

## MI Essential Instructional Practices in Early Literacy

The full listing of the MI Essential Instructional Practices in Early Literacy can be found online at:

<http://www.gomaisa.org/sites/default/files/K-3%20Literacy%20Essentials%203.2016.pdf#overlay-context=general-education-leadership-network>

**1**

### Deliberate, research-informed efforts to foster literacy motivation and engagement within and across lessons

The teacher:

1. creates opportunities for children to see themselves as successful readers and writers
2. provides daily opportunities for children to make choices in their reading and writing (choices may be a limited set of options or from extensive options but within a specified topic or genre)
3. offers regular opportunities for children to collaborate with peers in reading and writing, such as through small-group discussion of texts of interest and opportunities to write within group projects
4. helps establish purposes for children to read and write beyond being assigned or expected to do so, such as for their enjoyment/interest, to answer their questions about the natural and social world, to address community needs, or to communicate with a specific audience
5. uses additional strategies to generate excitement about reading and writing, such as book talks and updates about book series. The teacher avoids attempting to incentivize reading through non-reading-related prizes such as stickers, coupons, or toys, and avoids using reading and writing as “punishment” (e.g., “If you can’t listen, I’m going to send you to sit and read in the library”)

	Exact Path	Reading Eggs
1	Scaffolded reading lessons and activities motivate students to grow	Rewards are given to students who meet reading and Lexile® measure goals
2	Students can select their own paths within a set boundary	Students have personalization in reading lessons, activities, and book selection in a wide variety of genres and Lexile levels
3	Teacher Graded Activities increase the student’s depth of knowledge as they move through their learning paths	Teacher lesson plans offer opportunities to include small-group and class discussions
4	Instruction takes place using real-world examples of how students can use reading in their daily lives	The digital library allows students to select readings and activities based on interest
5	Engaging instruction includes themes that show reading in a positive light as a life skill	Students gain awards by increasing their reading level; these awards are used to allow students to play games related to reading skills

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## 2

**Read alouds of age-appropriate books and other materials, print or digital**

Read alouds involve:

1. sets of texts, across read aloud sessions, that are thematically and conceptually related and that offer opportunities to learn that children could not yet experience independently
2. modeling of appropriate fluency (accuracy, automaticity, and prosody) in reading
3. child-friendly explanations of words within the text and revisiting of those words after reading using tools such as movement, props, video, photo, examples, and non-examples, and engaging children in saying the words aloud and using the words at other points in the day and over time
4. higher-order discussion among children and teacher before, during, and after reading
5. instructional strategies, depending on the grade level and children’s needs, that:
  - a. develop print concepts, such as developing children’s directionality by running fingers under words and asking where to start, with texts being sufficiently visible to children that they can see specific features of print
  - b. model application of knowledge and strategies for word recognition
  - c. build knowledge of the structure and features of text, including, with regard to structure, key story elements and common informational text structures (compare-contrast, cause-effect, problem-solution, description, and sequence), and such as, with regard to text features, tables of content, diagrams, captions, and index
  - d. describe and model comprehension strategies, including activating prior knowledge/predicting; questioning; visualizing; monitoring and fix-up; drawing inferences; and summarizing/retelling
  - e. describe and model strategies for ascertaining the meaning of unfamiliar vocabulary from context

	Exact Path	Reading Eggs
1	Instruction includes consistent characters, stories, and situations that bridge between lessons	Instruction is separated into progress maps, each having a connected theme.
2	Grades K–4 learning progressions address reading foundations such as fluency and accuracy, and oral assessments reinforce	Stepping Stone Lessons build and reinforce foundational reading skills, including phonemic awareness, phonics, vocabulary, and fluency
3	Lessons include student-friendly explanations and activities using new vocabulary	New vocabulary is reinforced in photos, games, spelling tests, and stories
4	Physical reading dexterity activities not included	Teacher support and print materials provide a framework for working physically with students
5	Model application of knowledge strategies throughout	Model application of knowledge strategies throughout
5	Complete reading program includes all standard skills for students to become advanced readers	Complete reading program includes all standard skills for students to become advanced readers
5	Complete reading program includes all standard skills for students to become advanced readers	Complete reading program includes all standard skills for students to become advanced readers
5	Includes instruction on connections and parts of words in order to derive meaning of unknown words	Includes instruction on connections and parts of words in order to derive meaning of unknown words

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

The teacher:

1. ensures that children use most of their time actually reading and writing (or working toward this goal in kindergarten and early first grade)
2. coaches children as they engage in reading and writing, with reading prompts focusing primarily on (a) monitoring for meaning, (b) letters and groups of letters in words, (c) rereading
3. employs practices for developing reading fluency, such as repeated reading, echo reading, paired and partner reading
4. includes explicit instruction, as needed, in word recognition strategies, including multi-syllabic word decoding, text structure, comprehension strategies, and writing
5. is deliberate in providing quality instruction to children in all groups, with meaning-making the ultimate goal of each group’s work

