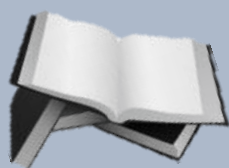


DIGGING DEEPER INTO CONTENT AREAS

Questions at the District/School and Teacher Level:



**English Language Arts (ELA)
Grades 3-5, 6-8, Keystone Literature**

COMPREHENSIVE VERSION



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Digging Deeper into Content Areas: English Language Arts (ELA)

Reflection questions are offered at two levels:

1. District and school level, for system-wide reflection, appropriate for district administrators, building principals, department chairs, content leaders, coaches
2. Teacher level, appropriate for individual teachers as they consider their data/information

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Disclaimer: This document was developed with feedback from individuals with expertise in the specific content area. However, if you find any errors or information of concern, please let us know as this is the first version of these content specific questions. Email pdepvaas@iu13.org.

Digging Deeper into Content Areas: District/School and Teacher Level Questions

As an individual teacher, a school or district administrator, and/or a member of a school-wide team, how do I use PVAAS data, along with other data, to analyze professional practices and engage in continuous improvement?

The Digging Deeper into Content Areas documents are available in the three core subjects, ELA, Math, and Science. These documents are designed to help teachers and administrators move from the initial step of identifying strengths, weaknesses, and patterns in data to determining the “root cause”—or the “why”—in order to plan for improvement and enhancements leading to continuous growth for all students.

This document focuses on English Language Arts (ELA), including questions at the Grade 3-5 level, the Grade 6-8 level, and for Keystone Literature. By looking at various contributing factors, *Digging Deeper into ELA* goes beyond the general questioning we might ask ourselves to the pertinent variables that must be addressed in analyzing data in this specific content area. Because data only tells us “what” is going on, not “why,” digging more deeply into a core subject area has great potential for improving student results!

It is widely acknowledged that self-reflection is key to improving one’s practices. However, teachers may ask, “What exactly should I reflect ON?” or, “What can I learn from the data?” or, “I analyzed the data, now what?” The teacher specific questions can help guide that process. Likewise, the questions may help administrators, both at the district and the school level, as well as school-wide teams to determine why they may be seeing patterns in school-wide data.

Using these questions effectively has the potential to take what might be a random process to a level of organization that encourages strategic discussion and probing in the specific core subject area being examined.

How to Use this Resource

1. Review the entire document first to become familiar with the format and the scope of questions offered for discussion and probing.
2. Decide whether you are beginning with the district/school level questions or the teacher level questions.
 - a. Note: If you are a district level administrator, there are questions included that allow for a systems-level perspective. Many of these questions fall in the *School-Curriculum* section, as that area is typically addressed as an entire system.
3. Determine if there is one area on which you need to focus (Curriculum, Instruction, Assessment, or Organization), or if the issues may be dispersed across the four areas.
4. Carefully read and reflect on the areas you are targeting and star/flag those questions that you (or the data team) believes to be worth further “digging,” discussion, and reflection.
5. Consider other data and determine the EVIDENCE to support your reflection and analyses.
6. Choose one or more areas for goal setting and focus to apply to the current group of students in your classroom or school.

Remember, this is not a checklist or sequenced in any specific order to be simply handed to the school-wide team or individual teacher. Rather, it is a listing of issues to explore more deeply. The document requires discussion about evidence of practice and honest reflection, along with careful selection of where to start and how deeply to probe. The focus and starting point is dependent on the school’s current status and needs, as well as the needs of individual teachers. Each question is to be considered and answered with solid evidence.

Resources and Evidence: ELA Grades 3-5, Grades 6-8, Keystone Literature

To dig more deeply in ELA Education, it is beneficial to focus on these major sources of information. Evidence for reflection on each question may come from knowledge of information in one or more of these resources.

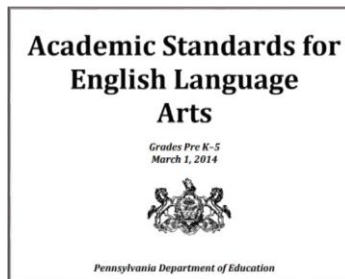
PDE SAS Portal

<http://www.pdesas.org>



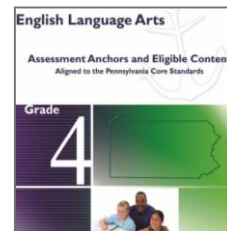
PA English Language Arts Core Standards

<http://www.pdesas.org/Standard/StandardsDownloads>



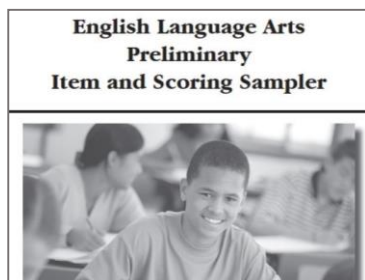
ELA Assessment Anchors and Eligible Content

<http://www.pdesas.org/Standard/AnchorDownloads>



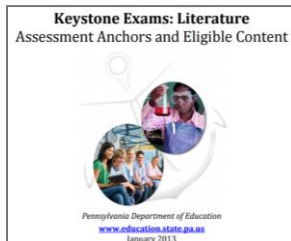
ELA Item Sampler

<http://www.education.pa.gov/K-12/Assessment%20and%20Accountability/PSSA/Pages/default.aspx#.VYhKbfVhHw>



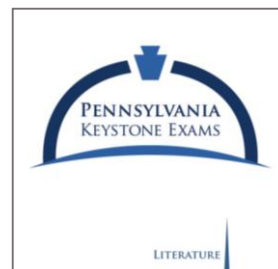
Keystone Literature Assessment Anchors and Eligible Content

<http://www.pdesas.org/standard/KeystoneDownloads>



Keystone Literature Item Sampler

<http://static.pdesas.org/Content/Documents/Keystone Literature Feb 2011 Item and Scoring Sampler.pdf>



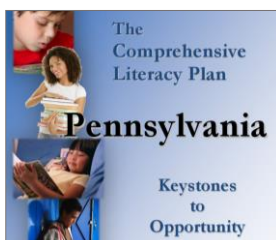
ELA Emphasis Guides

<http://www.pdesas.org/Standard/PACore>

CONTINUED EMPHASIS	SPECIFIC PA CORE EMPHASIS
Comprehension Skills (Fiction and Non-Fiction)	- Emphasizing use of non-fiction text (Introduction to ELA Key Considerations) - Identifying non-fiction text structures to aid in comprehension (problem/solution, cause/effect) (CC.1.2.5.E) - Analyzing the impact point of view has on a text (CC.1.2.5.D) - Assessing how illustrations/multi-media contribute to text presentation (CC.1.3.5.G) - Comparing and contrasting structures, ideas, etc. between any (CC.1.3.5.C) - Clarifying relationships between theme and topic (CC.1.2.5.C) - Providing explicit support when drawing inferences (CC.1.2.5.F) - Citing reasons and evidence used by the author (CC.1.2.5.H) - Varying sentence structure to convey meaning and maintain interest (CC.1.4.5.E, CC.1.4.5.K, CC.1.4.5.Q)
Vocabulary Development	- Using multiple strategies to determine meaning of unknown words (CC.1.3.5.I) - Developing vocabulary through the use of dictionaries and the (CC.1.3.5.I)

PA Comprehensive Literacy Plan

<http://static.pdesas.org/content/documents/PA%20Comprehensive%20Literacy%20Plan.pdf>



Hess' Cognitive Matrix/Webb's Depth of Knowledge

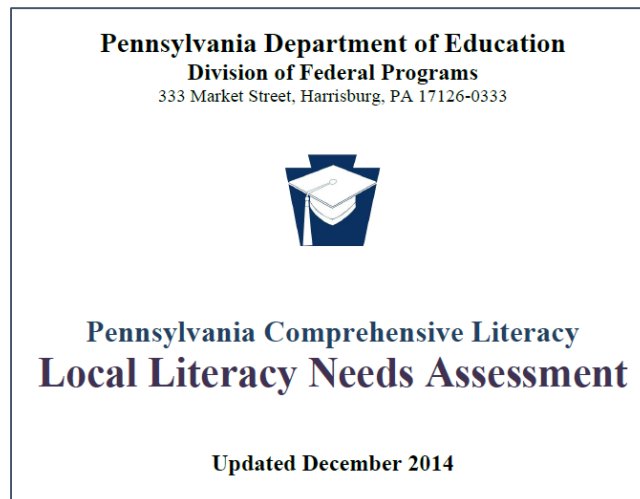
<http://static.pdesas.org/content/documents/M1-Slide 22 DOK Hess Cognitive Rigor.pdf>

