

Promoting Advanced Literacies in Today's Schools to Match Today's Context

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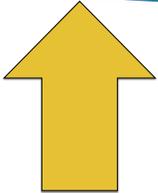
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This Morning's Session

- 1 Today's Literacy Context
- 2 A Refresher on Reading: Two Key Distinctions
- 3 Designing 21st –Century Learning Environments
 - ▶ Fostering Advanced Literacies and Critical Thinking in Today's Classrooms
- 4 A Window into Our Work with Leaders in NYC

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Today's Literacy Context: Rethinking "Literacy"



Increasingly sophisticated literacy skills needed to thrive day-to-day

- Demands communication (orally and in writing) in diverse ways and with diverse audiences
- Requires a need to understand and use print for a variety of purposes
- Is much more than decoding and understanding print

New role of language and literacy skills in society— in our neighborhoods and in the global world

What counts as "literate" on the rise

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Changing Demands of Workforce Participation

"In order to prepare young people to do the jobs computers cannot do, we must re-focus our education system around one objective; **giving students the foundational skills in problem-solving and communication that computers don't have.**"

"Computerized work has ratcheted up the definition of foundational skills."

Murnane & Levy, 2013

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Changing Demands of Workforce Participation

Foundational Skills in the Digital Age

- ▶ **Solving Unstructured Problems** Tackling problems that lack rules-based solutions. Computers cannot replace the human work in these task but can help humans solve problems by making information more readily available.
- ▶ **Working with New Information** Acquiring and making sense of new information for use in problem-solving or to influence the decisions of others.
- ▶ **Combining Cognitive and Social Skills** Working in fluid, rapidly changing, team-based settings.

Deming, 2017; Murnane & Levy, 2013

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Changing Demands of Workforce Participation Competencies in 21st Century Economy

In addition to language and literacy skills, social skills are also needed for workers in a global knowledge-based economy.

Inter-personal Skills

- Teamwork and the ability to collaborate in pursuit of a common objective.
- Effective communication with colleagues and clients.
- Leadership capabilities

Intra-personal Skills

- Motivation and attitude
- The ability to learn
- Problem-solving skills
- Analytical skills

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Changing Demands of Workforce Participation Competencies in 21st Century Economy

In a knowledge economy, language and literacy competencies are central. These skills often include:

- ▶ Complex text and language analysis
- ▶ Language-based higher-order thinking
- ▶ Information literacy
- ▶ Technical & persuasive writing

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GETTING TO 21ST CENTURY LITERACY SKILLS: TWO SENSITIVE PERIODS

The diagram illustrates two sensitive periods for literacy skills. The first period, 'Early Childhood', spans from birth to age 8, with a note that children are not born with these skills and need to be cultivated for proficiency. The second period, 'Late Childhood and Adolescence', spans from late childhood through adolescence, with a note that another sensitive period occurs during this time. Both periods are linked to 'Language', 'Cognition', and 'Social-emotional' skills.

Knudsen, 2004

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Getting to 21st Century Skills: Pathways of Success

The flowchart shows a progression from 'School-aged years' to 'Associated Social Consequences'. Key stages include 'Documented Long-Run Positive Effects' and 'Associated Personal Consequences'. The final outcomes are 'Higher productivity' and 'Decreased welfare dependence'.

e.g., Camilli, Vargas, Ryan, & Barnett, 2010; Deming, 2009; Heckman & Masterov, 2007; Jones, Brown & Aber, 2011; Tobias, Snow, & Dickinson, 2001

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A Refresher on Reading: Two Key Distinctions

- Code-Based Skills and Meaning-Based Skills
- Everyday Language and Academic Language

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Passage Analysis

Shark Facts: A 3rd Grade Text

There are almost 400 different kinds of sharks. Each kind of shark looks different, has a unique diet, and behaves differently. There are sharks in all four oceans of the world. Some sharks are longer than a school bus, while others are so small they can live in fish tanks. Sharks come in all kinds of colors. Most of the time, their skin color helps them blend in with their surroundings. But, some sharks that live in the deepest part of the ocean actually have parts that glow in the dark. Most sharks live in salt water, but some can live in fresh water. All sharks are unique, or have different qualities that make them so special.

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Passage Analysis

Code-based skills	<p>3 sounds, 1 word: /sh/ /ar/ /k/</p> <p>Spelling pattern: there vs. their</p> <p>~100 words correct per minute (grade 3)</p>	Meaning-based Skills	<p>Cognitive strategies</p> <p>Vocabulary</p> <p>Relevant background knowledge</p> <p>Understanding of language</p> <p>Interest and motivation</p>
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Spotlight: Second Grade Classroom

Challenges due to underdeveloped word reading skills (i.e., code-based skills); she reads each word slowly and laboriously.

"The tr-a-i-n is low to the g-rou-nd... The train is low to the ground."

"These... trains provided... the first passenger service."

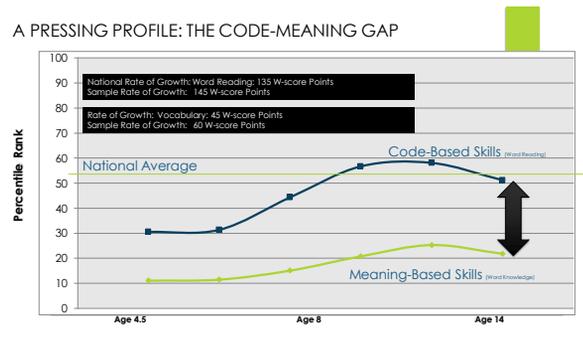
Challenges due to underdeveloped vocabulary knowledge as it relates to the passage (i.e., meaning-based skills); he pauses as he tries to understand the text despite the unfamiliar words.

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Code-Based and Meaning-Based Skills: A Critical Distinction

	Code	Meaning
Developmental Processes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Typically mastered by 3rd grade Constrained, i.e., mastery-oriented 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develops from infancy through adulthood Unconstrained, i.e., not mastered
Instructional Implications	Highly susceptible to instruction in the early elementary years (assuming sufficient quality & dosage)	Requires sustained instruction, beginning in early childhood through adolescence

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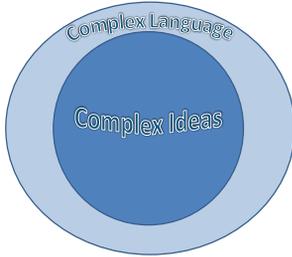


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Everyday Language vs. Academic Language

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The Language-Reading Connection



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Academic Language

The oral and written language used primarily in school, civic, and professional settings—the language of text, academic success, and of power and influence.

It is distinct from everyday conversational language.

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Academic Language

► The skills and competencies that enable communication in increasingly diverse ways and promote the understanding and use of text for a variety of purposes

<p>COMMUNICATE</p> <p>Communicate (orally and in writing) in increasingly diverse ways and with increasingly diverse audiences.</p>	<p>UNDERSTAND</p> <p>Understand and use print for a variety of purposes.</p>	<p>ACCESS</p> <p>Access and participate in academic, civic, and professional communities, where knowledge is shared and generated.</p>
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A Developing Reader's Journey

- Depends upon:
- Talking and playing with adults
 - Talking and playing with peers and siblings
 - Varied experiences to build knowledge



- Depends upon:
- Access to books and other texts – for engaging learning and conversation
 - Joint reading (with adults and/or peers) – opportunities to make reading social

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Summary: Today's Literacy Context

1. The school-age population is increasingly linguistically, culturally, and economically diverse.
2. What counts as "literate" today is on the rise.
3. The design of literacy instruction today has not kept pace with this shift from the need for basic to advanced literacy.
4. A more systems-level, strategic approach is needed, beginning in early childhood.

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Designing 21st Century Learning Environments

HOW CAN WE PROVIDE ALL LEARNERS WITH ENHANCED OPPORTUNITIES TO BUILD ORAL AND WRITTEN LANGUAGE SKILLS AND DEEPEN THEIR KNOWLEDGE OF ABSTRACT CONCEPTS AND IDEAS?

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Cultivating 21st Century Skills: Current Realities

Reality: The school-age population is linguistically diverse. There are 400+ native languages in the U.S., and by 2030, 40% of the school-age population will speak a language other than English at home.

Reality: In many classrooms, the literacy strengths and needs of English learners and their English-only peers are more similar than they are different. Learning academic English, oral and written, should be an instructional priority for all.

Reality: In many settings, the instructional core needs to be updated to match today's literacy demands.

Meeting today's demands for what counts as 'literate' requires a new approach and instruction.

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Today's Literacy Realities

Compromised opportunities to develop:

- Language and reading skills
- Strong emotional, social, and cognitive skills

High rates of special education placement and dropout

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Today's Literacy Realities: U.S. 8th Graders

Group	Percentage at or above proficient
All children	34
Latino	21
Black or African American	16
Eligible for free or reduced price lunch	34
English language learners	4

U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Educational Sciences, National Center for Education Statistics, National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), mathematics, 1990-2015 Reading Assessment.

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Cultivating 21st Century Skills: Common Pitfall

Common Pitfall	What's Needed
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Intervention and remediation of language-based literacy difficulties at grades 2, 3, and beyond. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Create a sustained model, beginning in the earliest years, with attention to the crucial link between early language development and later reading outcomes. ▶ Language- and content-rich learning environments, beginning at Pre-K

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Cultivating 21st Century Skills: Mapping Workforce Demands to Curriculum Design

- ▶ Team-based, project-based approaches
- ▶ Emphasis on building up conceptual reasoning skills and background knowledge across subject areas
- ▶ Emphasis on oral and written communications meant to convey knowledge and reasoning to others
- ▶ Emphasis on solving unstructured problems
 - ▶ i.e., several potential solutions, weighing trade-offs against priorities to arrive at "best" solution

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Cultivating 21st Century Skills: Digital Age Demands

Moving to more dynamic, relevant, and applied teaching.

Breadth of Skills

- Literacy
- Flexibility
- Collaborative Problem Solving

Winthrop, R., Wilkins, T.P., & McCivney, E. (2016).

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Cultivating 21st Century Skills: Successful Learning

Students successfully learn when they are:

- Mentally active
- Tackling juicy questions and big ideas
- Socially interactive
- Building meaningful connections to the world and to their lives



Hassinger-Das, B., Hirth-Pawek, K., & Galinski, R.M. (2017).

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How do we get there?

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The Foundation: A Curriculum with Units of Study

Supports teaching & learning with a focus on the skills and competencies associated with 21st Century Learning

Code-Based Skills	Phonological Awareness	Phonics and Word Recognition	Spelling	Fluency
	Conceptual knowledge about the world		Understand abstract, complex ideas when reading	
Meaning-Based Skills	Produce written language about abstract and complex ideas		Produce academic language in speech	

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What Makes a Strong Curriculum?

Operationalizes Principles of Knowledge-Building Literacy Instruction

Organizes learning around content-rich themes and texts	Promotes culturally responsive classrooms	Uses consistent routines and language
Provides rigor and challenge in a supportive context	Combines explicit instruction with inquiry-based learning	Supports peer-to-peer interaction

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The Foundation: Units of Study

- Units of study are a key mechanism for creating the conditions for knowledge-building literacy instruction

DEPTH OF LEARNING Place a concept, word, or theme at the center to deepen understanding.	LEARNING AS A PROCESS Facilitate learning such that students can grapple with ideas and learn from mistakes.	INTERACTIVE LEARNING Support meaningful interactions among teachers and peers.
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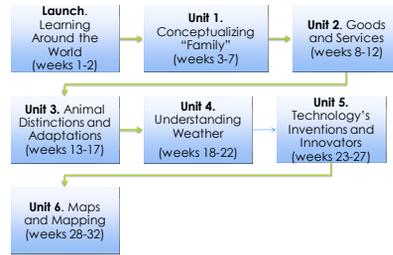
First Grade Example: Overarching Theme

(Focus on First, Boston Public Schools)



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Six Independent Units (+Launch): Each Connects to Globalization in Some Way

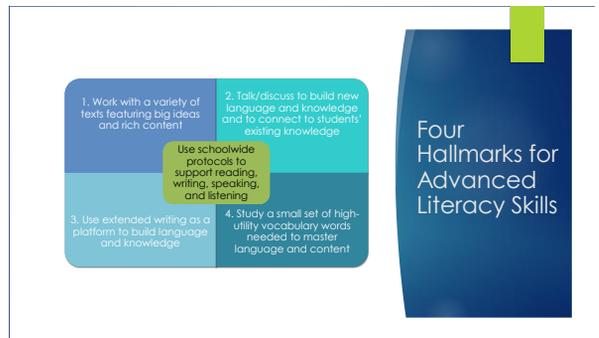


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Cross-Unit Links



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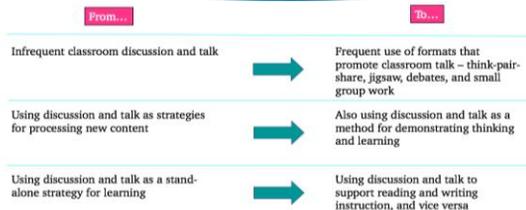
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Hallmark 1. Engaging, Content-Rich Texts

- Traditional Instructional Practices** ▶ Texts used with strugglers are extremely challenging because they are at or above grade-level OR are below grade-level, offering little engaging content and compromising learning activities.
- 21st Century Instructional Practices** ▶ Multiple texts—text sets—at different levels are used and read to support a rich understanding of a topic and to develop students' reading comprehension skills.

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Hallmark 2. Practicing Classroom Talk & Discussion



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Hallmark 3. Building Written Language

Traditional Instructional Practices

- Many writing assignments are brief writing "exercises" — on-demand writing, often in response to a prompt, and drawing on personal experience and opinion.

21st Century Instructional Practices

- Structured, content-based approach to writing assignments and tasks, e.g. text questions, projects, or narratives.
- Students need to have studied the material to be processed and written about.
- Students need supports and scaffolds to plan, discuss, and organize their ideas and develop an argument long before they put pen to paper.

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Hallmark 4. Developing Academic Vocabulary and Language

From...	➔	To...
Approaching vocabulary instruction as stand-alone strategy	➔	Organizing vocabulary instruction within content-based units of study that involve reading, writing, and dialogue
Starting with long lists of words	➔	Selecting a small set of useful and complex words, then complementing this instruction with word-learning strategies
Teaching words through a series of memorization and spelling activities and independent worksheets	➔	Studying words and concepts using multiple methods and formats, including collaboration
Relying on wide reading to build word knowledge	➔	Reading a small set of thematically-related texts deeply to build knowledge of words and concepts

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APPLY ADVANCED LITERACY SKILLS AND COMPETENCIES

CONSOLIDATE CONTENT KNOWLEDGE

FOSTER ACADEMIC MOTIVATION

Spotlight: Language Production Projects

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Spotlight: Language Production Projects

Designing Effective Language Production Projects

- ▶ 1. What is the (juicy) question or topic?
- ▶ 2. What compelling issue will students focus on?
- ▶ 3. What research will students need to undertake?
- ▶ 4. What product will they generate?

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Sample: Language Production Project

Week 5 At A Glance

Week 5's Knowledge Goal:

- To study the ways that communities and scientists can partner to protect animals and their habitats.

Fundations	Learning Stations	Reading to Learn	Integrated Writing
<p>Unit 8, Week 1</p> <p>Reading:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Listening to birds: <i>Turtle Tide: The Ways of Sea Turtles</i> by Stephen K. Swenburne <p>Word Work - Work with I and R blends.</p> <p>Content Writing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Creating an informational table which students will orally present to their classmates. 	<p>Core Texts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Sea Turtles</i> by Laura Mearns <p>Focus Areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify main idea and details Setting a purpose for reading 	<p>Read on Your Own Book 18</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Sea Turtles</i> <i>Turtle Tide</i> <p>Trade Books</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Generate an informational bulletin Plan, draft, edit, and orally present information about the endangered sea turtle Describe the actions scientists and community members can take to protect sea turtles and their habitats

- Require students to synthesize information gained from texts and other sources
- Involve reading and speaking that demands use of the language and concepts taught in the unit
- Focuses on communicating for an authentic purpose, with an authentic audience

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Spotlight: How play fits into cultivating 21st-century skills

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Spotlight: Playful Learning



What is "playful learning"?

Playful learning is a pedagogical approach that includes choice, exploration, and engagement.

Research suggests playful learning helps students develop a variety of skills.

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Spotlight: Playful Learning

Playful Learning...

- Involves choice and intentional support from adults.
- Is practice to become a self-guided, autonomous learner.
- Is powerful for children of all ages, and for adults.

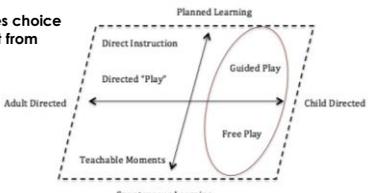
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Spotlight: Playful Learning

Guided Play

Playful learning involves choice and intentional support from adults.

- Guided Play
- Hands-on activities with interesting materials



Hirsh-Pasek, K., & Golinkoff, R.M. (2009).

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Spotlight: Playful Learning

What do these learning environments look like and sound like?

- Students setting goals, developing and sharing ideas, making rules, negotiating challenges, and choosing how long to play.
- Students exploring, creating, pretending, imagining, and learning from trial and error.
- Students talking, debating, expressing, and laughing.

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Spotlight: Playful Learning

The Power of Play

Playful learning is powerful for children of all ages, and for adults.

"Children do not stop playing [for learning] when they enter grade school. While the nature of the play changes as children grow into teenagers—there may be more complex games with rules and collaborative quizzes, advanced physical activity like team sports, programming with computers, and jam sessions with instruments—the active engagement and meaning-making continues."

Mardell, B., et al., 2016

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The Advanced Literacies Context: Two Pressing Issues

- Review:** The context of literacy development and its instruction has changed drastically in even just 10-15 years.
 - ▶ These changes relate to demography, a more sophisticated science, and the economy and labor market.
 - ▶ To keep pace with these changes, leaders need enhanced core knowledge about literacy development and instruction.
- In addition:** Today's context of literacy leadership is challenging and can often be overwhelming.
 - ▶ Leaders need support and strategies to plan, organize, and streamline the work for greater impact.

