Characteristics of Highly Effective Teaching and Learning
Reading & Writing

The Kentucky Academic Standards for Reading and Writing consist of the following strands: Reading Literature, Reading Informational Text, Composition, Language, Handwriting Skills (K-3) and Foundational Skills (K-5). The strands outline what a student should know and be able to do independently by the end of each grade in grades K-8 and in each grade band for 9-10 and 11-12. These grade-level specific and grade-banded standards intentionally support the learning progression as they strategically stair-step students toward the guiding principles for each strand.

The Interdisciplinary Literacy Practices are built upon a foundation of common understandings—or practices—which provide the overarching goals for literacy instruction for each student across the state. These ten foundational practices are fundamental to fostering an environment that goes beyond teaching and learning isolated skills. This literacy-rich environment focuses on the larger vision and objective of empowering independent, lifelong learners who think deeply and critically about text, and who recognize that text is anything that communicates a message. The practices should not be confused as additional standards, but they should guide teachers in providing intentional opportunities for students to practice the behaviors of a literate citizen. The Interdisciplinary Literacy Practices are interwoven throughout the Characteristics of Highly Effective Teaching and Learning for Reading and Writing.

Section One: Learning Climate

Learning Climate: A safe environment supported by the teacher in which high, clear expectations and positive relationships are fostered; active learning is promoted

Teacher Characteristics:

A. Teacher creates a learning environment where students are active participants as individuals and as members of collaborative groups. The teacher:
   1. Provides multiple opportunities for collaboration on a variety of tasks, prompting students consideration of diverse experiences and perspectives; and
   2. Cultivates active participation among students by incorporating strategies such as reading groups, reading circles, literature circles, debates, writing and reading workshops, and inquiry projects.

B. Teacher motivates students and nurtures their desire to learn in a safe, healthy and supportive environment which develops compassion and mutual respect. The teacher:
   1. Fosters compassion and respect by thoughtfully guiding students with reading selections and topics for composing, researching and exploring;
   2. Reframes thinking about texts--texts are anything that communicate a message

(e.g., print, non-print, digital, charts, graphs, timelines, maps, pictures, songs, video clips);

3. Regularly models and shares the thinking processes and communication skills of a literate person, emphasizing curiosity and enthusiasm about print and digital texts and the uses of language; and

4. Chooses print and non-print interdisciplinary texts to demonstrate the variety of ways authors can communicate meaning.

C. Teacher cultivates cross cultural understandings and the value of diversity. The teacher:
1. Encourages students to share confusions and difficulties with texts and recognizes the diverse perspectives and resources brought by each member of the class; and
2. Provides opportunities for students to read texts from a variety of perspectives, cultures, time periods and disciplines.

D. Teacher encourages students to accept responsibility for their own learning and accommodates the diverse learning needs of all students. The teacher:
1. Sets expectations for all students to attain individual literacy goals;
2. Offers and models various learning strategies for how to approach a new text or composition product; and
3. Provides opportunities for students to self-regulate by choosing appropriate strategies for a new task.

E. Teacher displays effective and efficient classroom management that includes classroom routines that promote comfort, order and appropriate student behaviors. The teacher:
1. Uses classroom routines and procedures to develop a literate community.

F. Teacher provides students equitable access to technology, space, tools and time. The teacher:
1. Encourages students to use technology to access appropriate and engaging texts, to conduct research and to communicate; and
2. Provides students with multiple opportunities to learn, communicate, and create, using various digital resources.

G. Teacher effectively allocates time for students to engage in hands-on experiences, discuss and process content and make meaningful connections. The teacher:
1. Actively uses literacy skills as tools to help students learn and make connections and immerses students in language and words.

H. Teacher designs lessons that allow students to participate in empowering activities in which they understand that learning is a process and mistakes are a natural part of learning. The teacher:
1. Promotes the idea that learning is a process and mistakes are part of that process by creating a literate community that encourages students to share their ongoing work and to take risks.

I. Teacher creates an environment where student work is valued, appreciated and used as a learning tool. The teacher:
    1. Displays student composition products and uses them as models to help students improve their work.

Student Characteristics:

A. Student accepts responsibility for his/her own learning. The student:
    1. Sets and attains literacy goals and accepts responsibility for revising work and actively participating in academic conversations and activities;
    2. Uses learning strategies to access new or unfamiliar literacy tasks; and
    3. Decides which strategy best meets the need for a particular text or task.

B. Student actively participates and is authentically engaged. The student:
    1. Recognizes that text is anything that communicates a message (e.g., print, non-print, digital, charts, graphs, timelines, maps, pictures, songs, video clips); and
    2. Interacts with a wide variety of texts (print and non-print), including his/her own composition products.

C. Student collaborates/teams with other students. The student:
    1. Works with other students to complete inquiry projects and participate in class discussions about language and words; and
    2. Utilizes receptive and expressive language arts to better understand self, others and the world.

D. Student exhibits a sense of accomplishment and confidence. The student:
    1. Exhibits a sense of accomplishment by valuing literacy and sharing literacy experiences; and
    2. Develops a literacy identity that promotes lifelong learning.

E. Student takes educational risks in class. The student:
    1. Understands that, like learning, composition is a process and mistakes are part of that process; and
    2. Uses the literary experience to change or to inform an opinion or to take action.

F. Student practices and engages in safe, responsible and ethical use of technology. The student:
    1. Demonstrates communication skills by practicing and engaging in safe, responsible and ethical use of technology; and
    2. Critiques digital sources to determine their accuracy, credibility and usefulness.

Section Two: Classroom Assessment and Reflection

Classroom Assessment and Reflection: The teacher and student collaboratively gather information and reflect on learning through a systematic process that informs instruction.

Teacher Characteristics:

A. Teacher uses multiple methods to systematically gather data about student understanding and ability. The teacher:
   1. Observes group interactions (e.g. literature circles, reading circles, debates); uses discussion protocols, writing checklists, anecdotal notes, writing to learn products such as exit slips, journals, reading logs.

B. Teacher uses student work/data, observations of instruction, assignments and interactions with colleagues to reflect on and improve teaching practice. The teacher:
   1. Uses results from observations, achievement data, constructed responses, essays, on demand writing situations to inform instructional practices;
   2. Analyzes student reading/writing throughout the year to see the growth/progression of students' literacy skills; and
   3. Collaborates to analyze reading/writing work samples in formats such as Professional Learning Communities and/or tuning protocols to guide instructional practices.

C. Teacher revises instructional strategies based upon student achievement data. The teacher:
   1. Designs writing instruction and mini-lessons in response to students' needs, using explicit modeling in teaching, think alouds, flexible reading/writing groups; and
   2. Scaffolds students' application of strategic practices until students are able to independently approach new literacy tasks.

D. Teacher uncovers students' prior understanding of the concepts to be addressed and addresses students' misconceptions/incomplete conceptions. The teacher:
   1. Uses discussion strategies to activate prior knowledge and uncover misconceptions about processes of reading, writing, and communicating; and
   2. Uses students' schema associated with both content (background) knowledge and literacy strategies to break down, approach or create a text.

E. Teacher co-develops scoring guides/rubrics with students and provides adequate modeling to make clear the expectations for quality performance. The teacher:
   1. Guides students in the development of rubrics aligned with reading and writing standards; uses models to clarify expectations of literacy products.

F. Teacher guides students to apply rubrics to assess their performance and identify improvement strategies. The teacher:
   1. Incorporates developmentally appropriate rubrics for literacy assignments, allowing students to identify and address gaps in their understanding and uses differentiated assessments when appropriate to respond to student needs and backgrounds.

G. Teacher provides regular and timely feedback to students and parents that moves learners forward. The teacher:

1. Provides parents and students access to reading assessments, writing samples, journals, goal setting records and feedback on literacy performance; and
2. Uses coaching and ethical markings to provide feedback on student composition products.

H. Teacher allows students to use feedback to improve their work before a grade is assigned. The teacher:
   1. Guides students in using descriptive feedback by allowing for multiple revisions of composition products.

I. Teacher facilitates students in self- and peer-assessment. The teacher:
   1. Provides opportunities for students to evaluate their own and others' work and to participate in writing response groups/peer conferencing; and
   2. Engages students in reflection on their reading and writing and arranges for students to talk and write about themselves as readers and writers.

J. Teacher reflects on instruction and makes adjustments as student learning occurs. The teacher:
   1. Reflects on student progress toward literacy goals and adjusts instruction based on students' needs; and
   2. Provides opportunities for students to self-regulate by choosing appropriate strategies for a new task.

Student Characteristics:

A. Student recognizes what proficient work looks like and determines steps necessary for improving his/her work. The student:
   1. Uses models, examples and rubrics for improving literacy achievement.

B. Student monitors progress toward reaching learning targets. The student:
   1. Sets literacy goals; understands literacy objectives, monitors own progress, comprehension and use of strategies to understand texts;
   2. Engages actively in listening, reading, writing and viewing experiences to reach learning targets; and
   3. Strategically uses metacognition to self-regulate for optimum learning and performance in literacy.

C. Student develops and/or uses scoring guides periodically to assess his/her own work or that of peers. The student:
   1. Develops and uses rubrics to understand the characteristics of quality writing, to apply vocabulary knowledge and to understand the different types of texts.

D. Student uses teacher and peer feedback to improve his/her work. The student:
   1. Uses and recognizes the value of feedback and makes appropriate choice to improve reading, language, composition and communication skills.

E. Student reflects on work and makes adjustments as learning occurs. The student:
   1. Reflects on processes and products and makes adjustments in reading, language, composition and communication;
   2. Uses learning strategies to access new or unfamiliar literacy tasks and decides which strategy best meets the need for a particular text or task; and
   3. Uses metacognition and self-regulation to optimize learning and production of literacy tasks.

Section Three: Instructional Rigor and Student Engagement

Instructional Rigor and Student Engagement: A teacher supports and encourages a student's commitment to initiate and complete complex, inquiry-based learning requiring creative and critical thinking with attention to problem solving.

Teacher Characteristics:

A. Teacher instructs the complex processes, concepts and principles contained in state and national standards using differentiated strategies that make instruction accessible to all students. The teacher:
   1. Teaches the complex skills, processes and relationships among reading, composition, language and communication;
   2. Explicitly teaches comprehension strategies (e.g., questioning, monitoring, visualizing, inferencing, summarizing, determining importance, using prior knowledge and synthesizing (4-12)) appropriate for a variety of challenging texts; and
   3. Builds written and oral vocabulary through effective instruction (e.g., multiple exposures, context clues).

B. Teacher scaffolds instruction to help students reason and develop problem-solving strategies. The teacher:
   1. Offers and models various learning strategies for how to approach a variety of literacy tasks;
   2. Scaffolds instruction to help students apply metacognitive skills to challenging, developmental and/or age appropriate texts; and
   3. Provides opportunities for students to self-regulate by choosing appropriate strategies for a new task.

C. Teacher orchestrates effective classroom discussions, questioning, and learning tasks that promote higher-order thinking skills. The teacher:
   1. Challenges students to analyze, synthesize and evaluate individual and multiple texts for a variety of purposes;
   2. Orchestrates engaging classroom discussions and questioning to construct meaning and make connections about a variety of texts.

D. Teacher provides meaningful learning opportunities for students. The teacher:
   1. Offers a variety of engaging texts, geared toward student interest,

demonstrating that multiple reading options exist;
2. Explicitly teaches revision strategies throughout instruction and provides time for revision of current and past work to allow students to apply and refine skills; and
3. Flexibly structures literacy tasks to promote choice and student ownership.