Hess' Cognitive Rigor Matrix & Curricular Examples: Applying Webb's Depth-of-Knowledge Levels to Bloom's			
Revised Bloom's Taxonomy	Webb's DOK Level 1 Recall & Reproduction	Webb's DOK Level 2 Skills & Concepts	Webb's DOK Level 3 Strategic Thinking/Reasoning
Remember Retrieve knowledge from long-term memory; recognize, recall, locate, identify	- Recall, recognize, or locate basic facts, details, events, or ideas explicit in texts - Read words only in connected text with fluency & accuracy	- Specify, explain, show relationships; explain why, cause-effect - Give non-examples/samples - Summarize results, concepts, ideas - Make basic inferences or logical predictions from data or texts - Identify main ideas or accurate generalizations of facts - Locate information to support explicit/implicit central ideas - Write simple sentences - Use language structure (grammar) or word relationships	- Explain, generalize, or create using supporting (quote, example, text ref) - Identify make inferences; explicit or implicit theme - Describe how word choice, view, or bias may affect interpretation of a text for specific purpose, tone, & audience - Write multi-paragraph (for specific purpose, tone, & audience) - Apply a concept in a new situation - Revise final draft for me
Understand Construct meaning; clarify, paraphrase, represent, translate, illustrate, give examples, classify, differentiate, summarize, generalize, infer a logical conclusion, predict, compare/contrast, match like ideas, explain, construct models	- Identify or describe literary elements (characters, setting, sequence, etc.) - Select appropriate words when intended meaning/definition is clearly evident - Describe/explain who, what, where, when, or how - Define/describe facts, details, terms, principles - Write simple sentences - Use language structure (grammar) or word relationships	- Specify, explain, show relationships; explain why, cause-effect - Give non-examples/samples - Summarize results, concepts, ideas - Make basic inferences or logical predictions from data or texts - Identify main ideas or accurate generalizations of facts - Locate information to support explicit/implicit central ideas - Write simple sentences - Use language structure (grammar) or word relationships	- Explain, generalize, or create using supporting (quote, example, text ref) - Identify make inferences; explicit or implicit theme - Describe how word choice, view, or bias may affect interpretation of a text for specific purpose, tone, & audience - Write multi-paragraph (for specific purpose, tone, & audience) - Apply a concept in a new situation - Revise final draft for me
Apply Carry out or use a procedure in	- Identify or describe literary elements (characters, setting, sequence, etc.) - Select appropriate words when intended meaning/definition is clearly evident - Describe/explain who, what, where, when, or how - Define/describe facts, details, terms, principles - Write simple sentences - Use language structure (grammar) or word relationships	- Specify, explain, show relationships; explain why, cause-effect - Give non-examples/samples - Summarize results, concepts, ideas - Make basic inferences or logical predictions from data or texts - Identify main ideas or accurate generalizations of facts - Locate information to support explicit/implicit central ideas - Write simple sentences - Use language structure (grammar) or word relationships	- Explain, generalize, or create using supporting (quote, example, text ref) - Identify make inferences; explicit or implicit theme - Describe how word choice, view, or bias may affect interpretation of a text for specific purpose, tone, & audience - Write multi-paragraph (for specific purpose, tone, & audience) - Apply a concept in a new situation - Revise final draft for me

An Additional Resource

Pennsylvania Comprehensive Local Literacy Needs Assessment: Purpose and Background

In 2012, Pennsylvania's Keystones to Opportunity (KtO) Grant awarded significant dollars to LEAs/districts to address their gaps in literacy in the Birth-Grade 12 continuum. To ensure that funds were being allocated in areas that will address the greatest need, all applicants were required to complete a Local Literacy Needs Assessment. This document calls for districts to establish a Literacy Planning Team with representation from each of the statutory areas (Birth - Age 5, Elementary, Middle, and High school). After completing the Needs Assessment individually, the planning teams convened to discuss findings and establish consensus on the areas of strength and areas of need. This in-depth analysis provides LEAs/districts with the information needed to identify specific needs within a component or a statutory area, or identify any needs existing across the continuum. Results showed a consistent need in a single statutory area (e.g., High School) or a consistent need within a component spanning across all areas (e.g., Transition). These findings allowed the district to identify priority areas for growth and intervention, when writing or revisiting their Local Comprehensive Literacy Plan. This resource used by KtO recipients is available for use by all LEAs/districts in Pennsylvania. Many have already used this resources to assess the needs of their Birth-Grade 12 literacy program.



<http://static.pdesas.org/Content/Documents/Pennsylvania%20Comprehensive%20Local%20Literacy%20Needs%20Assessment.pdf>

ELA Grades 3-5: System Level Questions (District/School)

How might our system structures and practices at the district and school level related to Curriculum, Instruction, Assessment, and Organization contribute to our achievement and growth outcomes in English Language Arts?

These questions are offered as a vehicle to guide purposeful reflection, and should be considered and answered with clear evidence. This list is not exhaustive and is not a checklist. The questions do not need to be asked in the order in which they are numbered. (Numbers are provided only as a reference for use.) Rather, it is intended to help generate thinking specific to the district/building level ELA program. Through the information provided by PVAAS, along with other assessment data, this document is intended to assist in determining potential root causes leading to plans of action (looking back and looking forward). Building level administrators, ELA coordinators, and building level coaches may find these reflection questions helpful in analyzing data at a system level for the school. Additionally, questions are included that allow for a broader system level perspective, and district level administrators may find the questions helpful in analyzing the K-12 ELA program across the LEA/district.

**Each question indicates the related domain(s) from The Framework for Teaching:*

PP= Planning and Preparation

CE=Classroom Environment

I= Instruction

PR= Professional Responsibilities

C-1. Is the Grade 3-5 ELA written curriculum aligned to the PA Core Standards? (PP)

District/School: ELA Gr 3-5

CURRICULUM



- How frequently is the written curriculum reviewed/revised through analysis of student data?
- Is the curriculum both “guaranteed and viable”? (Marzano)
 - Guaranteed: equal access to the written curriculum for all students
 - Viable: adequate time for teachers to teach content and for students to learn it.
- Has an alignment been done that shows where certain skills/concepts are missing? Which concepts/skills need to be enhanced? Which concepts and skills are not included? Which concepts and skills lack a sufficient amount of practice embedded in the curriculum? Have lessons been developed to fill identified gaps?
- Were the ELA Emphasis Guides used to develop the written curriculum?
- Does the ELA written curriculum address fidelity to the ELA core program, clarifying the use of the ELA core program? Do both the core ELA program and the written curriculum meet the rigor required by the PA Core Standards?
- Do unit maps exist to guide lesson planning and instruction? Are they reviewed periodically and revised to address students’ needs, as identified through data analysis?

C-2. Does the written curriculum connect concepts and skills vertically, showing the progression of skills necessary for students to acquire deep understanding and to build upon prior knowledge? (PP)

- How does this years’ curriculum build on students’ prior knowledge and experiences from the previous year?

- How will the ELA content for this year lay the foundation for topics the students will explore in the next grade or upper-level grades?
- Do teachers engage in dialogue with teachers in grade levels above and below to examine the strengths and weaknesses of the overall program and prioritize needs of students?
- Are there opportunities for teacher collaboration on the vertical articulation of the K-5 written curriculum with the 6-8 ELA written curriculum?

C-3. Does the written curriculum systematically integrate reading, writing, speaking and listening throughout the day across all subject areas? (PP)

- Does the written curriculum for science, social studies, math, and all subject areas include ELA concepts and skills?
- Is writing a regular part of all subject areas?
- Do all teachers, including special areas teachers, view themselves as ELA teachers?

C-4. Is the core ELA program aligned to the PA Core Standards? (PP)

- Is the core literacy program evidence-based?
- Has an alignment been conducted to determine missing skills/concepts?
- Have lessons been created to fill any identified gaps?

C-5. Is the K-2 ELA written curriculum designed to ensure that students are receiving instruction in the essential elements of Literacy (phonemic awareness, phonics, vocabulary, fluency, comprehension, receptive and expressive language, and writing)? (PP)

- As evidenced by assessment data, does the kindergarten program provide the appropriate amount of effective instruction in phonemic awareness?
- Are there opportunities for vertical articulation reviews of the K-2 and 3-5 written curriculum and revisions made as needed?
- Does the written curriculum systematically integrate reading, writing, speaking and listening throughout the day across all subject areas? (For example, does the written curriculum for science, social studies, math and all subject areas include ELA concepts and skills?)

C-6. Does the written curriculum in ELA address the appropriate level of rigor (Webb's Depth of Knowledge/DOK)? (PP)

- Is the concept of rigor understood as different from difficulty level?
- Does the level of rigor in the curriculum match the rigor of each standard?
- Is there a balance of DOK levels 1, 2, and 3?
- Are there opportunities for DOK level 4 tasks?

C-7. Does the written curriculum specify use of text/resources at the appropriate level of text complexity? (PP)

C-8. Does the reading curriculum and/or core literacy program explicitly and sufficiently address systematic and explicit instruction in phonics and decoding? (PP)

- Are phonics skills introduced/reinforced to students following an evidence-based phonics scope and sequence?

C-9. Does the ELA written curriculum/core literacy program address vocabulary instruction through consistent and effective evidence-based methods? (PP)

- Does the written curriculum address vocabulary in a purposeful and explicit manner?
- Is there a school-wide program in place?
- Is vocabulary instruction embedded in unit maps? Lesson plans?
- Are specific vocabulary terms identified at each grade level?
- Are there evidence-based practices in place to teach vocabulary?

C-10. What is the balance between fiction and informational text? (PP)

- Is the balance appropriate and aligned to PA Core Standards, and if not, how is this addressed?
- In district written curriculum?
- In core literacy program?

