

FRIDAY FREEBIE

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# BALANCED

WEAVING THEORY INTO PRACTICE FOR SUCCESSFUL

# LITERACY

INSTRUCTION IN READING, WRITING, AND TALK

# ESSENTIALS



Literacy Essentials

*The Literacy Essentials as Presented in This Book*

1. For your literacy journey in the classroom, adopt the adventurous orientation of a navigator, critically aware of personal strengths, formative influences, and dimensions that need to be considered.
2. A classroom community founded on clear routines, knowledge of students, respect, and conscious use of community-building activities makes possible the effective teaching of literacy curriculum.
3. A workshop structure with warm-ups, mini-lessons, independent study, centre activities, and conferences combines theory and practice and enables students and teachers to develop independently and collaboratively as navigators of literacy.
4. Given the fact that talk is the foundation of literacy learning, promote accountable talk through explicit teaching and modelling, emphasizing that students interact with one another with respect, attentive listening, and an openness to new ideas.
5. Reading aloud every day to every child a “just right” text that you enjoy and use to prompt critical thinking provides an excellent way to model literate behaviors; students can then follow your modelling to further develop as literate beings.
6. The teaching of reading begins with an understanding that students need to read not only the words before them but the world around them. It demands use of a full continuum of support, beginning with modelling, encompassing guided work in small groups, and leading to opportunities for students to show reader independence. It also recognizes that making meaning of a text can be a collaborative effort.
7. To write is to put one’s mark on the world in a way that invites the reader to come closer. To help students make connections between reading and writing and to teach and assess writing, use mentor texts and real-life experiences in ways that allow students to be travellers of the world of text.
8. Children need poetry! Use poetry, with all its oral appeal and liberating potential, to engage students in playing with and exploring language, both aloud and written.
9. As a dynamic form of learning, drama belongs squarely in the classroom. When you infuse role-taking and drama strategies into your teaching, student engagement will deepen, and you can better bring stories and information to life. Diverse students can use drama as scaffolding to develop further as readers and writers.
10. Storytelling — traditional and digital — allows a teller and an audience to co-create a story using the spoken word and the picture-making ability of the imagination; it thereby provides a key way for students to consolidate their understanding of story and to convey stories that matter to them.

## Navigating the Dimensions Involved in Teaching Language and Literacy

Check and provide examples to help deepen your awareness of what is happening in your language and literacy block.

**The Instructional Dimension:** *Constructing learning experiences using what are traditionally referred to as the six language arts, texts of many types, multiple levels of support, and diverse teaching/learning strategies*

Characteristics

Classroom Examples

*Six Language Arts:*

- Listening:
- Speaking:
- Reading:
- Writing:
- Viewing:
- Representing:

*Texts of Many Types and Formats*

- Oral texts:
- Multimedia texts:
- Technology-mediated texts:
- Multiple levels of texts:
- Student choice of texts:
- Literacy texts:
- Content/Information texts:
- Other:

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*Teaching/Learning Strategies*

- Continuum of support, with gradual release of responsibility:
  - Range of instructional strategies (e.g., student-centred, cooperative):
  - Student groupings (independent, small/ large group):
  - Organizational structures (e.g., anchor charts, workshops, literacy centres):
  - Diverse assessment tools (e.g., checklist, conference, rubric, negotiated success criteria, portfolio):
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**The Individual Dimension:** *Shaping your teaching by taking into account how individuals learn and navigate texts of many types*

Characteristics

Classroom Examples

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*Multiple Intelligences*

- Linguistic (word smart):
  - Logical-mathematical (number/ reasoning smart):
  - Spatial (picture smart):
  - Bodily-Kinesthetic (body smart):
  - Musical (music smart):
  - Interpersonal (people smart)
  - Intrapersonal (self smart):
  - Naturalist (nature smart):
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*Ways of Knowing*

- Listening:
  - Observing:
  - Doing, constructing, investigating:
  - Reflecting on experience:
  - Thinking abstractly:
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*Ways of Being*

- Culture:
- Family characteristics:

**The Real-World Dimension:** *Building bridges between the classroom and the realities of everyday life in the 21st century*

Characteristics

Classroom Examples

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*Critical Literacy*

- Looking at the familiar in fresh, critical ways:
  - Closely considering multiple viewpoints/perspectives:
  - Travelling purposefully in the world of text:
  - Charting new courses:
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