

# Guidelines to Review Comprehensive Core Reading Programs

Florida Center for Reading Research

## Introduction

This document was developed to assist the Curriculum and Instruction Team at the Florida Center for Reading Research (FCRR) as they review Comprehensive Core Reading Programs (CCRP) to determine alignment with current reading research. In Florida, a Comprehensive Core Reading Program is intended to be the instructional tool used to guide high quality initial instruction in *Reading First* K-3 classrooms. A CCRP is considered the first line of defense to prevent reading failure for all students. Curriculum and Instruction Team members who use these guidelines to navigate their review of a CCRP have extensive knowledge of current reading research and *Reading First*, have taught struggling readers to read, have taught reading methods courses at the undergraduate and graduate level, and have assisted in developing reading curriculum that is research validated.

## Process of Using these Guidelines

When reviewing a reading program thoroughly, it is *not* sufficient to examine only a sample of lessons. In order to determine whether a program is aligned with current reading research, it is essential to review all the teacher and student materials. This document was developed to help navigate a reviewer through the lengthy but important process of reviewing a CCRP. It was designed to be utilized in conjunction with the resources listed below. When using this document, place a check mark in either the yes or no column after each question. If the answer is not clear or not evident, write 'not evident' in the comments column and leave the yes/no columns blank. It is very important to use the comments column to detail specific examples, note questions, etc. When a question is marked 'no' or 'not evident', it is a concern that the program may not be consistent with current research on reading and reading instruction. That is, if a CCRP is aligned with what research tells us about teaching reading, then 'yes' will be marked on all of the questions with evidence to support this assertion written in the comments column.

Note that this document includes the sequence of instruction that should occur from kindergarten through third grade. *Approximate* places are delineated to illustrate the separate grade level skills.

Educators who use this document to guide their own review of a CCRP, will find the following resources helpful:

- Glossary of Reading Terms developed by FCRR
- Continuum of Phonological Awareness Skills developed by FCRR
- Continuum of word types
- Reviews of CCRPs already posted at [www.fcrr.org](http://www.fcrr.org) (under FCRR Reports—Core Reading Programs)
- References listed at the back of this document

## Overall Instructional Design and Pedagogy of the CCRP

Characteristic	Yes	No	Comments (e.g., specific examples, strengths, concerns, questions)
Is there a clear 'road map' or 'blueprint' for teachers to get an overall picture of the program (e.g., <b>scope and sequence</b> )?			
Are goals and objectives clearly stated?			
Are there resources available to help the teacher understand the rationale for the instructional approach and <b>strategies</b> utilized in the program (e.g., articles, explanations in the teacher manuals, references, reliable websites)?			
Is there a <b>coherent instructional design</b> (e.g., are the 5 components of reading clearly linked within as well as across each component)?			
Is instruction consistently <b>explicit</b> ?			
Is instruction consistently <b>systematic</b> ?			
Is there a logical organization to the materials so that it's clear in what order the lesson proceeds?			
Are there consistent 'teacher friendly' <b>instructional routines</b> ?			
Are there <b>aligned student materials</b> ?			
Are there <b>ample student practice</b> opportunities?			
Are all of the activities (e.g., centers) reading related?			

Are teachers encouraged to give <b>immediate corrective feedback</b> ?			
Is <b>scaffolding</b> a prominent part of the lessons?			
Are there specific instructions for <b>scaffolding</b> ?			
Is <b>differentiated instruction</b> prominent?			
Are there guidelines and materials for <b>flexible grouping</b> ?			
Are <b>enrichment</b> activities included for advanced students?			
In addition to the 5 components of reading, are the dimensions of spelling, writing, oral language, and listening comprehension addressed?			

### Phonological Awareness Instruction

(PA should be a focus for kindergarten and first grade, although some older students may need these pre reading skills)

Characteristic	Yes	No	Comments (e.g., specific examples, strengths, concerns, questions)
			Approximately Kindergarten: Phonological Awareness
Overall, does instruction progress from easier PA activities to more difficult PA activities?			
Is PA taught <b>explicitly</b> every day?			
Is PA only a small portion of the daily lesson (no more than 30 minutes/day)?			
Do activities follow the <b>continuum of word types</b> (beginning with short words that contain 2 or 3 phonemes)?			
Does instruction include the use of physical representations (e.g., fingers, clapping, <b>Elkonin boxes</b> w/ markers)?			

