

English Language Arts Elementary Curriculum Framework



Arlington Public Schools

English Language Arts (ELA) Elementary Curriculum Framework

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Introduction

Arlington Public Schools elementary English language arts program is based on a developmental model. This assumes that children have pre-existing knowledge based on their experiences, culture, language, and community. The ELA program engages in a cycle of assessment, planning, teaching, and reassessment to ensure that all students are engaged in high quality instruction, which is designed to meet their individual and developmental, strengths and needs while guided by knowledge of a developmental continuum and research. The National Reading Panel (2000) and other professional books and journals have clearly defined the need to teach early literacy skills, phonological awareness, phonics, vocabulary, fluency, and comprehension as well as writing to foster the development of readers and writers.

The English Language Arts Curriculum Framework is presented to teachers to use as a guide for planning an effective, comprehensive literacy block. The components of the language arts program are founded on researched-based, best practices and are not program driven. Rather, it is the expectation that teachers and administrators are knowledgeable of their students, current instructional practices, and a variety of adopted resources to support literacy development.

This document will provide teachers and schools with a succinct description of each component of the literacy block: oral language, read aloud, shared reading, guided reading, independent reading, vocabulary, word study, and writing instruction. For each component, a description, set of goals, guidelines for implementation, monitoring student progress, and additional resources are provided.

ELA Standards of Practice are included to outline common expectations for administrators, teachers and students with regard to language arts instruction. These Standards of Practice are directly expressed so that they can be met with fidelity across Arlington County Public Schools. Teachers are encouraged to use this guide in conjunction with the *APS Elementary ELA Scope and Sequence* and *VDOE Curriculum Framework* to plan for effective, language arts instruction. Finally, the guide provides a vehicle for teachers to collaborate with their colleagues to provide the best possible instruction for students.

The ELA Office would like to thank the curriculum development committee for revising and elaborating on the *English Language Arts (ELA) Elementary Curriculum Framework*.

Dr. Michelle Picard, Supervisor, English Language Arts
Gayle Kelley, Reading Specialist, English Language Arts
Jennifer Clarke, Reading Specialist, Long Branch Elementary School
Carole Ebert, Reading Specialist, Claremont Immersion Elementary School
Rosemary Giangulio, Reading Specialist, Hoffman Boston Elementary School
Kimberly Gomez, Reading Specialist, Oakridge Elementary School
Rebecca Irwin-Kennedy, Reading Specialist, Oakridge Elementary School
Alison Meadows, Reading Specialist, Barcroft Elementary School
Carlin Schwartz, Reading Specialist, Randolph Elementary School
Natani Vaughn, Classroom Teacher, McKinley Elementary School

APS Elementary English Language Arts (ELA) Program Goals

The Arlington Public Schools English Language Arts (ELA) program seeks to develop students who are strategic readers, effective writers, engaging speakers, and critical thinkers.

Standards and objectives that describe grade-level expectations for teaching and learning these skills are found in Virginia's English Standards of Learning. The ELA Office believes all children can learn, and that children learn best when they are recognized as individuals and appreciated for their different interests, backgrounds, and personalities. Teachers and families working together can best help students reach their academic potential.

Literacy, primarily expressed in the ability to read unfamiliar texts and to write original texts, remains at the center of the ELA K-12 program. Literacy also resides in the heart of the learning process. Reading and writing skills enhance a student's ability to enjoy success in school and in the workplace. APS teachers work together with students, parents, other educators and community members to help students develop strong literacy skills.

ELA Standards of Practice

- Students will have access to a wide variety of multi-leveled, high interest texts.
- Students will have time to read self-selected texts daily.
- Students will have time to write every day.
- Teachers will read aloud to students daily for a variety of purposes.
- Teachers will provide explicit word study instruction.
- Teachers will provide daily opportunities to develop oral language by providing opportunities for students to engage in discussion of what they have read, written, viewed, experienced, and learned.
- Teachers will foster word consciousness and explicit instruction in language and word parts to increase student vocabulary.
- Teachers will provide books for students to read at home on a daily basis.
- Teachers will differentiate instruction according to assessment and developmental model to meet student needs.
- Teachers will provide opportunities for wide reading in content areas for students.
- Teachers will use formative assessments to check for understanding and inform instruction.
- Teachers will ensure that struggling students participate in early intervention that is based on student need.

Developmental Stages of Literacy

Reading and writing are reciprocal processes. They are complementary and influence one another. The development of reading and writing or literacy is predictable and has been described by many researchers as stages with discernible characteristics or literate behaviors (Bear, Templeton, Invernizzi, & Johnston, 2012; Chall, 1995; Ehri, 1991, 1999; Scanlon, Anderson, & Sweeney, 2010; Templeton & Gehsmann, 2014). A brief description of five stages of literacy development is below. An in-depth knowledge of developmental stages allows teachers to design and implement instruction that is uniquely suited for the student within his or her zone of proximal development (Vygotsky, 1962).

Emergent Readers and Writers

Emergent learners are typically preschool and kindergarten students who engage in memory or pretend reading – essentially students either retell a familiar story using the illustrations or they recite a familiar story without the use of phonetic cues. Students at this stage are developing phonological awareness, alphabet knowledge, concepts about print, and a concept of word.

In writing and spelling, emergent learners use a continuum of drawing, generative scribbles and random strings of letters to convey meaning. Spelling lacks a letter-sound correspondence.

Beginning Readers and Writers in the Letter Name-alphabetic Stage of Spelling

Beginning readers and writers, typically first to third grade, are able to read predictable, decodable, and leveled text through the use of phonetic and picture clues as well as a limited and growing collection of sight words. Students at this stage read and write with a deliberate attention to a sound-symbol match. They tend to track predictable and leveled texts, which provide support for beginning readers (i.e. picture clues, repeated sight words, limited text, familiar subjects).

In writing and spelling, students continue to develop phonological awareness and progress to the identification and use of individual phonemes to write and spell. Students early in the stage may represent one sound in a word such as U for you, while fully alphabetic spellers will represent each sound in a word such as BAKR for baker. This is often referred to as *invented* or *temporary spelling*. Reading and writing at this stage tends to be labor-intensive process of sounding out individual words and attaching letters to represent sounds along with a growing sight word vocabulary.

Transitional Readers and Writers in the Within Word Pattern Stage of Spelling

Transitional readers, typically first to fourth grade, demonstrate an increased fluency and expression in texts, which are longer and have fewer illustrations. As the students reading rate and volume of reading increases, readers come to prefer silent reading.

Parallel to the increase in reading, there is an increase in fluency and volume in writing. Students are fully alphabetic (e.g. represent all sounds) in their spelling and have begun to represent long vowel patterns as well as other long vowels in their writing (i.e. plain, strike). Sight words are also generated with ease. Students begin to write longer pieces with more details.

Intermediate Readers and Writers in the Syllables and Affixes Stage of Spelling

Intermediate readers, typically in third to sixth grade, read fluently and expressively in longer texts – both fiction and nonfiction. At this stage of development, readers have mastered a sight vocabulary and understand how sound, pattern, and meaning is represented in the written word. Comprehension is dependent less on reading the words from the page and more on their understanding of vocabulary, background knowledge, motivation and language.

Writers and spellers at this stage have mastered single syllable short and long vowel words and are beginning to examine the combination of syllables in words. They begin to use morphemes – meaning units such as prefixes, suffixes, and roots – not only in spelling and writing, but also in the understanding of vocabulary. Students begin to use more sophisticated and specialized vocabulary. Students at the intermediate stage write fluently for a variety of purposes including narrative story, reports, essays, poems, and journal responses.

Advanced Readers and Writers in the Derivational Relations Stage of Spelling

Advanced readers, typically in upper elementary and middle school, read fluently, expressively and for a variety of purposes. Background knowledge, vocabulary, and experience significantly affect comprehension, as do strategies to self-monitor comprehension.

In writing, students at this stage easily generate multipage, well-organized papers, which focus on a variety of purposes. They are able to synthesize information across multiple sources and experiences in writing. Spelling appears to be conventional, as students will use known words or resources to correct spelling. Spelling errors at this stage are generally on low frequency multisyllabic words derived from Latin and Greek combining forms.

Additional Information

- Bear, D., Invernizzi, M. A., Templeton, S. & Johnston, F. A. (2012) *Words Their Way: Word Study for Phonics, Spelling, and Vocabulary*. Pearson Publishing.
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- Vygotsky, L. S. (1962). *Thought and language*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

Overall Expectations for APS Comprehensive Literacy Program

<i>Categories</i>	<i>APS Comprehensive Literacy Program Requirements</i>
Curriculum and Standards	APS teachers will teach the VA Standards of Learning using the APS ELA Curriculum Framework and Scope and Sequence.
Time Allocations	<p>In grades K-2 a minimum two-hour block of language arts instruction should occur daily. When possible, 2.5 hours is recommended.</p> <p>In grades 3-5 a minimum 90-minute block of language arts instruction should occur daily. When possible, 2 hours is recommended.</p> <p>It is highly recommended that this block be uninterrupted to the greatest extent possible. Schedules should be designed to avoid pullout instruction during the language arts block (e.g., instrumental music, art). Additionally, young children benefit from an ELA block in the morning as opposed to the afternoon.</p>
Components of a Comprehensive Language Arts Program	<p>By using the following components of literacy, teachers consistently and effectively deliver comprehensive literacy instruction to meet individual student needs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Oral language development ▪ Read Aloud ▪ Shared Reading ▪ Guided Reading ▪ Independent Reading ▪ Vocabulary ▪ Word Study ▪ Writing Instruction ▪ Handwriting K-3 <p>Many of these components overlap and integrate throughout the day.</p>
Professional Knowledge and Vocabulary	Teachers and administrators have a unified understanding of how children learn to read and write through a balanced approach to literacy. APS implements a developmental model of literacy based on students' progression through the stages of literacy.
Assessment	Assessment is used to inform instruction and to monitor student progress. Assessments include both district-wide and teacher-selected measures.

