

# The Intersection of *Essential Instructional Practices in Early Literacy K to 3* and the *Assessment Literacy Standards*

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## Introduction

The *Essential Instructional Practices in Early Literacy K to 3* include a set of ten research-informed instructional practices to focus professional development throughout the state. The premise is, if practiced every day in every classroom the state of Michigan, these practices could make a measureable positive difference in literacy achievement.

The *Assessment Literacy Standards* include standards organized by role group (students & their parents, teachers, administrators and policymakers). They describe the dispositions, knowledge and performances/skills an individual would have if he or she were assessment literate. The premise of the AL Standards is that assessment literate individuals are equipped to use assessment to improve student learning and achievement.

The purpose of this macro-level crosswalk document is to initiate a conversation and exploration of these questions...

1. Which of these Essential Instruction practices in early literacy are highly dependent on an understanding of sound assessment practices?
2. Which of the Assessment Literacy Standards articulate and support select Essential Instruction Practices in Early literacy?

This initial paper is characterized as a macro-level crosswalk because only early literacy instructional practices that suggest what these authors considered an identifiable interdependence are noted here. For example, the use of the term *highly dependent* suggests to these authors a void in sound assessment practice could impede a teacher's ability to skillfully and effectively help children become literate. Similarly, use of the terms *articulate* and *support* suggest to these authors select assessment literacy standards, when placed in the context of select early literacy instructional practices, serve to say more about how and why the skillful use of assessment practices can enhance acquisition of early literacy development.

To this end, we have found this to be a useful exercise and hope that it might inform future professional learning opportunities for educators in the state of Michigan.

## Intersections

### ***Essential Practice 1. Deliberate, research-informed efforts to foster literacy motivation and engagement within and across lessons.***

<b>About the Essential Instructional Practice</b>	In Essential Practice 1, measures are taken so that students perceive themselves as successful readers/writers. There are daily opportunities to exercise choice and engage in regular peer collaboration to read and write. Learners have authentic purposes to read and write and strategies engender excitement about reading that provide authentic rewards v. extrinsic rewards and punishments.
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<b>How, Why or Where, Assessment Literacy Standards Support the Essential Instructional Practice</b>	<p>It is the student (not the teacher) who makes the first and continuing decision to persist or not, based on clarity of the targets, actionable feedback and suggested tactics that might be employed to add to the students’ belief that they are capable and will elect to persist.</p> <p>Further, authentic purposes to read and write suggest that with both literacy development and skillful use of assessment practice it is the learners and their motivation and beliefs about themselves as learners that make them the most important user of assessment information when the purpose of that information is to increase achievement and support learning.</p>
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#### ***Assessment Literacy Standards Teachers***

- Disposition A. Learn learning targets, understood by students, are necessary for learning and assessment.
- Disposition C. Effective feedback is critical to support learning
- Disposition D. Students should be active partners in learning how to use assessment results to improve their learning
- Disposition E. Assessment results should be used to make instructional decisions to improve student learning.
- Performance I. Use assessment results to make appropriate instructional decisions for individual students and groups of students.
- Performance K. Support student use of assessment feedback to improve attitudes, aspirations, mindsets and achievement.

Select recommendations for further reading that may serve to deepen understanding of the instructional practice and/or the assessment literacy standards referenced.

#### ***Literacy Instruction***

Shanahan, T., Callison, K., Carriere, C., Duke, N. K., Pearson, P. D., Schatschneider, C., & Torgesen, J. (2010). Improving reading comprehension in kindergarten through 3rd grade: A practice guide (NCEE 2010-4038). Washington, DC: National Center for Education Evaluation and Regional Assistance. Retrieved from [http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/pdf/practice\\_guides/readingcomp\\_pg\\_092810.pdf](http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/pdf/practice_guides/readingcomp_pg_092810.pdf)

Guthrie, J. T., McRae, A., & Kluda, S. L. (2007). Contributions of Concept-Oriented Reading Instruction to knowledge about interventions for motivations in reading. *Educational Psychologist*, 42, 237–250

Marinak, B. A., & Gambrell, L. B. (2008) Intrinsic motivation and rewards: What sustains young children’s

engagement with text? *Literacy Research and Instruction*, 47, 9-26.