Do students count the number of words in spoken sentences?			
Are there auditory <b>rhyming</b> activities (recognition and production)?			
Are there auditory <b>alliteration</b> activities?			
Are there activities that involve counting the number of <b>syllables</b> in a word?			
Are there activities that involve blending and segmenting syllables in a word?			
Are there activities for students to blend <b>onsets and rimes</b> ?			
When PA activities are at the <b>phoneme</b> level, do students engage in activities that target the <i>first sound</i> in words and then move to the <i>last sound</i> in words and finally focus on the <i>middle sound</i> in words?			
Are there auditory <b>blending</b> activities at the <b>phoneme</b> level?			
Are there auditory <b>segmenting</b> activities at the <b>phoneme</b> level?			
			Approximately 1 <sup>st</sup> Grade: Phonemic Awareness
Overall, does instruction progress from easier PA activities to more difficult PA activities?			
Is PA taught <b>explicitly</b> every day?			
Is PA only a small portion of the daily lesson (no more than 30 minutes/day)?			
Do activities continue to follow the <b>continuum of word types</b> ? (e.g., Are longer words part of PA instruction)?			

When PA activities are at the <b>phoneme</b> level, do students engage in activities that target the <i>first sound</i> in words and then move to the <i>last sound</i> in words and finally focus on the <i>middle sound</i> in words?			
Are there auditory <b>blending</b> activities at the <b>phoneme</b> level?			
Are there auditory <b>segmenting</b> activities at the <b>phoneme</b> level?			
Does instruction include manipulation of phonemes in words (e.g., deletion, substitution)?			
Once students demonstrate early <b>phonemic awareness</b> , is PA instruction <b>linked</b> with phonics instruction?			
Are words used in PA activities also found in the text students are reading?			
Do oral language PA activities drop out of the curriculum sometime during first grade?			

### Phonics Instruction

(see glossary to clarify meanings of reading terms, especially: *sight words*, *irregular words*, and *high frequency words*)

Characteristic	Yes	No	Comments (e.g., specific examples, strengths, concerns, questions)
			Approximately 2 <sup>nd</sup> semester Kindergarten/First Grade: Phonics
Are letter sounds introduced <b>explicitly</b> ?			
Are letter sounds introduced <b>systematically</b> ?			
Are individual letter sounds taught first (before <b>phonograms</b> )?			
Are the most useful letter sounds taught first (e.g., /m/ before /z/)?			

Are the most common letter-sound correspondences introduced first (e.g., c = /k/ vs. c = /s/)?			
Are students taught an <b>explicit strategy</b> to “sound out” words?			
Do students practice <b>decoding</b> words that contain only those letter sounds that they have learned?			
Does instruction follow the <b>continuum of word types</b> (beginning w/ CV and CVC words)?			
Once students have mastered a few letter sounds, do they immediately apply this to reading word lists and short <b>decodable connected</b> text?			
Does instruction progress from the simple to more complex concepts (e.g., short vowels before long vowels)?			
Are letters that are visually and auditorilly similar separated? (e.g., b/d; f/v)?			
Are there frequent and <b>cumulative reviews</b> of previously taught letter sounds, concepts, and words?			
Is there ample unfamiliar <b>decodable text</b> to provide students practice with phonic elements?			
Once students know letter sounds, are <b>letter combinations</b> taught (e.g., <b>digraphs</b> , vowel pairs, etc.)?			
Are <b>digraphs</b> taught as a unit of sound? /sh/, /ch/, /th/, /ai/			