Daily Schedule

It is recommended that English language arts teachers adhere to the schedule and component descriptions in this guide with the understanding that flexibility is required across the weeks and months to provide a balanced program to meet the needs of diverse learners. Daily components of the ELA curriculum framework will include reading aloud, reading instruction (guided, shared and independent reading/conferring), word study, vocabulary instruction, and writing instruction. The sequence of components within the daily schedule is left to teacher’s discretion.

Teachers will plan and implement a daily schedule that reflects the needs of students in all areas of literacy. For example, students performing below grade level will meet more frequently in small group instructional groups; have access to consistent teacher conferences and the possible intervention of a specialist as a double dose of support and instruction. Lessons in word study, writing, and reading will be differentiated and conferring will be individualized for students. Schedules will vary while maintaining a commitment to daily opportunities for explicit instruction and practice with reading, writing, speaking, and listening.

Sample Overview Schedule for Kindergarten to Second Grade (2-2.5 hours)			
Time	Component Description	Teacher Responsibilities	Student Responsibilities
10-15 min.	Whole Group (Read Aloud, Vocabulary, Mini-lesson, shared reading)	Teacher uses this time to read aloud, discuss vocabulary, conduct mini-lesson, or facilitate shared reading. Whole Group time is connected to small group and independent reading and writing expectations and lessons.	Students participate
60-75 min.	Reading Instruction Shared Reading Small Group Instruction Conferring with Students	Teacher conducts small group lessons which include fluency, comprehension, word study and writing Teacher confers with students reading independently	Participate in small group reading Work on Word study Read Independently Write
30-45 min.	Writer’s Workshop	Mini-lesson Confers with students Conducts a community Share	Participate in mini-lesson Plan, write, confer, share
15-30 min.	Word Study – Teachers will connect word study with guided reading. Teachers may conduct word study lessons as separate lessons (rotations) or as part of the guided reading lesson.	Small Group Lessons	Daily Sorting Discussion of the big ideas Writing for sounds Games

<i>Sample Overview of Schedule Grades 3-5 (1.5 hours to 2.0 hours)</i>			
<i>Time</i>	<i>Component Description</i>	<i>Teacher Responsibilities</i>	<i>Student Responsibilities</i>
10-15 min.	Whole Group (Read Aloud, Vocabulary, Mini-lesson, shared reading)	Teacher uses this time to read aloud, discuss vocabulary, conduct mini-lesson, or facilitate shared reading. Whole Group time is connected to small group and independent reading and writing expectations and lessons.	Students participate
45-60 min.	Reading Instruction (mini-lesson, guided reading, independent reading)	Teacher conducts small group lessons which include fluency, comprehension, word study and writing Teacher confers with students reading independently	Participate in small group reading Work on word study Read Independently Write
30-45 min.	Writer's Workshop 4-5 days a week	Mini-lesson Confers with students Conducts a community Share	Participate in mini-lesson Plan, write, confer, share
15-30 min.	Word Study 3-5 days a week	Small Group Lessons Generative – Growing Words Developmental	Daily Sorting Discussion of the big ideas Writing for sounds Games

Handwriting

Handwriting instruction is part of the English Language Arts curriculum. Professional decisions about when to teach handwriting are left to the discretion of the teacher based on student need and the constraints of the curriculum and school day. Many teachers choose to consolidate handwriting instruction during the first six weeks of the year while routines are being established; other teachers devote a consistent block each week. Teachers in the primary grades K-2 will focus on explicit instruction for students to learn proper letter formation. Cursive writing is introduced in the third grade and reinforced in grades four and five.

Content Integration

Teachers are expected to integrate reading and writing into the content areas. This allows teachers to reinforce literacy skills and strategies, specifically comprehension strategies and content organization and synthesis, while teaching science and social studies. Students experience stronger retention and understanding of concepts when they are exposed to the vocabulary and printed language of the subject area. For these reasons, reading high interest, multi-level text in content areas promotes both content knowledge and literacy skills.

Teachers are encouraged to read aloud in their content area, provide access to multilevel and interest texts, and engage students in reading and writing opportunities focused on content areas.

Technology Integration and Digital Learning

Students will be engaged in authentic technology use in order to become productive 21st century citizens. Teachers will work with students in meaningful curricular content through the purposeful and effective use of technology. Students will have opportunities to apply technology effectively to gain knowledge, develop skills, and create and distribute artifacts that reflect their understandings.

Reading and Writing Instruction Overview

The ELA Curriculum Framework is designed to be a succinct, overview of reading instruction and as such is organized by *instructional components* or blocks of time devoted to a particular instructional practice. Literacy development, however, can also be described as mastering the five essential proficiencies outlined by the National Reading Panel (2000) as well as writing. Please note that each component is related to one another and influences reading comprehension and all are integrated into the instructional components in this guide. Below they are briefly described.

1) **Phonological Awareness:** Phonological Awareness is the ability to identify, blend, segment, and manipulate sound in language. It does not require text. Phonological Awareness has been demonstrated to have a reciprocal relationship with learning to read.

2) **Phonics:** English is an alphabet system and based on predictable letter-sound match in words. Phonics is the first layer of the English language followed by orthography, the study of spelling patterns and morphology, units of meaning (i.e. pre - , graph, -ly). In order to learn to read, students must understand how sound, pattern, and meaning function in words. Studies have demonstrated that a students' word knowledge is related to word recognition, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension.

3) **Fluency:** Fluency is the ability to read text accurately, automatically and with appropriate expression. Fluency is affected by word recognition, vocabulary and background knowledge. It is the link between reading words and making meaning of the text. There are a number of ways in which to promote fluent reading including: increase the amount of reading conducted by students, reader's theater, timed repeated readings, poetry break and others. A few basic instructional strategies to develop fluency are listed below, while others are discussed in the shared reading section of the guide.

- **Silent Sustained Reading:** Provide SSR, Silent Sustained Reading or DEAR, Drop Everything and Read, time for students to read independently at his or her independent level. Time spent reading in text matters. Richard Allington reported, “differences in the volume of classroom reading were associated with elementary students' reading achievement. The average higher-achieving students read approximately three times as much each week as their lower-achieving classmates” (Allington, 2013).
- **Paired Reading:** Students work in pairs to read and/or reread material. Pairs may also include parents, teachers or instructional assistants. Readers must adjust their speed, intonation, and expression to accommodate their partner. Paired reading has a solid base in research and consistently yields reading gains.
- **Repeated Readings:** Provide students opportunities to reread independent or instructional level text. Reading speed, expression, and comprehension each increase as a student spends additional time in the same text. There are a variety of instructional methods to offer repeated readings including: partner reading (rereading favorite books, poems, or articles), timed repeated readings, readers' theater performances, and/or choral poetry.

- **Timed Repeated Readings:** Students can increase their reading rates, expression, and comprehension through the practice of repeated readings. Students are timed reading a selected passage. After discussion and the opportunity to practice the student is timed – reading the selection again. Students enjoy charting their progress and become both more fluent and have greater comprehension of the material.

4) **Comprehension:** Reading comprehension is making meaning of a written text and it is influenced by a great many factors from reading proficiencies such as word recognition and the acquisition of a concept of word to motivational factors, background knowledge, text complexity, vocabulary, language, culture and the conceptual content of the text. According to the RAND Reading Study Group (RRSG) (2002), reading comprehension is the “*process of simultaneously extracting and constructing meaning through interaction and involvement with written language*.” It involves the reader, the text, the activity, and is embedded within a sociocultural context. As we consider instructional strategies for teaching comprehension we must attend to a wide variety of factors including strategy instruction.

RAND Reading Study Group. (2002). *Reading for understanding: Toward an R&D program in reading comprehension*. Santa Monica, CA. RAND Corporation.

- **Strategy Instruction:** Studies have been conducted on which strategies “good readers” use as they process information. Michael Pressley, among others conducted the proficient reader strategy research, which was made popular in schools by Anne Goudvis, Stephanie Harvey, Chris Tovani, and Ellin Keene in their respective works. These seven strategies are listed below and provide a common lens through which we can discuss strategies to increase comprehension.
 1. Monitoring comprehension
 2. Activating and connecting to background knowledge
 3. Questioning
 4. Visualizing
 5. Making Inferences
 6. Determining Importance
 7. Summarizing and Synthesizing Information

Harvey, S. & Goudvis, A. (2007). *Strategies that work. Teaching Comprehension to enhance understanding*. Stenhouse Publishers.