C-11. Is fluency appropriately addressed in the core literacy program/district written curriculum? (PP)

C-12. Is differentiation of instruction an expectation, and specified in the district written curriculum? (PP)

C-13. Are teachers aware of the resources on the PDE SAS Portal (pdesas.org) in ELA? (PP, PR)



I-1. Do all students receive instruction on grade level PA Core Standards? (I)

- Is the delivery of instruction equitable across all students/all student groups?
- For students performing significantly below grade level, are the appropriate scaffolds in place to allow them to access and benefit from the core ELA curriculum?

District/School: ELA Gr 3-5

INSTRUCTION



I-2. Is there an observable alignment between the written, taught, and assessed curriculum? (PP, I)

- Does daily instruction in all classrooms align to the written curriculum?
- Is there a process in place to monitor that there is alignment between what is written, what is taught, and what is tested?
- Does differentiated instruction occur in all classrooms, with attention to the necessary pacing of the curriculum?

I-3. Are unit and lesson objectives/essential questions/learning intentions clear to students? (PP, I)

- Are the objectives communicated clearly in written and oral form?
- Are the objectives aligned to PA Core Standards?
- Are the objectives aligned with district ELA written curriculum?

I-4. Do all students receive effective instruction in all components of the curriculum (reading process, literary analysis, writing process, writing applications, communication, information and media literacy)? (I)

I-5. Is sufficient time allocated in the school master schedule for ELA at all grade levels? (I, PR)

- Do the actual instructional minutes closely mirror the allocated time on paper?

I-6. Within the ELA time block, is instructional time allocated to whole group, small group, and individual instruction? (PP, CE, I)

- Do all teachers provide whole group, small group and individual instruction for all students?
- Is there a grade level pacing guide used by all teachers, with flexibility to respond to students' needs?
- Do all students participate in whole group instruction, for example, in shared reading?

I-7. Are flexible reading skills groups used to provide targeted instruction at students' instructional levels and according to identified needs? (PP, I)

- Are they flexible to align with individual students' needs at appropriate points in time?
- Are groups adjusted, as informed by progress monitoring?

I-8. Is the core literacy program being implemented with fidelity? (PP, I)

- What is the evidence that all components of the core program are implemented as designed?
- Is this implementation consistent across classrooms?
- Is there a consistent observation/reflection protocol in use to ensure fidelity of the core?
- What is the process for determining the use of additional resources and materials?

I-9. Is there evidence of appropriate emphasis and instruction on both comprehension and decoding skills at each grade level? (PP, I)

- Are advanced phonics skills taught at grade levels 3-5 for decoding multi-syllabic words (e.g., affixes, root words, r-controlled vowels)?
- Do students have the opportunity to synthesize information from multiple texts about the same subject/idea?

I-10. Do students have the opportunity to synthesize or critique information from multiple texts about the same subject/idea? (I)

I-11. Are all students instructed using texts at the appropriate level of text complexity? (PP, I)

- Rigorous enough for the grade level?

I-12. Do all students have adequate reading practice through the use of choral reading, close reading, partner reading, literature circles, or individual turns in small groups? (I)

- Do all students have multiple opportunities to read?

I-13. Do students have sufficient opportunities to hear and practice fluent reading? (I)

I-14. Is vocabulary explicitly and consistently taught using evidence based techniques and strategies? (PP,I)

- Can all teachers identify how vocabulary words are chosen at each grade level?
- Can all teachers identify effective vs. ineffective vocabulary strategies? Is vocabulary taught using evidence-based strategies?
- Is there a school-wide vocabulary program in place?
- Is instruction in morphology (the study of meaningful units – e.g., root words) in place at all levels?

I-15. Is comprehension taught through explicit modeling and a gradual release of responsibility (I DO, WE DO, YOU DO)? (I)

- Are all aspects of the literacy program (decoding, advanced word study, vocabulary, etc.) taught in this manner?

I-16. Are students required to respond to and/or create higher-level questions (e.g., inferential, analytical) about shared readings and selections read? (I)

- Are activities and tasks at appropriate Webb's Depth of Knowledge levels?
- Are there opportunities for students to write academic responses to questions about texts?
- Are all teachers using effective questioning techniques, including but not limited to wait time, student name placement in questioning, random and strategic calling on students, high level questioning mixed with appropriate lower level questions?

I-17. Is independent work purposeful and directly related to building literacy skills? Is it consistent across all classrooms? (I)

I-18. Is there evidence of the use of manipulatives/visual aids (e.g., Elkonian boxes, affix cards, word/sound walls)? (I)

I-19. Is instruction differentiated during both whole group and small group instruction? (I)

- How? In what ways?
- Are teachers trained and supported in how to differentiate instruction specific to learning objectives/targets in ELA?
- Is differentiation of instruction an expectation, as supported/documented by the core program and district written curriculum?
- Are small groups/flexible groups used to provide differentiation within the math classroom?
- Are extension tasks provided for those students who are demonstrating mastery at the expected level?

I-20. Is technology used to differentiate instruction and provide additional practice on targeted skill areas? (I)

- Is technology used as a medium for reading in all content areas?
- Is there a process for selecting effective technology resources?
- Do all teachers have access to technology resources?

I-21. Are students provided with exemplary writing samples, assessment rubrics, real-world writing tasks, writing in response to reading, and oral and written feedback on their writing? (I)

I-22. Is writing instruction taught explicitly and systematically at all grade levels? (I)

I-23. Is spelling instruction provided explicitly and systematically? (I)

I-24. Are students receiving tiered interventions that provide specific instruction targeted to skill needs? (I)



A-1. Is there a district/building assessment map/calendar/plan accessible to all teachers? (I)

District/School: ELA Gr 3-5

ASSESSMENT



- Are valid and reliable assessment measures in place to screen, diagnose, monitor, and evaluate literacy outcomes for all students? Is this followed and implemented by all teachers?
- Has the range of assessments been evaluated for their purposes, to ensure that there is no unnecessary redundancy/overlap, nor important skill areas missing?
- Do all teachers have access to this plan and follow it, administering all required assessments in a timely manner, as per the schedule and with integrity of the administration?
- Is there consistency and agreement on the use of assessments available through the literacy program, along with other school-wide assessments?
- Are there scheduled times for staff to review new data in a timely manner to adjust instruction, groupings, etc.?

A-2. Have the assessments available in the ELA core literacy program been analyzed to determine which are to be used as common assessments? (PP, I, PR)

- Will all assessments in the core literacy program/package be used or some?
- How are these assessments chosen?
- How do these assessments mesh with other chosen assessments such as AIMSweb or DIBELS Next?

A-3. Are students assessed at appropriate levels of Webb's Depth of Knowledge (performance tasks, objective assessments, and oral questioning)? (I)

- Are assessment items reflective of the rigor of the standards being addressed?

A-4. Are formative and summative assessments established and used by all teachers? (I)

- Are common assessments in place?
- Are the assessments valid?
- Do all teachers have strong assessment literacy skills?

A-5. Do formative assessments measures, specifically questioning strategies, include higher-level questions (e.g., inferential, analytical) about shared readings and selections read? (I)

- Is there an analysis of the assessment data to inform the need for additional, specific skill instruction?

A-6. Are teachers aware of students' reading skills through a universal screening process in place at building level? (PP, I)

- Does universal screening occur early in the school year to effectively inform instruction?
- Is the universal screening considered along with PVAAS student projections?

A-7. Are benchmark assessments used to monitor progress of students throughout a given grade level/year? (I)

A-8. Are diagnostic assessments in place (e.g., CDTs, Core Phonics Survey) to inform instruction at Tier 1 as well as Tiers 2/3? (I)

A-9. Are progress monitoring measures in place and conducted by classroom teachers (DIBELS Next, DAZE, AIMSweb)? (I)

- Are students at moderate and high risk levels progress monitored with appropriate frequency?

A-10. Is writing assessed through evidence-based assessment practices, i.e., a common framework/rubrics, ensuring a consistent approach across subjects and grade levels? (I)

A-11. Is student progress closely monitored to ensure that students who are falling behind are provided proactive support through differentiation/multi-tiered system of support (MTSS/RtII)? Is there a structure in place that ensures this monitoring occurs on a prescribed basis? (I)

A-12. Are additional data/information on reading, writing, speaking and listening available at the classroom and individual student level? How is this additional information analyzed along with PVAAS reporting? (I)

Example: (1) What does the DIBELS Next Summary of Effectiveness report (for Grade 6) indicate, and how does that match data available through PVAAS? (2) What information from the CDT can be integrated for analysis along with PVAAS data?

A-13. Are there school-wide/grade level data meetings established for teachers to collaborate on analysis of data and action planning? (I, PR)

- Do protocols exist for the analysis of data?
- Are key data team members identified and trained?
- How frequently is data analyzed, and groupings/instruction changed as result of data analysis?
- Do grade level data meetings align closely with the district assessment plan?



O-1. Are teachers provided on-going professional development in ELA Standards and best practices? (PR)

- How are new teachers trained in the implementation of the core literacy program and in how to deliver the ELA curriculum?
- Are teachers knowledgeable of available resources, as well as recent and relevant research on how students learn to read?
- How is professional development provided to experienced teachers who are new to the content area or grade level?