Does the program directly teach <b>high frequency irregular words</b> and encourage students to use decoding <b>strategies</b> for parts of <b>irregular words</b> that are <b>decodable</b> ?			
Are the number of new <b>irregular words</b> that are introduced limited?			
Are <b>high utility irregular words</b> taught?			
Are <b>high frequency words</b> that are visually or phonemically confusing strategically separated (e.g., saw/was)?			
Is the <b>symbol to sound</b> (decoding) and the <b>sound to symbol</b> association (spelling) taught explicitly?			
Once students know individual letter sounds, are <b>spelling patterns</b> (i.e., <b>phonograms</b> , word families) taught?			
Are students taught the <b>strategy</b> of <b>chunking</b> when trying to decode <b>multisyllabic words</b> ?			
			Approximately Second Grade: Phonics
Are <b>advanced phonics</b> skills taught explicitly (first in isolation, then <b>connected text</b> , finally trade books)?			
Is the introduction of <b>letter combinations</b> that are auditorily and visually similar separated (e.g., ai/au)?			
Is there sufficient practice of individual letter sounds before larger <b>orthographic units</b> are taught (e.g., ing; ed; ill)?			

When needed, are <b>decodable texts</b> read before <b>trade books</b> (for students to master new skills)?			
Is there <b>explicit spelling instruction</b> where students use learned letter sounds to spell words?			
Are connections between <b>decoding</b> and spelling explicit?			
Is there a <b>strategy</b> taught to read multisyllabic words by using <b>prefixes, suffixes</b> , and known word parts?			
Are <b>high utility irregular words</b> taught (frequently used in grade-appropriate and informational text)?			
Are the number of <b>high frequency words</b> limited?			
Are <b>sight words</b> pre-taught prior to reading <b>connected text</b> ?			
			Approximately Third Grade: Phonics
Are word parts ( <b>affixes</b> , spelling patterns, etc.) taught first and then incorporated into words, sentences, and <b>connected text</b> ?			
Are <b>high frequency word</b> parts taught first?			
Is the introduction of similar word parts separated (ight/aight)?			
Is there an emphasis on reading <b>multisyllabic words</b> fluently?			
Are students taught to <b>decode multisyllabic words</b> using <b>affixes</b> ?			
Are there multiple opportunities for students to apply <b>decoding strategies</b> in reading <b>connected</b>			

text?			
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### Fluency Instruction

Characteristic	Yes	No	Comments (e.g. specific examples, strengths, concerns, questions)
			Approximately First Grade: Fluency
Is <b>fluency</b> practice introduced after students are proficient at reading words accurately (in sentences or passages)?			
Is <b>fluency</b> a part of the daily lesson?			
Are <b>accuracy, speed, and prosody</b> emphasized?			
Does the teacher <b>model prosody</b> ?			
Is there a guide to help teachers determine how to calculate <b>fluency</b> ?			
Is a <b>fluency</b> goal of 41 correct words per minute by the end of first grade emphasized?			
Does the program accurately describe to the teacher how to determine <b>independent, instructional, and frustrational reading levels</b> for individual students?			
Are students reading text at their <b>independent level or instructional level</b> to help build fluency?			
Does <b>fluency</b> practice involve the teacher giving feedback to students?			
Do <b>fluency</b> building passages include a high percentage of <b>regular words</b> ?			

Is there an <b>explicit strategy</b> taught as students transition from reading words in lists to reading <b>connected text</b> ?			
Does <b>fluency</b> practice involve <b>decodable text</b> (text that includes phonic elements and <b>word types</b> that students have previously been taught)?			
Are <b>ample practice</b> materials and opportunities at appropriate reading levels provided?			
Are research based <b>fluency strategies</b> included (e.g., <b>timed readings, peer reading</b> )?			
Is <b>fluency progress monitored</b> (e.g., through the use of <b>fluency measures</b> )?			
			Approximately Second Grade: Fluency
Is <b>fluency</b> practice introduced after students are proficient at reading words accurately (in sentences or passages)?			
Is <b>fluency</b> a part of the daily lesson?			
Are <b>accuracy, speed, and prosody</b> emphasized?			
Does the teacher model <b>prosody</b> ?			
Is there a guide to help teachers determine how to calculate <b>fluency</b> ?			
Is a <b>fluency</b> goal of 91 correct words per minute by the end of second grade emphasized?			
Does the program accurately describe to the teacher how to determine <b>independent, instructional, and frustrational reading levels</b> for individual			

students?			
Are students reading text at their <b>independent level or instructional level</b> to help build <b>fluency</b> ?			
Does <b>fluency</b> practice involve the teacher giving feedback to students?			
Are <b>ample practice</b> materials and opportunities at appropriate reading levels provided?			
Are research based <b>fluency strategies</b> included (e.g., <b>timed readings, partner reading</b> )?			
Is <b>fluency progress monitored</b> (e.g., through the use of <b>fluency measures</b> )?			
			Approximately Third Grade: Fluency
Is <b>fluency</b> practice introduced after students are proficient at reading words accurately (in sentences or passages)?			
Is <b>fluency</b> building a part of the daily lesson?			
Are <b>accuracy, speed, and prosody</b> emphasized?			
Does the teacher model <b>prosody</b> ?			
Is there a guide to help teachers determine how to calculate <b>fluency</b> ?			
Is a <b>fluency</b> goal of 111 correct words per minute by the end of third grade emphasized?			
Does the program accurately describe to the teacher how to determine <b>independent, instructional, and frustrational reading levels</b> for individual students?			

Are students reading text at their <b>independent level or instructional level</b> to help build <b>fluency</b> ?			
Are <b>ample practice</b> materials and opportunities at appropriate reading levels provided?			
Does <b>fluency</b> practice involve the teacher giving feedback to students?			
Are research based <b>fluency strategies</b> included (e.g., <b>timed readings, partner reading</b> )?			
Is <b>fluency progress monitored</b> (e.g., through the use of <b>fluency measures</b> )?			

### Vocabulary Instruction

Characteristic	Yes	No	Comments (e.g., specific examples, strengths, concerns, questions)
			Approximately Kindergarten: Vocabulary
Is there an emphasis on <b>listening</b> and <b>speaking</b> vocabulary?			
Is vocabulary taught <b>directly</b> and <b>indirectly</b> ?			
Are <b>oral language</b> activities part of daily instruction?			
Are activities for developing word knowledge used?			
Do students listen to the teacher read daily with an emphasis on new vocabulary words?			
Do students have ample opportunity to engage in wide reading at their <b>independent level</b> ?			
Are students repeatedly exposed to vocabulary in many contexts?			

Are <b>useful words, important words, and difficult words</b> chosen to be directly taught?			
Are previously introduced words <b>cumulatively reviewed</b> ?			
			Approximately First Grade: Vocabulary
Is there an emphasis on <b>reading and writing</b> vocabulary?			
Is vocabulary taught <b>directly</b> and <b>indirectly</b> ?			
Are <b>oral language</b> activities part of daily instruction?			
Are activities for developing word knowledge used?			
Does the teacher read daily with an emphasis on new words for vocabulary study?			
Are students exposed to diverse vocabulary through listening and reading <b>stories</b> and <b>informational text</b> ?			
Do students have the opportunity to read text at their <b>independent level</b> by themselves daily?			
Are students taught <b>word-learning strategies</b> ?			
Is extended instruction that promotes <b>active engagement</b> with vocabulary provided?			
Are students repeatedly exposed to vocabulary in many contexts?			
Are previously introduced words <b>cumulatively reviewed</b> ?			
Are various aspects of word study included, either under vocabulary or word recognition? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Concepts of word meaning</li> <li>• Multiple meanings</li> <li>• <b>Synonyms</b></li> </ul>			

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Antonyms</b></li> <li>• <b>Homonyms</b></li> </ul>			
			Approximately Second Grade: Vocabulary
Is there an emphasis on <b>reading</b> and <b>writing</b> vocabulary?			
Is vocabulary taught <b>directly</b> and <b>indirectly</b> ?			
Are <b>oral language</b> activities part of daily instruction?			
Are activities for developing word knowledge used?			
Does the teacher read daily with an emphasis on new words for vocabulary study?			
Are students exposed to diverse vocabulary through listening and reading <b>stories</b> and <b>informational text</b> ?			
Do students have the opportunity to read text at their <b>independent level</b> by themselves daily?			
Is <b>explicit instruction</b> provided for specific words (e.g., important words before reading a story)?			
Are students taught word-learning <b>strategies</b> ?			
Is extended instruction that promotes <b>active engagement</b> with vocabulary provided?			
Are students repeatedly exposed to critical vocabulary in many contexts?			
Are previously introduced words <b>cumulatively reviewed</b> ?			
Are meanings of <b>prefixes</b> and <b>suffixes</b> taught before connecting them to words?			
Is a <b>strategy</b> to determine word meanings based on meanings of			

