




The K-2 Elements of Aligned ELA Instruction

Students (Ss) need repeated exposure to a large amount of text – across a wide variety of genre and topics – to acquire a deep inventory of words that are instantly recognized or efficiently decoded. This exposure to text and reading also deepens the reader’s knowledge and vocabulary, in turn supporting their fluency, comprehension, and ability to read even more.

	Foundational Skills (K-1) Print Concepts, (K-1) Phonological Awareness, Phonics & Word Recognition (K-2)	Fluency Accuracy (K-2) Automaticity (K-2) Expression (Late 1-2)	Language Grammar, Syntax, Morphology, Spelling	Read Aloud Fiction and nonfiction 2-3 levels above grade level	Conversation Collaborative speaking and listening that support meaning making	Writing (K-1) Mechanics, Response to Text, Culminating Task
 60 MINUTES DAILY Building Decoding Skills and Word Recognition Instruction and practice reading targeted at building decoding skills and word recognition, using decodable texts.	Always: Use a K-2 curriculum that follows an explicit scope and sequence of phonics and word recognition and includes print concepts, phonological awareness, and weekly assessment to monitor progress toward mastery of discrete skills, inform differentiated groupings for practice and support, and place into motion protocols for identification of Ss who may need further remediation Daily: Provide explicit instruction and practice with foundational skills; both within a text and decoupled from the text	Daily: Provide reading practice with texts and word lists (decodable and/or high frequency) to support accuracy and automaticity of decoding and word recognition Weekly: Partner reading (aloud) Weekly: Have Ss read aloud the same text multiple times (repeated oral reading) Weekly: Monitor and track automaticity and accuracy of Ss decoding (1,2)	Always: Follow and explicit scope and sequence of punctuation and grammar instruction Often: Draw Ss attention to sentence structure, word roots, prefixes, suffixes, and spelling patterns, and irregular word in the decodable texts they read	Weekly: Model print concepts during reading (K,1) Weekly: Model what automatic, accurate, expressive reading of what decodable texts sounds like	Often: Engage in text-based discussion to ensure Ss are accountable for comprehending what they are reading	Daily: Provide opportunities for handwriting and spelling of taught sounds and words Often: Engage Ss in drawing and dictation, progressing to writing of words, phrases, or sentences comprised of taught sounds using correct or reasonable attempts at spelling Often: Engage in shared writing that models the expressive writing process (various genres)
KNOWLEDGE and VOCABULARY: Use texts that are as rich with content and vocabulary as decoding skills will allow, encouraging students to use known words and word parts to understand new words						
 45-60 MINUTES DAILY Working with Texts of Grade-level Complexity or Beyond Read-aloud and shared reading paired with discussion to build students knowledge, vocabulary, and understanding of text meaning, using texts of grade-level complexity or beyond (read aloud)		Daily: Include at least one form of Ss reading aloud together: choral reading; repeated reading; reader’s theater (1,2); Ss should be reading together versus waiting for their turn	Often: Analyze and discuss of sentence structure (juicy sentences) to build meaning during read-aloud and shared reading Often: Discuss word origins and spelling patterns in the context of texts read or shared	Often: Model fluent reading, particularly for new genres and more complex text Often: Provide opportunities for speaking and listening focused on making meaning from the text	Daily: Include at least one form of text-based discussion aimed at pushing students to think and make, and discover meaning from the text: rereading; text dependent questions; evidence based questions, deconstruction of juicy sentences	Often: Have Ss respond to text, in writing progressing from drawing and dictating to words to phrases to complete sentences Often: Engage in shared writing related to the text (various genres)
KNOWLEDGE and VOCABULARY: Read sets of texts (fiction and nonfiction), intentionally selected to build knowledge and vocabulary related to a topic						
 AS MUCH TIME AS POSSIBLE Volume of Engaged Reading Beyond Instruction Additional reading (guided, independent, or shared) within the ELA block and across all content areas to support all aspects of reading, including engagement and motivation, using texts at a variety of levels.	Daily: Additional reading to practice taught sounds and words, or allow students to challenge themselves reading beyond what has been taught	Weekly: Provide opportunities for partner reading (aloud) Weekly (content areas): Include at least one form of Ss reading aloud together: choral reading; repeated reading; reader’s theater; Ss should be reading together versus waiting for their turn Note: In K-1 ensure fluency focus is automatic and accurate decoding	As opportunity arises through the texts: Draw Ss attention to sentence structure, word origin, and spelling patterns	Often: Model what fluent reading sounds like, particularly for new topics, genres and more complex text	Often: Engage in text-based discussion to ensure Ss are accountable for comprehending what they are reading	Often: Have Ss respond to text in writing to ensure they are accountable for comprehending what they are reading
KNOWLEDGE and VOCABULARY: Allow Ss to read sets of texts compiled to build knowledge and vocabulary based on topics of student interest or selected to scaffold knowledge required for grade-						

Using the “Elements of Aligned ELA Instruction” Tables

The questions of what an ELA/Literacy block should look like and how much time should be spent on various aspects of instruction are adaptive challenges – unique to each situation. This document highlights essential (and often intertwined) elements of aligned instruction to help you to identify gaps, strengthen instruction, and improve alignment as you consider structure and time for your classroom(s) and curricula.

To dive deeper on the elements of aligned ELA instruction, see:

- [‘Both and’ Literacy Instruction K-5: A proposed Paradigm Shift for the Common Core State Standards ELA Classroom](#) by Meredith and David Liben
- [Advancing Our Students’ Language and Literacy: The Challenge of Complex Texts](#) by Marilyn Adams
- [Why a Structured Phonics Program is Effective](#) by David Liben (Draft)
- [Letting the Text Take Center Stage](#) by Timothy Shanahan