

South Carolina Department of Education  
Read to Succeed Elementary Exemplary Literacy Reflection Tool

**Directions: Please provide a narrative response for Sections A-I.**

**LETRS Questions:**

- How many eligible teachers in your school have completed Volume 1 ONLY of LETRS?: 16
- How many eligible teachers in your school have completed Volumes 1 and 2 of LETRS?: 10
- How many eligible teachers in your school are beginning Volume 1 of LETRS this year (or have not yet started or completed Volume 1)?: 2

**Section A:** Describe how reading assessment and instruction for all PreK-5<sup>th</sup> grade students in the school includes oral language, phonological awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension to aid in the comprehension of texts to meet grade-level English/Language Arts standards.

At John P. Thomas, we analyzed our student's data using the universal screener, the STAR Reading and/or Early Literacy assessment, and the BAS diagnostic tool. We design our instruction by comparing the data from these two sources.

The STAR data provides insights into the students' reading levels, skills, and potential growth. It pinpoints where each student falls on the reading spectrum in relation to grade-level expectations. It pinpoints gaps in a student's literacy development or opportunities to enrich. The BAS is administered one-on-one. It is a leveled reading assessment where teachers observe students' reading behaviors, fluency, and comprehension. Students demonstrate comprehension with oral responses to literal, inferential, and evaluative prompts. Both assessments provide data used to differentiate instruction. Through data analysis, we determine where students excel and where they struggle, thus allowing us to create growth opportunities. Here are Instructional opportunities and strategies we use to meet grade-level ELA standards:

**Oral Language**

- Pre-K through 5<sup>th</sup> students are asked and encouraged to share good things during Morning Meeting. Students from grades 1 to 5 are eligible to be a part of the school news team. Turn & talk, reciprocal teaching, small group work, project-based presentations, and implicit grammar instruction are included to support the development of their vocabulary and oral communication skills across all subjects.

**Phonological Awareness**

- Poems, games, songs, and Nursery rhymes from Pre-K to third grade are used to develop students' ability to manipulate sounds in the English language. Students will practice counting syllables by clapping or pounding words. Chants are also used to help our students build auditory awareness of sounds in our language.

**Phonemic Awareness**

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- In the primary grades, the OG 3-Part drill supports making the connection between the phonemes (sounds) and the graphemes (letters). Big book read aloud, using letter magnets or other alphabet manipulatives to build words with word families. Word ladder activities, word chains, and dictated sentences are also used to blend, segment, isolate, add, subtract, delete, and substitute sounds and their corresponding spellings.

Fluency

- Fluency development is achieved through teacher modeling, rereading familiar text, reader's theatre, small, guided reading groups, and building sight word recognition.

Vocabulary

- Direct instruction of Tier 2 & 3 words, morphology, and instruction on using resource materials—dictionary and thesaurus—supports expanding student vocabulary and text comprehension.

Comprehension

- Instruction, teacher modeling, and independent practice of comprehension strategies – making connections, asking questions, summarizing, determining text structure, monitoring comprehension, and visualizing while using a variety of genres are provided. The use of graphic organizers, reciprocal teaching, small flexible grouping, literature circles, and organized classroom libraries encourage and support student engagement and understanding of a variety of texts.

**Section B:** Document how Word Recognition assessment and instruction for PreK-5<sup>th</sup> grade students are further aligned to the science of reading, structured literacy and foundational literacy skills.

The science of reading says that word recognition is a foundation of reading and that all other reading processes depend on it. Word recognition is comprised of the following skills: phonological awareness, orthographic mapping, decoding, and fluency. Students who are identified through the STAR and BAS assessments as We identify students who are below grade level with the district's mandated screeners, the STAR Tests, and BAS. The PAST and Orton-Gillingham encoding and decoding assessments screen students performing below grade level. The data shows very specific gaps in the student's reading development. Phonological awareness instruction begins in Pre-K and continues in the primary grades. Students are exposed to rhymes, songs, stories, and games focusing on hearing and recognizing different sounds. Pre-K students are expected to identify and produce rhymes with pictures. These skills continue to develop in kindergarten with the addition of matching sounds to letters and blending the sounds & letters to create words. Our kindergarten students have instruction in segmenting and blending using the Orton-Gillingham Three-Part Drill. Students will practice manipulating sounds using magnets or letter cards. Students practice identifying how many words are in a sentence by pushing a colored square for each word. Students use a sand tray or other sensory materials to practice spelling sounds. These instructional strategies continue to the end of second grade. If a student is not performing at grade level, continued instruction and practice with these

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skills in a small group is provided. Also, during this time, students are expected to master high-frequency words. HFW having irregular spelling is taught through orthographic mapping. Students can see the parts of the word that follow learned phonics rules and memorize the part(s) that do not.