<b>prefixes</b> and <b>suffixes</b> taught?			
Is dictionary usage <b>explicitly</b> taught using grade appropriate dictionaries?			
Is the <b>use of context</b> to gain the meaning of an unfamiliar word taught?			
Are <b>antonyms</b> and <b>synonyms</b> taught?			
Is the <b>strategy</b> to predict meanings of words through the use of individual words in <b>compound words</b> taught?			
Are various aspects of word study included, either under vocabulary or word recognition? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Concepts of word meaning</li> <li>• Multiple meanings</li> <li>• <b>Morphemic analysis</b></li> <li>• <b>Synonyms</b></li> <li>• <b>Antonyms</b></li> <li>• <b>Homonyms</b></li> </ul>			
		Approximately Third Grade: Vocabulary	
Is there an emphasis on <b>reading</b> and <b>writing</b> vocabulary?			
Is vocabulary taught <b>directly</b> and <b>indirectly</b> ?			
Does the teacher read daily with an emphasis on new words for vocabulary study?			
Are activities for developing word knowledge used?			
Are students exposed to diverse vocabulary through listening and reading <b>stories</b> and <b>informational text</b> ?			
Do students have the opportunity to read text at their <b>independent</b>			

level by themselves daily?			
Is <b>explicit instruction</b> provided for specific words (e.g., important words before reading a story)?			
Are students taught word-learning <b>strategies</b> ?			
Is extended instruction that promotes <b>active engagement</b> with vocabulary provided?			
Are students repeatedly exposed to critical vocabulary in many contexts?			
Are previously introduced words <b>cumulatively reviewed</b> ?			
Are meanings of <b>prefixes</b> and <b>suffixes</b> taught before connecting them to words?			
Is a <b>strategy</b> to determine word meanings based on meanings of <b>prefixes</b> and <b>suffixes</b> taught?			
Is dictionary usage <b>explicitly</b> taught using grade appropriate dictionaries?			
Is the <b>use of context</b> to gain the meaning of an unfamiliar word taught?			
Are <b>antonyms</b> and <b>synonyms</b> taught?			
Is the <b>strategy</b> to predict meanings of words through the use of individual words in <b>compound words</b> taught?			
Are various aspects of word study included, either under vocabulary or word recognition? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Concepts of word meaning</li> <li>• Multiple meanings</li> <li>• <b>Morphemic analysis</b></li> <li>• <b>Synonyms</b></li> </ul>			

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Antonyms</b></li> <li>• <b>Homonyms</b></li> <li>• <b>Etymologies</b></li> <li>• <b>Figurative meanings</b></li> </ul>			
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### Comprehension Instruction

Characteristic	Yes	No	Comments (e.g., specific examples, strengths, concerns, questions)
Approximately Kindergarten: Comprehension			
Is comprehension instruction specifically addressed?			
Is there <b>explicit instruction (modeling, guided practice, multiple examples)</b> in listening comprehension <b>strategies</b> ?			
When a <b>strategy</b> is taught, is it applied frequently so students understand its usefulness?			
Does the teacher <b>model</b> and guide the students through a story using <b>think alouds</b> ?			
Does the teacher insert questions throughout the story as opposed to waiting until the end of the story?			
Is there <b>modeling</b> and a <b>systematic review</b> of <b>literal comprehension</b> ?			
Is there <b>modeling</b> and a <b>systematic</b> review of <b>retelling</b> ?			
Is there <b>modeling</b> and a <b>systematic</b> review of <b>main idea</b> ?			
Is there <b>modeling</b> and a <b>systematic</b> review of <b>summarization</b> ?			
Are the <b>elements of the stories explicit</b> ?			