	Exact Path	Reading Eggs
1	Intensive reading program requires active engagement from students in order to progress	Intensive reading program requires active engagement from students in order to progress
2	Includes instruction on reading strategies such as initial letter recognition and derivation of word meaning in context	Includes instruction on reading strategies from initial letter recognition to derivation of word meaning in context
3	Includes teacher-led oral fluency activities to support multiple modes of reading and includes automated grouping tool for grouping students by skill	Includes classroom planning and support materials to extend reading beyond the computer and includes simple data dashboards to allow teachers to easily group students by Lexile level
4	Complete reading program includes all standard skills for students to become advanced readers	Complete reading program includes all standard skills for students to become advanced readers
5	Award-winning and nationally recognized instruction content	Award-winning and nationally recognized instruction content

**Activities that build phonological awareness (grades K and 1 and as needed thereafter)**

**4** Teachers promote phonological awareness development, particularly phonemic awareness development, through explicit explanation, demonstration, play with sounds in words, and engaged study of words, by:

1. listening to and creating variations on books and songs with rhyming or alliteration
2. sorting pictures, objects, and written words by a sound or sounds (e.g., words with a short e sound versus words with a long e sound)
3. activities that involve segmenting sounds in words (e.g., Elkonin boxes, in which children move a token or letters into boxes, with one box for each sound in the word)
4. activities that involve blending sounds in words (e.g., “robot talk” in which the teacher says the sounds “fffff” “iiiiii” “shhhh” and children say fish)

- daily opportunities to write meaningful texts in which they listen for the sounds in words to estimate their spellings

	Exact Path	Reading Eggs
1	Complete reading program includes all standard skills for students to become advanced readers	Complete reading program includes all standard skills for students to become advanced readers
2		
3		
4		
5		

## 5 Explicit instruction in letter-sound relationships

Instruction in letter-sound relationships is:

- verbally precise and involving multiple channels, such as oral and visual or visual and tactile
- informed by careful observation of children’s reading and writing and, as needed, assessments that systematically examine knowledge of specific sound-letter relationships
- taught systematically in relation to students’ needs and aligned with the expectations of the Michigan K-3 Standards for English Language Arts
- accompanied by opportunities to apply knowledge of the letter-sound relationships taught by reading books or other connected texts that include those relationships
- reinforced through coaching children during reading, most notably by cueing children to monitor for meaning and by cueing children to attend to the letters in words and recognize letter-sound relationships they have been taught

	Exact Path	Reading Eggs
1	Complete reading program includes all standard skills for students to become advanced readers	Complete reading program includes all standard skills for students to become advanced readers
2	Frequent formative assessments ensure that students are gradually gaining reading skills	Frequent formative assessments ensure that students are gradually gaining reading skills
3	Frequent diagnostic and interim assessments ensure that content is aligned to student needs (MI alignment coming in spring)	Frequent diagnostic and interim assessments ensure that content is aligned to students’ needs (CCSS alignment only)
4	Complete reading program includes all standard skills for students to become advanced readers	Includes reading in context of instruction, short passages and full books all organized by skill, level, and context
5	Engaging curriculum designed to constantly monitor and coach students by including frequent activity, constructed response, and assessment	Engaging curriculum designed to constantly monitor and coach students by including frequent activity, constructed response, and assessment

## 6 Research- and standards-aligned writing instruction

The teacher provides:

- interactive writing experiences in grades K and 1
- daily time for children to write, aligned with instructional practice #1 above

3. instruction in writing processes and strategies, particularly those involving researching, planning, revising, and editing writing
4. opportunities to study models of and write a variety of texts for a variety of purposes and audiences, particularly opinion, informative/explanatory, and narrative texts (real and imagined)
5. explicit instruction in letter formation, spelling strategies, capitalization, punctuation, sentence construction, keyboarding, and word processing

	Exact Path	Reading Eggs
1	K–1 lessons include engaging, interactive writing activities	No writing in Reading Eggs
2	K–1 lessons include teacher-graded writing items	
3	All grade levels include instruction on researching, planning, revising, and editing writing	
4	All grade levels include instruction and practice in writing for a variety of purposes and audiences, including opinion, informative/explanatory, and narrative texts (real and imagined)	
5	Instruction in letter formation, spelling strategies, capitalization, punctuation, sentence construction and keyboarding/word processing through 8th grade	Instruction included for letter formation, spelling, capitalization, punctuation, and sentence conventions

## Intentional and ambitious efforts to build vocabulary and content knowledge

7

The teacher:

1. selects Tier 2 and Tier 3 vocabulary words to teach from read alouds of literature and informational texts and from content area curricula
2. introduces word meanings to children during reading and content area instruction using child-friendly explanations and by providing opportunities for children to pronounce the new words and to see the spelling of the new words
3. provides repeated opportunities for children to review and use new vocabulary over time, including discussing ways that new vocabulary relate to one another and to children’s existing knowledge, addressing multiple meanings or nuanced meanings of a word across different contexts, and encouraging children to use new words in meaningful contexts (e.g., discussion of texts, discussions of content area learning, semantic maps)
4. encourages talk among children, particularly during content-area learning and during discussions of print or digital texts
5. teaches morphology (i.e., meaning of word parts), including common word roots, inflections, prefixes, and affixes

	Exact Path	Reading Eggs
1	Includes cross-curricular reading passages and lessons from literature and informational text	Over 200 guided reading books from all subject areas
2	Consistent K–8 vocabulary building and 200 oral fluency passages	120 lessons which all include new vocabulary, word meanings, and spelling, plus supporting teacher-led speaking activities
3	Includes specific reading lessons to build on earlier vocabulary with new meanings and shades of word meanings	Includes consistent growth structure for vocabulary to build on students' current knowledge to identify meaning of unknown words
4	Includes teacher tools and materials to quickly identify levels of students for grouping for collaborative activities	Includes teacher tools and materials to quickly identify levels of students for grouping for collaborative activities
5	Includes instruction on common word roots, inflections, prefixes, and affixes to help students identify unknown words	Includes instruction on common word roots, inflections, prefixes, and affixes to help students identify unknown words

## 8

### Abundant reading material and reading opportunities in the classroom

The classroom includes:

1. a wide range of books and other texts, print, audio, and digital, including information books, poetry, and storybooks that children are supported in accessing
2. books and other materials connected to children's interests and that reflect children's backgrounds and cultural experiences, including class- and child-made books
3. books children can borrow to bring home and/or access digitally at home
4. comfortable places in which to read books, frequently visited by the teacher(s) and by adult volunteers recruited to the classroom
5. opportunities for children to engage in independent reading of materials of their choice every day, with the teacher providing instruction and coaching in how to select texts and employ productive strategies during reading, feedback on children's reading, and post-reading response activities including text discussion

	Exact Path	Reading Eggs
1	Includes reading passages for K–8 with audio and printable passages	Over 200 guided reading books from all subject areas, including audio and printable passages
2	Does not include a library of books	Includes a digital library of over 200 books organized by interest and reading level
3	Does not include a library of books	Includes a digital library of over 200 books organized by interest and reading level; books may also be provided in print form
4	Implementation plan and recommended implementation guides encourage appropriate setup of classrooms	Implementation plan and recommended implementation guides encourage appropriate setup of classrooms
5	Does not include a library of books	Includes a digital library of over 200 books organized by interest and reading level; books may also be provided in print form; books include teacher guides for implementing guided reading, connected lessons, and support

## 9

## Ongoing observation and assessment of children’s language and literacy development that informs their education

The teacher:

1. engages in observation and assessment that is guided by
  - a. an understanding of language and literacy development
  - b. the Michigan K to 12 Standards for English Language Arts
2. prioritizes observation during actual reading and writing
3. administers assessments as one source of information to identify children who may need additional instructional supports
4. employs formative and diagnostic assessment tools as needed to inform specific instructional targets (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)

	Exact Path	Reading Eggs
1	All content aligned to Common Core and MI standards	All content aligned to Common Core State Standards
2	Includes 200 teacher administered oral fluency passages	Includes hundreds of teacher materials for driving student observation activities
3	Includes up to four annual diagnostics and interim assessments to identify baseline knowledge and growth and includes automated grouping tool to allow teachers to quickly identify students needing assistance	Includes initial diagnostic assessment and ongoing interim assessments, allowing teachers to quickly identify struggling students
4	All diagnostic, formative, and summative assessments include data on specific skills and over 160 skills are included for K–8	All units (maps) include detailed skill bank assessments, including sight words, vocabulary, spelling, and Lexile levels

## 10

## Collaboration with families in promoting literacy

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 supporting families to:

1. prompt children during reading and writing and demonstrate ways to incorporate literacy-promoting strategies into everyday activities, such as cooking, communicating with friends and family, and traveling in the bus or car
2. promote children’s independent reading
3. support children in doing their homework and in academic learning over the summer months
4. speak with children in their home/most comfortable language, whether or not that language is English
5. provide literacy-supporting resources, such as:
  - a. books from the classroom that children can borrow or keep
  - b. children’s magazines
  - c. information about judicious, adult-supported use of educational television and applications that can, with guidance, support literacy development

- d. announcements about local events
- e. passes to local museums (for example, through [www. michiganactivitypass.info](http://www.michiganactivitypass.info))

	Exact Path	Reading Eggs
1	Uses situational-based lessons to connect students to everyday activities	Includes wide variety of nonfiction reading that places reading in context of everyday activities
2	All reading levels include independent reading passages	Over 200 reading books from all subject areas which can be used for independent reading
3	All materials can be accessed and worked on during non-school periods, and special assignments can be given by teachers for the summer months	All materials can be accessed and worked on during non-school periods, and special assignments can be given by teachers for the summer months
4	Includes translation tools in various languages	No world languages support
5	Includes reading passages for K–8 with audio and printable passages; implementation plan and recommended implementation guides encourage activities outside the program	Includes a digital library of over 200 books; books may also be provided in print form; implementation plan and recommended implementation guides encourage activities outside the program