

Explicit Vocabulary Instruction Observation Guide

This checklist helps principals and coaches monitor and support effective vocabulary instruction across schools, building their knowledge and guiding school-wide professional development to ensure consistency in classrooms.

Explicit Vocabulary Instruction Observation Checklist

Mark a check in the column for each indicator observed during the brief visit. Visits should typically last between 5 to 15 minutes, with an emphasis on frequency rather than duration. Use the provided space for any notes or reflections that can guide follow-up discussions with the teacher. This tool is not intended for teacher evaluation but serves as a foundation for constructive conversations between school leaders and teachers, helping to identify coaching and professional development needs to enhance instruction. Teachers should receive a copy of the tool, and school leaders should provide an overview of both the tool and its purpose before its use.

Characteristics of Effective Vocabulary Instruction

<i>Visits</i>	<i>Indicators</i>	<i>Notes on Teacher Instruction</i>	<i>Notes on Student Learning</i>
1 2 3	Instruction is clear and unambiguous		
1 2 3	Instruction involves presentation of word meanings and contextual examples		
1 2 3	Multiple exposures to the word are provided		
1 2 3	Sufficient instructional time is devoted to vocabulary instruction		

Explicit Instruction Vocabulary Routine

<i>Visits</i>	<i>Indicator</i>	<i>Notes on Teacher Instruction</i>	<i>Notes on Student Learning</i>
1 2 3	Introduce the word Word is displayed Students repeat word multiple times Part of speech Word parts		
1 2 3	Provide a student-friendly explanation Explanation provided by teacher Critical attributes Morphemes		
1 2 3	Illustrate with examples Concrete Visual Verbal		
1 2 3	Check for understanding Examples and non-examples Student generated examples Deep processing question Compare/Contrast		

References

Archer, A., & Hughes, C. (2011). *Explicit Instruction: Effective and Efficient Teaching*. NY: Guilford Publications.

Florida Center for Reading Research. (n.d.). *Literacy walkthrough overview: Grades K-5*. Florida Center for Reading Research. [https://fcrr.org/sites/g/files/upcbnu2836/files/media/PDFs/literacy-walkthrough/Literacy%20Walkthrough%20Overview Grades%20K-5 FINAL.pdf](https://fcrr.org/sites/g/files/upcbnu2836/files/media/PDFs/literacy-walkthrough/Literacy%20Walkthrough%20Overview%20Grades%20K-5_FINAL.pdf)

Keys to Literacy. (2009). *Walkthrough Guide for Principals: Key vocabulary routine use in content classrooms*. Keys to Literacy. <https://keystoliteracy.com/wp-content/pdfs/orc-vocabulary/Walkthrough%20checklist.pdf>

Michigan's MTSS Technical Assistance Center is funded by the Michigan Department of Education and the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs.