

Literacy Walk Essentials

Conduct literacy walks to observe evidence of literacy strategy instruction across subject areas. Use the results to support teachers and inform professional development. A literacy walk consists of three essential parts:

Planning

Team members identify the evidence to observe as they conduct the literacy walk. They may select (1) teacher instructional practices, (2) student engagement or work, and (3) physical classroom evidence of literacy instruction.

Observing

Members spend about ten minutes in each classroom to observe visible evidence of literacy instruction. They can record the evidence of literacy instruction and learning that they observe using a tally or checklist.

Reflection

Reassemble the team to evaluate, discuss, and interpret the evidence of literacy instruction. If a team visits ten classrooms and only observes one literacy strategy, the evidence indicates that teachers are not consistently integrating literacy strategies into their instruction. This quick and informal assessment will help the team make informed decisions about how to support teachers and choose additional professional development. If done in a non-threatening way, this approach will also spark professional discussions and provide opportunities for teacher modeling.

Sample Literacy Walk Tally

This tally shows evidence of literacy strategies in eight out of ten classrooms.

Number of Times Observed	Strategy	Examples
/ / / /	Prereading	Idea Wave, Anticipation Guide, Anchor Video, Preteaching Vocabulary
/ /	During Reading	Directed Reading-Thinking Activity (DRTA), Oral Cloze
/ /	Postreading	Think-Pair-Share, Numbered Heads

Name _____

Date _____

Observation Tool for Principals

Observe a classroom literacy strategy lesson and record your observations.

Teacher: _____ Strategy: _____ Length of Lesson: _____

1. How did the teacher **set expectations** for the strategy?

2. How did the teacher **motivate and focus** students?

3. • What did the teacher do to **teach** the strategy?

• How did the teacher **model** the strategy for students?

• How did the teacher **activate** students' **background knowledge**?

• How did the strategy help students **comprehend** the text?

• How did the teacher encourage **active participation**?

• How did the teacher **check for understanding** during and after the lesson?

4. How did the teacher provide opportunities for **directed and independent practice**?

5. How did the teacher **recap/wrap-up** the lesson?

My Questions/Suggestions:

