

Teacher Quality Standard III

Teachers plan and deliver effective instruction and create an environment that facilitates learning for their students.

Study after study shows the single most important factor determining the quality of the education a child receives is the quality of the teacher. Quality teachers have knowledge of content, curriculum, and standards. They are able to plan and implement instructional strategies in an effective and purposeful manner that enhances student learning and independence. Research shows that when implemented effectively and purposefully, the professional practices referenced in Standard III can result in an environment in which all students can learn and succeed.

Element C

Teachers demonstrate a rich knowledge of current research on effective instructional practices to meet the developmental and academic needs of their students.

Varying instructional activities allows all students to learn the same concepts and skills with varied levels of support, challenge, or complexity.

—Carol Ann Tomlinson

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 current research to meet the developmental and academic needs of their students, they must incorporate evidence-based strategies based on student data that provide for individualized instructional approaches.

ACCOMPLISHED AND EXEMPLARY RATING LEVELS

The impact of a proficient implementation of the professional practices referenced in Element C will be students who are able to embrace new ways of learning that are research-based in order to apply skills and knowledge they learn in the classroom.

PROFESSIONAL PRACTICES: STUDENTS:

- ***Embrace new and unique ways of learning as they are introduced through research-based lessons.***
- ***Apply skills and knowledge learned in the classroom.***

Classroom Examples

Elementary reading, writing, and communicating: Students are working on the Colorado Academic Standard 2: Reading for All Purposes, Grade Level Expectation 2—Comprehension strategies are



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necessary when reading informational or persuasive text. *(The teacher implements lessons based on Colorado Academic Standards.)*

Third-grade students are studying literature and are reading the book *Eleven* by Sandra Cisneros. The instructional objective is for students to analyze how particular elements of a story interact. The teacher begins the lesson by modeling the use of two-column notes. *(Incorporates evidence-based strategies into lessons.)* Next, she has students identify and label the main elements: Rachel, Mrs. Price, and “the red sweater” in the left-hand column. In the right-hand column students are directed to find textual evidence that describes those three main elements. The students work together in small groups that have been predetermined by the teacher to best support readers. *(Makes connections between student data and research-based practices.)* Students make connections among the three elements and analyze the relationship between the two characters, each other, and the red sweater. For struggling students, the teacher modifies the two-column note format to prepopulate with some of the details from the story. For the final task, the teacher allows students to create a visual representation and provides sentence starters for those students who need them. *(Individualizes instructional approach to meet unique needs of each student.)*

High school history: Students are working on Colorado Academic Standard 1: History, Grade Level Expectation 2—Analyze the key concepts of continuity and change, cause and effect, complexity, unity and diversity over time. *(Implements lesson plans based on: Colorado Academic Standards)*

Students are studying critical ideas, actions, and decisions that have led the United States to war/conflict (e.g., World War I, World War II, Vietnam, Korea). The teacher provides direct instruction through the use of a PowerPoint presentation with illustrations of the time period and models how to complete a graphic organizer on the causes and effects of each war. Students are provided a variety of primary and secondary sources to use for completing the organizer, including differentiated texts based on students’ reading levels. *(Incorporates evidence-based strategies into lessons.)* Students choose to complete the organizer with a partner or to work independently, based on their learning preference. Based on results from a pre-assessment, students with prior knowledge of America’s wars are provided extension activities that enhance their understanding for how the various causes of each war connect to the desire of people today to have a voice in their government. *(Individualizes instructional approach to meet unique needs of each student.)* Before students are dismissed, the teacher brings the class together to review the learning objective and provide opportunities for students to share the information they recorded on their graphic organizers as well as the connections to current times.

- Tasks may also be differentiated based on students’ level of language proficiency. For example, a teacher with English Language Learners spends time researching instructional practices to support her students’ various levels of proficiency and collaborates with school support staff to plan a variety of tasks. *(Make*



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connections between student data and research-based practices.) Students who are just beginning to learn English record historical events using labeled timelines. Students with developing skills make entries using complete sentences (e.g., in journals or logs) based on timelines or visually supported texts. Students who are able to bridge the gap between their native language and English produce reports by summarizing information from multiple resources. *(Individualizes instructional approach to meet unique needs of each student.)*

Planning/Coaching Questions

- How will I determine the developmental and academic needs of each student?
- What resources will I utilize to identify research-based practices?
- How will I decide which research-based practices to implement in my instruction?
- How will I decide on the instructional approaches to use in order to individualize instruction for each student?



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