In grades 3 through 5, students dive deeper into words with morphology. Teaching morphology helps students understand and apply word structure for decoding, encoding, and expanding vocabulary. Students study morphemes – base/root, prefixes, and suffixes. Students are explicitly taught affixes and how they relate to base words. Teachers model how morphemes work in different words. Students who struggle are screened and s/he will receive small group instruction in the identified skill deficit.

**Section C:** Document how the school uses universal screener data and diagnostic assessment data to determine targeted pathways of intervention (word recognition or language comprehension) for students in PreK-5<sup>th</sup> grade who have failed to demonstrate grade-level reading proficiency.

Data continues to drive the decisions we make regarding Tier 2 and Tier 3 Reading Interventions for students at John P. Thomas Elementary. We use a combination of STAR—Early Literacy and Reading-, BAS, LAPS documentation, and, in some instances, OG Site Word and/or Spelling Test to ensure we are assigning the right intervention and interventionist to students.

Moving into the 2024 – 2025 school year, we knew the loss of an interventionist would impact our Tier 3 interventions tremendously. Our Administration agreed that we would take a deep dive into the data of those students who finished the 2023 – 2024 school year as Tier 3 students. This practice resulted in the MTSS process beginning August 19th- looking at historical data points, STAR Instructional Plans, and LAP documentation, we met with parents, teachers, and our Interventionist to determine appropriate goals and progress monitoring routines for a 4-week cycle. This allowed us to intervene until we administered FALL STAR and BAS. In addition, we used this same data to identify 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup>, and 5<sup>th</sup>-grade students with a STAR score less than 852 (*emergent or transitional reader*) and a BAS level at least 2 grade levels below. We determined they needed to complete STAR Early Literacy- as this would give us more data on their phonological “glows and grows”.

After completing STAR, Letter Recognition and Sounds, and BAS assessments, as an MTSS Leadership Team, we sit to triangulate data looking for confirmation or discrepancies for Tier 2 and Tier 3 students- this assists with students who need further testing (*drop down to STAR Early Literacy, OG spelling test, or BAS with Reading Interventionist or Literacy Coach*). Next steps include a meeting of the minds with our Literacy Coach, Reading Interventionist, and school-based Instructional Coach to create grade-level intervention groups and schedule for 1<sup>st</sup> – 5<sup>th</sup> Grade students, with careful consideration to 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup>-grade students who have yet to reach a STAR score of 852 and a BAS Level of ‘J’ and below. Once we have established a routine for our Tier 3 students, we open the discussion to teachers and trained support staff that could assist with Tier 2 interventions. Thinking from the lens of prescribing the right intervention and resource, we begin to group students in skill and strategy groups during the regular school day, Guided Reading Groups, and RTI time.

We are fortunate to have an afterschool program that meets three days a week, where we continue our intervention practices beyond the traditional school day. We have employed Early Childhood teachers who have completed OG and LETRS training to work on prescriptive skills and strategies with pullout groups in 3<sup>rd</sup> – 5<sup>th</sup> grade. We’ve also looked at the data for our Special Services students to provide an inclusive setting where they work on grade level standards or with pull-out Guided Reading groups focusing on skill-based strategies. Following our 4 – 6-week MTSS cycles, we will look at progress monitoring data during our afterschool intercession to monitor goal progressions and decide the next steps.

We will monitor progress throughout the year with fidelity and consistency to ensure that our intervention cycles are fluid in nature, in hopes of meeting the vast needs of our learners.

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**Section D:** Describe the system in place to help parents in your school understand how they can support the student as a reader and writer at home.

At John P. Thomas, our school team collaborates with our embedded Parent Engagement Specialist, School Improvement Council, Parent Teacher Organization, and Community Partners to help improve and sustain parent and community involvement in student learning beyond school. Parents are provided with books and resources to support reading and writing at home during school activities such as Open House, Curriculum Night, Literacy Night, Math and Science Night, Grandparents Day, Assemblies, and Parent-Teacher Conferences. As a school, we also encourage our parents to complete surveys to inform us of their needs. This allows us to ensure our parents deeply understand the school, district, and state policies in education. Parents are also informed of their student's academics by receiving reports after each district or state benchmark.

