

Creating a Comprehensive School-Wide AL/Vocabulary Program: Self Assessment Inventory

No Sort of Yes

Active Engagement Tools Used School Wide

- * All teachers understand the “Matthew Effects” and the need to structure active student engagement (optimize the amount of saying/writing/doing) 1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5
- * All teachers have been trained in the “Engagement Tool Kit” and have some mastery of using choral/partner/written/individual responses. 1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5
- * All teachers have learned “precision partners” (e.g. how to match students, determine who goes first, accountable listening, designated floaters, etc.) 1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5
- * School-wide plan to ensure ALL use these “best practice” tools (“Checklist Manifesto”) 1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5

Next Steps:

Academic Language (AL)

- * All teachers understand the “what & why” of Academic Language 1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5
- * AL is intentionally embedded into Core instruction across the grades and disciplines (e.g. Math, Science, ELA). 1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5
- * Teachers share/compare strategies to teach AL such as sentence frames/starters, correcting grammar errors, etc.
- * A particular focus on AL for English learners (e.g. part of structured English Language Development or ELD). 1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5
- * School-wide focus on explicit oral language development e.g. “say the whole thing”, “more miles on the tongue”. 1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5
- * All teachers effectively utilize the “engagement tool kit” to ensure Every student is actively responding to every lesson using AL . 1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5

Next Steps:

Increasing Reading Volume & Accountable Read Alouds/Listening

- * Daily Read-Alouds focus on vocabulary instruction & comprehension strategy practice; especially before and during reading. 1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5
- * A balance of texts includes a significant focus on non-fiction, esp. K-3 1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5
- * Any SSR or independent reading program is sufficiently structured/scaffolded so ALL students are reading (e.g. simple accountability built in) 1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5
- Daily time for reading: Teacher guided + scaffolded independent reading grows each grade from 17 min. in grade 1, to 30 min. in grade 2, to 40 min. in grade 3 & Up.

Next Steps:

Direct/Explicit Instruction & Use of Important Words

- * District and/or school teams prioritize vocabulary for instruction. 1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5
- * Target words include both high use academic and key topic specific. 1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5
- * All teachers understand & utilize an “evidence based” approach to

- teaching new terms (e.g. all students saying the word, explanation before definition, examples connecting to student's experience, etc.) 1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5
- * Teachers deepen understanding using an array of tactics based on the word itself, grade level, relative importance, etc, (e.g. images, acting out, graphic organizers, non-examples) 1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5
- * Teachers ensure ALL students apply the new words in sentences, writing, applying appropriate syntax and grammar (e.g. verb tense) over time. 1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5

Next Steps:

Explicit Teaching Independent Word Learning Strategies

- * Teachers understand the limits of using context to derive meaning of unknown words & teach students how to use the “inside/around/outside” strategy. 1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5
- * A clear focus on teaching prefixes and suffixes and how they work (gr. 3 & up) (e.g. prefixes usually modify the meaning of the root/base, suffixes the part of speech) 1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5
- * A focus on contextual learning, morphology (Latin/Greek roots) in grades 4/5 and above. 1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5
- * Students learn how to use various tools (dictionaries, thesaurus, online tools). 1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5

Next Steps:

Intentional Focus on Building Student Word Consciousness

- * Regular use of various review strategies to ensure “multiple exposures” to key terms 1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5
- * Explicit plan/strategies to ensure all students use newly learned terms on their own (e.g. Word Wizards), fun/engaging ways to incentivize this (e.g. starts, points, etc.) 1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5
- * Explicit plan/strategies to ensure all students notice and record/share interesting new words they encounter in their own reading etc. (e.g. Word Detectives, Neat Words) 1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5
- * Explicit plans/strategies to promote word play (e.g. hink pinks, hang man, various teacher directed “sponge” activities involving word games). 1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5
- * Connections to home/families to encourage and support word usage/play/exploration. 1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5
- * Explicit plans/strategies to ensure students use new terms in their writing. (e.g. word banks, vocabulary focus in writing rubrics). 1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5
- * Formative assessment activities that require application of new terms beyond simply memorization (e.g. Yes/No why?, Image/Explain, Show you know sentences) 1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5

Next Steps:

Site/District Leadership Supports an AL/Vocabulary Focus

- Clear commitment/agreement to create a school-wide AL/Vocab program. 1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5
- Time allocated for teacher collaboration to support the project. 1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5
- * Classroom walk throughs/coaching/etc. provides support & accountability. 1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5
- * Formative assessment is collected, analyzed, & acted upon to foster improvement. (e.g. part of PLC or grade level team focus using student work/assessment) 1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5
- * Teacher teams prioritize vocabulary harvested from core programs. 1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5
- * Word play, vocabulary focus is evident in faculty and other meetings, keep AL/Vocab on the school/district’s “radar screen”. 1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5

Overall Priorities for Continued Improvement in AL/Vocabulary Building