Keene, E. (2007). *Mosaic of thought: The power of comprehension strategy instruction*. Heinemann.

Keene, E. (2012). *Talk about understanding: Rethinking classroom talk to increase comprehension*. Heinemann.

Tovani, C. (2000). *I read it, but I don't get it: Comprehension strategies for adolescent readers*. Stenhouse Publishers.

5) **Vocabulary:** Vocabulary is highly correlated with comprehension. Put another way, students who have strong vocabularies tend to be strong readers with sophisticated comprehension and strong readers tend to have expansive vocabularies. Reading widely contributes greatly to an increased vocabulary and the development of background knowledge. Vocabulary instruction can be generative or specific. Both are valued.

- **Generative vocabulary** instruction introduces students to word parts and encourages students to make connections among words with a common word part. For example, the words courage, courageous, discourage, encourage, encouragement, discouragement, are all related by the root word courage.
- **Specific vocabulary instruction** focuses on teaching high leverage, tier two words (Beck, McKeown, & Kucan, 2013).

Beck, I.L., McKeown, M. G., & Kucan, L. (2013). *Bringing words to life: Robust vocabulary instruction*. Guilford Press.

6) **Writing:** Reading and writing are reciprocal processes; two sides of a coin. In reading we consume the text and in writing we generate the text. Writing instruction must include a connection to reading, an immersion in text. APS is committed to a process-writing model (prewriting ideas, drafting, revising and editing) in which students are engaged in explicit instruction and practice. Students engage in writing for a variety of purposes on a daily basis for authentic tasks. Teachers and peers provide explicit teaching, feedback and conferring, and the opportunity to write and revise writing in school and beyond.

Component Description: Oral Language Development

Goal

The goal of oral language instruction is to promote effective communication in listening and speaking skills.

Description

Oral language is a fundamental component of a comprehensive language arts program. Development of oral language is explicitly addressed within reading, writing, word study, and vocabulary. Teachers create and use opportunities throughout the day for oral language skill development. Students use their listening and speaking vocabularies to participate in oral language activities. Daily listening and speaking opportunities, both formal and informal, should be embedded throughout the curriculum.

Planning for Instruction

Knowledge of students' oral language abilities influences instructional decisions throughout the school day. Teachers are encouraged to be familiar with student's oral language proficiencies. Specifically, English learners are assessed and are identified with WIDA levels. Teachers are encouraged to use the formative assessment measures (i.e. ACCESS WIDA) and observations to make instructional decisions for students as we work to explicitly teach and extend oral language development. Teachers will deliberately plan for multiple opportunities and routines for students to engage in student talk. Classroom and small group discussions will be scaffolded through a variety of techniques including the use of visuals, regalia, sentence frames, and instructional techniques, which support oral language development.

Implementation Guidelines

- Teachers provide multiple opportunities to engage students in authentic meaningful exchanges.
- Teachers explicitly teach both social and academic vocabulary throughout the day.
- Teachers build background knowledge to increase student understanding through read alouds, films, interactive experiences, the use of visuals and artifacts, and the facilitation of small group conversations.
- Teachers facilitate discussions among students in partner and group settings.
- Teachers provide opportunities for performances, oral reports, and presentations.
- Teachers maintain high expectations for how students hold conversations. Students and teachers demonstrate active listening.

Sample Strategies to Support Oral Language Development

- **Turn n' Talk:** This is a strategy in which students are asked to turn to a partner and discuss an open-ended question posed by the teacher for 1-3 minutes. This allows all students an opportunity to consider the question and to rehearse a response. It increases student engagement and thinking.
- **Fold the Line:** This strategy requires that the students are asked to form a line and then the line is folded so that the first and last persons in the line become partners, the second

and second to last and so forth. Once each person has a partner, they discuss a question posed by the teacher. After a few moments, the line shifts by one person and the conversation begins again. This allows students the opportunity to think about their response and share it with a few people. It also builds in movement. (Note – sometimes the line is created based on an inquiry or characteristic such as line up by height, age, years of experience, number of sports you enjoy, etc. A variation is inside-outside in which students form an inner and outer circle, form partners, and engage in conversation in partners from the inside to the outside. Participants in the circles shift partners every few minutes.

- **Jigsaw:** Initially, the teacher divides an assignment into components. For example, students are divided into groups to discuss a novel’s characters, problems and solutions, themes and interesting vocabulary. Students work together in a small group and become an expert on one of the specific topics and are then reallocated into a new group to share their expertise and to learn from the other two or three groups. Each group is a puzzle piece that eventually fits together for a complete understanding.
- **Sentence Stems and Sentence Frames:** Sentence stems and frames provide some language to support conversation and thinking. Students are provided with the overall structure of a sentence or paragraph. This is particularly helpful for English learners. Examples include but are not limited to the following:
 - In summary the author explores issues of _____ and explains to the reader that _____. It’s important because _____. (Summary)
 - In conclusion the main idea of the article is _____.
 - The author explains how _____.
 - The main idea is _____.
 - I was _____ so I _____. (Cause and effect)
 - In order to _____, you might have to _____. (Cause and effect)
 - First I _____, second I _____ and finally I _____. (Sequence)
 - It is characterized by being _____ and _____. (Description)

Monitoring Student Progress

Student growth in oral language development is monitored primarily informally through teacher observation. Specific measures of oral language proficiency are available for English learners. Oral language and vocabulary are considered an integral part of a student’s literacy development.

Additional Information

Echevarria, J., Vogt, M., & Short, D. (2004). *Making content comprehensible for English learners: The SIOP model*. Boston: Allyn and Bacon.

Vogt, M., & Echevarria, J. (2008). *99 Ideas and Activities for Teaching English Learners with the SIOP Model*. Pearson Allyn and Bacon.

Component Description: Read Aloud

Goal

There are multiple goals for reading aloud to elementary age children. Reading aloud provides a fluent model of language and expression, while also introducing students to new vocabulary and conceptual development. It builds background knowledge, develops higher level thinking skills and exposes students to texts that they will feel inspired to read independently. It is a time for teachers to explicitly model skills and strategies, teach new content, and simply allow students to enjoy a book.

Description

There are many times throughout the school day that a teacher will read aloud to his/her class. Four examples of read alouds are described below:

Interactive Read Aloud: During an interactive read aloud a teacher selects and reads a piece of high-quality text aloud to the whole class and stops at planned points to ask open ended questions that elicit thoughtful student responses. Students learn to think deeply about text, to listen to others, and to grow their own ideas. Before conducting an interactive read aloud, teachers will carefully read and analyze the text to plan a purposeful strategy focus and key stopping points for discussion. The purpose is to model and focus student's attention on comprehension and strategies that support understanding such as inferring or questioning.

Content Area Read Aloud: Reading aloud in other content areas supports student literacy and content knowledge development. As teachers read aloud they may introduce new information or reinforce information that has been taught through experience. Reading widely, having exposure to multiple texts in a single area promotes deep understanding and vocabulary development and is easily integrated into content subjects.

Mentor Text Read Aloud for Writing: The APS writer's workshop approach to writing focuses on an immersion in a type of writing and reading. Teachers can consolidate lessons and use a read aloud for multiple purposes. Teachers may select and read aloud a selection based on a certain genre of writing or to showcase and model specific traits of writing. The mentor text supports both reading and writing.

Read Aloud for Enjoyment: Reading aloud selections for the pure enjoyment of sharing a novel or expository text is purposeful, engaging, and creates community. It may also fulfill a variety of other purposes: to recommend books that students will want to read independently, to introduce students to text that is slightly higher than their reading level or outside their typical genre choices, and to simply model fluent reading are a few examples.

Planning for Instruction

Interactive Read Aloud

Before Reading:

- 1) Select age-appropriate books that connect to focused strategies that are based on the APS Scope and Sequence; teachers should incorporate texts that are appropriate for each grade level. Consider using cross-curricular texts (books used in science, social studies, writing) to extend the understanding of both the comprehension strategy and content knowledge. Consider the following questions when analyzing texts for read aloud: Will students enjoy it? Is there a big idea or theme to explore? Are there opportunities for thinking deeply? Do students have necessary background knowledge? What are the vocabulary demands? Do the story and illustrations present cultural diversity?
- 2) Read the text carefully and consider the deep understanding you want to support students in reaching through discussion. Work backwards from your objective and identify designated stopping points in the read aloud. Write open-ended questions on sticky notes or in the margins in the places you want students to discuss them. Develop questions that will support student discussion and depth of thought as they move in the direction of this big idea. This isn't a search for "right answers," nor does it eliminate the possibility of other ideas surfacing during discussion. Make a plan for supporting thoughtful discussion.
- 3) Examine the vocabulary in the text. Are there words that students must know in order to arrive at understandings around the "big idea"? Develop a plan for introducing words quickly before or during reading. Teachers may choose to use these same words as part of their overall vocabulary instruction.