**Assessment Practice Research & Literature**

Black, P. and Wiliam D. (1998) Inside the black box: Raising standards through classroom assessment. *Phi Delta Kappan*, 80(2):139-148,

Dweck, Carol S., (2000) Self-Theories: their role in motivation, personality and development Psychology Press

Dweck, Carol, S., (2006) Mindset: The new psychology of success. New York: Balantine Books

Masters, Geoff N., (2013). "Towards a growth mindset in assessment"  
[http://research.acer.edu.au/ar\\_misc/17](http://research.acer.edu.au/ar_misc/17)

***Essential Practice 3. Small group and individual instruction, using a variety of group strategies, most often with flexible groups formed and instruction targeted to children’s observed and assessed needs in specific aspects of literacy development.***

<b>About the Essential Instructional Practice</b>	In Essential Practice 3, flexible groups are formed to meet a variety of purposes and needs. Groups focus on meaning making, quality instruction occurs across groups, and good instructional strategies are employed for/with groups to address fluency, word recognition, text structure, comprehension, and writing needs.
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<b>How, Why or Where, Assessment Literacy Standards Support the Essential Instructional Practice</b>	Knowing where a student’s developmental needs are at, at a given point in time & along a trajectory of learning (a learning progression) permits formation of a flexible group (one that is formed and lasts for a select purpose and time frame). For the assessor, s/he must be a master of targets him/herself and understand the nuances of the discipline well enough to know what comes before and after in the learning sequence. This disciplinary knowledge is combined with general and specific knowledge about the developmental needs, and progress of the learner(s).
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<b>Assessment Literacy Standards Teachers</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Performance C. Use learning targets aligned to the standards and understood by students to guide instruction. (teachers must be competent masters of targets)</li><li>● Performance D. Use learning progressions to guide instruction and assessment.</li><li>● Performance G. Use a variety of protocols for looking at and scoring student work.</li><li>● Performance H. Accurately determine and communicate levels of proficiency.</li><li>● Performance I. Use assessment result to make appropriate instructional decisions for individual students and groups of students.</li><li>● Performance M. Use assessment results appropriately to modify instruction to improve student achievement</li></ul>
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Select recommendations for further reading that may serve to deepen understanding of the instructional practice and/or the assessment literacy standards referenced.

**Literacy Instruction Research**

Connor, C., Morrison, F., Fishman, B., Giuliani, S., Luck, M., Underwood, P., Bayraktar, A, Crowe, E., & Schatschneider, C. (2011). Testing the impact of child characteristics × instruction interactions on third graders' reading comprehension by differentiating literacy instruction. *Reading Research Quarterly*, 46, 189-221.

Shanahan, T., Callison, K., Carriere, C., Duke, N. K., Pearson, P. D., Schatschneider, C., & Torgesen, J. (2010). Improving reading comprehension in kindergarten through 3rd grade: A practice guide (NCEE 2010-4038). Washington, DC: National Center for Education Evaluation and Regional Assistance, Institute of Education Sciences, U.S. Department of Education. Retrieved from [http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/pdf/practice\\_guides/readingcomp\\_pg\\_092810.pdf](http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/pdf/practice_guides/readingcomp_pg_092810.pdf)

Taylor, B. M., Pearson, P. D., Clark, K., & Walpole, S. (2000). Effective schools and accomplished teachers: Lessons about primary grade reading instruction in low-income schools. *The Elementary School Journal*, 101, 121-165

### **Assessment Practice Research & Literature**

Brookhart, Susan, Moss, Connie M. (2009) Chapter 2. Leveling the Playing Field: sharing learning targets and success criteria *Advancing Formative Assessment in Every Classroom* ASCD

Heritage, Margaret (2007) Formative Assessment what do teachers need to know and do? *Phi Delta Kappan*, 89, 140-145

Protocols for Looking at Student Work School Reform Initiative website  
[http://schoolreforminitiative.org/doc/atlas\\_lfsw.pdf](http://schoolreforminitiative.org/doc/atlas_lfsw.pdf)

Vygotsky, L.S., (1978) *Mind in Society*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 79-91.

William, Dylan (2004). Keeping learning on track: integrating assessment with instruction 30th annual conference of the International Association for Educational Assessment (IAEA) held in June, Philadelphia, PA.

### **Essential Practice 7. Intentional and ambitious efforts to build vocabulary and content knowledge.**

<b>About the Essential Instructional Practice</b>	In Essential Practice 7, vocabulary acquisition is intentionally and explicitly built in the context of read alouds and during content area instruction. There are many opportunities to say, spell, write, discuss and map new words – all in context. Word morphology is taught.
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<b>How, Why or Where, Assessment Literacy Standards Support the Essential Instructional Practice</b>	<p>A key feature of sound assessment practice is activating prior knowledge, to both diagnose and build on what a learner knows. Research is indicating much of our literacy achievement gaps can be attributed to the lack of vocabulary a child has upon entering school. When prior experiences outside school are insufficient to build a strong working vocabulary, in-school contextual learning experiences become essential for vocabulary development. In relationship to assessment practices, the teacher’s working knowledge of disciplinary vocabulary as well as generalized academic vocabulary is important to the teacher’s ability to create learning targets, and use formative assessment practices to acquire and expand a child’s working vocabulary (listening, reading, spoken, written) in the context of everyday, content area instruction.</p>
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**Assessment Literacy Standards Teachers**

- Disposition D. Students should be active partners in learning how to use assessment results to improve their learning
- Knowledge C. Teachers know the definitions of and uses for different types of assessments: (specifically 3. Formative assessment practices)
- Performance C. Use learning targets aligned to the standards and understood by students to guide instruction. (teachers must be competent masters of targets)
- Performance D. Use learning progressions to guide instruction and assessment.
- Performance I. Use assessment results to make appropriate instructional decisions for individual students and groups of students.
- Performance M. Use assessment results appropriately to modify instruction to improve student achievement

Select recommendations for further reading:

**Literacy Instruction Research**

Beck, I. L., & McKeown, M. G. (2007). Increasing young low-income children’s oral vocabulary repertoires through rich and focused instruction. *The Elementary School Journal*, 107, 251-271.

Vitale, M. R., & Romance, N. R. (2011). Adaption of a knowledge-based instructional intervention to accelerate student learning in science and early literacy in grades 1 and 2. *Journal of Curriculum and Instruction*, 5, 79-93.

**Assessment Practice Research & Literature**

Bailey, A.L., & Heritage, M (2008) *Formative assessment for literacy: Grades K—6*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.

Stiggins, R. Arter, J., Chappuis, J., & chappuis, S., (2004) *Classroom assessment for student learning: Doing it right—using it well*. Portland, OR Assessment Training Institute, Inc.

***Essential Practice 9. Ongoing observation and assessment of children’s language and literacy develop that informs their education.***

