
An Introduction to the Principal Reading Walkthrough Instrument for Grades K-3

Stephen M. Nettles

Florida Center for Reading Research



Session Objectives

- **Rationale for conducting reading walkthroughs**
- **Introduction to the process**
- **Overview of the content**
- **Examples of Web-based training**
- **Simulation of reading observations**

Conference Topics

- **Management of Reading Programs**
- **Characteristics of High-Quality Instruction**
- **Assessment**
- **Intervention**
- **Supports**

K-3 Reading Walkthroughs

- **Classroom Observation Tool**
- **Grade specific**
- **Focused on critical indicators of effective reading instruction**
- **Palm OS based**
- **Provides helpful data reports**

Classroom Observations

Principals greatly benefit as reading leaders when they understand research-based teaching strategies, recognize strengths in their teachers' practice, and note areas that need improvement. Observation and conferencing are primary responsibilities of instructional leaders.

(Glickman,1985; Pajak,1989;Scholastic, 2005)



Classroom Observations

The purpose of a classroom visit is to help teachers improve their instruction and identify the best teaching practices in your school. Observation visits reflect your interest in instruction and in your staff's professional growth. (Blase & Blase, 1998; Scholastic, 2005)



Classroom Observations

Benefits:

- **Critical in monitoring program implementation and student progress**
- **Builds rapport, teamwork and professional credibility with staff**
- **Improves accountability**
- **Builds principal knowledge of instructional practices**
- **Informs implementation decisions**

Classroom Observations

Challenges:

- Time
- Knowledge of effective reading instruction
- Understanding what to look for
- Collection and analysis of appropriate observational data

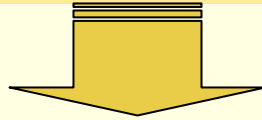


Indicator Categories

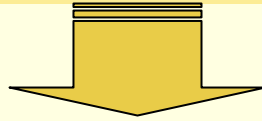
- **Classroom Environment**
- **Materials**
- **Teacher Instruction**
- **Whole Class Instruction**
- **Small Group, Differentiated Instruction**
- **Student Reading Centers**
- **Phonemic Awareness**
- **Phonics**
- **Fluency**
- **Vocabulary**
- **Comprehension**

Walkthrough Process

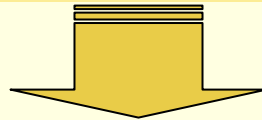
Principal selects grade level of classroom



Principal observes Classroom Environment, Materials and Teacher Instruction indicators



Principal observes Whole Class or Small Group Instruction indicators



Principal observes content specific indicators

Materials

- Teacher and student materials are accessible and organized.**
- Evidence exists of program materials being used as designed.**
- Teacher uses the Teacher's Edition during instruction.**

Phonemic Awareness

- Activities are oral and include segmenting and blending of individual sounds in words.
- Teacher uses engaging activities and materials to support instruction (e.g., hand motions, moving blocks, Elkonin boxes, clapping, etc.)
- Teacher clearly pronounces individual sounds that are the focus of the lesson with enough volume for students to hear.
- Instruction appears to be fun and interactive as opposed to repetitive and dull.
- Students are given ample opportunities to respond and receive feedback on their answers.

Phonics

- Visual aids (Alphabet cards and letter/sound cards) are used as designed by the program.**
- Teacher provides explicit instruction of letter sounds and blending strategies.**
- Students are applying letter/sound knowledge in reading and writing activities.**
- Teacher is following an organized sequence of instruction guided by the core reading program.**

Fluency

- Students are reading: oral reading, choral reading, partner reading, etc.**
- Oral reading is taking place in small groups with the teacher providing immediate scaffolded feedback.**
- Students are periodically assessed on oral fluency, as evidenced by repeated readings.**
- Teacher modeling of fluency is evident during read-aloud and shared reading activities.**

Vocabulary

- Teacher contextualizes words from the stories they read students (explain what the word means in the text).
- Teacher develops an explanation of vocabulary words that is child-friendly.
- Vocabulary instruction is purposeful and on-going as evidenced by lists of vocabulary words around the room.
- Teacher reinforces students' knowledge of vocabulary words via questioning activities.
- Students are actively involved with thinking about and using words in multiple contexts.