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Our Work on the Instructional Leadership Framework in NYC

- ▶ Institute-based professional education for instructional leaders focused on advanced literacies
- ▶ In this learning environment, leaders:
 - ▶ think differently about their day-to-day work, stepping back to see it in the context of a larger frame of systems-level reform
 - ▶ focus on creating and identifying opportunities to build all learners' advanced literacy skills
 - ▶ focus on getting to a coordinated, data-driven system of instruction

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Advanced Literacies Framework

Learn	Build core knowledge of the latest science of reading development and the elements of an effective school-level architecture to build advanced literacies among all students.
Analyze	Engage in a team-based, systematic process of taking inventory and identifying gaps against what's needed for the architecture (Leader's tools)
Plan	Determine priority area and a plan for action • Short-term and longer-term
Implement	Engage in cycles of implementation aligned to the priority area's action steps

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Advanced Literacies Framework: Theory of Action

Leaders focus on bringing coherence to:

1. The quality of day-to-day instruction that students receive (Tier 1).
2. The degree to which learning is coherent and cohesive as a result of using a shared platform for learning.
3. The manner in which assessment is used to identify the population's and individual learner's strengths and needs.
4. The degree to which adult learners are provided with supportive and tailored professional learning.

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Key Steps Towards Data-Driven Instruction

1. Implement screeners to measure and target specific literacy skills
2. Distinguish the unique struggler from the population
 - Understand and analyze the struggling reader's profile in context
3. Match the instructional core to the group's needs, tailor interventions to the individual's needs.

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The Benefits of Curriculum

For Teachers	For Students
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Frees time to focus on instruction • Supports vertical and horizontal alignment without teacher collaboration • Serves an educative function 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creates familiarity with a core set of learning routines • Presents information in a predictable format

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Advanced Literacies Framework

- Learn** - Build core knowledge of the latest science of reading development and the elements of an effective school-level architecture to build advanced literacies among all students
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 - Short-term and longer-term
- Implement** - Engage in cycles of implementation aligned to the priority area's action steps

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Why a strategic gap analysis? Raising literacy rates - an adaptive challenge

Technical Challenge

- Can generally be diagnosed and solved with technical solutions, i.e., straightforward, everyday fixes.
 - e.g., classroom without defined learning centers; difficult needs more time to complete the paperwork; not enough curriculum materials.
- Though some of these problems may be critically important, they can be solved in a relatively straightforward manner in a short period of time.

Adaptive Challenge

- Not solved using technical solutions. Often expose a gap between aspirations—the goals or the mission—and the current reality.
- Addressing them requires some complex planning; to figure out a solution, leaders need to involve those who are affected by the issue.
 - e.g., educator and co-teacher trying to support multiple children with challenging behaviors; getting grade-level teams to work productively.
- These challenges can't be solved quickly. They require experimentation and innovation to find a solution.
- Need to engage others in a gradual and meaningful process of change
 - Conducting a self-study is a key starting point

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Advanced Literacies Framework

What it is...	What it is not...
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ► A leadership framework that guides planning and strategic work at each school site to maximize literacy learning opportunities for that site's learner population. ► A data-driven process to determine how current practices and processes align with what's needed to strengthen student and adult learning <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ► Identify priorities and pressure points, including areas where there is too much "activity" ► A multi-year effort that involves the evaluation of literacy assessment systems, curriculum, instruction, and professional learning offerings. ► An approach designed to focus leaders and educators on ALL students, by connecting instructional initiatives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ► A top-down reform effort that can be implemented in a uniform way at all schools ► A curriculum ► A set of prescriptive instructional or "core" practices ► A short-term fix ► An approach designed for only some students ► Something "new" or another "initiative"

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Advanced Literacies Instructional Leaders...

- Recognize that advanced literacies are not a fad or trend, but instead skills and competencies that students should be supported to develop for academic and personal opportunities and success.
- Move past "magic bullet" thinking and "cookie cutter" solutions → to commit to a **multi-year focus on addressing weaknesses and recognizing strengths in a few critical structures and processes that support the development of advanced literacies.**
- Acknowledge the challenges inherent in the system (funding, resources, accountability systems), **yet consistently focus their team on recognizing actions that can be taken to create high-quality learning opportunities for all learners**

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Thank You

- The school-age population is increasingly linguistically, culturally, and economically diverse.
- What counts as "literate" today is on the rise.
- The design of literacy instruction today has not kept pace with this shift from the need for basic to advanced literacy.
- A more systems-level, strategic approach is needed, beginning in early childhood.

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