Are both <b>narrative</b> and <b>expository</b> text used?			
Are there ample opportunities for students to listen to a <b>variety of text structures</b> ?			
Are there ample opportunities to engage in discussions relating to the meanings of text?			
			Approximately First Grade: Comprehension
Is comprehension instruction specifically addressed?			
Does instruction begin with the use of short passages?			
Is <b>prior knowledge</b> activated before reading?			
Does instruction emphasize that students have a conceptual understanding of beginning, middle, and end?			
Is there an emphasis on helping students become independent <b>strategic learners</b> ?			
Is there <b>explicit instruction (modeling, guided practice, multiple examples)</b> in <b>comprehension strategies</b> ?			
When a <b>strategy</b> is taught, is it applied frequently so students understand its usefulness?			
Is <b>strategy</b> instruction dispersed across several lessons so students understand the usefulness of the <b>strategy</b> ?			
Are <b>strategies</b> taught such that students begin to monitor their own thinking processes?			
Are <b>before, during and after reading</b> comprehension <b>strategies</b> emphasized?			

Are students required to determine which <b>strategy</b> to use and why?			
Are there connections made between previously learned <b>strategies</b> with new text?			
Are <b>strategies</b> applied for authentic purposes using appropriate text?			
Does the program provide prompts for the teacher to guide the students through texts using <b>think alouds</b> ?			
Does instruction focus on frequently discussing <b>story elements</b> and comparing stories?			
Are models of effective questioning techniques provided to guide and monitor students' comprehension?			
Does instruction include students generating questions to improve engagement with and processing of text?			
Are students taught to use <b>graphic organizers</b> to illustrate interrelationships among concepts in text?			
Are students taught to use <b>semantic maps</b> to illustrate and understand a central concept and its relationship to a variety of related ideas and/or events?			
Are students taught how to recognize <b>story structure</b> and use some type of <b>story map</b> ?			
Are <b>elements of story grammar</b> (setting, characters, important events, etc.) used for <b>retelling</b> a			

story?			
Are there ample opportunities to engage in discussions relating to the meanings of text?			
Are there ample opportunities for students to read a variety of <b>text structures</b> ?			
Are students taught how to <b>summarize</b> text?			
Are both <b>narrative</b> and <b>expository</b> text used?			
Do texts contain familiar concepts and vocabulary?			
Are texts at the appropriate <b>readability level</b> used?			
			Approximately Second Grade: Comprehension
Is comprehension instruction specifically addressed?			
Is <b>prior knowledge</b> activated before reading?			
Is there an emphasis on helping students become independent <b>strategic learners</b> ?			
Is there <b>explicit instruction (modeling, guided practice, multiple examples)</b> in comprehension <b>strategies</b> ?			
When a <b>strategy</b> is taught, is it applied frequently so students understand its usefulness?			
Is <b>strategy</b> instruction dispersed across several lessons so students understand the usefulness of the <b>strategy</b> ?			
Is <b>strategy</b> instruction <b>cumulative</b> over the course of the year?			
Are there connections made between previously learned			

<b>strategies</b> with new text?			
Are <b>strategies</b> taught such that students begin to monitor their own thinking processes?			
Are <b>before, during and after reading</b> comprehension <b>strategies</b> emphasized?			
Are students required to determine which <b>strategy</b> to use and why?			
Are <b>strategies</b> applied for authentic purposes using appropriate text?			
Does instruction frequently focus on students discussing <b>story elements</b> and comparing stories?			
Are models of effective questioning techniques provided to guide and monitor students' comprehension?			
Does instruction include students generating questions to improve engagement with and processing of text?			
Are students taught to use <b>graphic organizers</b> to illustrate interrelationships among concepts in text?			
Are students taught to use <b>semantic maps</b> to illustrate and understand a central concept and its relationship to a variety of related ideas and/or events?			
Are students taught how to recognize <b>story structure</b> and use some type of <b>story map</b> ?			
Are elements of <b>story grammar</b> (setting, characters, important events, etc.) used for <b>retelling</b> a			