During and After Reading

- 4) Briefly introduce preliminary vocabulary necessary to understand the text.
- 5) Read the text aloud fluently, stopping to ask the questions you wrote during planning. Allow students to discuss them with partners and then share out with the group. Continue this process until you reach the end of the story.
- 6) After reading, support deeper conversation. Support students as they think about connections and push for deep thought, particularly around the big idea.
- 7) Make the text available for shared, guided, and independent reading opportunities. Locate related texts for sharing with students

Content Area Read Aloud: Use the school library and science and social studies resources that are provided, choose a text that will align with your lesson's content objectives. Decide whether the text would best introduce the topic of study, or reinforce what students have already learned.

Writing Mentor Text Read Aloud: Choose a writing genre as a unit of study and use mentor texts to provide students with concrete examples of that genre. You may also choose mentor texts to showcase specific writing traits as part of your Writers Workshop mini-lessons. Any time you are using a mentor text in writing instruction, you are exposing students to high-quality examples of various genres and writing traits.

Read Aloud for Enjoyment: Choose a book that fulfills one or more of the following conditions: it is engaging, it exposes students to text that is slightly higher than their reading levels, it introduces students to a genre that is outside their typical genre choices.

Implementation Guidelines

Interactive Read Aloud:

- 1) **Before reading:** Briefly introduce preliminary vocabulary necessary to understand the text. Provide a purpose for reading aloud (i.e. comprehension strategies)
- 2) **During reading:** Read the text aloud fluently, stopping to ask the questions you wrote during planning. Allow students to discuss them with partners and then share out with the group.
- 3) **After reading:** Support deeper conversation. Support students as they mine for connections and push for deep thought, particularly around the big idea. Make the text available for shared, guided, and independent reading opportunities. Locate related texts for sharing with students.

Content Area Read Aloud:

- 1) **Before reading:** Briefly introduce the text to your class and explain how it aligns to the content objective. Provide a purpose for reading aloud (i.e. to compare and contrast, collect facts)
- 2) **During reading:** Stop periodically throughout the read aloud to pose questions that will elicit class and small group discussions.
- 3) **After reading:** Discuss new information gained from the text and how the book has deepened the students' learning of the material.

Mentor Text Read Aloud:

- 1) **Before reading:** Set a purpose. Inform or remind students that they will be focusing on a specific genre or trait within the text. They will identify the trait or characteristics of the given genre or element of writing (i.e. tone, dialogue, voice, description).
- 2) **During reading:** Stop to have students turn and talk about the specific feature being taught. After the turn and talk, have students share what they have noticed.
- 3) **After reading:** Discuss how the chosen text fits within the genre and what specific things the author did to use the trait. Explain that students will now have a chance to write using that particular feature.

Read Aloud for Enjoyment: Choose a time of the day in which students would benefit from 5-10 minutes of listening to fluent, expressive reading. Refrain from asking too many questions or taking time to explain each new vocabulary word. Use this time to let students simply enjoy the book you are reading to them and be exposed to new genres or higher-level texts.

Monitoring Student Progress

Students should begin to utilize the ideas they have discussed during **Interactive Read Alouds** and in guided reading with support from the teacher and their peers, and will progress to using these same strategies in their independent reading, discussion of books, and in their independent writing about books. During these read alouds, listen to use of strategies and discussions about books, and gauge who is actively engaged and who may need more support in accessing the text.

During **Content Area Read Alouds** and **Writing Mentor Text Read Alouds**, look for evidence of reading strategy use. Determine whether students understand new material by listening in on their discussions of the text. **Read Alouds for Enjoyment**, take note of students' engagement and motivation to listen to the text.

Additional Information

Fisher, D., Flood, D., Lapp, J. & Frey, M. (2004). Interactive Read-Alouds: Is There a Common Set of Implementation Practices? *The Reading Teacher*, vol. 58.

Fox, M. (2008). *Reading magic: Why reading aloud to our children will change their lives*. Harcourt.

Layne, S. L. (2009). *Igniting a passion for reading: Successful strategies for building lifetime readers*. Stenhouse Publishers.

Trelease, J. (2013). *The read-aloud handbook* (7th ed.). New York: Penguin Books.

Component Description: Shared Reading

Goal

The goal of shared reading changes with each developmental stage. At the emergent and beginning reading stages, shared reading may be used through a big book, chart, or shared poem, song or jingle to develop concepts about print (CAP), concept of word (COW), alphabet recognition, letter-sounds, phonological awareness, or sight words. At the later stages, students engage in shared reading to increase automatic sight vocabulary, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension.

Description

Shared reading can take several forms. A shared reading is one in which more than one student is reading the text at the same time. They are reading the song, poem, jingle, or leveled reader as a group. In the early stages of development, shared reading is used to develop critical early literacy skills, while in the transitional, intermediate, and advanced stages focuses on fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension.

Planning for Instruction

Instructional strategies will vary based on the purpose of the shared reading.

Implementation Guidelines

1. Select or prepare a shared reading. This can be a poem, song, big book or short piece of writing.
2. Practice reading the text together.
3. Prompt the students to respond to questions with the teacher or a partner which addresses the desired outcome. For example, if the teacher is working on concept of word and alphabet knowledge, she may ask the students to track the text with his/her fingers and prompts, “Who can find a word that begins with m? How many words are in this first line?” Students who are not working on early literacy skills including word recognition are more focused on performance and deeper understanding of the piece.

Sample Strategies to Support Fluency through Shared Reading

- **PALS Website** (<https://pals.virginia.edu/>) describes a number of instructional strategies to support fluency at the beginning and transitional levels of literacy development.
- **Choral Poetry:** Read poems aloud as a model for the class. Have one group of students read the first two verses, the next groups read the third and fourth, and so on while the entire class reads the refrain. As you are working on developing fluency, stop to discuss the meaning and purpose of the poem. Discuss vocabulary and continue to reread the poem in a variety of forms. Next, allow small groups of students to work on presenting (choral reading) a poem that they select. Have each group present their reading to the class. Poetry is non-threatening form for reluctant readers due to its brevity. It also provides an authentic reason for rereading text.

- **Readers' Theater:** Students utilize commercially produced or create their own scripts to be read as performance. Initially, everyone reads through the material silently or the teacher models a passage. Eventually, parts are selected and students reread and perform the piece. Readers' Theater is about fluency and expression – not about movement and props. It provides an authentic reason for rereading text. It also provides an opportunity for students to work through vocabulary and concepts within the piece through repeated exposure, discussion, and performance.
- **Look for the Signals:** Create a three-column chart. In the first column, with the collaboration of the class record important signals or punctuation marks that aid the reader in making meaning. In the second column list the corresponding purpose for each mark. Tell what the author intends the reader to do when she reaches the signal. In the third column, record examples from text. After reviewing the chart, have students select pieces of fiction or nonfiction to practice reading aloud – specifically paying attention to punctuation. Have students work in partners and fill out a checklist similar to the class chart.
- **Personal Readers or Fluency Notebooks:** Over time students collect poems, songs, plays, and short stories that have become familiar through rereading. These pieces are kept in a notebook and provide a “personal reader” for students. Emergent and beginning readers enjoy the notebook since memory supports their ability to read the selections well. More proficient readers enjoy the “readers” because they have become fluent with these favorites.

Monitoring Student Progress

Progress on early literacy skills, fluency, and comprehension are varied and include subtests on the Phonological Awareness Literacy Screening, Developmental Reading Assessment, and teacher observation listening to a child read.

Additional Information

Allington, R. L. (2011). *What really matters for struggling readers: Designing research-based programs*. Pearson.

Opitz, M. F. & Rasinski, T. (2008). *Good-bye Round Robin: 25 Effective Oral Reading Strategies*. Heinemann.

Raskinski, T. (2003). *The Fluent Reader*. Scholastic.

Raskinski, T. (2010). *The Fluent Reader: Oral and silent reading strategies for building fluency, word recognition, and comprehension*. Scholastic.

Component Description: Small Group Guided Reading Instruction

Goal

A balanced literacy approach includes whole group, small group, and independent reading and writing. Small group guided reading instruction is tailored to the student's proficiencies, needs, and instructional reading level. Small group instruction is designed to maximize student support and to increase word knowledge, vocabulary, fluency, comprehension and reading engagement.

Description

Small group guided reading instruction is designed to differentiate instruction for students at all levels of proficiency. Groups may be formed based on reading instructional level, interest, or for specific strategy instruction. Small group lessons are designed and implemented to meet the student's developmental stage and to increase reading skills and engagement. Lessons are generally short (20 minutes) and connect to student's independent reading and writing.

Planning for Instruction

Guided reading groups will be determined based on individual needs of the students as identified through assessment and teacher observation. Regular assessments used to determine instructional reading level and specific skills and strategies that require attention may include Phonological Awareness Literacy Screening (PALS), a qualitative reading inventory such as the Developmental Reading Assessment (DRA) or division SOL-aligned Interactive Achievement assessments. The *APS ELA Scope and Sequence* and *VDOE Curriculum Framework* each provide guidance on the selection of specific teaching points. Frequently the teaching point will extend across a mini-lesson, small group lesson, independent reading and sometimes writing.

Texts for guided reading will be selected based on both the identified needs of students and the focus for instruction outlined in the scope and sequence. There is a wide variety of print and electronic materials available in each school for guided reading instruction in the classroom materials and school book rooms. Content materials also provide an extensive source of science and social studies texts to be used for guided and independent reading.

Implementation Guidelines

Establish routines: Establish routines for small group guided reading instruction. Students will learn more and perform independently if they are clear with the expectations and routines of both the classroom and lessons.

Small Group Guided Reading: Planning for small group guided reading instruction is dependent on the student's stage of development. Emergent and beginning readers have different needs than transitional, intermediate, and advanced readers and writers. Teachers will plan lessons based on both an understanding of development and fundamental literacy skills outlined in the National Reading Panel (2000) and the strengths and challenges of our students.

Each lesson will focus on a specific strategy or skill needed by that particular group of students. The teacher selects and introduces a new text and supports students reading the

complete text, making teaching points before, during and after reading. Utilizing a single teaching point allows the students to clearly understand the learning target and focus their work on that skill.

- Before reading the teacher activates background knowledge and sets a purpose for reading.
- During guided reading all students should have their own copies of the selected text. The majority of the time will be spent with the students reading to themselves (silently or softly) while the teacher supports individual students.
- After reading the teacher (and or students) guides discussions about the text as students summarize, extend thinking, and revisit the strategy focus.

An overall structure for a small group instructional setting includes the following:

<i>Components</i>	<i>Sample Small Group Reading Lesson Structure</i>
Fluency (and/or development of concept of word):	Students are engaged in rereading of familiar text with the supervision of the teacher. At the primary grades this may include leveled books or poems, at the upper grades it may include poems, nonfiction articles, or excerpts of text.
Comprehension: A new text (s) is introduced with a specific teaching point.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Identify a clear “teaching point” ▪ Activate background knowledge ▪ Set a purpose for reading ▪ Provide reading support (choral, echo, partner, and/or independent reading, purpose) ▪ Summarize and extend thinking; Emphasize teaching point
Word Study	Students will engage in developmentally appropriate instruction on how sound, pattern and meaning work in written words. Beginning readers will learn sight words harvested from reading and word study, strategies for recognizing and decoding words as well as spelling and writing words. Teachers are encouraged to connect the study of reading, writing and word study (spelling and decoding).
Writing	Connections will be fostered between reading and writing. At the earlier stages of development, dictations, one sentence summaries, and succinct responses are encouraged. At the more advanced levels, writing will take the form of response, questioning, inferring, and synthesizing information from multiple texts.

Monitoring Student Progress

Student growth in reading should be monitored frequently using a variety of measures. In addition to district-wide reading assessments (PALS, DRA, IA), teacher observation, anecdotal notes of conferences and running records may be used to inform adjustments in instruction. All of these

various sources should be taken into account to form a clear student learning profile for each student.

Tools for monitoring progress in reading include, but are not limited to the following:

- Phonological Awareness Literacy Screening (PALS) and PALS Quick Checks
 - Phonological Awareness
 - Concept of Word
 - Alphabet Recognition
 - Letter-Sound Knowledge
 - Oral Reading Fluency
 - Independent and Instructional levels
 - Spelling Knowledge
 - Sight words
 - Comprehension
- Developmental Reading Assessment (DRA)
 - Engagement (student survey component)
 - Oral Reading Fluency
 - Comprehension
- Developmental Spelling Assessment (DSA)
- PowerSchool Assessment formally Interactive Achievement (IA) quarterly assessments
- Running Records
- Students' written, unedited writing samples
- Students' retellings and/or discussion of text
- Student performance assessment tasks
- Reading and Writing Checklists and Rubrics
- Student Reading Interest Inventories
- Student Reading Logs and Book Lists
- Anecdotal Teacher Notes

Additional Information for Reading Instruction

Boushey, G., & Moser, J. (2006). *The daily 5: Fostering literacy independence in the elementary grades*. Stenhouse Publishers.

Cunningham, P., & Allington, R. (2010). *Classrooms that work: They can all read and write* (5th ed.). Boston: Pearson.

Harvey, S., & Goudvis, A. (2007). *Strategies that work: Teaching comprehension for understanding and engagement* (2nd ed.). Portland, ME: Stenhouse Publishers.

Keene, E. O., & Zimmermann, S. (1997). *Mosaic of thought: The power of comprehension strategy instruction* (2nd ed.). Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

Miller, D. (2013). *Reading with meaning: Teaching comprehension in the primary grades* (2nd ed.). Portland, ME: Stenhouse Publishers.

Miller, D., & Moss, B. (2013). *Not this but that: No more independent reading without support*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

- Johnston, P.H. (2004). *Choice words: How our language affects children's learning*. Portland, ME: Stenhouse Publishers.
- Pinnell, G.S., & Fountas, I.C. (2010). *The continuum of literacy learning, grades PK-8: A guide to teaching* (2nd ed.). Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.
- Tyner, B. (2009). *Small-group reading instruction: A differentiated teaching model for beginning and struggling readers* (2nd ed.). Newark, DE: International Reading Association.
- Tyner, B. B., & Green, S. E. (2011). *Small-group reading Instruction: Differentiated teaching models for intermediate readers, grades 3–8*. Newark, DE: International Reading Association.

Component Description: Independent Reading and Confering

Goal

Students will be engaged in independent reading both in school and at home in diverse, self-selected and assigned texts which connect to curriculum and student interests. In order for students to become proficient readers they must engage in the practice of reading. Studies have clearly indicated that reading volume as well as choice and access to text influence reading proficiency.

Description

Independent reading is the ability to read fluently with comprehension for a purpose. It is the ultimate goal of reading instruction, for students to be proficient purposeful readers. Independent reading is an essential component of a balanced literacy program and is best connected to the curriculum as well as student interest.

Planning for Instruction

Independent reading is structured and supported within the ELA block with teacher providing support selecting texts and monitoring interest, comprehension, and fluency. Teachers confer with individual students when they are not engaged in small group lessons.

Establishing a Classroom Library

Building a classroom library with a wide variety of levels and genres is key to a successful reading and writing program. Students will need access to many engaging texts. It is recommended that elementary classroom libraries organize approximately 30% of the books by reading levels using a leveling system (i.e. Fountas & Pinnell, DRA, Lexiles) and the other 70% be arranged by topic, genre, or student selected category. Teachers and schools may build classroom libraries through school and division funds, PTA funds, book drives, textbook adoption. Additionally, book room books, public, and school library books may be selected and cycled into and out of the classroom on a monthly basis.

Scheduling Time

Independent reading is an essential component of a high quality language arts program and can be integrated into the day in a number of formats. Teachers are encouraged to establish routine times for students to engage in independent reading and to confer with students throughout each week.

A few sample options for scheduling consistent independent reading opportunities are below:

	Students Read Independently	Teacher Confers with Students
Option #1	Independent Work Time When students are not engaged in a small group guided reading lesson, they may read independently in self-selected and assigned texts.	Teacher confers with a few students in-between guided reading groups or devotes a guided reading block (20 minutes) on a designated day(s) to confer with students.
Option #2	Designated Independent Whole Class Reading Time	Teacher supervises and confers with several students reading independently

	During a designated block of time in which the teacher is available to confer with a few individual students.	each day (i.e. SSR, DEAR, We Enjoy Books, before and after school).
Option #4	Before and After School Students may begin his/her day in the classroom or other extended program.	Teacher may confer with students if they are available during before and after school program(s) or times scheduled.
Option #3	Content Time Students read independently with content area texts.	Teacher confers with individual and small groups of students who have been afforded time in content area instruction to read and learn about a specific subject area.

Independent Reading

While the teacher is meeting with small groups, students will engage in daily independent reading of self-selected text on their own independent or instructional level. At the primary level, individual book boxes, book bags or group browsing tubs may be used to store independent reading material. As students become older and more sophisticated readers, they organize their own daily reading materials. The majority of reading materials should be on the students' independent and instructional reading levels as determined by assessment and teacher observation. This means that the book boxes will include student selected books on their independent level (below the instructional DRA level), as well as text previously read during small group guided reading. Rereading texts from guided reading instruction is especially important in grades K-2. Students may also elect to include school and classroom library books of interest to them.

While self-selection is an important feature of independent reading, teachers should support students in selecting appropriate books and encouraging students to read across genres. In general, students should be reading an entire book from beginning to end before starting a new book, rather than choosing a new book every day. Teachers who explicitly teach students to browse select and respond to texts can support independent reading. Teachers must also allow students to abandon texts that do not engage students or are a poor match for the reader.

Conferring

During independent reading, the teacher will want to confer with students about his/her reading. Teachers are encouraged to confer with students individually, to keep anecdotal notes. S/he will want to learn about the reader's interests, strengths, and challenges and select teaching points that are individualized to the reader and connected to whole and small group instruction. This is also an opportune time to set reading goals with individual students.