District/School: ELA Gr 3-5

ORGANIZATION



O-2. Are staff (regular education, special education, remedial/Title I, paraeducator) utilized in a variety of ways to maximize small group instructional opportunities? (I)

O-3. Does the master schedule include appropriate time for literacy instruction (reading, writing, speaking and listening)? (I)

- Do all teachers adhere to the master schedule? Is there a check between allocated time on the master schedule and actual instructional time in the classroom?
- Do teachers effectively utilize the block of time for whole group as well as small group instruction and is this consistent across a grade level?
- Is this time protected from meeting time, assemblies, and other interruptions?
- Is there a grade level pacing guide/schedule in place, with flexibility to address students' pacing needs?

O-4. Has a database been established (and is it used) to collect and summarize school-level and student-level literacy data (benchmark, diagnostic, summative, formative), with immediate and easy access for all teachers? (PR, I)

O-5. Has a multi-tiered system of support (MTSS/RtII) been established to provide additional supports to students (Tiers 2 and 3)? (PP, I)

O-6. Is there an effective schedule in place that ensures that students do not miss instructional time in order to receive tiered support? (PP)

O-7. Are intervention group sizes appropriate to the level of support needed by students (e.g., MTSS/RtII, Tiers 2/3)? (I)

O-8. Are the core program and intervention program materials/approaches aligned and coordinated for students receiving both core and tiered intervention support? (PP)

O-9. Does the master schedule allow for PLC (professional learning community) time/data meeting time for collaboration and planning? (PP, PR)

- If so, what is the frequency? Who is responsible for planning/monitoring for the effective use of this time?
- If not, how can this be built into the master schedule?

O-10. Are there opportunities for teacher collaboration on the vertical articulation of the K-5 written curriculum with the 6-8 ELA written curriculum? (PP, PR)

O-11. Do all teachers engage in regular conversations regarding how to connect skills and concepts horizontally as well as vertically from grade to grade? (PP, I)

- Is there knowledge and planning for vertical progression of skills?
- Are there opportunities for teacher collaboration on the vertical articulation of the K-5 written curriculum with the 6-8 ELA written curriculum?

ELA Grades 3-5: Teacher Level Questions

How might my practices and knowledge level related to Curriculum, Instruction, Assessment, and Organization contribute to the achievement and growth results of my students?

These questions are offered as a vehicle for individual teachers to guide self-reflection in a purposeful and systematic manner. Each question/probe should be thoughtfully considered and answered with clear evidence.

Teachers: As you consider each question/probe, ask yourself, “What is my evidence?”

This list is not exhaustive and is not a checklist. The questions do not need to be asked in the order in which they are numbered. (Numbers are provided only as a reference for use.) Rather, it is intended to help generate thinking as a teacher considers his/her PVAAS teacher specific report on an annual basis. These questions, when considered through the lens of data available through PVAAS and other assessments, are intended to guide the self-reflection process and to assist in identifying root causes and developing action plans for the current group of students.

**Each question also indicates the related domain(s) from The Framework for Teaching*

PP= Planning and Preparation

CE= Classroom Environment

I= Instruction

PR= Professional Responsibilities

C-1. Am I knowledgeable about the PA Core Standards at my grade level (assessment anchors, eligible content, etc.)? (PP)

- Am I familiar with resources available to me on the PDE SAS Portal (pdesas.org)?
- Do I have strong knowledge of the PA Core Standards, assessment anchors, and eligible content, and plan accordingly?
- Am I knowledgeable about effective instructional techniques/tools in all areas of literacy (reading, writing, speaking, listening)?

Teacher: ELA Gr 3-5

CURRICULUM



C-2. Am I using the district written curriculum and core literacy program, following prescribed protocols and procedures for literacy instruction? (PP)

C-3. Am I implementing all of the components of the core literacy program as intended? (PP, I)

C-4. Am I choosing appropriate materials and resources? (PP)

C-5. Am I ensuring that students have the appropriate balance of reading practice in both fiction and informational texts? (PP, I)

C-6. Am I knowledgeable about text complexity and using appropriate levels of texts with students? (PP)

C-7. Am I accessing and applying the most current research on literacy? Am I aware of and using key resources available to me? (PP, I, PR)

Example: Attending available training such as KtO, PA-LETRS, National Reading Panel findings, pdesas.org, PA Core Standards, FCRR, accessing in-house coaches and support, etc.



I-1. Am I providing all students with whole group instruction based on grade level PA Core Standards? (PP, I)

- Am I scaffolding instruction for students who are functioning below grade level to provide them with opportunities to access and benefit from the ELA core curriculum?

Teacher: ELA Gr 3-5

INSTRUCTION



I-2. Am I clear with students on each lesson's learning target(s)? (I)

- Are lesson objectives/essential questions posted and communicated?
- Do lesson plans clearly delineate the lesson objectives/essential questions/learning intentions?
- Are students able to articulate the learning target for the lesson?

I-3. Am I using the allocated reading block time effectively and efficiently? (CE, I)

- Are there smooth transitions between whole group and small group instruction?
- Is my pace of direct instruction brisk, yet responsive to students' needs?
- Am I prepared for each small group so as to maximize allocated small group time?
- Are independent learning tasks/stations aligned to specific learning targets? Are they meaningful and differentiated for the various small groups?

I-4. Am I knowledgeable about Webb's Depth of Knowledge (DOK), and therefore providing tasks and questions at levels 1, 2, 3, and 4 for all students? (PP, CE, I)

I-5. Am I ensuring that students have the appropriate balance of reading practice in both fiction and informational texts? (PP, I)

I-6. Am I providing systematic and explicit phonics instruction, for the decoding of multi-syllabic words to all students as needed? (I)

I-7. Are all students receiving sufficient practice in oral reading? Are there certain groups of students who may need more guided practice? (CE, I)

I-8. Do I model fluent reading for my students? (I)

I-9. Have I made it clear to students that fluency is not about just reading faster? Do I – and my students – have a clear understanding of what fluency means and do I know how to teach fluency using evidence based strategies (e.g, fluency boxes, fluency phrases, fluency poems, repeated readings)? (I)

I-10. Am I teaching vocabulary in an explicit manner, using evidence-based strategies? (I)

- Am I aware of the difference between academic vocabulary and content-specific vocabulary, and am I addressing both?
- Am I knowledgeable about morphology (meaningful units in words), and am I providing instruction in morphology?

I-11. Am I knowledgeable about the critical importance of background knowledge as it impacts comprehension, and providing necessary background knowledge as needed as a pre-reading strategy? (I)

- Do I provide access to texts to develop my students' background knowledge?

I-12. Am I providing direct instruction in comprehension, such as how to determine main idea, locate and provide supporting details, identify cause and effect, make predictions, retell, identify text features, etc.? (I)

I-13. Am I teaching spelling as a reciprocal process to reading/decoding? (I)

- Is it therefore differentiated and aligned?

I-14. Am I engaging all students through active participation techniques – and the use of age appropriate content of interest? (CE, I)

I-15. Am I providing timely feedback to all students? (CE, I)

- Am I using questioning to provide feedback to guide students in helping them address misconceptions, improve their work, and/or guide their thinking?

I-16. Is the independent work that I am providing clearly targeting skills that facilitate reading growth? (PP, I)

I-17. Am I promoting independent reading? How do I ensure accountability for what the students read independently? (CE, I)

I-18. Am I motivating students through goal setting, monitoring, and/or graphing their own progress? (CE, I)

I-19. Am I using flexible skills grouping to provide direct instruction to students based on their targeted skill needs? (CE, I)

- Do I monitor student progress within flexible groups and change groups as needed?
- Am I identifying students who are in need of additional supports and providing that differentiation in the regular classroom?

I-20. Am I identifying students who are in need of additional supports and providing that differentiation in the regular classroom? (CE, I)

I-21. Are the materials and texts that I'm using appropriate to the instructional levels of varying groups of students? (PP, I)

I-22. Am I using effective questioning techniques, including but not limited to wait time, student name placement in questioning, random and strategic calling on students, high level questioning mixed with the appropriate lower level questions? (I)



A-1. Am I assessing students with the agreed upon common assessments (benchmark, diagnostic, summative, formative), as per the district assessment plan? (I)

Teacher: ELA Gr 3-5

ASSESSMENT



A-2. Am I considering all available achievement and growth assessment data on students as I plan and deliver instruction? (PP, I)

Example: PVAAS teacher specific report, PVAAS value added and performance/quintile diagnostic, PVAAS student projection data, and PSSA, AIMSweb, DIBELS Next, DAZE, CDT, CBM, PSSA, GRADE, etc.

A-3. Am I using the established building level universal screening process to inform instruction and grouping, including identifying students in need of supplemental supports? (PP, I)

- Am I using the PVAAS projection score for individual students in my classroom to assist in grouping decisions and the degree/frequency of progress monitoring needed?
- Am I using the PVAAS student projection score to assist in determining needs for tiered interventions?