story?			
Are there ample opportunities to engage in discussions relating to the meanings of text?			
Are there ample opportunities for students to read a variety of <b>text structures</b> ?			
Are students taught how to <b>summarize</b> text?			
Are both <b>narrative</b> and <b>expository</b> text used?			
Are the conventions of <b>informational text</b> (e.g., chapter headings) taught?			
Are explicit strategies to interpret information from charts, graphs, etc. taught?			
Is the concept of cause and effect emphasized?			
Do texts contain familiar concepts and vocabulary?			
			Approximately Third Grade: Comprehension
Is comprehension instruction specifically addressed?			
Is there an emphasis on helping students become independent strategic learners?			
Is there <b>explicit instruction</b> ( <b>modeling, guided practice, multiple examples</b> ) in reading comprehension strategies?			
When a <b>strategy</b> is taught, is it applied frequently so students understand its usefulness?			
Is <b>strategy</b> instruction dispersed across several lessons so students understand the usefulness of the strategy?			

Is <b>strategy</b> instruction <b>cumulative</b> over the course of the year?			
Are there connections made between previously learned <b>strategies</b> with new text?			
Are <b>strategies</b> taught such that students begin to monitor their own thinking processes?			
Are <b>before, during and after reading comprehension strategies</b> emphasized?			
Are students required to determine which <b>strategy</b> to use and why?			
Are <b>strategies</b> applied for authentic purposes using appropriate text?			
Are texts at the appropriate <b>readability level</b> used?			
Is <b>prior knowledge</b> activated before reading?			
Do teachers use effective questioning techniques to guide and monitor students' comprehension?			
Does instruction include students generating questions to improve engagement with and processing of text?			
Are students taught to use <b>graphic organizers</b> to illustrate interrelationships among concepts in text?			
Are students taught to use <b>semantic maps</b> to illustrate and understand a central concept and its relationship to a variety of related ideas and/or events?			

Are elements of <b>story grammar</b> (setting, characters, important events, etc.) used for <b>retelling</b> a story?			
Are there ample opportunities to engage in discussions relating to the meanings of text?			
Are there ample opportunities for students to read a variety of <b>text structures</b> ?			
Are students taught how to <b>summarize</b> text?			
Are both <b>narrative</b> and <b>expository</b> text used?			
Are <b>explicit strategies</b> to interpret information from charts, graphs, etc. taught?			
Is the concept of cause and effect emphasized?			
Do texts contain familiar concepts and vocabulary?			
Are texts at the appropriate readability level used?			
Is the main idea <b>strategy</b> taught <b>systematically</b> (e.g., using pictures, then individual sentences, then paragraphs, etc.)			
Once students have grasped main idea, are more complex texts used in which the main idea is not <b>explicit</b> ?			

### Assessment

(refer to chart: Diagnostic Instruments Appropriate for Primary and Secondary Levels found in Reviewer Guidelines for FCRR Reports)

Characteristic	Yes	No	Comments (e.g. specific examples, strengths, concerns, questions)
Are assessments included that teachers can use to guide student movement through the program?			

Do the assessments measure progress in the five components of reading?			
Do the assessments identify students who are at risk or already experiencing difficulty learning to read?			

### Professional Development for the CCRP

<b>Characteristic</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Comments (e.g., specific examples, strengths, concerns, questions)</b>
Is there adequate time offered for teachers to learn new concepts and practice what they have learned?			
Is there a plan for coaches, mentors, peers, or outside experts to provide feedback to teachers and follow up assistance as they put new concepts into practice?			
Are teachers taught how to administer and interpret assessments that accompany the program?			
Is PD for the program customized to meet the varying needs of the participants (e.g., first year teachers, coaches, principals)?			
Does the PD provide support (e.g., principal checklists, follow up in class modeling, a CD for teachers to view model lessons) to facilitate application of content?			