Share

In a readers' workshop model, part of a balanced literacy model, will generally provide a brief share lasting just 2-5 minutes. The teacher can either gather the students together again or allow them to stay at their seats for the share. The purpose is for students to reflect on themselves as readers. The teacher may share ways that students incorporated a mini-lesson or focus strategy provided during whole group, small group or independent reading work.. The share allows the teacher to bring closure to the readers' workshop and ties thinking back to the points of instruction.

Monitoring Student Progress

Please refer to monitoring student progress in the small group instruction section.

Component Description: Word Study

Goal

The goal of word study instruction is to increase student knowledge of spelling patterns and the ability to apply them in reading and writing.

Description

Word study consists of small group instruction in word knowledge (spelling, word recognition and vocabulary - phonics, orthography, morphology) based on individual student needs within a developmental model. Children engage in active, developmentally appropriate exploration to increase their specific knowledge of words and spelling. The primary activity of word study is sorting pictures and/or words to identify spelling patterns or features. The teacher directly connects spelling patterns learned to words encountered in guided and independent reading. Word study instruction will take place 3-5 days per week.

Planning for Instruction

Word study groups will be determined based on the instructional spelling levels of the students as identified by qualitative assessment data. Teachers will administer a developmental spelling assessment (Developmental Spelling Assessment or PALS) to all students in order to determine developmental stage of spelling. These assessments will be reviewed to identify spelling features that students know, *use but confuse*, and are absent. Results from this assessment will be used to create no more than 3-4 small groups for word study instruction. Teachers will design a weekly schedule that allows for each group to meet with the teacher regularly, daily for grades K-2 and 3-5 days per week for grades 3-5. Teachers are encouraged to consult the adopted materials designed to support a high quality implementation of word study.

Implementation Guidelines

Teachers are expected to design a consistent weekly routine that includes five essential word study instructional techniques during each cycle: Introduce the Sort, Daily Student Sorting, Word Hunt, Writing Sort and Word Study Notebooks. Students will also participate in additional independent word study activities while the teacher meets with other groups. Each of these instructional techniques is described briefly here, and in more detail in supplemental word study resource materials.

Introduce the Sort: First, read the words aloud and discuss the vocabulary. Next, display and discuss the headers for the sort. Model the sort with several of the words for students. Then, have students help you sort the remaining words. Engage students in a problem-solving discussion surrounding categorization and vocabulary. Finally, check the sort with students to locate and correct errors. Ask students to explain what is similar about the words in each column (sound, pattern, or both).

Daily Student Sorting: Students are given the opportunity to practice sorting every day. Students are encouraged to sort, check and reflect with each sort. Daily student sorting will take place at school and/or at home as part of the consistent weekly routine.

Word Hunt: Guide the students to hunt for words that follow the patterns being studied either in a shared or familiar text. Words can be recorded on a group chart or whiteboard, or in the students' individual notebooks under headings. After hunting, guide the students to

read down each column (check) and then discuss why the words fit into the categories they have been studying (reflect). An oddball category should be included as well.

Writing Sort: Students divide a page in their notebooks into the categories they have been studying. The teacher calls out words to be spelled that fit the patterns, starting with a few words from the sort but then moving on to other words that follow the patterns under study. Discuss each word as needed with the group for correct placement and spelling. Read down each column (check) and discuss the patterns (reflect).

Word Study Notebook: Each student will maintain a word study notebook. Students will record their sorts and all related work in the word study notebook. Spiral or composition notebooks both work well. Attach a plastic bag or envelope to the inside cover of the notebook to hold the weekly sort. The word study notebook may travel between school and home. It is helpful to both students and parents to post the weekly word study routine inside the word study notebook.

In addition to the instructional techniques used in weekly routines during teacher-led lessons, students will also engage in independent word study activities while the teacher meets with other small groups. Students may sort independently, write the words in the sort, sort with a friend, explain the sort to a friend, or compose a written reflection explaining the sort.

Monitoring Student Progress

Student growth in word knowledge should be monitored frequently using a variety of measures. Developmental spelling assessments will be administered on a regular schedule 3-4 times per year as identified in the countywide testing calendar. In addition to these broad stage assessments, teachers also use more frequent spell-checks to assess student understanding of specific patterns before moving on to a new spelling feature. Students should not advance to the next feature until they have mastered the current feature so alternate sorts should be used to support growth. Student writing samples are also an excellent way to assess student understanding of spelling patterns and the ability to apply them to new words.

Additional Information

Bear, D.R., Invernizzi, M., Templeton, S., & Johnston, F. (2012). *Words Their Way: Word Study for Phonics, Vocabulary, and Spelling Instruction (6th ed.)*. Boston: Pearson.

Ganske, K. (2008). *Mindful of words: Spelling and vocabulary explorations 4-8*. New York: Guilford Press.

Ganske, K. (2010). *Word journeys: Assessment-guided phonics, spelling, and vocabulary instruction (2nd ed.)*. New York: Guilford Press.

Ganske, K. (2006). *Word sorts and more: Sound, pattern, and meaning explorations K-3*. New York: Guilford Press.

Helman, L., Bear, D.R., Templeton, S.R., Invernizzi, M., Johnston, F.R. (2011). *Words their way with English learners: Word study for phonics, vocabulary, and spelling (2nd ed.)*. Boston: Pearson.

Johnston, F.R., Invernizzi, M., Helman, L., Bear, D.R., & Templeton, S.R. (2015). *Words their way for preK-K*. Boston: Pearson.

Component Description: Vocabulary

Goal

The goal of vocabulary instruction is to increase student knowledge of specific and generative knowledge of words. Specific vocabulary instruction increases a student's conceptual understanding and comprehension of a topic or text, while generative knowledge (word parts - prefixes, suffixes, roots) increases a student's capacity to make meaningful connections among words and to infer meaning of new words. Our goal is for students to develop both specific and generative knowledge and to develop a strong sense of word consciousness, overall interest in and curiosity about words.

Description

In addition to word study based on spelling patterns, students will participate in whole group instruction on two types of vocabulary. **Robust Vocabulary** will be focused on increasing individual word knowledge by learning new high-utility words through text. **Generative or Word Part** instruction will be focused on teaching students words parts (prefixes, suffixes and roots) and common words that include them. Understanding word parts is described as generative knowledge, due to the fact that the meaning unit or word part, unlocks the meaning of many additional words as in the following example. If you know that the word part *script* means *to record* you will have a key insight into the meaning and spelling of the following words: *script, scripted, scripture, scriptures, manuscript, manuscripts, prescription, description, descriptive, nondescript* and *inscription* among others. The focus of this vocabulary instruction is for students to deepen understanding of word meanings as well as spelling.

Planning for Instruction

The teacher selects **Robust Vocabulary** for direct instruction based on current read alouds and content being studied. Teachers select vocabulary coined by Beck, McKeown, and Kucan (2013) as Tier 2 words or words that are high-frequency, high value, and occur across a variety of content domains; words that are found frequently in adult conversation and literature. Examples of Tier 2 words vary by age appropriateness; however, an upper grade example may include the following terms: fortunate, industrious, comparison, measure, specific, flexible, and slumber. When selecting materials to read aloud, teachers will select 5-10 robust vocabulary words for students to learn each week. Selections must be embedded in content area study and reading materials. Multiple exposures are critical. The **Word Parts** instruction will be based on a structured, grade-level sequence described in the *APS Growing Words* curriculum.

Implementation Guidelines

Robust Vocabulary: When teaching specific vocabulary, teachers will read the word in context and provide a student-friendly definition. Teachers support student understanding by encouraging discussion about the word in the original context and also apply the word in new contexts. Words are posted in the classroom to support deeper understanding of word meaning. Posting the words allows students to revisit words when they come up again in conversation or other texts.

Word Parts: The core instruction will consist of introducing and discussing the word part, definition and example words each week. Teachers create a chart or poster to display the

word part being studied. Students will continue to brainstorm, hunt for, and record additional words that have the word part.

Sample Strategies to Support Vocabulary Development

- **One-sentence summaries:** Teachers place 3-5 related vocabulary terms on the board and ask students to create a sentence with as many terms as he/she can. Students share the sentences and listen to a variety of examples with correct use of the terms.
- **Capsule Vocabulary:** Students form partners and each spends 1-3 minutes discussing the meaning of a few vocabulary terms prior to group discussion.
- **List-Sort-Label:** Students and teachers generate a list of related terms (and or phrases). Students work in partners or small groups to create categories. The terms are sorted and labeled. This discussion allows students to make connection among terms and to understand the nuances among words.
- **Concept Mapping or Frayer Model:** Students create concept maps, which define a term, provide a visual, a sentence, and examples of what the term is and what it is not.
- **Essential Word Parts:** Students generate an essential prefix (or suffix and roots) reference chart in his/her vocabulary notebooks. Students are encouraged to use the chart to break apart new words and discern their meanings by examining the morphemes (units of meaning).

Prefix	Meaning	Examples
un	not, opposite of	unfair, unkind, unlikely
in, im, ir, il	not	incomprehensible, illogical
mis	wrongly	misunderstood
dis	not, opposite of	disenchanted, disarm
re	again	rewrite, revise, reword
non	not	nonrenewable

Monitoring Student Progress

Teachers will assess students’ vocabulary development through both structured assessments such as weekly quizzes, and observations from reading conferences, class discussions and writing conferences. Teachers will look for examples of students applying new vocabulary and word parts in speech and writing.

