

Balanced Literacy Framework - 8 Components

The Balanced Literacy Framework consists of eight components that help learners move toward independence.

Read Aloud The teacher reads and thinks aloud demonstrating the thinking process of a fluent reader. Teachers select teaching points from these readings based upon ongoing observation and assessment to target students' current needs. Read aloud lessons can teach vocabulary, concepts of print, or comprehension strategies. Teachers frequently reread texts to teach additional concepts and extend learning.

Shared Reading The teacher and the students engage in an interactive reading experience using a text with large print. The teacher selects the text based upon the needs of the students and uses teaching points they believe will benefit students based upon ongoing assessment and observation. The teacher rereads the text many times over a period of days and invites students to join during repeated readings. Teachers may use big books, large charts, pocket charts, transparencies, or multiple copies of the text to ensure that everyone can see the print.

Guided Reading The teacher works with a small group of children with similar reading needs. The teacher selects and introduces a new book and supports children as they read text by themselves. The teacher selects books and teaching points based upon ongoing observation and assessment to target current needs. Children have the opportunity to be independent problem solvers as they read. Groups are flexible and change as a result of frequent observation and assessment.

Independent Reading Students self-select and practice reading texts on their own or with a partner for an extended period of time. Students practice applying both known and developing skills and strategies. Students have the opportunity to read for pleasure, be independent problem-solvers, and improve reading fluency.

Modeled Writing The teacher demonstrates what a writer does by thinking aloud and writing in front of the students. Teaching points are based upon ongoing observation and instruction. The teacher may demonstrate concepts about print, word work, and the writing process. Texts are often composed over the course of several days and lessons.

Shared Writing The teacher writes the text while collaboratively discussing, planning, and composing text with the students. Teaching points are selected based upon ongoing observation and assessment. The teacher scaffolds the students' learning by expanding their knowledge of concepts of print, word work, the writing process, and writer's crafts. A variety of texts are written over the course of several lessons.

Interactive Writing The teacher and students compose and write a text together. Students participate by writing parts of the text they know, or are learning, and the teacher fills in unknown parts. Selected teaching points are chosen based upon ongoing observation and assessment. The text can take the form of a chart, report, research, story retell, letter, or invitation. Texts are often written over the course of several lessons.

Independent Writing Using what they have learned or are currently working on, students engage in independent writing. Students are encouraged to write for authentic reasons, selecting their own topics and genres. The teacher confers with individuals or small groups. Writing happens every day and texts may not be completed in one day.