A-4. Am I monitoring the progress of all students through evidence-based assessments and practices? (I, PR)

A-5. Am I monitoring the progress of all students through benchmark assessments to determine who is at risk, the level of risk, and then providing related instruction? (PP, I)

A-6. Am I able to interpret the results of benchmark assessments being used (e.g., DIBELS Next, AIMSweb)? (I)

- Am I monitoring the progress of all students through benchmark assessments to determine who is at risk, the level of risk, and then providing related instruction?

Example: DIBELS Next Summary of Effectiveness report – are all students at benchmark at BOY (beginning of year) continuing to hit benchmarks at MOY (middle of year) and EOY (end of year)?

A-7. Am I using the established building level universal screening process to provide selected students with supplemental supports (Tiers 2/3) before they begin to struggle/fail? (PP, I)

A-8. Am I identifying students who are in need of additional supports and providing that differentiation in the regular classroom? (I)

- Am I using flexible grouping
- Am I providing additional time allocated to guided/independent practice

A-9. Am I able to use diagnostic assessments to determine individual students' needs (e.g., Core Phonics Survey, CDT)? (PP, I)

A-10. Do I know which students have a decoding problem, which have a comprehension problem, and/or which have both? (PP, I)

- What assessments are used to determine that?



O-1. Do I have the appropriate amount of time allocated for ELA instruction (includes reading, writing, speaking, listening)? (PP, CE, I)

- Are there smooth transitions between whole group and small group instruction?
- Am I prepared for each small group so as to maximize allocated small group time?
- Are procedures smooth and efficient to maximize time available?

Teacher: ELA Gr 3-5

ORGANIZATION



O-2. Am I monitoring how I incorporate the essential components of literacy within my daily instruction? (PP, I)

- Am I providing the appropriate amount of instruction in decoding and comprehension?
- Am I monitoring how many minutes per day my students are engaged in the task of reading?

O-3. Am I using flexible grouping to provide direct instruction to students based on their targeted skill needs? (PP, CE, I)

- Do I monitor student progress within flexible groups and change groups as needed?

O-4. Do I collaborate with other teachers on my team in analysis of data and integration of reading, writing, speaking and listening across all subjects? (PP, PR)

O-5. Am I using PVAAS student projection reports (Custom Student Reports) to assist in organizing groups, inform instruction, and identify those students in need of supplemental supports (MTSS/RtII)? (PP, I, PR)

O-6. Am I using my PVAAS growth reports to examine past patterns of academic growth and then using that information to inform my instruction for my current groups of students? (PP, I, PR)

O-7. Am I communicating with the intervention teacher(s) to coordinate instruction, providing purposeful and consistent instruction that reinforces skills taught in general education classroom? (I, PR)

ELA Grades 6-8: System Level Questions (District/School)

How might our system structures and practices at the district and school level related to Curriculum, Instruction, Assessment, and Organization contribute to our achievement and growth outcomes in English Language Arts?

These questions are offered as a vehicle to guide purposeful reflection, and should be considered and answered with clear evidence. This list is not exhaustive and is not a checklist. . The questions do not need to be asked in the order in which they are numbered. (Numbers are provided only as a reference for use.) Rather, it is intended to help generate thinking specific to the district/building level ELA program. Through the information provided by PVAAS, along with other assessment data, this document is intended to assist in determining potential root causes leading to plans of action (looking back and looking forward). Building level administrators, ELA coordinators, and building level coaches may find these reflection questions helpful in analyzing data at a system level for the school. Additionally, questions are included that allow for a broader system level perspective, and district level administrators may find the questions helpful in analyzing the K-12 ELA program across the district.

**Each question indicates the related domain(s) from The Framework for Teaching:*

PP= Planning and Preparation

CE=Classroom Environment

I= Instruction

PR= Professional Responsibilities

C-1. Is the Grade 6-8 ELA written curriculum aligned to the PA Core Standards? (PP)

District/School: ELA Gr 6-8

CURRICULUM



- How frequently is the written curriculum reviewed/revised through analysis of student data?
- Is the curriculum both “guaranteed and viable”? (Marzano)
 - Guaranteed: equal access to the written curriculum for all students
 - Viable: adequate time for teachers to teach content and for students to learn it.
- Has an alignment been done that shows where certain skills/concepts are missing? Which concepts/skills need to be enhanced? Which concepts and skills are not included? Which concepts and skills lack a sufficient amount of practice embedded in the curriculum? Have lessons been developed to fill identified gaps?
- Were the ELA Emphasis Guides used to develop the written curriculum?
- Does the ELA written curriculum address fidelity to the ELA core program, clarifying the use of the ELA core program? Do both the core ELA program and the written curriculum meet the rigor required by the PA Core Standards?
- Do unit maps exist to guide lesson planning and instruction? Are they reviewed periodically and revised to address students’ needs, as identified through data analysis?

C-2. Does the written curriculum connect concepts and skills vertically, showing the progression of skills necessary for students to acquire deep understanding and to build upon prior knowledge? (PP)

- How does this years’ curriculum build on students’ prior knowledge and experiences from the previous year?

- How will the ELA content for this year lay the foundation for topics the students will explore in the next grade or upper-level grades?
- Do teachers engage in dialogue with teachers in grade levels above and below to examine the strengths and weaknesses of the overall program and prioritize needs of students?
- Are there opportunities for teacher collaboration on the vertical articulation of the K-5 written curriculum with the 6-8 ELA written curriculum?

C-3. Does the written curriculum systematically integrate reading, writing, speaking and listening throughout the day in all subject areas? (PP)

- Does the written curriculum for science social studies, math, and all subject areas include ELA concepts and skills?
- Is writing a regular part of all subject areas?
- Do all teachers view themselves as teachers of ELA?

C-4. Is the core ELA program aligned to the PA Core Standards? (PP)

- Is the core literacy program evidence-based?
- Has an alignment been conducted to determine missing skills/concepts?
- Have lessons been created to fill any identified gaps?

C-6. Are all the components of an effective ELA course included in the written curriculum (reading process, literary analysis, writing process, writing applications, communication, information and media literacy)? (PP)

C-7. Does the written curriculum in ELA address the appropriate level of rigor (Webb's Depth of Knowledge)? (PP)

- Is the concept of rigor understood as different from difficulty level?
- Does the level of rigor in the curriculum match the rigor of each standard?
- Is there a balance of DOK levels 1, 2, and 3?
- Are there opportunities for DOK level 4 tasks?

C-8. Does the written curriculum specify use of text/resources at the appropriate level of text complexity? (PP)

C-9. What is the balance between fiction and informational text? (PP)

- In district written curriculum?
- In core literacy/English program?
- Is the balance appropriate and aligned to PA Core Standards, and if not, how is this addressed?

C-10. Does the written curriculum address vocabulary in a purposeful and explicit manner? (PP)

- Is there a school-wide program in place?
- Does all written curriculum – in all subjects and grades– identify critical vocabulary?
- Are there evidence based practices in place?
- Is instruction in morphology addressed?

C-11. Are teachers aware of the resources on the PDE SAS Portal (pdesas.org) in ELA? (PP, PR)



I-1. Do all students receive instruction on grade level PA Core Standards? (I)

District/School: ELA Gr 6-8

INSTRUCTION



- Is the delivery of instruction equitable across all students/all student groups?
- For students functioning significantly below grade level, are the appropriate scaffolds in place to allow them to access and benefit from the core ELA curriculum?

I-2. Is there an observable alignment between the written, taught, and assessed curriculum? (PP, I)

- Does daily instruction in all classrooms follow the written curriculum?
- Is there a process in place to monitor that there is alignment between what is written, what is taught, and what is tested?
- Does differentiated instruction occur in all classrooms, with attention to the necessary pacing of the curriculum?

I-3. Are unit and lesson objectives/ essential questions,/learning intentions clear to students? (I)

- Communicated clearly in written and oral form?
- Aligned to PA Core Standards?
- Aligned with district ELA written curriculum?

I-4. Is the core ELA program being implemented with fidelity? (PP, I)

- What is the evidence that all components of the core program are implemented as intended?
- Is this implementation consistent across classrooms?
- Is there a consistent observation/reflection protocol in use to ensure fidelity of the core?
- What is the process for determining the use of additional resources and materials?

I-5. Do all students receive effective instruction in all components of the curriculum (reading process, literary analysis, writing process, writing applications, communication, information and media literacy)? (I)

I-6. Is sufficient time allocated in the school master schedule for ELA at all grade levels? (I, PR)

- Do the actual instructional minutes closely mirror the allocated time on paper?

I-7. Within the ELA time block, is instructional time allocated to whole group, small group, and individual instruction? (PP, CE, I)

- Do all teachers provide whole group, small group and individual instruction for all students?
- Is there a grade level pacing guide used by all teachers, with flexibility to respond to students' needs?
- Do all students participate in whole group instruction, for example, in shared reading?

I-8. Are all students instructed using text at the appropriate level of text complexity? Rigorous enough for the grade level? (PP, I)

I-9. Is comprehension taught through explicit modeling and a gradual release of responsibility (I DO, WE DO, YOU DO)? (I)

- Are all aspects of the literacy program (decoding, advanced, word study, vocabulary, writing) taught through explicit modeling and a gradual release of responsibility?

I-10. Do all students have adequate reading practice through the use of choral reading, close reading, partner reading, literature circles, or individual turns in small groups? (I)

- Do all students have multiple opportunities to read?