Additional Information

Beck, I. L., McKeown, M. G., & Kucan, L. (2013). *Bringing words to life: Robust vocabulary instruction*. Guilford Press.

Cobb, C., & Blachowicz, C. (2014). *No more “Look up the list” vocabulary instruction*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

Component Description: Writers' Workshop

Goal

The goal of the Writers Workshop is for students to develop their writing and to transfer what they have learned through exposure to high quality literature and explicit writing lessons to their own writing. Students will be engaged in writing for a variety of purposes and be engaged in communicating their ideas to others through writing.

Description

The writers' workshop includes a mini-lesson, writing and conferring time and a brief share time. The workshop will begin with a brief, whole-group mini-lesson on a focused topic as outlined in the APS scope and sequence and adopted curriculum materials. After the mini-lesson, students will disperse to their writing spots in the classroom and will begin writing. During the independent writing time teachers will consult with students in a one-on-one setting or in a small group in order to give specific immediate feedback that students can use in their writing. Finally, at the end of the lesson teachers will provide the opportunity for students to share some of their writing.

Planning for Instruction

The APS Scope and Sequence and APS adopted curriculum materials for writing will be used to select specific teaching points. Teachers are encouraged to use anecdotal notes in order to track the teaching points and conversations they have with individual students during these conference times. These notes as well as more formal assessments (APS writing rubrics, DSA assessments) are used to pinpoint the specific skills that need further development. These conversations will drive the instruction for mini-lessons as well as subsequent conferences. There is a wide variety of mentor texts that teachers can pull from in order to explicitly expose students to high quality literature that addresses specific teaching points and genres. Teachers are encouraged to plan deliberately and consult the resources provided to the division.

Implementation Guidelines

Mini-lesson: The mini-lesson is designed to set the stage for independent and small group writing instruction. The mini-lesson should take only 7-10 minutes. The focus of the mini-lesson should be based on the APS ELA Scope and Sequence and adopted curriculum materials for writing. The mini-lesson explicitly exposes students to high quality writing, focuses on a writing strategy (i.e. use of voice, character, dialogue, description, persuasion) and also gives students the chance to convey their own ideas in writing.

Independent Writing: While the teacher is conferring with individual students or small groups of students who have similar needs, the rest of the students will engage in independent writing. Students have the opportunity to quietly share ideas with a writing partner as they work on their own writing. Teachers often assign students to a writing partner in order for students to be able to confer as they work to develop their own pieces of writing.

Conferring: Teachers will meet with a range of 4-5 students each day depending on class size and time constraints. The teacher will have the student read a portion of their writing and during that time the teacher will make a decision about one or two teaching points to discuss with the child. The teacher can use mentor texts to show examples of how

professional authors have used certain skills and can give specific oral feedback that the student can immediately apply to their own writing. The purpose of the conversation is to help the student develop as a writer. The teaching points are ones that will extend beyond that one specific piece of writing and will help the individual student develop as a writer.

Share: The writers' workshop closes with a brief share lasting just 2-5 minutes. The teacher can either gather the students together again or allow them to stay at their seats for the share. The purpose of the share is two-fold: first for students to gain ideas from their peers and second for students to have the opportunity to share their ideas and get feedback from their classmates and teacher. The teacher may share ways that students incorporated the focus strategy into their writing. The share allows the teacher to bring closure to the writers' workshop and tie back to the mini-lesson. Teachers will celebrate the writing process through a more formal share at the end of each unit.

Monitoring Student Progress

Student growth in writing should be monitored frequently using a variety of measures. District-wide writing samples scored with writing rubrics, teacher observation, anecdotal notes of conferences, writer's checklists can all be used to inform instruction and monitor student progress. All of these sources should be taken into account to form a clear picture of a student's proficiencies in order to create an individualized plan for instruction.

Additional Information

Anderson, J. (2005). *Mechanically inclined: Building grammar, usage and style into writer's workshop*. Portland, ME: Stenhouse Publishers.

Culham, R. (2014). *The writing thief: Using mentor texts to teach the craft of writing*. Newark, DE: International Reading Association.

Fletcher, R.J., & Portalupi, J. (2007). *Craft lessons: Teaching writing K-8* (2nd ed.). Portland, ME: Stenhouse Publishers.

Fletcher, R.J., & Portalupi, J. (2001). *Nonfiction craft lessons: Teaching information writing K-8*. Portland, ME: Stenhouse Publishers.

Fletcher, R.J. (2001). *Writing Workshop: The Essential Guide*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

Ray, K.W. (2006). *Study driven: A framework for planning units of study in the writing workshop*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

Assessment

Ongoing assessment is designed and implemented to monitor progress, inform instruction and identify student needs for intervention programs. The word assessment comes from the Latin root *assidere* meaning “to sit beside.” As we sit beside our students we are gathering information, which will support the design and implementation of instruction.

ELA Assessment Schedule

Please consult the district-wide required assessments for elementary school each year. The goal of assessment is to monitor student progress and to ensure that typical benchmarks are met or exceeded. Teachers are encouraged to use multiple measures to ensure that students are actively engaged in their own growth and learning and to ensure that students master essential literacy skills in order to become proficient readers, writers, and speakers.

Reading Assessments

Reading Comprehension: A Definition

Reading Comprehension, according to the RAND Reading Study Group (RRSG) (1999), is the “*process of simultaneously extracting and constructing meaning through interaction and involvement with written language....the words extracting and constructing emphasize both the importance and the insufficiency of the text as a determinant of reading comprehension.*”

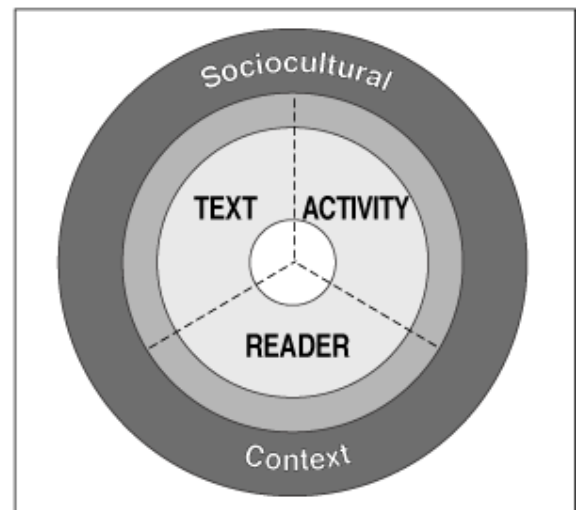
Comprehension entails three elements:

- *The reader who is doing the comprehending*
- *The text that is to be comprehended*
- *The activity in which comprehension is a part.*”

The RAND report goes on to aptly describe the many factors, which affect reading comprehension and are depicted in the image to the right.

- **Readers** are affected by their own abilities (i.e. word recognition, fluency, inference, vocabulary), knowledge, background experiences, language, culture and motivations;
- **Text** is influenced by syntax, vocabulary, sentence length, language, genre, and the overall complexity and/or familiarity of the concepts addressed;
- **Activity** influences comprehension as it provides the purpose or purposes for reading. It addresses factors of motivation, interest, prior knowledge, and consequence.

All of these elements occur in a socio-cultural context, which is affected by socio-economics, social group membership, and classroom organization.



Copied from Rand Report: Reading for Understanding
Figure 2.1—A Heuristic for Thinking About Reading Comprehension

Assessing Reading Comprehension

In order to measure progress in reading, teachers and administrators must agree on the type of assessment. The most common measurement of reading is known as an Informal Reading Inventory (IRI). Students are typically assessed on word recognition in isolation, reading accuracy in context and reading comprehension. A student's ability to read words in isolation is highly predictive of their overall reading proficiency (Morris, 2008; Rayner, Foorman, Perfetti, Pesetsky, & Seidenber, 2001) and provides a quick starting point for an assessment of oral reading accuracy and comprehension. Once a student has read a passage based on a grade level equivalent, she or he is assessed on both accuracy and comprehension. From these informal tasks, the teacher may determine a child's *independent*, *instructional*, and *frustration* levels. Common criteria are listed below for determining a student's reading comprehension level on a grade level passage.

Levels	Accuracy	Comprehension
Independent	95-100% accuracy in K-3 98-100% accuracy in grades 4-8	75-90% correct responses on comprehension task
Instructional	90-94% accuracy in grades K-3 95-97% accuracy in grades 4-8	60-75% correct responses on comprehension tasks
Frustration	Below 90% accuracy	Below 60%

Templeton, S. & Gehsmann, K. (2011). *Teaching Reading and Writing: The Developmental Approach*. Pearson Publishing.

Morris, D. (2008). *Diagnosis and correction of reading problems*. New York: Guilford.

Rayner, K., Foorman, B., Perfetti, C., Pesetsky, D., & Seidenber, M. (2001). How psychological science informs the teaching of reading. *Psychological Science in the Public Interest*, 2, 3-74.

