

Charleston County School District Elements of Balanced Literacy in Elementary

Element	Definition	Purpose	Structure
Read-Aloud	The oral reading of a text in front of the class or a group of students where there is a single text used and the teacher is in control of the text. Most commonly used are picture books or excerpts from longer texts. The teacher models expressive reading and critical thinking in response to the text "live" in front of students.	To provide an oral reading of text - including but not limited to the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For the enjoyment of story • For class discussion using a common text • As a model of what good reading sounds like • To teach or model specific strategies, skills, or elements of literature or text • To expose <i>all</i> students to "complex text" text they can comprehend and discuss 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 10-15 min. daily • Single text -teacher holds and/or controls • May include stopping to teach or have students turn and talk depending on purpose
Reading Workshop (RW)	The teaching of reading using a specific structure/method that includes direct and explicit strategy instruction (mini-lesson) followed by student engagement and the application or practice of the skills/strategies learned in a variety of possible ways. (see below)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To provide explicit instruction in the strategies and skills needed to comprehend text (and model it) • To develop student independence as readers • To build a predictable structure that supports students' cognitive growth 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mini-lesson (10-15 min. daily) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Connect ◦ Teach ◦ Engage ◦ Link • Independent Reading as teacher/Confers/conducts small groups (20-40 min. daily) • End-of-RW Share (5 min. daily)
Independent Reading	An extended period of time during Reading Workshop where students are provided time daily to read books of their choosing at their independent reading level. Teacher conducts conferences or small groups during this time.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To provide students with time to read "just right" (independent level) books <i>during</i> class • To strengthen students' stamina and ability to focus for extended periods of time • To monitor students' independent reading habits and patterns "live" in the classroom 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students read self-selected (leveled) text that matches their independent reading level • 20-40 minutes daily • Students in small groups as assigned • Students may jot in reading notebooks
Guided Reading	Small group, teacher-directed instruction that follows a specific structure for a group of students reading at the same (or closely related) instructional reading level. The group is formed to meet the reading needs of students performing <u>below</u> grade level in their reading. Groups <i>often</i> work together for extended periods of time – although the groups must be flexible and fluid as needed to meet students' changing needs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To advance (below level) students' <i>instructional</i> reading levels at an accelerated rate in an effort to bring them up to grade level • To "target" the specific, identified skills students reading below grade level need to strengthen to advance their reading comprehension as efficiently and as quickly as possible 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3-6 students • 15-20 min. • Instructional level text • 2-3X/week • Increasing text levels as quickly as possible

Charleston County School District Elements of Balanced Literacy in Elementary

Element	Definition	Purpose	Structure
Strategy Groups	Small "ad-hoc" group instruction formed for short periods of time – organized for a specific, focused, instructional purpose (a specific skill, strategy, misunderstanding, genre need, etc.). Designed to bring students with similar learning need (but not necessarily same text level) together to learn a skill or strategy).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To address an immediate need of a small group of students who need the same kind of help • To save teachers time who might otherwise confer with a number of students 1:1 who all need the same help • To differentiate effectively 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 10-15 min/session • Meet 2-3X/week until dismissed • Varied text used • Have a specific focus
Reading Partnerships	A collaborative structure - student partners have similar reading levels, interests, and/or needs. Students' pair up for assigned discussions, to share ideas, and support one another as readers. Partners may not necessarily be reading the same text at the same time, depending on the unit of study. Partners in the same text may re-read and/or reference the text as assigned. The teacher specifically assigns a focus or task when partners meet.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide a social setting for book & literary discussions • To practice skills and strategies being taught • Build student confidence in their ability to participate in a literary discussion • Deepen student comprehension through conversation • Prepare students in grades 3-5 for Book Clubs later in the year 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2-3 students • 10-15 min. meetings –usually @ end of class period • 2-3X/week as needed • Students complete a task or have a specific focus • Students may have different or same text
Book Clubs (formerly called Literature Circles)	A group structure that mirrors adult book clubs in the real world. Students are grouped by the teacher, but make choices about the book to read and the pacing of their reading. Students are strongly supported during club sessions but meetings are not <i>conducted</i> by the teacher	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To build efficacy and empower students as critical readers of literature and informational text by placing them in charge of their own reading, learning, and thinking 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4-6 students per club • 2-3X/week • Students read same text • Students reading at same independent level (or very closely)
Reading Notebooks	Reading notebooks record students' thinking about reading – a critical element of readers in grades 3 and beyond. The extent to which reading notebooks promote higher level thinking is dependent upon the tasks assigned and the way in which student notebook work is supported and/or reinforced by the teacher.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To develop critical thinking through writing • To strengthen communication thru writing • To provide a record of student progress in reading, writing, and analytical thinking over time • To make reading comprehension visible 	Notebooks are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personalized • Dated • Used almost daily • For before/during/after • Organized (Guided, Club)

Charleston County School District Elements of Balanced Literacy in Elementary

Element	Definition	Purpose	Structure
Shared Reading	A structured sequence of direct instruction using a short text in front of the class or a group over a period of several days. (Only ONE text is visible during this lesson, and the teacher is using it in front of students. The reading of text is guided by the teacher, with class participating in a series of activities that analyze and learn from the text.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● To reinforce comprehension, literacy, vocabulary, & communication skills learned ● For class discussion using a common text ● To teach or model specific strategies, skills, or elements of literature or text ● To expose all students to “complex text” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 10-15 min./session ● Whole class/small group Includes vocabulary ● Integrates reading ● Touches all genres ● Team planned
Writing Workshop	The teaching of writing using a specific structure/method that includes direct and explicit strategy instruction (mini-lesson) followed by student engagement and the application or practice of the skills/strategies learned in a variety of possible ways. (Turn and talk, Stop and Jot, Stop and Sketch, Act it Out, “Listen for...)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● To provide explicit instruction in the strategies and skills needed to comprehend text (and model it) ● To develop student independence as readers ● To build a predictable structure that supports students’ cognitive growth 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Mini-lesson (7-10min daily) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Connect ○ Teach ○ Engage ○ Link ● Independent Reading /Confer/Small Groups (20-40 min. daily) ● End-of-RW Share (5 min. daily)
Interactive Writing (K-2)	Teacher leads the class in composing a text. The teacher shares the pen with the students, asking them to come up to write portions of words or whole words. May also include interactive “drawing” to support students in planning stages of writing.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● To model reading and writing strategies ● Demonstrates concepts about print, early strategies, and how words work. ● Provides opportunities to hear sounds in words and connect sounds with letters. ● Helps students understand the decoding and encoding process in reading and writing. ● Increases spelling knowledge. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 10 min. daily (kindergarten) ● 2-3X/week (first grade) ● Rarely (second grade)
Writing Folders (K-2)	An organizational tool used to “house” student work samples during a unit of study in writing. Typically, the writing folder includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Tools (ABC chart, high-freq. words, etc.) for students to use ○ 2 pockets – one for work in progress and the other for completed work ○ Only the current unit of study work – is cleaned out at the start of new unit 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● To help students organize their work ● To provide instructional/supportive writing tools they can use when drafting and / or editing and revising ● To use during conferences so that the teacher can view work across a period of time rather than just one day at a time 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● How it is used and organized is up to the classroom teacher ● Some teachers collect folders daily ● Some teachers allow students to keep in their desks or cubby

Charleston County School District Elements of Balanced Literacy in Elementary

Element	Definition	Purpose	Structure
Writing Notebooks (3-5)	Writing notebooks record students' planning, drafting, editing and revising as a writer – a critical element in grades 3 and beyond. The extent to which writing notebooks promote higher level thinking and independence in writing is dependent upon the tasks assigned and the way in which student notebook work is supported and/or reinforced by the teacher.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To provide students with a specific place to develop their craft as a writer • To strengthen their writing • To provide a record of student progress in, writing, and analytical thinking over time • To make their steps in the writing process visible • To allow for comparisons of writing skills across time and from unit to unit (genre to genre) 	Notebooks are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personalized • Dated • Used almost daily • Involve every step in the writing process except the publishing step • Organized (often by genre)
Mentor Text	Picture books or short text chosen to support specific skills and use of craft in writing. The teacher selects books or text that can be used as a "reference" in the room. For example, if teaching meaningful use of dialogue, a specific story is used to show how the author is selective and has a specific purpose for including talk in their story. In NF text, mentor text is often selected for its organizational structure and/or the use of text features.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To provide a "model" of good writing that both teachers and students can refer back to as they continue their study of writing • To provide the teacher with examples of writing he or she can lift up during their study of writing • To give students (and teachers) examples of a specific writing skill that teacher and/or student can "copy" (or mirror) in their own work. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduced to students during Read-Aloud or Shared Reading • NOT read in its entirety during writing workshop. Rather, it is <u>referenced</u> (using a specific page, scene, or structure of the text)
Word Study	A time for students to actively learn phonics, spelling, and word structure through explicit instruction, exploration, and practice. Lessons taught during word study enhance students' learning experiences when reading and writing authentic texts. Vocabulary and grammar instruction are important instructional components of word study that support reading and writing development.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To provide explicit instruction in the skills and strategies needed to develop word solving actions • To increase the speed at which students can recognize and solve words • To provide students with time to apply and practice their knowledge of letters, sounds, word structure, and word meaning to read, write, and learn new words 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 10-15 min. daily explicit Instruction • 10-15 min. daily application (Small group/Independent) • Whole group, small group, or independent • Explicit and systematic
Close Reading	A thoughtful, critical analysis of a text or text excerpt that focuses on significant details or patterns in order to develop a deep, precise understanding of the text's form, craft, and meaning. Initially, one text is selected and displayed for the entire class to see. Students in grades 2 and up are given copies of the text.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A process that teaches students to deconstruct and then reconstruct text leading to a more in-depth understanding of the text as a whole • Strengthens students' own writing skills through the careful analysis of author's craft. Students observe the author's intentionality of word choice, text structure, visuals, etc. to deepen the meaning of a text • Fosters students' abilities to analyze, question, and infer meaning; teaches reading is thinking 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 15-45 min. • As often as possible • Ideally a 3-5 day process that includes teacher modeling and student practice • Whole group, small group, partners and/or independent