



What is literacy?

What is balanced literacy?

Give One...Get One...Move On

Topic _____

1.	2.	3.
4.	5.	6.
7.	8.	9.

Sample Talk Partners Success Criteria

- Look at your partner.
- Listen to your partner.
- Be ready to speak when it is your turn.
- Speak so that only your partner can hear you.
- Remain on topic.
- Turn and face the front once you and your partner are finished sharing.

My Transitions Success Criteria

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

**Reading
Time**

**Award
Time**

Writing

THE LITERACY BLOCK: Introducing Direct Instruction

Sample Schedule Chart *Week 1*

Approximate Time	Literacy Activity	
15-30 minutes	Direct Instruction: Reading Time	
	Teacher	Students
	Modelled Reading Teaching students how to engage with texts by reading aloud, explicitly teaching reading strategies, posing higher-order thinking questions, etc.	Whole Class Active participation in reading lesson.
15-25 minutes	Teacher-selected community-building activities	
15-30 minutes	Direct Instruction: Writing Time	
	Teacher	Students
	Writing Instruction Teaching students various writing skills through modelling, examination of mentor texts, establishing success criteria, etc.	Whole Class
5 minutes	Class debriefing & Sharing	

THE LITERACY BLOCK: Introducing Independent Learning

Sample Schedule Chart *Weeks 2-3*

Approximate Time	Literacy Activity	
15-30 minutes	Direct Instruction: Reading Time	
	Teacher	Students
	Modelled Reading Teaching students how to engage with texts by reading aloud, explicitly teaching reading strategies, posing higher-order thinking questions, etc.	Whole Class Active participation in reading lesson.
10-15 minutes	Independent Reading	
	Teacher	Students
	Guided Reading* Working with a small group of students to read a teacher selected text	Independent Reading Reading a variety of texts on their own
15-30 minutes	Direct Instruction: Writing Time	
	Teacher	Students
	Writing Instruction Teaching students various writing skills through modelling, examination of mentor texts, establishing success criteria, etc.	Whole Class Active participation in writing lessons.
10-20 minutes	Independent Writing	
	Teacher	Students
	Writing Conferences* Working with a small group of students to share and provide feedback about their writing.	Independent Writing Working on their writing independently.

THE LITERACY BLOCK: Introducing AWARD/Small Group Time

Sample Schedule Chart Weeks 4-6+

Approximate Time	Literacy Activity	
15-20 minutes	Direct Instruction: Reading Time	
	Teacher	Students
	Modelled Reading Teaching students how to engage with texts by reading aloud, explicitly teaching reading strategies, posing higher-order thinking questions, etc.	Whole Class Active participation in reading lesson.
40-50 minutes	AWARD Time*	
	Teacher	Students
	Guided Reading – Group 1 Working with a small group of students to read a teacher selected text	Group 1 Group 2 Group 3 Group 4
	Writing Conference – Group 3	Group 1 Group 2 Group 3 Group 4
15-20 minutes	Direct Instruction: Writing Time	
	Teacher	Students
	Writing Instruction Teaching students various writing skills through modelling, examination of mentor texts, establishing success criteria, etc.	Whole Class Active participation in writing lessons.

Notes: _____

SAMPLE TIMELINE FOR INTRODUCING COMPONENTS OF THE LITERACY BLOCK

Approximate timeline	Component of Literacy Block
Week 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Begin by book-ending the literacy block with two distinct times for direct instruction, beginning with Reading Time and ending with Writing Time.
Weeks 2-3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Add times for independent reading and writing, gradually increasing the time that students spend engaged in each task. • Begin to use independent work times to meet with individual students for reading assessments or initial observations.
Weeks 4-6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Form initial instructional groupings and began to use award time to conduct guided reading lessons and writing conferences, meeting with one group for guided reading during independent reading time and another group for a writing conference doing independent writing time. Introduce students to the tracking board, including literacy tasks to be completed during simplified award time; independent reading, guided reading, independent writing, writing conference. • Use direct instruction reading and writing times to introduce students to reading responses, peer sharing, and technology. At this point, it is best to keep it simple and include a limited selection of reading responses and a simple technology task; e.g., Writing a book recommendation for a friend or reading a specific text from an online source.
Week 7 +	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Add additional elements to award tracking board, ensuring that students transition from one learning task to another in a way that intentionally connects independent learning task to small group learning opportunities: e.g., reading response follows guided reading writing conferences follows independent. • Have students rotate through a four or five day cycle completing 2 to 3 learning tasks a day. Continue to revisit routines and expectations for all learning times, ensuring that students have opportunities to select reading text as well as writing topics. • Continue to use direct instruction Reading and Writing times to introduce students to new learning task and to add to the selection of reading responses, writing ideas, and technology assignments revisit instructional groupings frequently and form a new groups as needed, focusing on various reasons for grouping students: ability, specific learning needs, interest, etc.

Lisa Donahue 2012. *100 Minutes Making Every Minute Count in the Literacy Block*

Create your own reader response task cards.

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Notes:

Grade	Subject:
Standards:	
Objectives:	
Anticipatory Set (Hook)	
Direct Instruction:	
Guided Practice:	
Closure:	
Independent Practice:	
Materials:	
Assessment:	

Components of Balanced Literacy Defined

Read Aloud: The teacher reads text aloud to students. The students are engaging in a variety of activities, including, previewing, predicting, questioning, and responding.

Shared Reading: The teacher and students read text together. Shared reading promotes discussion and critical thinking. It affords students the opportunity to problem solve. Shared reading often includes big books, charts, and pictures.

Guided Reading: The teacher works with small groups who have similar reading abilities and require similar assistance. Proper book selection is critical in order to match the instructional level of students and support whole text reading. The teacher explicitly teaches a variety of reading strategies to the group. Assessment is continuous and grouping flexible to allow for change when necessary.

Independent Reading: Students select their own text based on their reading level and interest. Students read independently for a select period of time. While reading independently, students are practicing the reading strategies that were taught during read aloud, shared reading, and guided reading.

Interactive Writing: Together, the teacher and class compose a variety of written text, using what is called a "shared pen" technique. Through discussion, the class agrees on what to write. Together, the teacher and students navigate through the writing process.

Shared Writing: The teacher and students work together to create different forms of writing. Students provide the teacher with ideas, while the teacher serves as a scribe. The teacher's role during shared writing is to effectively demonstrate the writing process.

Guided Writing: The teacher works with small groups who have similar writing strengths and weaknesses. The teacher introduces techniques and strategies carefully chosen to match the students' instructional levels. Assessment is continuous to ensure that learning is being facilitated. Grouping is flexible and may be changed as often as necessary.

Independent Writing: Students spend a specified amount of time writing independently. Writing topics may be selected by the teacher, but are most often self-selected. During this time, students are practicing strategies that were explicitly taught during interactive writing, shared writing, and guided writing.