

Instruction Glossary

Activating Strategies - Instructional strategies that are used prior to beginning the explanation of new information to bridge prior knowledge with the new learning or to provide a brief preview into the new information to enable students to make mental connections.

Benchmark Work - Selected student work that meets the standard. Benchmark work is accompanied by written commentary that states why the work meets standard.

Class Profile - A form or chart used to record student mastery of the specific elements of a standard as well as the elements that students have not mastered. The profile serves a management tool to match instruction to the identified needs of each student.

Commentary - Notes attached to student work that describe what students know and understand as evidenced in the work. Commentary typically notates the element of the performance standard and the evidence *directly* from the student work that demonstrates the student's understanding of that particular element.

DIBELS - Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills

Differentiated Instruction - Creating multiple paths so that students of different abilities, interest or learning needs experience equally appropriate ways to absorb, use, develop and present concepts as a part of the daily learning process.

Direct Instruction - Instructional strategies that involve a high degree of teacher control.

Enduring Understandings - Important ideas or core processes that are essential to a discipline and transferable to new situations and that have lasting value beyond the classroom.

Essential Questions - Designed to reflect the most important issues, problems and debates in a unit of study, essential questions are open-ended with no single, correct answer. They are meant to stimulate inquiry, debate, and further questions, and can be reexamined over time.

Experiential Learning - Instructional strategies where students learn by doing or experiencing authentic or simulated situations.

Formative Assessments - Ongoing assessments designed to identify strengths and weaknesses and impact or "inform" instruction.

Frustration Reading Level - The student reads 89% or less of the words accurately. Texts at a student's frustration level are not appropriate for independent reading assignments and guided reading lessons. However, texts above a student's reading level do have a place in reading instruction. Teachers may use texts above a student's level in a read-aloud. Using above level texts does demonstrate higher sentence structure, rich vocabulary and deeper content information. It is critical that teachers activate prior knowledge when using above level texts to strengthen comprehension.

Home/School Notebooks - a small notebook (or agenda) carried back and forth between home and school which provides updates on student performance, information on events and activities, and which the teacher and parents use as a mode for daily or weekly communication.

Independent Learning - Learning in which the learner can make the decisions necessary to meet the learner's own learning needs.

Independent Reading Level - The student reads 95 %-98% of the words accurately. As a student works toward reading one million words per year, most of the reading should be done at the independent level to strengthen fluency and comprehension.

Indirect Instruction - Instructional strategies where the teacher establishes the learning situation or task, but the students determine the direction and/or solution.

Instructional Framework - A unit or lesson design format.

Instructional Reading Level - The student can read 90%-94% of the words accurately. Instructional level texts are used to increase reading proficiency through instructional guidance, support and feedback.

Interactive Instruction - Instructional strategies that involve students working with other students and/or the teacher to move toward the learning goals.

Metacognitive Strategies - Memorable plans or approaches that students use to problem-solve. These strategies include the student's *thinking* as well as their *physical actions*. Two important characteristics of any effective metacognitive strategy are that it must be *memorable* and it must *accurately represent the learning task*. Some of the most common metacognitive strategies come in the form of mnemonics.

Nonlinguistic Representations - Representing information using the imagery mode (mental pictures or physical sensations). Examples include graphic representations, making physical models, generating mental pictures, drawing pictures and pictograms, and engaging in kinesthetic activities.

Readability Formulas - a method used to determine the reading level of written materials (e.g. SMOG, Flesch-Kincaid, and Fry)

Read-Alouds - Daily reading aloud by a classroom teacher provides access to ideas and language beyond students' instructional levels. The teacher reads books that are usually more difficult than what youngsters could read alone. Read-alouds provide exposure to different genres, increase vocabulary, provide opportunities for students to respond orally to texts and familiarize themselves with the types of responses they will later be asked to write, provide ways for the teacher to demonstrate reading comprehension strategies, build listening comprehension, and promote a love of reading.

Reading Logs - A chart or form where students record the books they have completed reading independently. Students may record the title, author, genre, date of completion, number of pages, and a brief summary. Logs are completed daily and kept as evidence of books read.

Example reading log:

DATE	TITLE/AUTHOR	GENRE	PAGES/CHAPTERS READ	BRIEF SUMMARY OR RESPONSE
8/29	<u>Nightjohn</u> by Gary Paulsen	Historical Fiction	Ch. 9 & 10	They cut off Nightjohn's toe because he is trying to teach Sarny to read.

Scoring Rubrics - A scoring guide that enables teachers to make reliable judgments about student work and enables students to self-assess their work. A rubric is based on a continuum of performance quality, built upon a scale of different possible score points to be assigned; identifies the key traits or dimensions to be examined and assessed; and provides key features of performance for each level of scoring (descriptors) which signify the degree to which the criteria have been met.

SMOG - A readability formula used to determine the reading level of written materials. The following describes the process in detail:

1. Count off 10 consecutive sentences near the beginning, in the middle, and near the end of the text.
2. From this sample of 30 sentences, circle all of the words containing three or more syllables (polysyllabic), including repetitions of the same word, and total the number of words circled.
3. Estimate the square root of the total number of polysyllabic words counted. This is done by finding the nearest perfect square, and taking its square root.
4. Finally, add a constant of three to the square root. This number gives the SMOG grade, or the reading grade level that a person must have reached if he or she is to fully understand the text being assessed.

SMOG Conversion Table

Total polysyllabic word counts	Approximate grade level (+/- 1.5 grades)
0-2	4
3-6	5
7-12	6
13-20	7
21-30	8
31-42	9
43-56	10
57-72	11
73-90	12

91-110	13
111-132	14
133-156	15
157-182	16

Standards-based Instructional Bulletin Boards - A strategically placed bulletin board inside the classroom that provides examples of student work that have been correlated to the standard by elements. Generally, the student work, the task, the standard, and the commentary on the work are posted on the bulletin board for students and others to refer to as a model or exemplar of student work that meets or approaches meeting the standard.

Study Groups - Groups comprised of professionals with similar professional learning needs. The groups work together to study professional literature, student work and best practices in order to improve the quality of instruction.

Summative Assessments - Cumulative or culminating assessments used to determine mastery of the curriculum objectives or standards.

Tasks - Tasks are complex assessment challenges relating to the standard. Students are required to use their knowledge and skills to effectively perform or create a product to show understanding or proficiency of the standard.

Teacher Meetings - Meetings led by teacher leaders or consultants that focus on best practices that will improve the quality of instruction. These meetings are school-based and focused on the needs of the particular school staff.

Teacher/Student Conference - An individualized instructional strategy where the teacher sits side by side with the student to provide feedback and support.

Teaching Rubrics - Based on a continuum of performance quality and a scale of different possible score points, the rubric identifies the key traits or dimensions to be examined and assessed and provides key features of performance for each level of scoring. Teaching rubrics are explicitly designed to support as well as to evaluate student learning. Teaching rubrics have several features that support learning:

- they are written in language that students can understand;
- they are created as a result of the teaching that has occurred in the classroom (not before the teaching takes place);
- they define and describe quality work;
- they refer to common weaknesses in students' work and indicate how such weaknesses can be avoided, and;
- they can be used by students to assess their works-in-progress and thereby guide revision and improvement.