purposes, Grade Level Expectation 3—Knowledge of morphology and word relationships matters when reading. *(Implements lesson plans based on: Colorado Academic Standards)*

The emphasis of this 5th-grade classroom lesson on developing the needed vocabulary for students to access a grade-appropriate complex text. Starting with a short focus lesson, the teacher explains to students that they will be using S.A.G.E, a technique that prompts students to search the passage for



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four types of clues to help determine the meaning of unknown words and aide in comprehension. *(Integrates literacy skills into lessons, including: Vocabulary. Comprehension. Engages students in instruction that is: Purposeful. Explicit. Systematic.)* The teacher explains that students can use S.A.G.E. any time they come across a word that is unknown to them and is interfering with comprehension or fluency—in any text and in any context. *(Integrates literacy skills into lessons, including: Fluency.)* After these explanations, the teacher models how to perform it in an authentic context by handing out a pre-selected, grade-appropriate complex text and asking students to read it independently, taking note of words that are unfamiliar to them and are interfering with comprehension or fluency. The teacher then selects a section of the text to read out loud and selects an unfamiliar word within that section that has interrupted comprehension or the reader’s fluency. She models application of the S.A.G.E. technique using a think-aloud in which she asks the following questions:

Synonym—*What word or phrase in the passage might mean the same?*

Antonym—*What word or phrase in the passage might mean the opposite?*

Gist—*Based on the passage, what is the tone or mood of the word or phrase? What might be its general meaning?*

Explanation—*Does the author anywhere in the passage offer an explanation of the word or phrase?*

Based on all of my thinking, I’m going to infer that the word I selected means _____.

After the model, the teacher guides students through the technique using the words they noted from their initial independent reading. The teacher provides collaborative opportunities for students to use S.A.G.E., reading passages aloud and checking for fluency and comprehension along the way. *(Integrates literacy skills into lessons, including: Speaking. Listening. Students apply literacy skills while communicating during the school day.)* Finally, students use the strategy independently in a variety of contexts. *(Teaches and provides opportunities for students to apply literacy skills. Students apply literacy skills: To new/unfamiliar material.)* The recursive steps of this teaching process continue until all students can demonstrate their ability to use the technique for determining the meaning of unfamiliar words in a manner that enhances their reading comprehension and fluency. *(Provides instruction that is: Needs-based. Intensive. Of sufficient duration to accelerate learning.)*

High school reading, writing, and communicating: Students are working on Colorado Academic Standard 2: Reading for All Purposes, Grade Level Expectation 1—Increasingly complex literary elements in traditional and contemporary works of literature require scrutiny and comparison. *(Implements lesson plans based on: Colorado Academic Standards.)*

Ninth-grade students are reading *Romeo and Juliet*. The teacher engages students by using the gradual release of instruction framework. *(Engages students in instruction that is: Purposeful. Explicit. Systematic.)* He begins with a succinct focus lesson and explains to students that they will read the text

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in chunks. *(Integrates literacy skills into lessons, including: Comprehension. Writing.)* He explains that students will use summary frames to help organize their thoughts after each section of text and that there are different summary frames for different text structures. Depending on the structure of the section of text, students will choose one or more of the following:

- Cause/Effect: _____ happens because _____ OR _____ causes _____ because _____
- Description: _____ is a kind of _____ that _____
- Problem/Solution : Somebody wanted _____ but _____ so _____
- Sequence: _____ begins with _____ continues with _____ and ends with _____
- Comparison/Contrast: x and y are similar in that they are both _____ but x _____ while y _____

The teacher reads a section of text aloud, modeling how to adjust pace and expression when reading a play. *(Integrates literacy skills into lessons, including: Fluency.)* Then, using a think-aloud, he models how to first determine the text structure of the chunk of text that was read and how to select the correct sentence frame. Finally, he models how to complete one of the sentence frames and explains how the summary frames support comprehension of the section of text. The teacher gives students another pre-selected section of the text. Students work in pairs, taking turns reading the text aloud while adjusting pace and expression accordingly. *(Integrates literacy skills into lessons, including: Fluency. Speaking and Listening.)* Students collaborate to complete the appropriate sentence frame for each chunk of text read. Once students have had sufficient time to work in collaborative pairs, they are given a new, pre-selected portion of text to independently read and create sentence summaries. While students work independently, the teacher conferences with small groups and individuals to provide formative feedback and reinforce instruction, as needed. *(The teacher provides instruction that is; Needs-based. Intensive. Students apply literacy skills: To new/unfamiliar material.)*

Planning/Coaching Questions

- How will I emphasize literacy connections to other subject areas?
- How will I provide opportunities for students to apply literacy skills?
- How will I integrate literacy skills into lessons?
- Which literacy skill(s) will need to be integrated into the lesson for students to master the learning objective?
- How will I engage students in instruction that is purposeful, explicit, and systematic?
- How will I provide instruction that is needs-based?
- How will I identify the needs that should be addressed in my instruction?
- How will I provide instruction that is intensive and of sufficient duration to accelerate learning?



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