Although Informal Reading Inventories are common practice for reading assessment it is critical to note that the reader, text, activity, and sociocultural context all affect the outcome; therefore each assessment is a snapshot at that time. A student may be independent in a text in which s/he is highly motivated and knowledgeable and at an instructional level for a text, which is less aligned with the reader's motivation and experience. Assessments are informal guides. Teachers must consider which factor is influencing comprehension and intentionally address the area of challenge.

Assessing Fluency

Fluency is the ability to read text accurately, automatically and with appropriate expression. It bridges word recognition and decoding with comprehension. It may be assessed in a variety of ways. Running Records, for example are used to determine accuracy and can be timed to determine words per minutes (speed). There are also qualitative rubrics to assess a student's fluency.

NAEP Fluency Rubric: Source: U.S. Department of Education, 2002

Fluent	Level 4	Reads primarily in larger, meaningful phrase groups. Although some regressions, repetitions, and deviations from text may be present, these do not appear to detract from the overall structure of the story. Preservation of the author's syntax is consistent. Some or most of the story is read with expressive interpretation.
	Level 3	Reads primarily in three- or four-word phrase groups. Some small groupings may be present. However, the majority of phrasing seems appropriate and preserves the syntax of the author. Little or no expressive interpretation is present.
Non-fluent	Level 2	Reads primary in two-word phrases with some three- or four-word groupings. Some word-by-word reading may be present. Word groupings may seem awkward and unrelated to larger context of sentence or passage.
	Level 1	Reads primarily word-by-word. Occasional two-word or three-word phrases may occur – but these are infrequent and/or they do not preserve meaningful syntax.

Assessing Word Knowledge

A student's understanding of how words work in reading and writing is critical to his/her ability to read effectively. Word knowledge affects word recognition, vocabulary, fluency and comprehension. Qualitative spelling inventories such as the Developmental Spelling Assessment (DSA) or the Words Their Way Assessments allow teachers to 1) identify a student's specific stage of development and 2) catalog which spelling (and reading) features are known, used but confused or are absent. This information is useful when designing word study lesson and small group reading lessons. Students' progress can be monitored with qualitative spelling inventories and a review of unedited writing 2-4 times each year.

Assessing Early Literacy Skills

The National Early Literacy Panel (NELP) has clearly documented the early literacy skills that are essential to reading proficiency. These include: phonological awareness, concepts about print (CAP), concept of word (COW), alphabet recognition, letter-sounds, phonics, blending, segmenting, and word recognition. Each of these skills, with the exception of concepts about print is assessed using the Phonological Awareness Literacy Screening (PALS) for kindergarten to grade 3. Students with strong early literacy skills become early readers and are exposed to text, vocabulary, and new concepts through reading.

Progress Monitoring

As previously described, students' progress can be measured by components or by an overall reading level (i.e. independent and instructional reading levels). It should be noted that there are a variety of leveling systems including the *Developmental Reading Assessment (DRA)*, *Reading Recovery*, *Fountas and Pinnell*, and *Lexiles*; however, all systems are correlated with grade level equivalents. Please refer to the *APS Benchmark Chart* for guidance as well as the *APS Elementary Reading Level Correlations Chart* on the next two pages.

English Language Arts (ELA) Assessment Benchmarks

A benchmark is a standard point of reference against which things may be compared or assessed. Synonyms include: gauge, guide, guideline, touchstone, yardstick, barometer, indicator, measure, model, exemplar, and criterion. Please note that the benchmarks listed below describe the typical grade level growth. Benchmarks in this case must be considered minimum gauges. APS strives to meet and exceed these benchmarks with our students.

	Beginning of Year	End of Q1	End of Q2	End of Q3	End of Year
Kindergarten		A	DRA 1/2 A/B	DRA 2/3 B/C	DRA 4 C
					Early to Middle Letter Name (12/25)
1st Grade	DRA 4 C	DRA 6/8 D/E	DRA 12 G	DRA 14/16 H/I	DRA 16/18 I/J
					Early Within Word Pattern
2nd Grade	DRA 16/18 I/J	DRA 18/20 J/K	DRA 24 L	DRA 24/28 L/M	DRA 28/30 M/N
					Middle to Late Within Word Pattern (WWP) 12/25 to 20/25
3rd Grade	DRA 28/30 M/N	DRA 30 N	DRA 34 O	DRA 34/38 O/P	DRA 38/40 P/Q
					Early Syllables & Affixes (5/25)
4th Grade	DRA 38/40 P/Q	DRA 40 Q	DRA 40 R	DRA 40 S	DRA 40/50 S/T
					Middle to Late Syllables & Affixes (12/25-20/25)
5th Grade	DRA 40/50 S/T	DRA 50 T/U	DRA 50 U	DRA 50 V	DRA 50/60 W
					Late Syllables and Affixes (20/25)

This chart provides guidance on typical grade level performance using several measures:

- Grade level equivalents
- Developmental Reading Assessment (DRA)
- Developmental Spelling Assessment (DSA)
- Fountas and Pinnell Book Leveling System A to Z

Fountas, I. & Pinnell, G. (2010). *The continuum of literacy learning*, Grades Prek-8. Heinemann.

Arlington Public Schools
Department of Instruction: English Language Arts
 Elementary Reading Level Correlations

Reading Level Correlation Chart						
Grade w/Basal Reading Levels	ESOL/HILT WIDA Levels	PALS	Reading Recovery	DRA2	Fountas & Pinnell	Lexile (Correlation Ranges from Booksource)
Kindergarten: R PP1 pp2	Level 1 Entering	Readiness	A-B-1-2	A - 2	A - B	
		PP A	3 - 4	3	C	
		PP B	5 - 6	4	C	
Grade 1: PP3 Primer 1 ¹ 1 ²	Level 2 Beginning	PP C	7 - 8	6 - 8	D - E	190L - 530L
		Primer	9 - 10	10	F	
		1 st Grade	11 - 12 13-14-15-16-17	12 14 - 16	G H - I	
Grade 2: 2 ¹ 2 ²	Level 3 Developing	2 nd Grade	18-19-20	18 - 20	J - K	420L - 650L
				24 - 28	L - M	
Grade 3: 3 ¹ 3 ²	Level 4 Expanding	3 rd Grade		30 - 34	N - O	520L - 820L
				38	P	
Grade 4: 4 ¹ 4 ²	Level 5 Bridging	4 th Grade		40	Q - R - S	740L - 940L
Grade 5: 5 ¹ 5 ²		5 th Grade		50	T - U - V	830L - 1010L

Intervention

Classroom Practice: All students are entitled to explicit instruction based on his or her developmental needs. Teachers are responsible for designing and implementing high quality lessons, which promote increased proficiency for all students. Students will be grouped and regrouped according to formative assessments, which reflect student needs.

Accelerating Learning: Intervention: Some students will require additional doses of instruction in order to accelerate learning to meet or exceed grade level expectations. These students will be identified by multiple assessment measures and will be provided with extended learning opportunities.

As intervention plans are created and implemented, please consider the following:

- **Use of Personnel:** Who will serve the students in need of additional instruction and expertise? Will the most expert instructors serve the students with the greatest needs? It is recommended that the students with the greatest needs are afforded a double dose of instruction from a specialist. This may be a reading specialist, special education teacher, or ESOL/HILT resource teacher. Paraprofessionals and community volunteers can also be engaged in providing support for students; however the personnel must be used wisely. Decisions must be based on the needs of the students.
- **Frequency/ Duration:** It has been demonstrated that intervention approaches must be at least twice a week for 30-40 minutes to increase student achievement. The frequency and duration of lessons is dependent on the student's needs and the approach being utilized. Students who are performing significantly below grade level will need greater frequency, duration, and focus.
- **Focus:** It is critical that students are engaged in instruction, which explicitly addresses his/her areas of challenge and how those skills contribute to overall reading and writing proficiency. If for example, the student struggles with decoding, word knowledge, and fluency, a comprehension approach is unlikely to support growth. Conversely, if a student is a strong decoder (reads fluently and recognizes words easily), an approach to increase decoding such as *Spell Read*, *Phonographix*, *Orton Gillingham*, or *word study* is unlikely to support growth. It should, however, be noted that reading is a complex process and students require the integration of multiple proficiencies. Formative assessment data is critical to establishing a reader's profile and plan for acceleration of learning.

Progress monitoring: Teachers that engage students in acceleration/intervention must monitor progress frequently to ensure the rate of improvement will meet student needs and also so that instructional adjustments can be made on timely data.

Home Connections

Teachers will provide opportunities and materials for students to read at home. Students must be able to take books home from school and read and write about these books. Teachers are encouraged to send home reading logs that account for student choice in book selection, provide students an opportunity to reflect on their reading, and to give students feedback about what they are reading. By providing students with books to take home teachers will help bridge the home school connection and involve parents in the important partnership between home and school.

Suggested Reading Time at Home

Kindergarten	15 minutes	read to self or parent reads to child
1 st -2 nd Grade	20 minutes	read to self or parent reads to child
3 rd Grade	20 minutes	read to self
4 th -5 th Grade	30 minutes	read to self

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