**Section E:** Document how the school provides for the monitoring of reading achievement and growth at the classroom and school level with decisions about PreK-5<sup>th</sup> grade intervention based on all available data to ensure grade-level proficiency in reading.

John P. Thomas Elementary School provides monitoring of reading achievement and growth at the classroom and school level with decisions about Pre-Kindergarten through fifth-grade interventions based on all available data to ensure grade-level proficiency in reading through the implementation of the Multi-Tier System of Support (MTSS) Framework. The Multi-Tier System of Support Framework is a problem-solving approach with data-driven decision-making to provide support and interventions for Pre-Kindergarten through fifth-grade students in academic, behavioral, social-emotional learning, and chronic absenteeism to address student attendance. Regular grade-level discussions are held monthly to analyze benchmark assessment data and foster collaboration among educators.

The Multi-Tier System of Support Team at John P. Thomas Elementary School is comprised of a dedicated School Level Team of the Reading Interventionist, Principal, Assistant Principal, Literacy Coach, Curriculum Coach, Math Interventionist, and Behavior Interventionist that meets every six weeks to review student assessment data, track progress monitoring, and identify students in grade levels Pre-Kindergarten through fifth grade who needs additional intervention. The Multi-Tier System of Support Framework offers three tiers of classroom-level interventions, with support consisting of Tier I: All students benefit from a high-quality curriculum and instruction. Tier II: Students requiring additional support receive targeted classroom teaching and strategic interventions, and Tier III: These students receive intensive, individualized interventions alongside Tier II support. Progress Monitoring of students' academic achievement and readability levels are monitored through classroom assessments such as common formative assessments (CFAs) and Mastery Connect Benchmark lessons and benchmark assessments. Multi-tier Support Meetings systems allow for stakeholder input, ensuring comprehensive support. Follow-up Multi-Tier Systems of Support Meetings are scheduled to evaluate the effectiveness of interventions based on ongoing analyzed and disaggregated data through data-driven decision-making and targeted interventions. We strive to create a learning environment that promotes literary success for every student.

**Section F:** Describe how the school provides teacher training based in the science of reading, structured literacy, and foundational literacy skills to support all students in PreK-5<sup>th</sup> grade.

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The literacy coach, district support, and/or a consultant provide training at John P. Thomas at least three to four times a month. The training teachers receive a combination of focus based on their needs. Teachers are trained on the systematic approach of providing direct instruction. In addition, LETRS, Orton Gillingham, and Morphology training, and resources are implemented during small-group instruction.

**Section G: Analysis of Data**

<b>Strengths</b>	<b>Possibilities for Growth</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Teachers have various professional learning opportunities at the district and school levels.</li><li>• A variety of assessments are available within the district.</li><li>• Students have access to ample texts on various levels in the classroom, allowing them to choose from multiple genres.</li><li>• Our school has ongoing community partnerships with various groups focusing on literacy.</li><li>• Teachers use Fountas &amp; Pinnell, Wonders, and Orton Gillingham resources when planning daily instruction.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• During PLOs and PLCs, teachers will collaboratively analyze data, strategies, and resources used to deliver effective instruction.</li><li>• Implement their data and resources as guide tools to guide instruction in all tiers.</li><li>• During PLC, data from small group instruction and response to intervention groups will be used to monitor student progress towards universal screening grade level goals.</li><li>• Use Standards to align all primary and secondary resources.</li><li>• Student/progress monitoring (not just from RTI)</li><li>• Using engagement inventories to monitor student engagement, confer with students to increase their independent work volume, and continue eliminating activities that do not support instruction.</li><li>• Increase time for authentic writing across content areas to optimize learning.</li><li>• Increase the use of conferencing and observations of reading and writing engagement to plan for and monitor the results of literacy instructions.</li><li>• Professional Learning implemented and observed in instructional practices.</li></ul>

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**Section H: Previous School Year SMART Goals and Progress Toward Those Goals**

- Please provide your school's goals from last school year and the progress your school has made towards these goals. Utilize quantitative and qualitative data to determine progress toward the goal (s). As a reminder, all schools serving third grade were required to use Goal #1 (below).

Goals	Progress
Goal #1 (Third Grade Goal): Reduce the percentage of third graders scoring Does Not Meet in the spring of 2023 as determined by SC READY from 31.6 % to 28 % in the spring of 2024.	Not Met Goal Based on the Spring 2024 data, 31% of third graders scored Not Met on 2024 SC READY
Goal #2: Increase parent attendance by 30% at all parent workshops through various platforms.	Met Goal Based on the Spring 2024 data, parent attendance increased by 30%.
Goal #3: During the 2023-2024 school year, 100% of Pre-K-5th grade teachers will receive ongoing Professional Learning Opportunities (PLOs) monthly focused on literacy best practices and utilizing formative assessment data to plan, execute, and reflect on daily instructional practices	Met Goal Based on Spring 2024 data 100% of teachers received monthly Professional Learning Opportunities focused on teacher clarity to provide standard-based instruction.

**Section I: Current SMART Goals and Action Steps Based on Analysis of Data**

- All schools serving students in third grade MUST respond to the third-grade reading proficiency goal. Schools that do not serve third grade students may choose a different goal. Schools may continue to use the same SMART goals from previous years or choose new goals. Goals should be academically measurable. The Reflection Tool may be helpful in determining action steps to reach an academic goal. Schools are strongly encouraged to incorporate goals from the strategic plan.

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Goals	Action Steps
<p><u>Goal #1 (Third Grade Goal):</u> Reduce the percentage of third graders scoring Does Not Meet in the spring of 2024 as determined by SC READY from 31 % to 28 % in the spring of 2025.</p>	<p><b>Action Steps:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Participate in collaborative planning to align standards with Fountas &amp; Pinnell Classroom resources.</li> <li>• Implement the Comprehensive Literacy Framework</li> <li>• Utilize primary and secondary resources with fidelity during interventions and word study.</li> <li>• Conducted and analyzed running records to implement interventions for targeted students.</li> <li>• Creating and instructing small groups based on students' needs.</li> <li>• Progress monitoring student progress using specific data points.</li> <li>• Professional development will be crafted to support the instructional needs of the students.</li> <li>• Conduct reading and writing standard-based conferences.</li> <li>• Collaborate with students to set goals based on universal screeners and formative and summative assessments.</li> <li>• Using a variety of data to inform and adjust daily instruction. (Including, but not limited to, Universal Screener, BAS, common formative assessments, rubrics, checklists, running/reading records, and conferring data)</li> <li>• Utilizing SC State Standards to explicitly teach the literacy skills and strategies of reading, writing, listening, and speaking to engage students in all content areas.</li> <li>• Using protocols to deconstruct standards for instructional implementation.</li> </ul>
<p><u>Goal #2:</u> Increase parent attendance by 50% at all parent workshops through various platforms.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Plan and facilitate a parent workshop series.</li> <li>• Plan &amp; facilitate literacy and special services events for parents and community partners.</li> <li>• Quarterly Literacy Newsletter</li> <li>• Provide opportunities for families to give feedback on events and review the information to assess effectiveness</li> </ul>

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Goals	Action Steps
<p><u>Goal #3:</u> During the 2024-2025 school year, 100% of Pre-K-5th grade teachers will receive monthly ongoing Professional Learning Opportunities (PLOs) focused on literacy best practices and utilizing formative assessment data to plan, execute, and reflect on daily instructional practices.</p>	<p><b>Action Steps Pre-K-5:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide extensive training to school-based Literacy support personnel (Reading Coach, Reading Interventionist, Curriculum Resource Teacher, Assistant Principal, and Principals), increasing their capacity to provide PLOs and support learning by: effectively</li> <li>• Utilizing SC State Standards to explicitly teach the literacy skills and strategies of reading, writing, listening, and speaking to engage students in all content areas.</li> <li>• Using protocols to deconstruct standards for instructional implementation.</li> <li>• Utilizing a Balanced Literacy Approach to instruction.</li> <li>• Implementing Curriculum Units of Study with fidelity.</li> <li>• Participating in effective Professional Learning Communities to reflect, plan, evaluate, and execute instruction.</li> <li>• Developing observational tools for instructional expectations to support coaching work.</li> <li>• Conducting monthly Learning Labs to support instructional expectation.</li> <li>• Studying text level behaviors and utilizing the Literacy Continuum for intentional instruction.</li> <li>• Creating and instructing small groups based on students' needs.</li> <li>• Progress monitoring student progress using specific data points.</li> <li>• Using a variety of data to inform and adjust daily instruction. (Including, but not limited to Universal Screener, BAS, common formative assessments, rubrics, checklists, running/reading records, and conferring data)</li> </ul>



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Goals	Action Steps