<b>About the Essential Instructional Practice</b>	<p>In Essential Practice 9, assessment practice prioritizes the use of observation during reading and writing, that is guided by an understanding of language and literacy development as well as Michigan’s K-12 Standards for ELA. Diagnostic measures are used as one source of information to inform supports that may be needed for</p>
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	instructional purposes and identification of students who may receive additional instructional supports. Formative assessment and diagnostic assessment tools are used as needed to inform specific instructional strategies (e.g. assessing knowledge of specific sound-letter relationships, assessing knowledge of specific vocabulary words taught, reading and writing strategies being used and not used).
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<b>How, Why or Where, Assessment Literacy Standards Support the Essential Instructional Practice</b>	Assessment can certify or verify learning as well as support learning. Both types of assessment are important. It is important to know which type to use when and how to responsibly use and communicate the results. When the aim is increasing student acquisition of language, literacy development – knowledge of and the ability to execute assessment practices designed to support and advance learning are paramount. Assessment methods designed to certify learning are not designed to contribute to the teaching and learning cycle that comprises the environment that is designed to support literacy development. For this reason, it is the skillful use of formative assessment practices embedded in literacy instruction that promises increased achievement for students.
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<b>Assessment Literacy Standards Teachers</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Disposition E. Assessment results should be used to make instructional decisions to improve student learning.</li> <li>● Disposition F. An effective assessment system must balance different purposes for different users and use varied methods of assessment and communication</li> <li>● Disposition G. Good classroom assessment and quality instruction are intricately linked to each other.</li> <li>● Knowledge D. The differences between the types of assessment tools: achievement, aptitude, diagnostic, screening.</li> <li>● Knowledge J. How to provide effective feedback from assessments suitable for different audiences: descriptive and evaluative</li> <li>● Knowledge M. How to engage students in using their own assessment results for reflection and goal setting</li> <li>● Performance B. Select and use various assessment methods appropriate to assessment purposes and learning targets.</li> <li>● Performance C. Use learning targets aligned to the standards and understood by students to guide instruction.</li> <li>● Performance D. Use learning progressions to guide instruction and assessment.</li> <li>● Performance I. Use assessment results to make appropriate instructional decisions for individual students and groups of students.</li> <li>● Performance J. Provide timely, descriptive and actionable feedback to students based on assessment results.</li> <li>● Performance M. Use assessment results appropriately to modify instruction to improve student achievement.</li> <li>● Performance O. Use multiple sources of data over time to identify trends in learning.</li> </ul>	

Select recommendations for further reading :

**Literacy Instruction Research**

Witmer, S. E., Duke, N. K., Billman, A. K., & Betts, J. (2014). Using assessment to improve early elementary students’ knowledge and skills for comprehending informational text. *Journal of Applied School*

*Psychology*, 30, 223-253.

Taylor, B. M., Pearson, P. D., Clark, K., & Walpole, S. (2000). Effective schools and accomplished teachers: Lessons about primary-grade reading instruction in low-income schools. *The Elementary School Journal* 101, 121-165.

**Assessment Practice Research & Literature**

Brookhart, S.M. (2014). How to design questions and tasks to assess student thinking. Alexandria, VA: ASCD

Brookhart, S.M. (2016) How to Make Decisions with Different Kinds of Student Assessment Data. Alexandria, VA: ASCD.

Brookhart, S.M., & Nitko, A.J. (2015) Educational assessment of students (7<sup>th</sup> ed.) Boston: Pearson Education.

Heritage, Margaret (2008) Learning Progressions: supporting instruction and formative assessment. CRESST published by Council of Chief State School Officers, Washington DC

Hattie, J., & Timperley, H. (2007). The power of feedback. *Review of Educational Research*, 77(1),81–112.

Natriello, G.(1987).The impact of evaluation processes on students. *Educational Psychologist*, 22(3), 155–175.

Sadler, D.R. (1989).Formative assessment and the design of instructional systems. *Instructional Science*, 18(2), 119–144.

**Essential Practice 10. Collaboration with families in promoting literacy.**

<b>About the Essential Instructional Practice</b>	In Essential Practice 10, Families engage in language and literacy interactions with their children that can be drawn upon and extended in kindergarten through third grade. Educators help families add to their repertoire of strategies for promoting literacy at home, including: demonstrating during reading and writing effective strategies, promoting independent reading, using first language used in the home, providing literacy materials and notice about literacy opportunities, as well as guidance about television and other media sources and applications designed to support literacy development.
<b>How, Why or Where, Assessment Literacy Standards Support the Essential Instructional Practice</b>	Essential Practice 10 suggests that parents should have some elemental working knowledge of language acquisition and the print and language rich environments that support language acquisition and literacy development. It is also suggested that parents have (or are supported in acquiring) some elemental working knowledge of strategies to employ to assist students in reading and writing development when at home. In this way, select expectations for parents mirror those of the teacher and the students with respect to using assessment practices to support learning. Specifically, parents would be helped to know the moves and strategies a proficient reader uses to monitor and self-correct all along the continua of reading in order to support the use of these strategies outside of school.

### **Assessment Literacy Standards Students (AL Standards for Students substituted in this one section)**

- Disposition A. Students learn best when they know the targets for their learning
- Disposition C. Students learn from effective feedback provided on their work from their teachers
- Disposition D. Students are responsible for their own learning
- Disposition E. Students use assessment results to learn more

Select recommendations for further reading:

#### **Literacy Instruction Research**

Sénéchal, M., & Young, L. (2008). The effect of family literacy interventions on children's acquisition of reading from kindergarten to grade 3: A meta-analytic review. *Review of Educational Research*, 78, 880-907.

van Steensel, R., McElvany, N., Kurvers, J., & Herppich, S. (2011). How effective are family literacy programs? Results of a meta-analysis. *Review of Educational Research*, 81, 69-96.

Kim, J. S., & Quinn, D. M. (2013). The effects of summer reading on low-income children's literacy achievement from kindergarten to grade 8: A meta-analysis of classroom and home interventions. *Review of Educational Research*, 83, 386-431.

#### **Assessment Practice Research & Literature**

Black, P., Harrison, C., Lee, C., Marshall, B., & Wiliam, D. (2004). Working inside the black box: Assessment for learning in the classroom. *Phi Delta Kappan*, 86(1), 8-21.

Stiggins, R. (2014). Improve assessment literacy outside of schools too. V96 N2 *Kappan Magazine*

Note 1.: The **Intersections** portion of this document features the **Teacher Assessment Literacy Standards**. While there are other sets of standards for role groups including: students & their parents, administrators and policymakers; intersections between teacher assessment literacy standards and instructional practices mastered by teachers, seemed the logical choice.

Note 2.: This paper is a first draft of work that has yet to be vetted, further developed and potentially endorsed by GELN's Early Literacy Task Force and MI Assessment Consortium's board of directors. It is the work of two individuals. The authors are seeking comments, observations and suggestions.

#### **To access and cite the source documents:**

Michigan Association of Intermediate School Administrators General Education Leadership Network Early Literacy Task Force (2016) *Essential instructional practices in early literacy: K to 3*. Lansing, MI: authors [Essential Instructional Practices in Early Literacy Grades K to 3](#)

Michigan Assessment Consortium (2015) *Assessment Literacy Standards: A National Imperative* [Assessment Literacy Standards: A National Imperative](#)

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Coaches and the development of professional learning with the Early Literacy Task Force. She is also the K-12 English Language Arts Consultant for Muskegon Area Intermediate School District. She is the chair of the Michigan Reading Association Early Childhood and Family Literacy Committee, past chair of the Michigan ELA Leadership Team, and a member of the Reading Now Network Field Study Team. Her M.A. is in Literacy Studies and she worked as an elementary teacher, a literacy specialist and then was a literacy coach for seven years before transitioning to the Muskegon Area ISD. [ebrown@muskegonisd.org](mailto:ebrown@muskegonisd.org)

Kathy Dewsbury-White serves as the president and CEO of the MI Assessment Consortium. She contributed to the development of the *Assessment Literacy Standards* (2015) developed by MAC and endorsed by the MI SBE 5.10.2106. Through a long and distinguished career as a curriculum director she developed numerous curriculum, instruction and assessment professional learning opportunities for school systems. Her Ph.D. is in Curriculum & Instruction, her M.A. is in reading, she worked as a reading teacher in adult basic education and alternative education and in private practice. She taught Content Area Reading as well as Secondary Methods Reading courses through graduate school. [kdwhite@michiganassessmentconsortium.org](mailto:kdwhite@michiganassessmentconsortium.org)