E. Teacher challenges students to think deeply about problems and encourages/models a variety of approaches to a solution. The teacher:
1. Challenges students to communicate complex written and spoken arguments and to substantiate each point clearly; and
2. Uses direct instruction to model and practice specific thinking processes (e.g., application, synthesis, analysis, creativity, etc.).

F. Teacher integrates a variety of learning resources with classroom instruction to increase learning options. The teacher**:**
1. Uses technology effectively to differentiate literacy instruction and support student learning; and
2. Integrates a variety of learning resources with classroom literacy instruction to increase learning options and products.

G. Teacher structures and facilitates ongoing formal and informal discussions based on a shared understanding of rules and discourse. The teacher:
1. Provides opportunities for and encourages students to communicate effectively with a variety of audiences and purposes.

H. Teacher integrates the application of inquiry skills into learning experiences. The teacher:
1. Integrates the application of inquiry and research skills into a variety of experiences to support literacy skill development; and
2. Provides multiple opportunities for students to ask and research answers to individual, as well as assigned, inquiry questions.

I. Teacher clarifies and shares with students learning intentions/targets and criteria for success. The teacher:
1. Clarifies and shares learning intentions/targets and criteria for success focused on specific literacy skills with students.

Student Characteristics:

A. Student articulates and understands learning intentions/targets and criteria for success. The student:
1. Articulates and understands learning intentions/targets and criteria for success focused on specific literacy skills.

B. Student reads with understanding a variety of texts. The student:
1. Uses a variety of texts for multiple purposes, both inside and outside of the classroom; and

2. Selects and uses technology appropriate for literacy tasks.

C. Student applies and refines inquiry skills. The student:
   1. Interacts with a variety of challenging texts:
      i. Selects appropriate print and digital sources and applies appropriate strategies;
      ii. Thinks critically and applies a variety of reading strategies to make meaning; and
      iii. makes and shares connections with a variety of texts.
   2. Applies appropriate inquiry and research skills:
      i. Asks and identifies questions to guide research; and
      ii. Locates, uses and appropriately documents print and digital sources.
   3. Communicates with a variety of audiences;
   4. Sets purposes for a variety of modes;
   5. Incorporates real world problems and interests; and
   6. Revises current and past work.

Section Four: Instructional Relevance

Instructional Relevance: A teacher's ability to facilitate learning experiences that are meaningful to students and prepare them for their futures

Teacher Characteristics:

A. Teacher designs learning opportunities that allow students to participate in empowering activities in which they understand that learning is a process and mistakes are a natural part of the learning. The teacher:
   1. Provides opportunities for reading, writing, language and communication activities through which students learn that literacy development is a recursive process;
   2. Provides students access to texts of different difficulty levels, lengths, genres and topics; and
   3. Empowers students to activate growth mindsets in challenging situations.

B. Teacher links concepts and key ideas to students' prior experiences and understandings, uses multiple representations, examples and explanations. The teacher:
   1. Links interactions with print and non-print texts (reading and responding orally or through composition) to students' prior experiences and understandings;
   2. Prompts students through questioning, simulations, scenarios or other strategies to activate prior knowledge;
   3. Uses comprehension strategies, multiple representations and other tools to enable all students to understand and respond to text;
   4. Builds student background knowledge through various learning experiences (e.g. virtual field trips, multimedia presentations, read-alouds, discussions, simulations); and
   5. Scaffolds instruction to facilitate understanding and engage all students in literacy activities.

C. Teacher incorporates student experiences, interests and real-life situations in instruction. The

teacher:
1. Incorporates student experiences, interests and real-life situations when designing authentic literacy instruction (e.g. activities, assignments, assessments);
2. Creates opportunities for receptive and expressive language arts to help students better understand self, others and the world; and
3. Allows for student choice (e.g. reading selections, topics and purposes for composition and discussion).

D. Teacher selects and utilizes a variety of technology that support student learning. The teacher:
1. Selects and utilizes a variety of technology that support student comprehension, interaction and response to text; and
2. Incorporates opportunities for students to utilize digital resources to learn and share with others.

E. Teacher effectively incorporates essential skills that prepare students to meet future challenges. The teacher:
1. Effectively incorporates technologies that prepare students to meet future literacy and job-related challenges;
2. Provides students with connected and relevant literacy instruction so that they may read like a writer/write like a reader, or speak like a listener/listen like a speaker, etc.;
3. Offers varied but related messages from written, auditory, and/or graphic texts to examine how receptive and expressive texts are interrelated;
4. Instructs students on the ethical use of technology and credibility of digital sources; and
5. Provides students with multiple opportunities to learn, communicate, and create using various digital resources.

F. Teacher works with other teachers to make connections between and among disciplines. The teacher:
1. Works with other teachers to make connections between and among disciplines to show how reading, composition, language and communication skills are a part of other major subjects; and
2. Supports students in engaging in specialized, discipline-specific literacy practices.

G. Teacher makes lesson connections to community, society and current events. The teacher:
1. Connects learning to community, society, and current events through meaningful dialogue, debate and composition;
2. Uses collaborative exercises to prompt students' consideration of diverse experiences and perspectives;
3. Provides opportunities for authentic social and collaborative communications that emphasize research, discussion, communication and interaction; and
4. Facilitates connections to the world of work through the exploration of careers which require the advanced application of literacy skills.

Student Characteristics:

A. Student poses and responds to meaningful questions. The student:
   1. Makes meaningful connections to texts (e.g. text to self, text to community, text to text) and shares these connections through written and oral communication;
   2. Listens actively and respectfully to one another to refine understanding and broaden perspectives;
   3. Contributes ideas actively and respectfully in order to refine understanding and broaden perspectives; and
   4. Thoughtfully poses and responds to meaningful questions (e.g. written response, small-group and whole- group discussion, interviews, digital communication).

B. Student uses appropriate tools and techniques to gather, analyze and interpret quantitative and qualitative data. The student:
   1. Investigates a variety of self-directed topics to analyze, synthesize and then communicate in a variety of form;
   2. Evaluates sources of information for credibility and accuracy; provides correct documentation of those sources; and
   3. Engages in specialized discipline-specific literacy practices.

C. Student develops descriptions, explanations, predictions and models using evidence. The student:
   1. In response to real-life problems, prompts, questions and discussions, writes, researches and logically organizes written and spoken evidence.

D. Student works collaboratively to address complex, authentic problems which require innovative approaches to solve. The student:
   1. Employs, develops and refines schema for understanding new and challenging texts; and
   2. Collaborates to address complex, authentic problems--through reading, composition, language and communication.

E. Student communicates knowledge and understanding in a variety of real-world forms. The student:
   1. Develops and justifies a variety of oral and written responses (e.g. descriptions, explanations, predictions, persuasions);
   2. Chooses appropriate print, non-print and digital texts, tools and techniques to access, create and communicate ideas and knowledge; and
   3. Creates text according to conventions, processes, information and forms that are valued by the discipline.

Section Five: Knowledge of Content

Knowledge of Content: A teacher's understanding and application of the current theories, principles, concepts and skills of a discipline.

Teacher Characteristics:

A. Teacher demonstrates an understanding and in-depth knowledge of content and maintains an ability to convey this content to students. The teacher:
   1. Demonstrates an understanding and in-depth knowledge of the skills and concepts related to reading, language and composition and an ability to teach students to understand and apply these skills and concepts;
   2. Develops independent thinkers, readers and writers;
   3. Understands that students learn to read and write in a variety of ways;
   4. Understands that reading and writing are processes that are developmental in nature;
   5. Understands that language is a dynamic social construct;
   6. Understands the complex relationship between audience and media;
   7. Demonstrates knowledge of language history, theory and development, and language structure and understands the instructional implications of these theories; and
   8. Demonstrates familiarity with the main theories of discourse, including how communication skills develop.

