

Instructional Practices for ELA Practitioner Checklist

Twelve instructional practices emerged from the 2017 adopted ELA standards. These essential actions provide a framework for strongly aligned teaching and learning. Educators should note that not all of the practices are expected to be evident in every lesson. As teachers consider their instruction and their students’ learning, this checklist helps to maintain consistency in carrying out and achieving each instructional practice. The purpose of this list is to provide a resource for self-reflection.

IP #1: Teachers use high quality appropriately complex text as the center of instruction. There is a balance of informational and literary texts.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> I focus on the expectations of the standards and I use the text(s) as a vehicle to teach them. <input type="checkbox"/> I measure the complexity of the text to ensure it is appropriate for the grade-level I teach. I consider all three text complexity measures: quantitative, qualitative, reader and task considerations. <input type="checkbox"/> I use a text worthy of close reading and rereading that: exhibits exceptional craft and thought, is well written, is richly illustrated, and/or provides useful information. <input type="checkbox"/> I use both informational and literary texts as the center of instruction. There is a 50-50 balance throughout the course of the year.
IP #2: Teachers integrate the reading, writing, speaking and listening, and language standards effectively.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> I ensure that the majority of a lesson is spent reading, writing, speaking, and listening about text(s). <input type="checkbox"/> I choose standards that naturally support one another. I cross strands to create an integrated understanding of how language works: reading and writing, grammar and writing, speaking and writing, etc. <input type="checkbox"/> I choose a focus standard and supporting standards and my lesson makes clear distinctions between them.
IP #3: Activities and instruction support building academic vocabulary systematically.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> I choose words carefully to decide which words to teach, which words to tell, or which words students can understand through the context. <input type="checkbox"/> I choose tier 2 words that students will encounter across disciplines and in later grades. <input type="checkbox"/> I choose words that help students express themselves in their writing and speaking. <input type="checkbox"/> I make sure that vocabulary instruction is contextual and intentional.
IP #4: Texts are organized around conceptually-related topics (at a range of complexities) to build students’ knowledge and vocabulary.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> When using a set of texts, I identify an anchor text and line of inquiry. <input type="checkbox"/> I choose texts that build a body of knowledge connected to the anchor text. <input type="checkbox"/> I include a balance of text types and formats in the text sets. <input type="checkbox"/> I choose texts at a range of complexities.

IP #5: Teachers integrate technology and research throughout instruction.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> I integrate technology and research by requiring students to: integrate and evaluate information in a variety of media and formats; and gather relevant information from a variety of sources. <input type="checkbox"/> I require students to use digital tools to produce and publish writing, as well as interact and collaborate with others. <input type="checkbox"/> I require students to consult digital reference materials in addition to print ones. <input type="checkbox"/> I keep the NC Digital learning competencies, especially for digital citizenship and digital content and instruction, in mind when planning instruction.
IP #6: There are opportunities for students to engage in effective communication as a part of daily practice.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> I offer opportunities for students to share, expand, and clarify their thinking. <input type="checkbox"/> I model for students how they should respond to each other in discussions. <input type="checkbox"/> I support my students in setting classroom rules for discussions and interactions. <input type="checkbox"/> I facilitate and/or encourage students to have productive discussions, collaborate, and actively listen to one another.
IP #7: Students think critically while reading, writing, speaking, and listening about texts.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> I create questions and tasks with Bloom’s Taxonomy and/or Webb’s Depth of Knowledge in mind. <input type="checkbox"/> I provide questions and tasks that challenge students to go beyond the obvious “right there” questions. <input type="checkbox"/> I ask questions and assign tasks that require students to focus on the interconnectedness of concepts, ideas, and details in a text. <input type="checkbox"/> I ask questions and provide tasks that support the spiraling of ELA instruction and integration of strands.
IP #8: Teachers apply formative assessment practices to gauge student mastery and inform instruction.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> I use formative assessment <i>during</i> instruction. <input type="checkbox"/> I provide descriptive feedback to students so they can adjust or self-monitor their learning. <input type="checkbox"/> I collect evidence of student learning to adjust my teaching to meet the needs of my students and/or better align with the expectations of the standards. <input type="checkbox"/> I do not grade or use formative assessments in accountability systems.
IP #9: Scaffolds are provided as needed so that all students have access to complex text.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> I provide scaffolds to make vocabulary accessible. <input type="checkbox"/> I provide reading strategies to help students make sense of the text. <input type="checkbox"/> I provide scaffolds to help students grapple with the challenging parts of the text.
IP #10: Examples, lessons, and tasks are authentic and relevant.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> I use examples, deliver lessons, and/or assign tasks that are worth knowing and have real world application.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> I use examples, deliver lessons, and/or assign tasks that encourage inquiry, not recall or recognition. <input type="checkbox"/> I use examples, deliver lessons, and/or assign tasks that engage my students.
<p>IP #11: Students return to the text to support their ideas, inferences, and conclusions with evidence.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> I ask questions and assign tasks that require re-reading or careful reading. <input type="checkbox"/> I use questions and tasks that frame <i>important</i> concepts, ideas, and details in text. <input type="checkbox"/> I require students to give evidence-based responses to questions. <input type="checkbox"/> I use questions and tasks that focus on the information found <i>within</i> the text.
<p>IP #12: Language skills are developed through student writing and supported through mentor texts.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> I teach language skills and grammar within the context of reading or writing. <input type="checkbox"/> I teach targeted grammar lessons based on students' needs that are evident in their writing and/or speaking. <input type="checkbox"/> I use mentor texts that are exceptional models of language use. <input type="checkbox"/> I encourage students to mimic the mentor text's use of language.