This tool provides concrete examples of what college and career readiness (CCR) standards in ELA/literacy look like in daily planning and practice. It is designed as a professional development tool for instructors, those who support instructors, and others working to implement CCR standards.

**Key Shifts Required by CCR Standards:**

The key shifts identify the most significant elements of the CCR standards. They include:

1. **Complexity: Regular practice with complex text and its academic language**
2. **Evidence: Reading, writing, and speaking grounded in evidence from text**
3. **Knowledge: Building knowledge through content rich nonfiction**

**Core Actions:**

At the heart of these advances is a focus in literacy instruction on the careful examination of the text itself. Thus the core actions outlined below revolve around the texts that students read and the kinds of questions students should address as they write and speak about them. They also focus on the close connection between comprehension of text and acquisition of knowledge.

**Core Criterion 1.** *Does instruction and structure of the lesson provide regular practice with complex text and its academic language?*

**Core Criterion 2.** *Does instruction and structure of the lesson provide reading, writing, and speaking activities grounded in evidence from text?*

**Core Criterion 3.** *Does instruction and structure of the lesson build knowledge through content-rich nonfiction?*

**Core Criterion 4.** *Does the lesson provide structure and support for standards-aligned instruction and assessment?*

**Directions:**

Under each core action, mark the indicators with either a Y (for Yes, it is evident) or an N (for No, it is not evident). If an indicator is not evident because it is not applicable in that particular observed lesson, then mark it as N/A.

Use the last column for each core action to make notes about what is seen and heard to support findings. Include information about student behavior, class discussions, student and instructor actions and interactions, and other activities as they happen. Keeping notes will provide specific examples—evidence—to support findings when discussing them with instructors later. The process for observing effective teaching and learning practices is not linear. In many cases, determinations about whether certain core actions and indicators are evident will not become clear until the lesson is over. Others will be evident early in the lesson. Mark the indicator with either a **“Y” (for “Yes, it is evident”)** or an **“N” (for** “**No, it is not evident”).** If an indicator is not evident because it is not applicable in that particular observed lesson, then mark it as **“N/A.”**

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| **Core Criterion 1.** *Does instruction and structure of the lesson provide regular practice with complex text and its academic language?*  | **Y, N, or N/A** | **Evidence observed:** |
| A. Instructor presents a lesson that includes text(s) at or above the appropriate text complexity band for the students’ level(s). |  |
| B. Instructor uses text(s) central to the lesson that display exceptional craft and thought and/or provide useful info; where appropriate, the texts are richly illustrated. |  |
| C. Instructor makes reading text(s) closely a central focus of instruction. |  |
| D. Instructor presents a lesson that includes appropriate scaffolding so that students directly experience the complexity of the text. |  |
| E. Instructor presents a lesson that includes questions and tasks that support students in identifying and analyzing the academic language in passages. |  |
| F. Instructor focuses on explicitly building students’ academic vocabulary and syntax during the lesson. |  |
| **Core Criterion 2.** *Does instruction and structure of the lesson provide reading, writing, and speaking activities grounded in evidence from text?* | **Y, N, or N/A** | **Evidence observed:** |
| A. Instructor poses questions and tasks that require students to use evidence from the text to demonstrate understanding and to support their ideas and inferences about the text(s). Ideas are expressed through writing, speaking, illustrating, media, etc.) |  |
| B. Instructor poses questions and tasks that address the text(s) by attending to words, phrases, and sentences within the text and particular structure, concepts, ideas, events, and details. |  |
| C. Instructor poses intentionally sequenced questions and tasks that target level-specific standards. |  |
| D. Instructor encourages a majority of the lesson to be spent reading, writing, or speaking about text(s); where appropriate, read alouds are used. |  |
| E. Instructor encourages all or most students to display persistence with challenging tasks on reading, speaking, and/or writing about demanding texts. |  |
| F. Instructor creates the conditions for student conversations and plans tasks where students are encouraged to build on each other’s observations or insights during discussion or collaboration. |  |

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| **Core Action 3.** *Does the resource build knowledge through content-rich nonfiction?*  | **Y, N, or N/A** | **Evidence observed:** |
| A. Instructor explicitly links lesson content to previous lessons or to build students’ knowledge in a content area. |  |
| B. The lesson includes attention to high-quality informational texts. |  |
| C. Instructor builds students’ content knowledge and their understanding of reading and writing in careers, community, social studies, the arts, science, and/or technical subjects through the coherent selection of texts. |  |
| D. Texts are sequenced and organized with the goals of increasing knowledge on a topic or focused area of inquiry. |  |
|  E. Instructor ends the lesson by:• Reviewing lesson goals• Summarizing student learning with references to student work and discussion. |  |

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| **Core Action 4.** *Does the lesson provide structure and support for standards-aligned instruction and assessment?*  | **Y, N, or N/A** | **Evidence observed:** |
| A. Instructor facilitates active participation in the lesson through class discussions and activities, group projects, etc. |  |
| B. Instructor provides students with prompt, specific feedback to correct misunderstandings, reinforce learning, and/or help students revise their initial work. |  |
| C. Instructor provides all students (including emergent and beginning readers) with extensive opportunities to engage with level appropriate complex texts, including appropriate supports in reading, writing, listening & speaking for students who are EL, have disabilities, or are reading below the level appropriate text band. |  |
| D. Instructor consistently or often uses formal or informal formative assessments to check whether students are mastering standards-based lesson content (e.g., walks around the room to check on students’ work, monitors verbal responses, assigns short problems, etc.). |  |
| E. Instructor provides extension activities for students who complete classwork early or are working above the lesson level. |  |

**CCR Observation Guidelines**1. Support the natural atmosphere of the classroom.
2. Arrive early and stay in the classroom for the entire lesson to see the lesson’s setup, flow, and conclusion.
3. Minimize your interaction with students; asking questions or participating in activities sometimes can detract from your observations. However, contact is allowed if done discreetly and with the purpose of understanding what students are thinking about and working on.
4. During whole-class discussion, if you cannot hear students working individually or in groups or need to see their work, walk around the room; otherwise, move to the side or back of the room.
5. Pay attention to students’ responses, including their level of engagement, how they are constructing their understanding, strategies they use to solve problems, and patterns of student error.
6. Pay attention to instructor-student interactions, including types of student engagement and how the instructor encourages engagement.
7. Pay attention to what the instructor says and does, as well as what he or she asks students to do.
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