I-11. Do students have the opportunity to synthesize or critique information from multiple texts about the same subject/idea? (I)

I-12. Are students required to respond to higher-level questions (e.g., inferential, analytical) about shared readings and selections read? (I)

- Are activities and tasks at appropriate DOK (Depth of Knowledge) levels?
- Are there opportunities for students to write academic responses to questions about texts?
- Are all teachers using effective questioning techniques, including but not limited to wait time, student name placement in questioning, random and strategic calling on students, high level questioning mixed with appropriate lower level questions?

I-13. Is writing instruction taught explicitly and systematically at all grade levels? (I)

I-14. Is spelling instruction taught explicitly and systematically? (I)

I-15. Is vocabulary explicitly and consistently taught using evidence based techniques and strategies? (PP, I)

- Can all teachers identify how vocabulary words are chosen at each grade level?
- Can all teachers identify effective vs. ineffective vocabulary strategies? Is vocabulary taught using evidence-based strategies?
- Is there a school-wide vocabulary program in place?
- Is instruction in morphology (the study of meaningful units – e.g., root words) in place at all levels?

I-16. Are students provided with exemplary writing samples, assessment rubrics, real-world writing tasks, writing in response to reading, and oral and written feedback on their writing? (I)

I-17. Do students have sufficient opportunities to hear and practice fluent reading? (I)

I-18. Are flexible reading skills groups used to provide targeted instruction at students' instructional levels and according to identified needs? (PP, I)

- Are they flexible to align with individual students' needs at appropriate points in time?
- Is growth measured with ongoing progress monitoring?

I-19. Is technology used to differentiate instruction and provide additional practice on targeted skill areas? (I)

- Is technology used as a medium for reading in all content areas?
- Is there a process for selecting effective technology resources?
- Do all teachers have access to technology resources?

I-20. Is independent work purposeful and directly related to building literacy skills? Is it consistent across all classrooms? (I)

I-21. Are students receiving interventions that are being closely monitored, and provided specific instruction targeted to skill deficits? (I)

I-22. Is instruction differentiated during both whole group and small group instruction? (I)

- How? In what ways?
- Are teachers trained and supported in how to differentiate instruction specific to learning objectives/targets in ELA?
- Is differentiation of instruction an expectation that is supported/documented by the core program and district written curriculum?
- Are small groups/flexible groups used to provide differentiation within the math classroom?
- Are extension tasks provided for those students who are demonstrating mastery at the expected level?



A-1. Is there a district/building assessment map/calendar/plan accessible to all teachers? (I)

District/School: ELA Gr 6-8

ASSESSMENT



- Are valid and reliable assessment measures in place to screen, diagnose, monitor, and evaluate literacy outcomes for all students? Is this followed and implemented by all teachers?
- Has the range of assessments been evaluated for their purposes, to ensure that there is no unnecessary redundancy/overlap, nor important skill areas missing?
- Do all teachers have access to this plan and follow it, administering all required assessments in timely manner, as per schedule?
- Is there consistency and agreement on the use of assessments available through the literacy program, along with other school-wide assessments?
- Are there scheduled times for staff to review new data in a timely manner to adjust instruction, groupings, etc.?

A-2. Are students assessed at appropriate levels of Webb's Depth of Knowledge (performance tasks, objective assessments, and oral questioning)? (I)

- Are assessment items reflective of the rigor of the standards being addressed?

A-3. Are formative and summative assessments established and used by all teachers? (I)

- Are common assessments in place?
- Are the assessments valid?

- Do all teachers have strong assessment literacy skills?

A-4. Do formative assessments measures, specifically questioning strategies, include higher-level questions (e.g., inferential, analytical) about shared readings and selections read? (I)

- Is there an analysis of the assessment data to inform the need for additional, specific skill instruction?

A-5. Are teachers aware of students' reading skills through universal screening process in place at building level? (PP, I)

- Does universal screening occur early in the school year to effectively inform instruction?
- Is the universal screening considered along with PVAAS projections scores on individual students?

A-6. Are benchmark assessments used to monitor progress of students throughout a given grade level year? (I)

A-7. Are diagnostic assessments in place (e.g., CDT, Core Phonics Survey) to inform instruction at Tier 1 as well as Tiers 2/3? (I)

A-8. Are additional data/information on reading, writing, speaking and listening available at the classroom and individual student level and how is this additional information analyzed along with PVAAS reporting? (I)

Example: (1) What information from the CDT can be integrated for analysis along with PVAAS data?
(2) How are common formative and summative assessment data used along with PVAAS data to inform instruction?

A-9. Is writing assessed through evidence-based assessment practices, i.e., a common framework and rubrics ensuring a consistent approach across subjects and grade levels? (I)

A-10. Are progress monitoring measures in place and conducted by classroom teachers (e.g., DIBELS Next, AIMSweb, CBM)? (I)

A-11. Is student progress closely monitored to ensure that students who are falling behind are provided proactive support through differentiation and a multi-tiered system of supports (MTSS/RtII)? Is there a structure in place that ensures this monitoring occurs on a prescribed basis? (I)

A-12. Are there school-wide/grade level/team data meetings established for teachers to collaborate on analysis of data and action planning? (I, PR)

- Do protocols exist for the analysis of data?
- How frequently is data analyzed, and groupings/instruction changed as result of data analysis?
- Are key data team members identified and trained?
- Do grade level data meetings align closely with the district assessment plan?

A-13. Is a grading policy established at the district and school level that uses grades/marks that correspond to students' academic achievement and proficiency levels? (I)

- Are soft skills evaluated separate from academic performance to indicate a student's true performance on identified concepts and skills?



O-1. Are teachers provided on-going professional development in ELA Standards and best practices? (PR)

- How are new teachers trained to deliver the ELA curriculum/program?
- Are teachers knowledgeable of resources and the most relevant research on how students learn to read?
- How is professional development provided to experienced teachers who are new to the content area or grade level?

District/School: ELA Gr 6-8

ORGANIZATION



O-2. Does the master schedule include appropriate time for literacy instruction (reading, writing, speaking and listening)? (I)

- Do all teachers adhere to the master schedule? Is there a check between allocated time on the master schedule and actual instructional time in the classroom?
- Do teachers effectively utilize the block of time for whole group as well as small group instruction and is this consistent across a grade level?
- Is this time protected from meeting time, assemblies, and other interruptions?
- Is there a grade level pacing guide/schedule in place, with flexibility to address students' pacing needs?

O-3. Are staff (regular education, special education, remedial/Title I, paraeducator) utilized in a variety of ways to maximize small group instructional opportunities? (I)

O-3. Has a database been established (and is it used) to collect and summarize school-level and student-level literacy data, with immediate and easy access for all teachers? (PR, I)

O-4. Has a multi-tiered system of support (MTSS/RtII) been established to provide additional supports (Tiers 2 and 3)?

O-5. Are intervention group sizes appropriate to the level of support needed (i.e., MTSS Tiers 2/3)? (I)

O-6. Are the core program and intervention program materials/approaches aligned and coordinated for students receiving both core and tiered intervention support? (PP)

O-7. Is there an effective schedule in place that ensures that students do not miss instructional time in order to receive tiered support? (PP)

O-8. Does the master schedule allow for PLC (professional learning community) time/data meeting time for collaboration and planning? (PP, PR)

- If so, what is the frequency? Who is responsible for planning/monitoring for the effective use of this time?
- If not, how can this be built into the master schedule?

O-9. Are there opportunities for teacher collaboration on the vertical articulation of the K-5 written curriculum with the 6-8 ELA written curriculum? (PP, PR)

O-10. Do all teachers engage in regular conversations regarding how to connect skills and concepts horizontally as well as vertically from grade to grade? (PP, I)

- Is there knowledge and planning for vertical progression of skills?

ELA Grades 6-8: Teacher Level Questions

How might my practices and knowledge level related to Curriculum, Instruction, Assessment, and Organization contribute to the achievement and growth results of my students?

These questions are offered as a vehicle for individual teachers to guide self-reflection in a purposeful and systematic manner. Each question/probe should be thoughtfully considered and answered with clear evidence.

Teachers: As you consider each question/probe, ask yourself, “What is my evidence?”

This list is not exhaustive and is not a checklist. . The questions do not need to be asked in the order in which they are numbered. (Numbers are provided only as a reference for use.) Rather, it is intended to help generate thinking as a teacher considers his/her PVAAS teacher specific report on an annual basis. These questions, when considered through the lens of data available through PVAAS and other assessments, are intended to guide the self-reflection process and to assist in identifying root causes and developing action plans for the current group of students.

**Each question also indicates the related domain(s) from The Framework for Teaching*

PP= Planning and Preparation

CE= Classroom Environment

I= Instruction

PR= Professional Responsibilities

C-1. Am I knowledgeable about the PA Core Standards at my grade level (assessment anchors, eligible content, etc.)? (PP)

- Am I familiar with resources available to me on the PDE SAS Portal (pdesas.org)?
- Do I have strong knowledge of the PA Core Standards, assessment anchors, and eligible content, and plan accordingly?
- Am I knowledgeable about effective instructional techniques/tools in all areas of literacy (reading, writing, speaking, listening)?

