

The Rhode Island Comprehensive Literacy Plan

Guiding Questions

Chapter 1 Essential Understanding of Literacy

1. How can we integrate literacy skills in other content areas?
2. How will the predictors listed on pages 6-7 impact what we do each day in our early childhood classrooms?
3. How can we best meet the needs of our students, when there are so many students coming to school with gaps?
4. What are the implications for half-day K and full-day K when we look at literacy at such an early age?
5. Can we use the predictors listed on pages 6-7 to better design our early childhood curriculum?
6. Does our current early childhood curriculum include these predictors?

Chapter 2 Supporting All Learners in Literacy

1. How do we provide appropriate English language instruction while respecting the home language and culture?
2. How do we differentiate instruction within the core reading curriculum to adequately meet the needs of all students?
3. Evaluate how well our programs/curriculum/policies engage families in literacy development. Where can we improve?
4. How can we ensure that all teachers understand the importance of a student's home or first language?

Chapter 3 Components of Literacy: Speaking and Listening

1. Do we balance written language learning with opportunities to support interpersonal relationships? Do we use multiple grouping formats that allow for structured conversations?
2. Evaluate the learning environment in each classroom- is it language rich? Is the atmosphere safe and comfortable enough to allow for productive talk?
3. In what ways can we practice listening skills and effective classroom discussion techniques?

Chapter 4 The Process of Reading

1. Discuss the quote found on page 25.

“Teachers need constantly to remind themselves that reading is
always a particular event involving a particular reader
at a particular time under particular circumstances”
(Rosenblatt, 1991)
2. Reflect on the stages of reading development, and determine how to differentiate instruction for students who may be at multiple stages within your classroom.

Chapter 5 Components of Literacy: Reading

1. How can the components of reading provide the basis for sound curriculum decisions and instructional approaches for all students?
2. Do our assessments align to the reading components, and do they provide adequate and appropriate data to guide instruction?
3. Do the materials we have sufficiently support the diverse needs of all students? Identify any areas of need.
4. Will staff development be available to address the essential components of reading, to meet the needs of administrators and teachers?

Chapter 6 Components of Literacy: Writing

1. What can early childhood educators do to develop writing skills in different genres of writing?
2. After reading about the five stages of spelling development, are there classroom implications for instruction? If so, at what grade levels?
3. Reflect on the teaching of writing. What changes will strengthen writing instruction?
4. How does our instruction support students' taking charge of their own writing and/or students working with peers on their writing?
5. Reflect on ways to improve the motivation of all students to write in the classroom.

Chapter 7 Content-Area Literacy

1. How do we create authentic reading and writing activities within our classrooms/school?
2. Are content teachers teaching students to "read and write like mathematicians, historians, scientists, and so forth?"
3. What reading and writing practices are specific to each content-area? How can we prepare students for success with these practices? How does our school support these literacy practices?
4. In what ways do we build vocabulary acquisition and its use in our classrooms/school? How does this teaching support the students learning of content knowledge?
5. How do we address both "depth" and "breadth" of content learning through literacy practices?
6. How are our content teachers incorporating the CCSS's demands of increased text complexity into their curricula? What types of scaffolds are in place to support struggling readers?
7. How might the "Implications for Classroom Instruction" sections help us plan future instruction?
8. Describe the ways we integrate the comprehension process throughout our reading instruction. How do we know students have comprehended the reading material (e.g., what behaviors are seen)?
9. How do we select differentiated texts for our students to ensure accessibility and rigor?
10. What writing practices do we teach to help students write effectively in our content-areas? How are our reading and writing practices integrated into our instruction?
11. How are 21st century literacies changing in each content-area? What kinds of supports are in place or what is needed for students to have access to these literacies?

Chapter 8 Comprehensive System of Assessment for Literacy

1. After reading the key questions, do we believe we need to examine the assessments we use in our schools/LEAs? Are there changes we need to make?
2. Are the intervention assessments in our schools/LEA appropriate? Do changes need to be made to streamline the system already in place?
3. What improvements could we make to the system of assessing our students in all types of writing?

Chapter 9 Literacy Intervention

1. What supplementary interventions, supports and services have proven effective to improve literacy within our school's RTI process? How does our school support the needs of struggling readers?
2. The passage states,

“Clearly, ‘good instruction for struggling readers focuses on a difference model, one that meets students at the point in their literacy development where they are performing and then seeks to move them forward, rather than a deficit model, which focuses on what students do not know.’”

What examples of this “good instruction” have we seen within our RTI model?

3. How does writing fit into our school/LEA's RTI model?
4. Is our school/LEA culturally responsive to the needs of EL students? In what ways?
5. Does our school/LEA have adequate resources to effectively support the third tier of RTI? If not, how do we best allocate our limited resources?
6. According to the research, "Many students start falling behind around the fourth grade." What is our school/LEA specifically doing to target the needs of this at-risk population of students?

Chapter 10 Growing Professionally: Teacher Preparation, Professional Development, and School Leadership

1. How is our professional growth indicative of the four characteristics of effective teaching?
2. In what ways does our school provide support for us to ensure professional growth throughout our careers (e.g., rigorous standards for teaching)?
3. How are teacher certification programs preparing educators for the rigorous climate of today's schools (e.g., evaluation, analysis of student data, literacy skills,)?
4. What collaborative structures are in place in our schools for us to share responsibility for student achievement?