## References

- *Put Reading First: The Research Building Blocks for Teaching Children to Read, Kindergarten through Grade 3*- September 2001

This publication was developed by the Center for the Improvement of Early Reading Achievement (CIERA) and was funded by the National Institute for Literacy through the Educational Research and Development Center Program. To order this publication, call 1-877-4-ED-PUBS. Downloads can be obtained at <http://www.nifl.gov>.

- *Report of the National Reading Panel: Teaching Children to Read* April 2000

The National Reading Panel Report outlines the most effective approaches to teaching children to read, the status of the research on reading, and reading instructional practices that are ready to be used by teachers in classrooms. Both the report and the congressional testimony are available on line and in hard copy. Call 1-800-228-8813 for more information, and reference publication number EX0114p.

- *Preventing Reading Difficulties in Young Children* December 1998

This landmark 1998 report of the National Research Council synthesizes the wealth of research on early reading development. It provides an integrated picture of how reading develops and how reading instruction should proceed. This book includes recommendations for practice and further research. Hardcover copies are available from the National Academy Press by calling 1-800-624-6242. Each book costs \$35.95 plus shipping and handling.

- *Starting Out Right: A Guide to Promoting Children's Reading Success* 1998

This guide, developed by the National Research Council, explains how children learn to read and how adults can help them. It provides ideas for the prevention of reading difficulties in early childhood and the primary grades. Copies are available from the National Academy Press by calling 1-800-624-6242. Each book costs \$14.95 plus shipping and handling.

- *How Should Reading Be Taught?* By Keith Rayner, Barbara Foorman, Charles Perfetti, David Pesetsky, and Mark Seidenberg. Published in the March 2002 issue of *Scientific American*.

This brief article provides an excellent overview of the basic research that supports the *Reading First* initiative. It is written in a way that is accessible to nontechnical personnel.

- The prevention of reading difficulties by Joseph Torgesen. Published in 2002 by the *Journal of School Psychology*. Volume 40, pages 7-26.

This article provides a description of the essential elements and rationale of a school wide plan to prevent reading difficulties in young children.

- *Teaching Reading is Rocket Science* By Louisa Moats. Published by American Federation of Teachers, Washington, D.C. Call 202-393-5684 and ask for item number 372.

This brochure describes the essential knowledge and skill required to teach reading to children who experience difficulties learning to read. It also describes many of the basic research findings on which the *Reading First* initiative is based.

- *A Consumer's Guide to Evaluating a Core Reading Program Grades K-3: A Critical Elements Analysis*. College of Education, University of Oregon. Deborah C. Simmons, Ph.D. and Edward J. Kame'enui, Ph.D. This guide can be accessed at [www.myflorida.com/jrf](http://www.myflorida.com/jrf).

A critical review of reading programs requires objective and in-depth analysis. For these reasons, they offer the following recommendations and procedures for analyzing critical elements of programs. First, they address questions regarding the importance and process of a core program. Following, they specify the criteria for program evaluation organized by grade level and reading dimensions. Further, they offer guidelines regarding instructional time, differentiated instruction, and assessment.

- Carnine, D.W., Silbert, J., & Kameenui, E.J. (1997). *Direct instruction reading* (3rd ed.). Upper Saddle River NJ: Merrill-Prentice Hall.
- Adams, M. (1990). *Beginning to read: Thinking and learning about print*. Cambridge, MA: MIT
- An Evaluation of Two Reading Interventions Derived From Diverse Models by Mathes, P.G., Denton, C.A., Fletcher, J.M., Anthony, J.L., Francis, D.J., & Schatschneider, C. In press by Reading Research Quarterly.
- Every Child Reading: A Professional Development Guide (2002). This guide can be accessed at <http://www.learningfirst.org/readingguide.pdf>

This guide is a companion to Every Child Reading: An Action Plan and recommends criteria for high quality inservice professional development in reading.

- Learning First Alliance-Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation at <http://www.learningfirst.org/index.htm>

The Learning First Alliance represents an unprecedented, self-initiated commitment by its members to work in concert to improve student learning. The Alliance will strive to deliver a common message to all parts of the education system, align priorities, share and disseminate success stories, encourage collaboration at every level, and work toward long-term systemic change based on solid research evidence.