Teacher: ELA Gr 6-8

CURRICULUM



C-2. Am I using the district written curriculum and following protocols and procedures for ELA instruction? (PP)

C-3. Am I choosing appropriate materials and resources? (PP)

C-4. Am I ensuring that students have the appropriate balance of reading practice in both fiction and informational texts? (PP, I)

C-5. Am I knowledgeable about text complexity and using appropriate levels of texts with students? (PP)

C-6. Am I accessing and applying the most current research on literacy? Am I aware of and using key resources available to me? (PP, I, PR)

Example: attending available trainings such as KtO, PA-LETRS, National Reading Panel findings, pdesas.org, PA Core Standards, FCRR, etc.



I-1. Am I providing all students with whole group instruction based on grade level PA Core Standards? (PP, I)

Teacher: ELA Gr 6-8

INSTRUCTION



- Am I scaffolding instruction for students who are functioning below grade level to provide them with opportunities to access and benefit from the general education curriculum?

I-2. Am I clear with students on each lesson's learning target(s)? (I)

- Are lesson objectives/essential questions posted and communicated?
- Do lesson plans clearly delineate the lesson objectives/essential questions/learning intentions?
- Are students able to articulate the learning target for the lesson?

I-3. Am I using the allocated ELA time period effectively and efficiently? (CE, I)

- Are there smooth transitions between whole group and small group instruction?
- Is my pace of direct instruction brisk, yet responsive to students' needs?
- Am I prepared for each small group so as to maximize allocated small group time?
- Am I starting on time and using the full period/time allotted to instruction?
- Are independent learning task/stations aligned to specific learning targets? Are they meaningful and differentiated for the various small groups?

I-4. Am I ensuring that students have the appropriate balance of reading practice in both fiction and informational texts? (PP, I)

I-5. Are the materials and texts that I am using appropriate to the instructional levels of varying groups of students? (PP, I)

I-6. Am I teaching vocabulary in an explicit manner, using evidence-based strategies? (I)

- Am I aware of the difference between academic vocabulary and content-specific vocabulary and am I addressing both?
- Am I knowledgeable about morphology (meaningful units in words), and am I providing instruction in morphology?

I-7. Do I model fluent reading for my students? (I)

I-8. Have I made it clear to students that fluency is not about just reading faster? Do I – and my students – have a clear understanding of what fluency means and do I know how to teach fluency using evidence based strategies (e.g, fluency boxes, fluency phrases, fluency poems, repeated readings)? (I)

I-9. Am I engaging students in close reading? (I)

I-10. Am I teaching students how to analyze a text for evidence? (I)

- Am I giving my students opportunity to use multiple sources in an analysis?

I-11. Am I teaching students how to identify and use text features of fiction and informational text to aid reading comprehension in various subject level textbooks? (I)

I-12. Am I knowledgeable about Webb's Depth of Knowledge (DOK), and providing tasks and questions at Levels 1, 2, 3, and 4 for all students? (PP, CE, I)

- Am I using effective questioning techniques, including but not limited to wait time, student name placement in questioning, random and strategic calling on students, high level questioning mixed with the appropriate lower level questions?

I-13. Am I knowledgeable about the critical importance of background knowledge as it impacts comprehension, and providing necessary background knowledge as needed as a pre-reading strategy? (I)

- Do I provide access to texts to develop my students' background knowledge?

I-14. Am I providing direct instruction in comprehension, such as how to determine main idea, locate and provide supporting details, identify cause and effect, make predictions, retell, summarize, etc.? (I)

I-15. Am I engaging all students through active participation techniques – and the use of age appropriate content of interest? (CE, I)

I-16. Am I providing timely feedback all students? (CE, I)

- Am I using questioning to provide feedback to guide students in helping them address misconceptions, improve their work, and/or guide their thinking?

I-17. Am I requiring written responses to text on a regular basis? (I)

I-18. Is the independent work clearly targeting skills that facilitate reading growth? (PP, I)

I-19. Am I promoting (outside of school) independent reading? (CE, I)

I-20. Am I motivating students through goal setting, monitoring and/or graphing their own progress? (CE, I)

I-21. Am I using small, flexible grouping within my classroom to differentiate instruction? (CE, I)

- Do I monitor student progress within flexible groups and change groups as needed?
- Am I identifying students who are in need of additional supports and providing that differentiation in the regular classroom?



A-1. Am I assessing students with the agreed upon common assessments (benchmark, diagnostic, summative, formative), as per the district assessment plan? (I)

Teacher: ELA Gr 6-8

ASSESSMENT



A-2. Am I considering all available achievement and growth assessment data on students as I plan and deliver instruction? (PP, I)

Example: PVAAS teacher specific report, PVAAS value added and performance/quintile diagnostic, PVAAS student projection data, and PSSA, AIMSweb, DIBELS Next, CDT, CBM, PSSA, GRADE, etc.

A-3. Am I identifying students who are in need of additional supports and providing that differentiation in the regular classroom? (I)

- Am I using flexible grouping?
- Am I providing additional time allocated to guided/independent practice?

A-4. Am I monitoring the progress of all students through benchmark assessments to determine who is at risk, the level of risk, and then providing related instruction? (PP, I)

A-5. Am I able to interpret the results of benchmark assessments being used (e.g., DIBELS Next, AIMSweb)? (I)

- Am I monitoring the progress of all students through benchmark assessments to determine who is at risk, the level of risk, and then providing related instruction?

Example: DIBELS Next Summary of Effectiveness report – are all students at benchmark at BOY (beginning of year) continuing to hit benchmarks at MOY (middle of year) and EOY (end of year)?

A-6. Am I able to use diagnostic assessments to determine individual students' needs? (PP, I)

Example: CBM, phonics surveys, CDT, etc.

A-7. Am I using the established building level universal screening process to inform instruction and grouping within my classroom? (PP, I)

- Am I using the PVAAS projection report for individual students in my classroom to assist in grouping decisions and the degree/frequency of progress monitoring needed?

A-8. Am I using the established building level universal screening process to provide selected students with supplemental supports (Tiers 2/3) before they begin to struggle/fail? (PP, I)

A-9. Am I able to analyze a student's reading difficulties and determine priority needs? (I)

Example: Do I know whether a student continues to have decoding difficulties that are interfering with reading comprehension?



O-1. Am I using the allocated time within the period efficiently? (PP, CE, I)

- Are there smooth transitions between whole group and small group instruction?
- Are procedures smooth and efficient so as to maximize time allotted?
- Am I starting on time, and reviewing homework in an efficient and effective manner?

Teacher: ELA Gr 6-8

ORGANIZATION



O-2. Am I using flexible grouping to provide direct instruction to students based on their targeted skill needs? (PP, CE, I)

- Do I monitor student progress within flexible groups and change groups as needed?

O-3. Am I using PVAAS projection reports (Custom Student Reports) to assist in organizing groups, inform instruction, and identify those students in need of supplemental supports (MTSS/RtII)? (PP, I, PR)

O-4. Am I using my PVAAS growth reports to examine past patterns and then using that information to inform my instruction for my current groups of students? (PP, I, PR)

O-5. Am I communicating with the intervention teacher(s) to coordinate instruction, providing purposeful and consistent instruction that reinforces skills taught in general education classrooms? (I, PR)

O-6. Do I collaborate with other teachers on my team in analysis of data and integration of reading, writing, speaking and listening across all subjects? (PP, PR)

Keystone Literature: System Level Questions (District/School)

How might our system structures and practices at the district and school level related to Curriculum, Instruction, Assessment, and Organization contribute to our achievement and growth outcomes in English Language Arts?

These questions are offered as a vehicle to guide purposeful reflection, and should be considered and answered with clear evidence. This list is not exhaustive and is not a checklist. The questions do not need to be asked in the order in which they are numbered. (Numbers are provided only as a reference for use.) Rather, it is intended to help generate thinking specific to the Keystone Literature course. Through the information provided by PVAAS, along with other assessment data, this document is intended to assist in determining potential root causes leading to plans of action (looking back and looking forward). Building level administrators, ELA coordinators, and building level coaches may find these reflection questions helpful in analyzing data at a system level for the school. Additionally, questions are included that allow for a broader system level perspective, and district level administrators may find the questions helpful in analyzing the K-12 ELA program across the LEA/district.

**Each question indicates the related domain(s) from The Framework for Teaching:*

PP= Planning and Preparation

CE=Classroom Environment

I= Instruction

PR= Professional Responsibilities

C-1. Is the written curriculum for the Keystone Literature course appropriately aligned to the PA Core Standards? (PP)

- Has an alignment been done that shows where certain skills/concepts are missing? Which skills/concepts need to be enhanced? Which skills/concepts are not included with a sufficient amount of practice embedded?
- How frequently is the written curriculum reviewed/revised through analysis of student data?
- Is the curriculum both “guaranteed and viable”? (Marzano)
 - Guaranteed: equal access to the written curriculum for all students
 - Viable: adequate time for teachers to teach content and for students to learn it
- How is the Keystone written curriculum made accessible to teachers?
- Has the textbook/texts for the course been examined for degree of alignment to the PA Core Standards/Keystone Exam eligible content?
- Is there a written map that provides a crosswalk between the course approved textbook and the PA Core Standards? Does the curriculum focus on the priorities addressed in the 9-10 ELA Emphasis Guides?
- Does the curriculum tightly align to the Keystone Literature assessment anchors and eligible content?