Comprehension

- **Teacher models and encourages students to use comprehension strategies throughout instruction and shared reading:**
 - **Summarizing**
 - **Monitoring and clarifying**
 - **Asking questions**
 - **Predicting**
 - **Making connections**
 - **Visualizing**
 - **Using graphic and semantic organizers**
- **Students are discussing answers to higher level questions about selections read.**

Whole Class Instruction

- ❑ Instruction is focused on the content of the lesson in the Teacher's Edition.
- ❑ Teacher uses a variety of resources during reading instruction (e.g., big books, puppets, decodable books, vocabulary word lists, letter-sound cards, etc.).

Indicator

- **Instruction guided by Teacher's Edition**
 - **Elements**
 - **Teacher refers to lesson planning guide**
 - **Phonemic awareness**
 - **Phonics**
 - **Fluency instruction**
 - **Comprehension strategies**
 - **Comprehension questions**
 - **Vocabulary word instruction**



Small Group, Differentiated Instruction

- Small group instruction is provided at different levels depending on student need.**
- Differentiated, small group instruction or time for direct work with individuals is a regular daily activity, as evidenced by the posted classroom schedule.**
- A well defined behavior management system is in place to guide student movement between groups and centers.**

Indicator

- **Differentiated Small Group or Direct Individual Work is Daily Activity**
 - **Elements**
 - **Teacher works with small groups**
 - **Daily schedule is posted**
 - **Groups are well-defined**



Teacher Instruction

- Classroom behavior management system is effective in providing an environment conducive to learning.
- Teacher follows the selected program's instructional routines as designed.
- Evidence exists that reading routines and procedures were previously taught.
- Teacher provides appropriate and clear instruction for children at risk, including English learners, and special education students.
- Teacher uses explicit instruction.
- Teacher scaffolds instruction.
- Teacher fosters active student engagement and motivation to learn.
- Pacing is appropriate.
- Transitions are smooth and quick.

Indicator

- **Teacher follows instructional routines**
 - **Elements**
 - **Student grouping for whole group instruction**
 - **Student grouping in small groups**
 - **Independent reading centers**



Student Reading Centers

- At independent student learning centers, students are working on activities that directly build reading skills.
- Centers are clearly defined and labeled.
- Students remain engaged during centers and independent work.
- A well defined behavior management system is in place to guide student movement between groups and centers.

Indicator

- **Students Working on Reading Skills**
 - **Elements**
 - **Activities to build skills in specific areas**
 - **Phonemic awareness**
 - **Phonics**
 - **Fluency**
 - **Vocabulary**
 - **Comprehension**