B. Teacher maintains on-going knowledge and awareness of current content developments. The teacher:
   1. Stays current with research related to reading, composition, language and communication.

C. Teacher designs and implements standards-based courses/lessons/units using state and national standards. The teacher:
   1. Understands that the *Kentucky Academic Standards for Reading and Writing* involve teaching skills and concepts through a variety of texts; and
   2. Understands the benefit of implementing interdisciplinary literacy practices.

D. Teacher uses and promotes the understanding of appropriate content vocabulary. The teacher:
   1. Uses evidence-based vocabulary instruction to help students build vocabulary knowledge; and
   2. Teaches students to use context clues and word analysis strategies to determine meanings of words.

E. Teacher provides essential supports for students who are struggling with the content. The teacher:
   1. Identifies literacy difficulties and intervenes using specific, evidence-based practices;
   2. Teaches students how to use a variety of literacy strategies independently to access content; and
   3. Provides opportunities for students to self-regulate by choosing appropriate strategies for a new or challenging task.

F. Teacher accesses a rich repertoire of instructional practices, strategies, resources and

applies them appropriately. The teacher:
1. Teaches students to develop and use a range of strategies to identify and explain author's craft to achieve effects;
2. Knows the processes and strategies that skilled readers use to decode, comprehend, analyze, synthesize, and evaluate texts and how to teach these processes and strategies to students;
3. Teaches students to identify various types of text and text structures and how they work together to create meaning;
4. Teaches students to synthesize, summarize, clarify, and question texts to make connections to self, others and the world; and
5. Applies high level cognitive processes to think deeply and critically about text.

Student Characteristics:

A. Student demonstrates growth in content knowledge. The student:
1. Reflects on growth in literacy;
2. Summarizes passages in own words and checks to make sure words make sense in larger context of text;
3. Synthesizes multiple texts to deepen understanding of themes, issues, and arguments;
4. Self-regulates--makes intentional decisions on when, where and how to apply thinking and learning processes; and
5. Reflects on interdisciplinary information and understands the impact that it has on their learning.

B. Student uses and seeks to expand appropriate content vocabulary. The student:
1. Discusses the ways authors use words to convey meaning, tone, and develop voice;
2. Uses content vocabulary to access and interpret literary and informational texts.

C. Student connects ideas across content areas. The student:
1. Uses and seeks to expand appropriate literacy skills and concepts (e.g. reading, composition, language and communication); and
2. Applies and connects literacy skills across content areas and in everyday life by activating Interdisciplinary Literacy Practices to allow students to practice the behaviors of a literate citizen:
   - Practice 1: Recognizes that text is anything that communicates a message.
   - Practice 2: Employs, develops and refines schema to understand and create text.
   - Practice 3: Views literacy experiences as transactional, interdisciplinary, and transformational.
   - Practice 4: Utilizes receptive and expressive language arts to better understand self, others and the world.
   - Practice 5: Applies strategic practices, with scaffolding and then independently to approach new literacy tasks.
   - Practice 6: Collaborates with others to create new meaning.
   - Practice 7: Utilizes digital resources to learn and share with others.
   - Practice 8: Engages in specialized, discipline-specific literacy practices.
   - Practice 9: Applies high level cognitive processes to think deeply and critically about text.
   - Practice 10: Develops a literacy identity that promotes lifelong learning.

D. Student uses ideas in realistic problem solving situations. The student:
1. Creates and interprets media outside of the school setting;
2. Critiques digital sources to determine their accuracy and usefulness; and
3. Evaluates digital communication to become a critical and reflective consumer of information.