District/School:
Keystone Literature

CURRICULUM



C-2. Are appropriate materials and resources used in the instruction of Keystone Literature? (PP)

- Is the textbook considered a resource for instruction rather than the curriculum?
- Has the textbook for the course been examined for degree of alignment to the PA Core Standards/Keystone exam eligible content?

C-3. Are texts, excerpts and other written resources at the appropriate text complexity level? (PP)

- How is that determined at the building level?
- Do teachers understand the importance of text complexity?

C-4. Do unit and lesson plans include objectives for the explicit teaching of key vocabulary? (PP)

- Do plans include objectives for the explicit teaching of morphology?
- Do plans include objectives for the explicit teaching of etymology?

C-5. Is explicit writing instruction embedded in the Keystone Literature course curriculum? (PP, I)

- Does the writing instruction address informational, narrative, and argumentative writing types?
- Are genre-specific rubrics, both holistic and analytic, used to evaluate students' writing?

C-6. Are teachers aware of the resources on the PDE SAS Portal (pdesas.org) for Keystone Literature? (PP, PR)



I-1. Are all teachers adhering to the written curriculum for the Keystone Literature course (i.e., taught curriculum matches the written and assessed curriculum)? (I)

District/School:
Keystone Literature

INSTRUCTION



I-2. Are teachers appropriately using the materials and resources identified in the written curriculum? (I)

I-3. Are teachers adapting instruction for those who need differentiated instruction yet still having students grapple with complex text? (I)

I-4. Are teachers providing enrichment for those students whose rate of learning exceeds the average pace? (I)

I-5. Are all teachers pacing through the curriculum at the established and appropriate pace? (I)

I-6. Do teachers provide direct instruction in close reading? In text dependent analysis? (I)

I-7. Is available technology used to differentiate instruction and provide additional practice on targeted skill areas? (I)

A-1. Are common formative and summative assessments in place to provide consistency for all students across courses/sections/teachers? (PP, I)

- Are the assessments valid?
- Do all teachers have strong assessment literacy skills?
- Are common summative assessments in place?
- Are assessments analyzed for cognitive thinking levels (Webb's Depth of Knowledge/DOK)?
 - Unit assessments?
 - Mid-terms and finals?
 - Other?

District/School:
Keystone Literature

ASSESSMENT



A-2. Are formative and summative assessments truly assessing the intended learning targets? Is there a match between the written, taught and tested curriculum? (PP, I)

A-3. Are test items aligned to the level of cognitive thinking required by the relevant standard? Do tests reflect a range of DOK (Depth of Knowledge) levels? (I)

A-4. Is there a universal screening process in place to determine which students may be in need of additional support prior to and/or during enrollment in the Keystone Literature course? (PP, I)

- Does this include using PVAAS projection reports, available from Grade 5 forward?

A-5. Are the various types of writing (narrative, informational, argumentative) assessed during the course using effective writing assessments and measures? (I)

A-6. Do Keystone course teachers conduct item analysis on common assessments to revise curriculum and instruction as indicated? (I, PR)

- Is there time built in for the re-teaching of skills as identified through item analysis?

A-7. Are PVAAS growth reports and PVAAS student projection reports used to reflect on past practices and apply information to future planning/work? (PP, I)

- Used during the curriculum review/revision process?
- Used in planning and delivery of instruction?
- Used during planning for (proactive) intervention supports?
- Used for secondary ELA course design and sequence?
- Used for placement of students?



O-1. Are supplemental supports available to students who are at risk during their enrollment in the Keystone Literature course? (PP)

District/School:
Keystone Literature

ORGANIZATION



O-2. Are there opportunities for Keystone Literature teachers to collaboratively plan, prepare, and analyze common assessment data during the course? (I, PR)

O-3. Have teachers participated in professional development on the topic of assessment literacy? (PR)

O-4. Are remediation courses/supports available to students who have not achieved proficiency on the Keystone exam? (PP)

- Targeted to individual students' needs, as indicated by data

Keystone Literature: Teacher Level Questions

How might my practices and knowledge level related to Keystone Literature in Curriculum, Instruction, Assessment, and Organization contribute to my students' results?

These questions are offered as a vehicle for individual teachers to guide self-reflection in a purposeful and systematic manner. Each question should be thoughtfully considered and answered with clear evidence.

This list is not exhaustive and is not a checklist. . The questions do not need to be asked in the order in which they are numbered. (Numbers are provided only as a reference for use.) Rather, it is intended to help generate thinking as a teacher considers his/her PVAAS teacher specific report on an annual basis. These questions, when considered through the lens of data available through PVAAS and other assessments, are intended to guide the self-reflection process and to assist in identifying root causes and developing action plans for the current group of students.

Teachers: As you consider each question/probe, ask yourself,
"What is my evidence?"

**Each question also indicates the related domain(s) from The Framework for Teaching*

PP= Planning and Preparation

CE= Classroom Environment

I= Instruction

PR= Professional Responsibilities

C-1. Do I have deep knowledge of the PA Core Standards and the Keystone Literature exam assessment anchors and eligible content? Do I use that knowledge in my planning? (PP)

Teacher: Keystone Literature

CURRICULUM



C-2. Am I using the written curriculum to plan lessons? (PP)

C-3. Am I aware of the terms found in the Keystone Exam glossary – and does my lesson planning include explicit instruction on vocabulary? (PP)

C-4. Do I have access to and use the materials and resources identified in the written curriculum? (PP, I)

C-5. Do I have the proper balance of literature and informational text in assigned readings, as indicated in the two modules of the Keystone Exam? (PP, I)

C-6. Are the assigned readings/texts at the appropriate level of text complexity? (PP, I)

I-1. Am I providing students with varied texts/excerpts and materials to address the assessment anchors and eligible content? (PP, I)

Teacher: Keystone Literature

INSTRUCTION



I-2. Am I requiring my students to use multiple texts to synthesize or critique information about a topic/idea? (PP, I)

I-3. Am I providing direct and explicit instruction in the craft and structure of text, e.g., literary devices and patterns in literature? (I)

I-4. Does my instruction reflect emphasis on author's purpose in both fiction and non-fiction/informational text? (I)

I-5. Am I modeling and providing guided and independent practice (I DO, WE DO, YOU DO) in close reading and providing direct instruction on how to find supporting details in text? (I)

I-6. Am I explicitly teaching vocabulary, including morphology, affixes, word connotations, and use of context clues to determine meaning? (I)

I-7. Am I requiring my students to write regularly using academic form? (I)

I-8. Am I differentiating instruction to meet the needs of all students in the course yet still ensuring that all students grapple with complex text? (CE, I)

I-9. Am I providing timely feedback to students on a daily basis? (I)

I-10. Am I monitoring my pacing of instruction through frequent checks with the pacing guide/written curriculum? (PP, I)

- Am I adjusting my pacing to meet the needs of my students?

I-11. Am I using effective questioning techniques, with purposeful planning to address levels of thinking as defined in Webb's Depth of Knowledge (DOK)? (I)

- Do I know and understand Webb's DOK as it pertains to instructional tasks?
- Have I received professional development necessary to develop good questions and tasks at DOK levels 2 and 3?

A-1. Am I using formative and summative assessments throughout the course (“along the way”) to inform my instruction? (I)

- Do I have strong assessment literacy?
- Are the assessments valid?
- Are the assessments aligned to the standards intended to be assessed?
- Are the assessment items developed to the rigorous level of the standards?

Teacher: Keystone Literature

ASSESSMENT



A-2. Am I using diagnostic data (e.g., CDT) to inform my instruction? (I)

A-3. Am I working with colleagues in teams to analyze common assessment data? (PR)

A-4. Am I using PVAAS projection data available on students in my current course to inform my instruction, including differentiation within the course, and/or identifying students at risk at start of course? (PP, I)

A-5. Am I identifying students for supplemental/tiered support prior to or during enrollment in the Keystone Literature course (prior to the Keystone exam)? (PP, I)

- Am I using PVAAS projection data to the Keystone exam, available for students last tested in grade 5?

A-6. Am I following protocols and accessing team processes to identify students for supplemental/tiered support? (PP, I)

A-7. Do students grades/marks in my class accurately reflect their academic achievement and proficiency levels? Am I providing accurate and relevant grades to students to reflect their progress along the way? (I)

Based on assessment data, am I following the established procedures and protocols to identify students for supplemental/tiered support? (PP, I, CE)

Am I taking advantage of available opportunities and/or seeking opportunities to enhance my content knowledge and pedagogical skills? (PR)

Before and throughout the course, do I work collaboratively with other Keystone Literature course teachers to plan instruction and analyze students’ learning outcomes for the purpose of improving my practice? (PR)

Teacher: Keystone Literature

ORGANIZATION



Am I using the allocated time for instruction effectively and efficiently? (PP, CE, I)

- Am I starting the class on time?
- Am I using the full period/time block for instruction?
- Am I using efficient procedures to check homework, etc.?