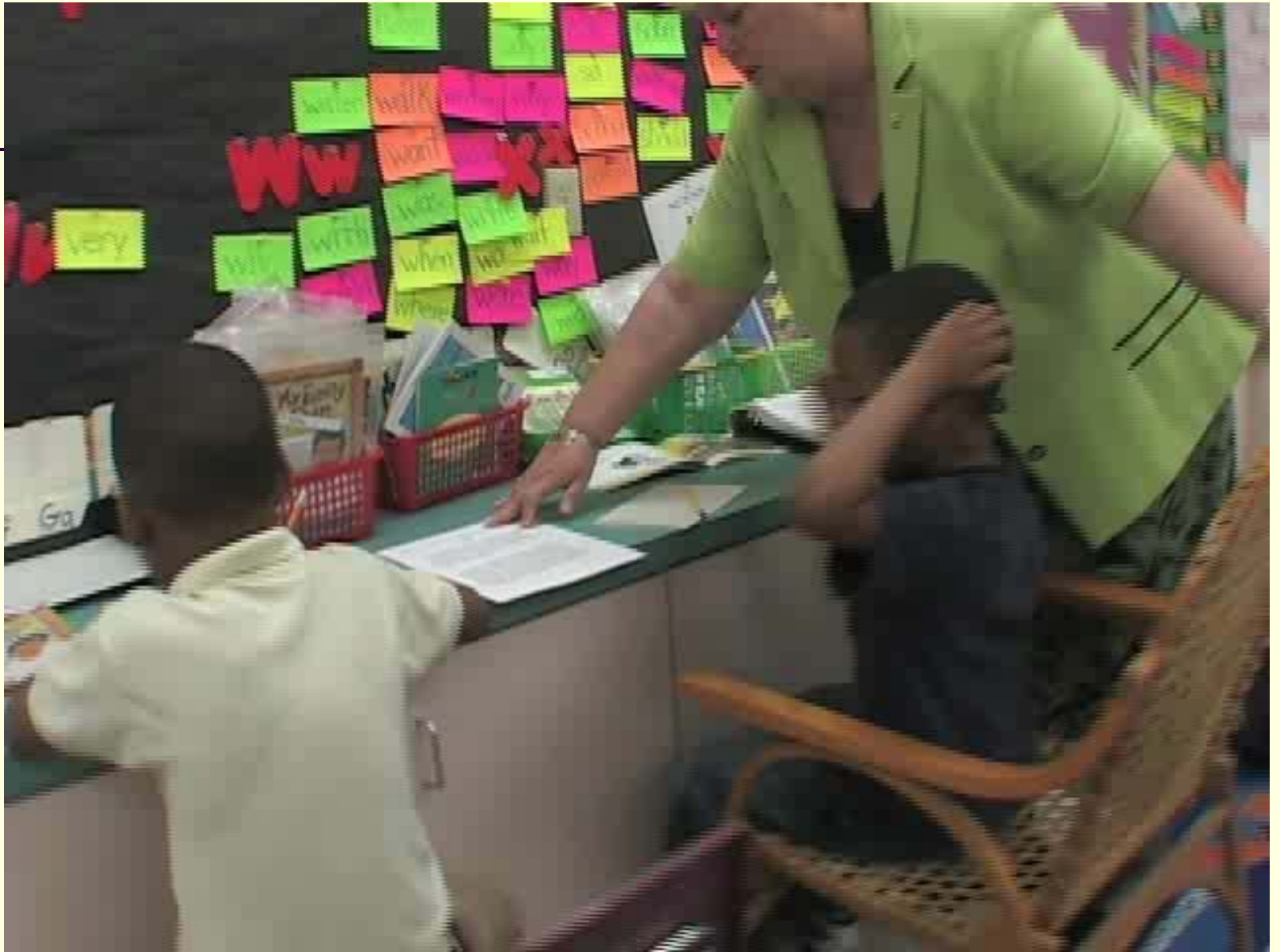
Classroom Environment

- Classroom is arranged to enable active engagement by all students.
- Classroom is arranged to accommodate whole group instruction, teacher-led small group instruction, and independent student centers.
- Daily Class Schedule is posted which includes a minimum of 90 minutes for reading instruction plus an additional block of time for intensive intervention.
- Program components are evident and in use indicating a print rich environment (e.g., big books, decodable books, vocabulary words, letter-sound cards, etc.).
- Displays, including student work and curriculum materials (e.g., word banks, posters, vocabulary lists), reflect the current reading topic or theme.



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How To Be Prepared

- **Understand the reading process and be able to articulate it to teachers and parents.**
- **Be knowledgeable about the components of effective reading instruction and the framework necessary for supporting it.**
- **Review individual classroom timetables to ensure that they provide effective reading blocks.**

How To Be Prepared

- **Monitor teachers' reading programs to ensure that the components are effectively implemented and observable in classrooms.**
- **Ensure that reading resources are available and accessible to all.**
- **Visit classrooms to observe reading instruction.**

(Report of the Expert Panel on Early Reading in Ontario, 2003)



How To Gain Staff Support

- **Create an atmosphere of trust and support.**
- **Be constructive.**
- **Use data to improve schoolwide implementation of effective reading programs.**

QUESTIONS?

Contact Information:

Steve Nettles

Director of Research

FCRR

snettles@fcrr.org

