

# The Coaching Cycle in Action: Empowering Educators, Enhancing Instruction

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**Office of Curriculum and Instruction**

Division of Literacy



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DEPARTMENT OF  
EDUCATION

Fall 2025



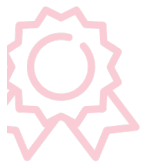
## VISION

To create a world-class educational system that gives students the knowledge and skills to be successful in college and the workforce, and to flourish as parents and citizens

## MISSION

To provide leadership through the development of policy and accountability systems so that all students are prepared to compete in the global community





1

**ALL** Students Proficient and Showing Growth in All Assessed Areas



2

**EVERY** Student Graduates from High School and is Ready for College and Career



3

**EVERY** Child Has Access to a High-Quality Early Childhood Program

**EVERY** School Has Effective Teachers and Leaders

4



**EVERY** Community Effectively Uses a World-Class Data System to Improve Student Outcomes

5



**EVERY** School and District is Rated “C” or Higher

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## Part 1 Session Goals

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Discuss characteristics of an instructional coach

Define the role of an instructional coach

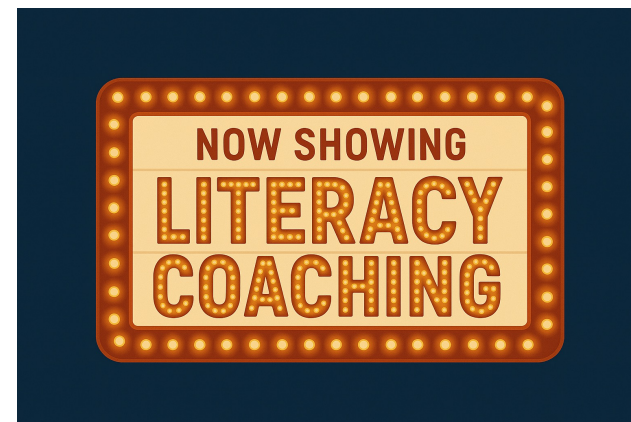
Identify and discuss the coaching cycle

Explore coaching scenarios and zones of comfort



# What is Instructional Coaching?

From Insight to Impact:  
Characteristics and Roles



## Activity: What is Instructional Coaching?

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**Directions:** Answer each of the following questions on separate sticky notes and place your answers on the appropriate anchor charts posted in the room.

1. How is instructional coaching defined in your district?
2. What are the goals of instructional coaching in your role?
3. What are the impacts of instructional coaching?



*“**Coaching** isn't about heroically showing up as the expert and bestowing knowledge, it's about **courageously** showing up every day to stand for the potential of **each and every** one of our educators.*

*It's giving up how I think things '**should**' go and asking myself, 'what do they need from me to make a '**real impact**' and not giving up until I find it.”*

Becca Silver (2024)



- **Building** positive, trusting relationships that serve as the **foundation** for open dialogue, reflection, and growth
- **Collaborating** with teachers to improve instruction in ways that directly **impact** student learning outcomes
- **Identifying** instructional concerns in partnership with teachers and **co-creating** actionable plans aligned to classroom goals
- **Providing** differentiated, sustained support **tailored** to each teacher's experience level, goals, and student needs
- **Designing** and **leading** PLCs while also **following** through with resources, modeling, and feedback to help bring best practices to life in the classroom.

- **Delivering** strategic, job-embedded coaching to support teacher and specialist development
- **Prioritizing** ownership, dialogue, deep understanding, and goal-driven learning over compliance and routine
- **Using** evidence-based practices to drive instructional improvement
- **Targeting** student outcomes through intentional, data-informed coaching
- **Designing** collaborative, hands-on, and engaging professional learning experiences

# Characteristics of an Instructional Coach

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What makes an instructional coach effective?

## Activity: Effective Coaching Characteristics

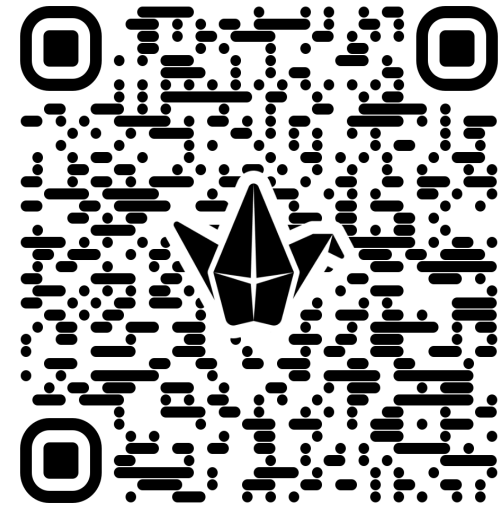
### Characteristics of Effective School-Based Coaches

(Killian, J. Harrison, C. [2006]. *Taking the Lead: New Roles for Coaches and Teacher Leaders*.  
Oxford, OH: National Staff Development Council, in press.)

Beliefs	Teaching Expertise	Coaching Skills	Relationship Skills	Content Expertise	Leadership Skills
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Is willing to learn</li> <li>Has a passion for ongoing development and learning</li> <li>Holds the attitude that everyone is important</li> <li>Believes in the capacity of others to grow and develop</li> <li>Does not assume to have "The Answer"</li> <li>Is committed to continuous improvement</li> <li>Have moral purpose</li> <li>Can let go of being responsible for another person's behaviors</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Is skilled in instructional planning</li> <li>Has strong classroom organizations and management</li> <li>Has fluency with multiple methods of delivering instruction</li> <li>Uses multiple methods for student assessment</li> <li>Demonstrates success in their work as classroom teachers</li> <li>Articulates their practice</li> <li>Reflects on their own practice</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Understands and applies knowledge about adult development</li> <li>Listens skillfully</li> <li>Communicates effectively</li> <li>Uses effective questioning skills</li> <li>Understands and employs a specific reflection process</li> <li>Diagnoses the needs of teachers</li> <li>Aligns support to the identified needs of teachers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Desires to be a part of a team</li> <li>Works effectively with teachers and principals</li> <li>Builds trusting relationships</li> <li>Is respected by peers</li> <li>Has patience for the learning process</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Possesses and applies appropriate, in-depth content knowledge</li> <li>Uses extensive research and theory to support instructional decisions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Understands and applies knowledge about change</li> <li>Communicates the vision of the school</li> <li>Aligns work with school goals</li> <li>Uses data to drive decisions</li> <li>Engages others in developing plans for improvement</li> <li>Maintains a productive culture</li> </ul>

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## Characteristics of an Instructional Coach

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An effective instructional coach brings together instructional knowledge, strong interpersonal skills, and a commitment to ongoing, data-driven coaching and continuous learning.

- Knowledge base
- Instructional expertise
- Mentoring skills
- Communication skills
- Leadership and advocacy
- Lifelong learner



## Characteristics of an Instructional Coach

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Characteristic	Description
<b>Knowledge and Instructional Expertise</b>	Informed by evidence-based practices, skilled in district curriculum and screeners, and experienced in instructional strategies and interventions.
<b>Mentoring</b>	Engages teachers in collaborative dialogue, supports sustainable change with time and flexibility, and adapts to teacher needs, school culture, and data.
<b>Communication</b>	Communicates clearly and directly, asks purposeful questions, provides timely feedback, and uses positive cues to support growth.
<b>Leadership and Advocacy</b>	Collaborates to build trust and shared responsibility for the school's literacy plan, asks thoughtful questions to guide strong instructional decisions, and encourages alignment with school goals.
<b>Lifelong Learner and Adaptability</b>	Provides focused, immediate feedback, supports both short-term needs and long-term instructional goals, and stays current with new educational research and best practices.

**Communicates clearly and directly** – Shares expectations, goals, and feedback in a respectful, straightforward way.

- **Asks purposeful questions** – Uses open-ended questions to guide teacher thinking, reflection, and instructional decisions.
- **Gives timely and supportive feedback** – Offers helpful input that is specific, kind, and focused on growth.
- **Uses positive nonverbal cues** – Shows attentiveness through eye contact, nodding, and body language to build trust and rapport.
- **Uses objective language** – Provides clear, unbiased, and based on factual evidence or specific observations rather than personal opinions or feelings.

## Objective vs. Subjective Communication

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	Objective	Subjective
<b>Based upon</b>	Observation of measurable facts (ability to be counted/ measured)	Personal opinions, assumptions, interpretations and beliefs
<b>Commonly found in</b>	Encyclopedias, textbooks, news reporting	Newspaper editorials, blogs, biographies, comments on the Internet
<b>Suitable for decision making?</b>	Yes (usually)	Sometimes (rarely)
<b>Suitable for factual documentation/ reporting?</b>	Yes	No (often used)



**Active listening** is a communication skill that is important in instructional coaching and involves fully concentrating, understanding, responding, and remembering what someone else is saying.

- **Give full attention** (no multitasking)
- **Use nonverbal cues** (eye contact, nodding, open posture)
- **Paraphrase or restate** what the teacher says to confirm understanding
- **Ask clarifying or follow-up questions**
- **Pause before responding** to show thoughtful consideration
- **Validate teacher perspectives** even when offering suggestions

## Activity: Listen, Repeat, Reflect

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**Directions:** In pairs, you will take turns **actively listening** to your partner.

- Partner A shares about the prompt for 1 minute
- Partner B listens actively without agreeing or disagreeing and repeats what they heard using phrases like
  - "What I heard you say is..."
  - "It sounds like..."
  - "So, you are saying..."
- Partner A confirms and clarifies
- Switch roles

**Prompt:** Talk about a time where you had to provide corrective feedback. (Can be a student, teacher, etc.)

## Activity: Coaching Self-Assessment

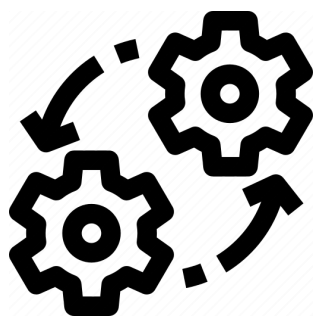
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### Knowledge, Skills, and Dispositions for Literacy Coaching Self-Assessment Checklist

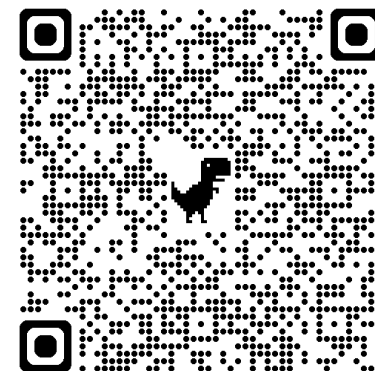
	Strong	Developing
<b>Teacher Support</b>		
<i>How would you rate your ability to provide support to teachers?</i>		
Encouraging Reflective Dialogue	_____	_____
Providing Supportive Feedback	_____	_____
Locating Resources	_____	_____
Demonstration or Co-teaching	_____	_____
Observation	_____	_____
<b>Literacy Content Knowledge</b>		
<i>How well developed is your background in reading and writing processes?</i>		
Theory and Research	_____	_____
Language Acquisition	_____	_____
Instructional Strategies	_____	_____
Curriculum and Materials	_____	_____
Assessment and Evaluation	_____	_____
Young Adult Literature	_____	_____
Critical Thinking	_____	_____
<b>Literacy Teaching</b>		
<i>What are your strengths in teaching middle level literacy learners?</i>		
Varying Modes of Instruction	_____	_____
Using Assessment to Inform Instruction	_____	_____
Flexible Grouping Practices	_____	_____
Conferring with Readers and Writers	_____	_____
Differentiating Instruction	_____	_____
Providing Feedback	_____	_____
Incorporating Technology	_____	_____
<b>Fostering a Learning Community</b>		
<i>How skilled are you at helping teachers work together as learners?</i>		
Creating Trusting Relationships	_____	_____
Sharing Your Own Learning	_____	_____
Encouraging Multiple Perspectives	_____	_____
Being Flexible	_____	_____
Facilitating Discussion	_____	_____

## The Importance of Self-Assessment:

In which areas of Knowledge, Skills, and Disposition of Coaching are you **STRONG** or **DEVELOPING**?



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# The Role of the Instructional Coach

Guidance, Support, and Empowerment

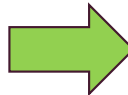


# Instructional Coach and Teacher Partnership Agreement

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- Establishes a clear, collaborative working relationship to **ensure that the roles of the coach can be fulfilled**
- Serves as a framework to align expectations, responsibilities and goals to improve instruction and student outcomes

Scan here for sample



## Literacy Coach and Teacher Partnership Agreement

Teacher: \_\_\_\_\_ Teaching Experience: \_\_\_\_\_ years  
School: \_\_\_\_\_ Grade: \_\_\_\_\_

Literacy Coach's Roles/Responsibilities	Teacher's Desired Outcomes
<b>My role as Coach:</b> To improve instructional decision-making and increase reflectivity in practice Methods: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Co-planning</li><li>• Co-teaching</li><li>• Observation</li></ul>	What do you hope to gain from coaching/co-teaching/modeling done in your classroom?
<b>How and when we will communicate:</b> We will meet individually, as needed, as well as during planning times. <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Learning focused conversations which include inquiry, reflection, generation of insights regarding professional practice, and lesson plan revision when necessary</li></ul>	How will you monitor student achievement in your classroom?
<b>Focus in team/grade-level meetings:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Plan effective instruction</li><li>• Share ideas, problem solve collaboratively</li><li>• Generate reciprocal support (shared effort) for growth and improvement of practice</li></ul>	Where do you want to start in your classroom? List our priorities (i.e., managing small-group activities, checking for comprehension, questioning techniques, etc.) <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>•</li><li>•</li><li>•</li></ul>
<b>Overall Focus:</b> Participate as equals in planning, reflecting, and problem solving.	What additional resources will you need?

- **Administrator** = The navigator, setting direction and ensuring accountability
- **Teacher** = The driver, actively steering learning in the classroom
- **Instructional Coach** = The GPS assistant, helping refine the route, offering alternatives, and supporting the journey—without judgment

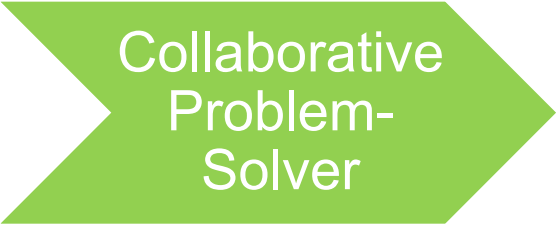
Coaches provide a wide range of services to the schools and districts they support, including:

- **Observing** teachers and providing constructive, actionable feedback
- Visiting classrooms to **model** effective instructional strategies and lessons
- Reviewing curriculum materials and supporting teachers in understanding and **implementing** the district-adopted curriculum
- **Designing** and **facilitating** professional development (PD) and professional learning communities (PLCs) grounded in the Science of Reading
- **Assisting** teachers with the organization and management of instructional programs and classroom routines


A **coaching role** involves guiding, supporting, and empowering individuals—often teachers, employees, or clients—to improve their skills, performance, or personal growth. Coaches provide feedback, ask insightful questions, set goals, and help develop strategies for success while encouraging reflection and self-directed learning.



Facilitator



Collaborative  
Problem-  
Solver



Continuous  
Learner



### Facilitator Role

#### Building Relationships:

- Attend team meetings or classroom instruction, listen to teachers' goals, and observe their classroom culture, showing respect for their expertise.
- Leave a sticky note on a teacher's desk or send a follow-up email celebrating a successful mini lesson or student interaction observed.
- Validate the concerns of a teacher and offers options, not directives.

### Facilitator Role

#### Coaching System of Support:

- Align coaching efforts with school-wide instructional goals, curriculum, and data.
- Co-develop individual and team goals with teachers.
- Use tools like coaching menus and goal-setting forms.
- Facilitate job-embedded PD.
- Lead or support PLC meetings focused on instructional strategies, student work, or research-based practices.

### Facilitator Role

#### Using Data to Support Growth:

- Support teachers in creating action plans by setting small group goals or choosing appropriate interventions.
- Facilitate data meetings for teachers to dig deeper into item analysis or subskill breakdowns.
- Use data to differentiate teacher professional development.

### Facilitator Role

#### Maintaining Professional Alignment:

- Support consistent use of the school's or district's instructional framework.
- Encourage shared decision making.
- Promote consistency in instructional practices across grade levels.
- Maintain an objective stance.

## Roles of Instructional Coaching

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Facilitator Support	Examples
Support teachers to continue to be effective and successful	classroom management, lesson planning routine/lesson study research, communicating with a family
Spend time building the all-important professional relationships that can get the coaching process started	take the time to get to know the teachers and administrators
Help lead the school/district toward a commitment to the success of all students by supporting the successful implementation of systems of support	school literacy action plan, implement programs/policies
Assist, on occasion, a busy teacher with logistics	finding a missing workbook to accompany a lesson, tracking down assessment materials, helping with data entry or analysis, locating an online patch for a software glitch

### Collaborative Problem-Solving Role

#### Understanding Teacher Needs:

- Have the teacher complete a needs assessment to better understand their instructional knowledge and guide targeted coaching support. Analyze and utilize data from the needs assessment.
- Meet regularly with the teacher to review instructional needs and determine appropriate coaching supports.

## Sample Needs Assessment Questions

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- What specific skills or knowledge would you like to develop further?
- What training or development opportunities would be most helpful for your professional growth?
- What topics or skills would you like to see addressed in professional development sessions?
- What are the biggest barriers to your professional development?
- How often do you discuss your development needs with your principal?



### Collaborative Problem-Solving Role

Provide targeted and sustained professional development support to teachers.

Collaborate with teachers regarding classroom-based challenges to improve outcomes for students.

Build essential professional collaborative relationships.



### Continuous Learner Role

#### **Defining Effective Professional Learning for Coaches:**

Describe what effective professional learning (PL) means in your role as a coach. Explain how it supports meaningful instructional change and teacher growth.

#### **Planning for Continuous Learning:**

Explain how you plan for continuous, ongoing learning of a new skill or strategy—moving beyond a single PD session to promote long-term impact.

#### **Providing Differentiated, Sustained Support:**

Describe how you offer differentiated and sustained professional learning opportunities that align with individual teacher needs, goals, and levels of readiness.

#### **Measuring the Impact of Professional Learning:**

Identify the evidence that demonstrates how PL at your school maximizes each teacher's knowledge and skills, ultimately enhancing student learning outcomes.

## Effective Professional Learning

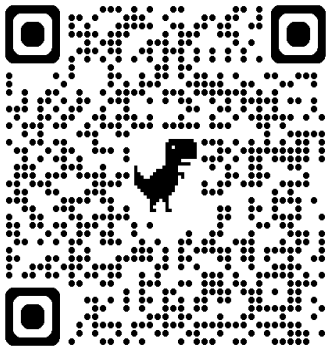
### Professional Learning Community (PLC)

- Focused on student growth and achievement
- Includes activities that encourage self- or peer-led learning and reflection
- Requires implementation of strategies

### Professional Development (PD)

- Focused on teacher growth, successes, and challenges
- Formally structure lesson or course with learning outcomes

A **Professional Learning Community (PLC)** is a group of educators who regularly meet, collaborate, and share best practices to improve teaching strategies, enhance student learning, and foster professional growth. The primary focus of a PLC is to create a culture of continuous learning and improvement among educators.



"Professional Learning  
Communities Facilitator's  
Guide"



Type	Purpose
Content	Deepen teacher understanding of subject matter and instructional strategies
Data	Use student data to drive instructional decisions and interventions
Preparation/ Planning	Ensure that instructional plans, materials, and assessments are ready for delivery and the teacher has internalized lesson components and outcomes

*"Leadership is an interaction between two or more members of a group that often involves a **structuring** or **restructuring** of the situation and the **perceptions** and **expectations** of members.*

*Leaders are **agents of change** - persons whose acts affect other people more than other people's acts affect them.*

***Leadership** occurs when one group member modifies the **motivation** or **competencies** of others in the group... Any member of the group can exhibit some amount of **leadership**."*

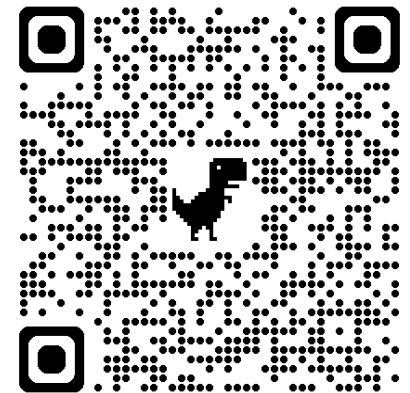
**Bass (1990)**

# Zones of Comfort

Determining your Zones

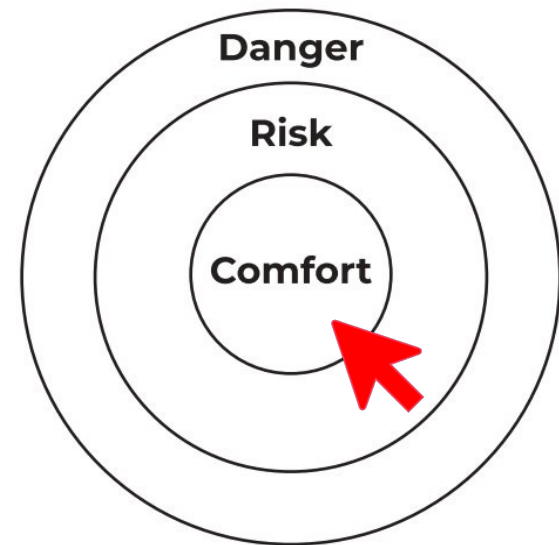


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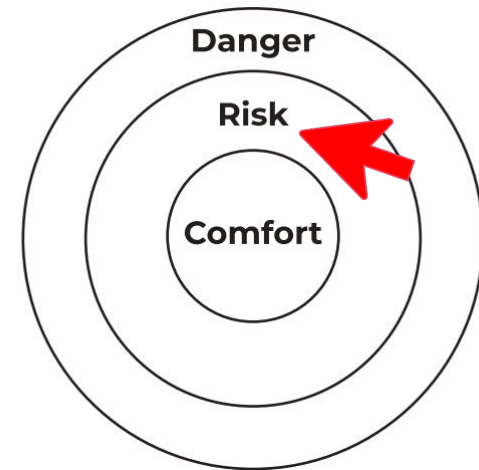
### Comfort Zone

- Feel at ease and in control
- Free from stress or tension
- Confident navigating challenges
- Safe space to retreat from discomfort
- Restful zone for renewal and reflection



### Risk Zone

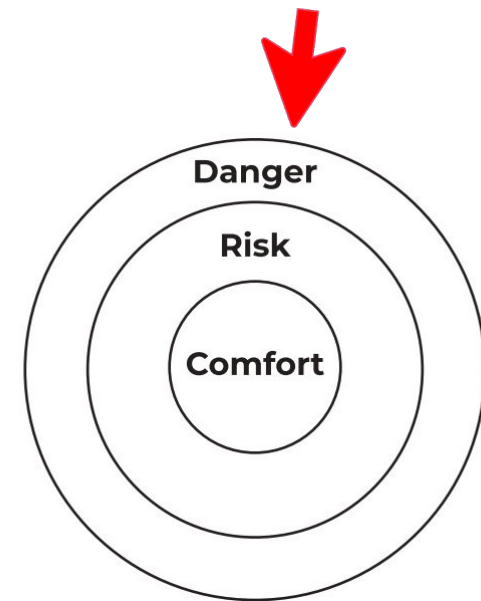
- Adapts to new circumstances
- Fertile ground for learning
- Willing to take risks and embrace uncertainty
- Open to new ideas and perspectives
- Driven by curiosity and a desire to grow





### Danger Zone

- Avoid working from the Danger Zone
- Characterized by fear, defensiveness, and resistance
- Drains time and energy
- Limits productivity and collaboration
- Recognize when you are in this zone
- Use strategies to shift into the Risk Zone



Using the Zones of Comfort anchor charts around the room, record **two tasks or topics** for each Zone of Comfort within the coaching cycle. Place each task or topic in the zone that best matches your current comfort level about it.

### ***Potential Coaching Tasks or Topics:***

*creating professional development, conferencing with teachers, principal debriefs, model lessons, HQIM, phonemic awareness, phonics, vocabulary, comprehension, writing, co-teaching, observing, writing S.M.A.R.T. goals, creating and utilizing needs assessments, presenting to teachers, facilitating PLCs*

# The Coaching Cycle

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Lights, Camera, Instruction!



The **coaching cycle** is the process in which a teacher and instructional coach work **collaboratively** to:

- **set** an instructional or student **learning goal**
- **plan** for supporting the goal
- **monitor progress** toward the goal, and then
- **reflect** on how well the plan supported the goal.



## Phases of the Coaching Cycle

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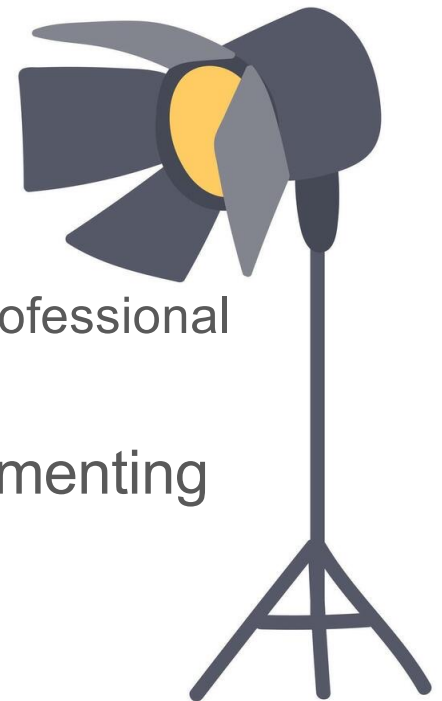


- 1. Pre-conference** - a collaborative planning discussion between an instructional coach and a teacher that occurs before an instructional observation or coaching session
  - Identify the growth area or current target
  - Set a goal and select a teaching strategy to apply to meet the goal
- 2. Action** - the coach and teacher implement the agreed-upon instructional strategies or focus area
  - Examples: classroom observations, co-teaching, modeling lessons, or gathering student data
  - Designed to support the teacher's instruction and student learning

**3. Post-conference** - reflective conversation where the coach and teacher review the observation or action

- Celebrate successes
- Identify areas for growth
- Set actionable next steps to support student learning and professional growth

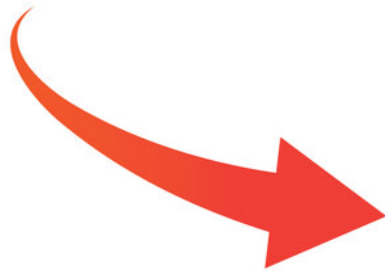
**4. Improve** - ongoing observations of the teacher implementing the targeted practice or next steps



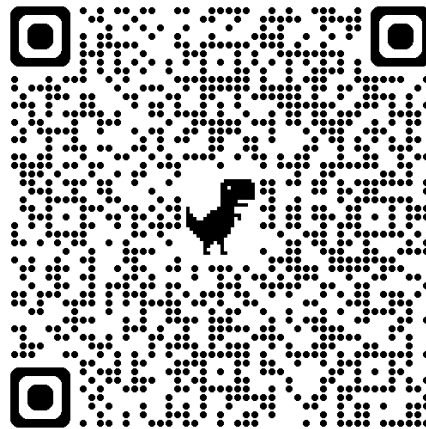
## The Pre-Conference

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The goal of the **pre-conference** is to organize all logistical details in advance, allowing you to fully focus on effective teaching and student learning



Scan here for sample  
question stems





The **action** refers to the instructional moment the coach will observe or support during the lesson

- Observation
- Modeling
- Co-teaching
- Side-by-side Coaching
- Peer Observation




**Observation:** the coach observes the teacher implementing strategies aligned with their agreed-upon goals, focusing on specific student behaviors or instructional techniques

- Most frequently used coaching method
- Collects meaningful and actionable data
- Driven by a clear and intentional goal



MDE Coaching Observation Tool



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Ensuring a bright future for every child

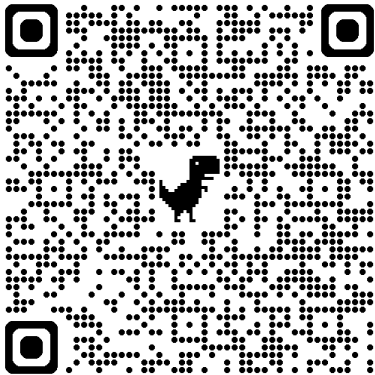
Coaching Guide  
Observation Tool

Teacher \_\_\_\_\_ Grade \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_  
School \_\_\_\_\_ Coach \_\_\_\_\_ Total Time : \_\_\_\_\_  
☐ Phonemic Awareness    ☐ Phonics/Word Study    ☐ Fluency    ☐ Vocabulary    ☐ Comprehension    ☐ Writing

Evidence/Comments		
Teacher-Teaching	Time	Student- Learning



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### Observation Data Collection

- Frequency of whole group and individual student responses
- Responses from specific student subgroups (e.g., SPED, ELL)
- Depth and quality of student responses (e.g., complete thoughts, elaboration, academic vocabulary)
- Alignment between stated objective and observed student task
- Quantity and quality of feedback provided
- Actual instructional time compared to scheduled time
- Ratio of teacher talk to student engagement
- Pacing and timing of lesson segments
- Cognitive demand of questions (e.g., recall vs. higher-order thinking)

### Observation Perspective

Teacher-Centered	
How is the teacher orchestrating the lesson? Is it smooth or choppy and disjointed? What is the evidence of this?	Is the teacher following the HQIM lesson as designed? Is the teacher elevating the lesson?
How is the lesson paced? Are the students keeping up with the lesson?	When in the lesson, did the teacher start to “lose students?”
How many re-directions did the teacher have during each portion of the lesson?	What percentage of the time did the teacher spend in delivery of instruction vs. guided or independent practice?
Was the goal of the lesson apparent? Did the teacher revisit the goal to remind the students?	Is the teacher using HQIM materials to increase student engagement?

### Observation Perspective

#### Student-Centered

Is a sub-group of students having trouble with the intensity of the lesson? Which students? How could you tell?

What was the students' product or outcome? What written responses did the teacher expect? What expectations did the teacher have for discussion or oral responses? Did the students use complete sentences and extended thoughts during the lesson?

When you asked students what they were working on, could they explain the task and purpose behind it?

Were students encouraged to ask questions for clarification?

### Directions:

1. Watch the lesson video.
2. Complete the provided observation sheet while you watch.
3. Talk about what you noticed with your group.
4. Be ready to share your thoughts with your group.



## Activity: Using the Observation Tool

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**Modeling:** the instructional coach delivers a lesson focusing on a pre-planned skill, procedure, or strategy while the teacher observes and takes notes.

- Lesson is focused on results and lasts less than 30 minutes
- The coach provides clear, step-by-step instruction for the students utilizing the gradual release model (I do, we do, you do)
- Modeling includes behavior management strategies, and instructional routines

**Co-teaching:** the instructional coach and the classroom teacher jointly deliver a skill, procedure, or strategy during small group or whole group instruction

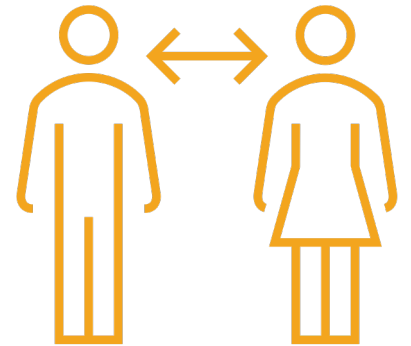
- Teacher and coach plan together to deliver lesson
- Teacher and coach share responsibility for parts of the lesson
- Feedback is immediate

*Example: After a post-conference, the teacher and coach decide to co-teach a phonics lesson on building words with r-controlled vowels (ir, er, ur) utilizing magnetic boards. The coach begins by having students repeat the word, segment the word, and build the word on the magnetic board. Teacher will do the next word, following the same procedure. Coach will assist as needed.*

**Side-by-Side Coaching:** the teacher delivers instruction while the coach is positioned close by to provide support. The coach provides on-the-spot feedback, support, and guidance, facilitating a collaborative learning experience for the teacher.

Coach may whisper feedback to the teacher throughout the lesson to ensure the lesson goals are met

- “Try that again, you didn't have everyone's attention.”
- “Let's go ahead and model that one more time.”



**Peer Observations:** the teacher and coach observe another teacher to deepen their understanding of instructional best practice and gather strategies to apply in the classroom

1. The teacher and coach discuss and establish a clear focus during a pre-conference
2. They observe a specific goal or strategy in action during live instruction, taking notes while they observe
3. They post-conference to discuss key takeaways and next steps



**Content Knowledge Building:** intentional development of a teacher's knowledge and understanding of effective instruction

- During a conference, the coach and teacher identify areas for growth in content knowledge
  - Resources to support learning (e.g., PD sessions, PLCs, videos, articles, lesson samples)
  - Clear goals and expectations for applying new content knowledge

### Example

*A 1<sup>st</sup> grade teacher is unsure about teaching digraphs. Together, the coach and teacher review phonics materials from the HQIM. They plan a follow-up meeting to clarify misunderstandings and adjust instruction as needed.*

### Scenario: Literacy

Ms. Thompson, a 3rd-grade teacher, mentions during a team meeting that her students "just don't seem to understand what they read" even though they're decoding fluently. She has been giving comprehension questions after each story, but students struggle to answer with details. She hasn't used any graphic organizers or strategy instruction and says she's not sure "what else to do."

### Task:

- In which phase of the coaching cycle would you start?
- What evidence supports your choice?
- How might this impact next steps?

### Scenario: Math

Mr. Patel, a 6th-grade teacher, is using the district curriculum with fidelity. When reviewing assessment data, you notice students are consistently underperforming in multi-step word problems. Mr. Patel is surprised by this and says, “They did great on practice problems!” Upon observation, you see he models the procedure but doesn’t model how to unpack or visualize problems. Students rarely talk during problem-solving.

### Task:

- In which phase of the coaching cycle would you start?
- What evidence supports your choice?
- How might this impact next steps?

### Scenario: Science

Ms. Garcia, a high school biology teacher, asks for support with student engagement during labs. She notes students “go through the motions” but aren’t making connections to content or asking questions. You observe a lab where students are copying procedures and answers with little discussion. The teacher is circulating but not asking probing questions or facilitating dialogue.

### Task:

- In which phase of the coaching cycle would you start?
- What evidence supports your choice?
- How might this impact next steps?



### Discuss in pairs or groups:

- What trends did you notice in how you determined the entry point?
- Did any scenario tempt you to “jump in” too soon?
- How do your decisions support teacher agency and student outcomes?

### Reflect:

- How do you ensure you're not assuming the teacher's readiness level?
- What tools (e.g., coaching conversation protocols, data review) help you decide your starting point?

## Roles of Administrator, Coach, and Teacher

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Scenario	Administrator's Role	Coach's Role	Teacher's Role
<b>Low math scores on assessment</b>	Sets goal for improvement; allocates resources	Supports teachers in analyzing data and trying strategies	Reflects on data and works with coach to improve instruction
<b>New curriculum adoption</b>	Oversees implementation and fidelity	Provides planning and modeling support	Learns and adapts instruction
<b>Teacher struggles with engagement</b>	May suggest coaching support or provide observation feedback	Partners confidentially with teacher to address the issue	Reflects and collaborates with coach
<b>Teacher needs support with struggling readers</b>	Encourages teacher to seek support and provides time for PLC/Planning	Builds teacher knowledge through modeling, co-teaching, and sharing strategies aligned with the SOR	Seeks to understand how to support readers; engages in learning and applying strategies

## The Post-Conference

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1. Restate the purpose for the coaching interaction (1 minute)
2. Reflect on the teaching (5 minutes)
3. Using your notes, describe in detail what you saw during the lesson (5 minutes)
4. Provide specific “This was successful” feedback (2 minutes)
5. Provide specific “Here’s what I’d like you to work on” feedback (5 minutes)
6. Ask the teacher to reflect on your feedback (2 minutes)
7. Choose a next step action and time commitment together (1 minute)

## The Post-Conference

68

### Post-Conference Questions

What are you pleased about?

What parts did not go as planned? What factors contributed to this?

Did you meet your goal for the lesson? What evidence supports that the goal was achieved?

If you met the goal, do you want to identify another goal, take a break, or keep refining the current new practice?

If you did not meet the goal, do you want to stick with the chosen practice or try a new one?

Tell me what you thought when...

If you continue with the chosen practice, how will you modify it to increase its impact? (Revisit the checklist.)

What I hear you saying is...

If you choose another practice, what will it be?

What data do you have to support that?

What are your next actions?

What did you want me to see during your lesson?

What were you surprised about?

This leads me to think that we should take a look at...

A new kindergarten teacher demonstrates a need for support with phonological awareness and articulation. During whole-group instruction, she produces consonant sounds incorrectly, often adding the schwa sound, which is then mirrored by her students. Additionally, she provides incorrect examples by using words with consonant digraphs (e.g., shape, shaker, and ship) to teach single consonant sounds like /s/.

### Reflect:

- What questions could you ask to determine the best strategy approach in correcting the lack of knowledge around foundational skill instruction?
- How will you know the teacher is clear on next steps?

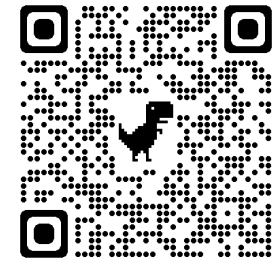
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# Coaching Cycle: Column Observation Conference Tool

70



## Literacy Coach Conference Artifacts



Teacher: \_\_\_\_\_ Grade: \_\_\_\_\_ Coach: \_\_\_\_\_ School: \_\_\_\_\_

Pre-Conference	Act	Post-Conference	Improve
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What component(s) of instruction will be the focus of observation?</li> <li>What is the content or skill objective(s)?</li> <li>Identify the special needs of various students that should be considered.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Observation</li> <li>Model lesson</li> <li>Co-teaching Lesson</li> <li>Side-by-side Coaching</li> <li>Peer Observation</li> <li>Content Building</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What was your impression of the lesson? (What worked or didn't work?)</li> <li>How will you/did you assess mastery of the content or skill objective?</li> <li>What is the evidence that students have mastered the concept or skill objective?</li> <li>If not mastered, how will we meet the students' needs?</li> <li>When will we revisit to see how instructional delivery is progressing? (if applicable)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Based on this experience, what next steps will be taken to make instruction more effective?</li> <li>How and when will these next steps be implemented?</li> <li>How will you know you are successful?</li> </ul>
Date: _____	Date: _____	Date: _____	Date: _____

1. **Implement New Strategies:** The teacher tries out new instructional practices or strategies discussed during planning or feedback sessions.
2. **Apply Feedback:** The teacher incorporates real-time or post-observation feedback into their teaching.
3. **Use Resources:** The teacher engages with selected tools or materials (e.g., videos, articles, lesson plans) to deepen understanding and improve practice.
4. **Monitor Progress:** The coach and teacher track how the changes are impacting student learning and teacher confidence.
5. **Adjust as Needed:** Based on what's working or not, the coach and teacher may tweak the approach or set new short-term goals.

## Review Activity: Speed Coaching

72

### Directions:

1. Make two equal lines (to be called line A and B) facing each other.
2. The person in line A will explain the first step of the coaching cycle (1 minute). The person in line B will use their active listening skills to give 2-3 high points that they heard partner A say about that phase (30 seconds).
3. Line A only will move to the left and repeat the process with the next partner for the remaining steps of the coaching cycle. Alternate which line explains and which line actively listens for each phase.

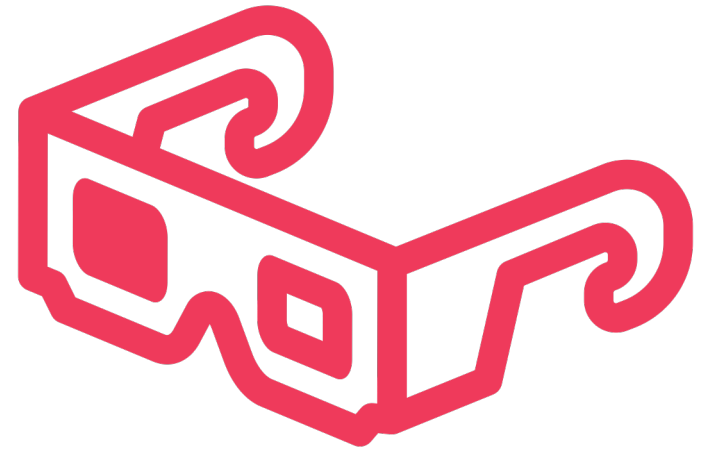


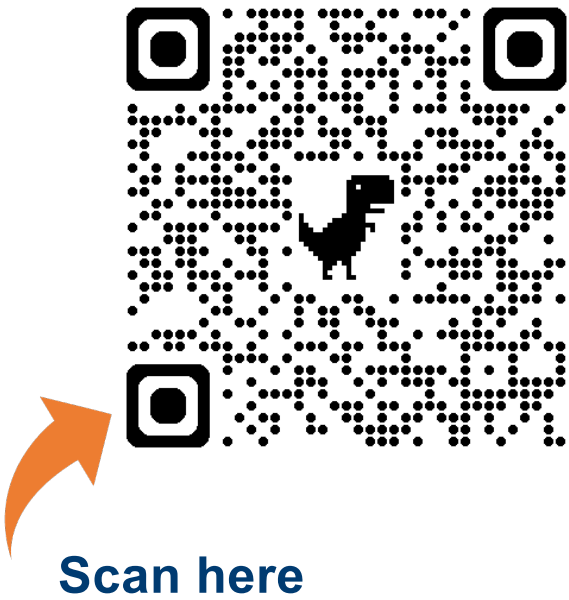


# Eyes on Growth

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Action Plans and Goal Setting





# School Leader’s Literacy Walkthrough

FLORIDA’S B.E.S.T. STANDARDS  
ENGLISH  
LANGUAGE  
ARTS

Grades K-5

Introduction .....	2
Overview of the Tool .....	2
Using the Tool.....	2
Florida Practice Profile.....	3
Pre-Walkthrough Meeting Guide.....	5
Post-Walkthrough Meeting Guide.....	5

The **MDE Learning Walk** refers to a structured, classroom observation process to support instructional improvement and professional growth. It is **not an evaluation**, but a **non-judgmental tool** for gathering data on teaching and learning practices.

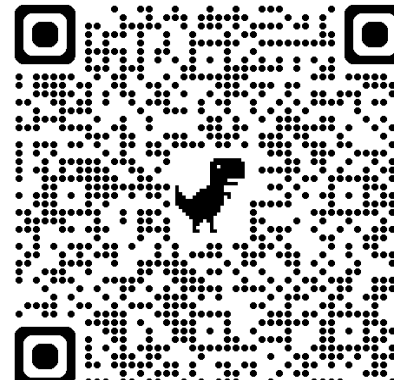
Features:

- Observations are made by a team
- Snapshot of instruction, typically 7–10-minute observation
- Each person on the team focuses on a different portion of the protocol



### Focuses on:

- Student learning behaviors
- Use of data to inform instruction
- Instructional strategies being taught
- Providing actionable feedback to educators
- Promoting continuous improvement



**Literacy  
Protocol**



**Math  
Protocol**



## Focuses on:

- Systematic improvement of teaching and learning
- Specific steps and strategies
- Ensuring accountability
- Long and short-term goals

**SCHOOL**  
**LITERACY ACTION PLAN**  
SCHOOL YEAR: 2020-2021



**School Name:** ABC Elementary  
**Principal:** Jane Doe  
**Literacy Coach:** Jim Smith  
**Date Updated:** September 5, 2020

### SECTION 2a: OVERALL GOAL BASED ON DATA

- Type overall goal(s) here. For example: Increase the percentage of third grade students scoring at/above benchmark from 32% at BOY to 70% at EOY. If you have more than one overall goal, you may number or bullet, like shown here.

### SECTION 2b: SMART GOALS

**SPECIFIC**

**MEASURABLE**

**ATTAINABLE**

**RELEVANT**

**TIME-BOUND**

SMART goals should include steps that will assist the coach in meeting the data-identified overall goal in section 2a.

GOALS/OUTCOMES	PERSON RESPONSIBLE	TIMELINE	RESOURCES	EVIDENCE OF PROGRESS	DATES COMPLETED	EVIDENCE OF SUSTAINABILITY
1. Type your specific goal/outcome here. You can use more or less rows than the ones provided.	Type the responsibility here. Sometimes, more than one person/group is responsible for the task.	Type the timeline here. Be as specific as possible.	Type the potential resources here.	Type the evidences of progress here. How will you measure your mastery towards the goal?	Type when you complete certain tasks here. For example, PLCs, models, co-teachings, etc.	Type evidences of sustainability here.
2.						
3.						
4.						
5.						



**Specific**



Clear and specific so the goal is easier to achieve.



**Measurable**



Can be tracked to see progress.



**Actionable**



Allows for planning steps to achieve the goal.



**Realistic**



Avoids overwhelm and stress by making goal realistic.



**Timebound**

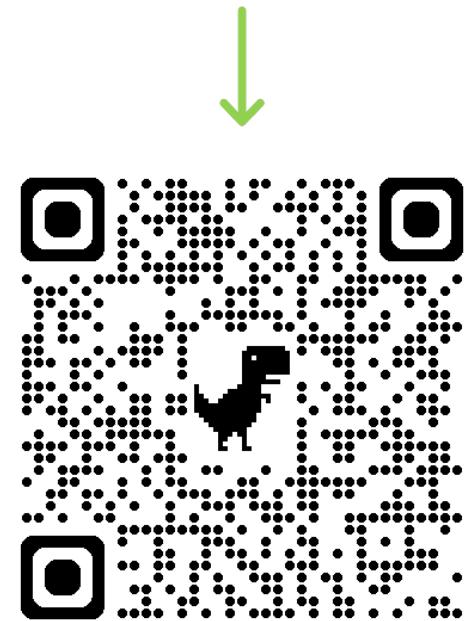


Dates help to stay focused and motivated towards goal.

### Goal Setting:

Co-develop S.M.A.R.T. goals to ensure goals are specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time bound

**Example:** By the end of the fall semester, 80% of students will improve in decoding CVCe words by 20%, measured by weekly phonics checks.



## Activity: Creating a S.M.A.R.T Goal

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Using the S.M.A.R.T Goals worksheet on your table, choose one instructional area or data point you want to be a focus in your building and turn it into a S.M.A.R.T Goal. Please be prepared to share your S.M.A.R.T Goal with your table.

### S.M.A.R.T. GOALS WORKSHEET

Crafting S.M.A.R.T. Goals are designed to help you identify if what you want to achieve is realistic and determine a deadline. When writing S.M.A.R.T. Goals use concise language but include relevant information. These are designed to help you succeed, so be positive when answering the questions.

<b>INITIAL GOAL</b>	Write the goal you have in mind
<b>S</b> <b>SPECIFIC</b>	What do you want to accomplish? Who needs to be included? When do you want to do this? Why is this a goal?
<b>M</b> <b>MEASURABLE</b>	How can you measure progress and know if you've successfully met your goal?
<b>A</b> <b>ACHIEVABLE</b>	Do you have the skills required to achieve the goal? If not, can you obtain them? What is the motivation for this goal? Is the amount of effort required on par with what the goal will achieve?
<b>R</b> <b>RELEVANT</b>	Why am I setting this goal now? Is it aligned with overall objectives?
<b>T</b> <b>TIME-BOUND</b>	What's the deadline and is it realistic?



# Lights, Camera, Action

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**Coaching Scenarios**



A first-grade teacher is implementing a 90-minute reading block entirely focused on phonics instruction and a rotation of structured centers.

Centers include a teacher-led center focusing on the reading of decodable text, an assistant-led center utilizing decodable passages for fluency, a phoneme-grapheme mapping center, and a text-dependent writing center utilizing decodable passages differentiated for each group based upon their phonics level.

### Reflect:

- What evidence of effective instruction did we observe?
- What elements were missing or unclear during the observation?
- What support or next steps could enhance instructional practice?

During professional learning sessions, you notice that teachers seem to sit in grade-level teams. Two of your teams engage in other activities, such as completing lesson plans, talking quietly, or even doing crossword puzzles during the sessions. For one of the teams, the information presented is particularly critical and you're becoming frustrated and embarrassed.

**Reflect** with your table group using sample questions on the next slide.

### Table Group Reflection

- Why might this team be disengaged during the session?
- What could I change to make the session more relevant or engaging for them?
- How can I address the behavior in a respectful and supportive way?
- Was the PLC relevant for all grade levels?
- How did you choose the PLC topic?
- Were there any PLC norms agreed upon beforehand?
- Did you create a PLC needs assessment for the teachers?
- How can you make the PLC more interactive?



The coach began a small group model lesson. The teacher leaves the room and once she returns, she lets the coach know it is time for recess.

### Reflect:

- Did the teacher understand the purpose and timing of the model lesson?
- How can I better communicate expectations before starting a coaching action?
- What steps can I take to ensure stronger collaboration moving forward?

An observation of a first-year, non-certified teacher's classroom revealed an urgent need for support in implementing effective classroom management. The current learning environment is characterized by a lack of structure and high levels of student misbehavior, which significantly disrupts instruction.

### Reflect:

- How can you support this teacher in building foundational management skills?
- What immediate strategies could help restore order and structure in the classroom?

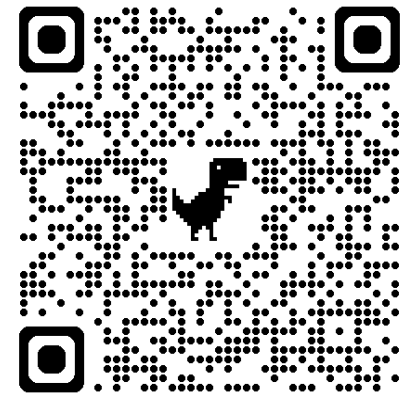
- Partner B will play the role of the teacher.
- Partner A will play the role as the coach.
- Participants will analyze how to approach and support a new teacher struggling with classroom management. Identify coaching strategies, appropriate support structures, and ways to preserve the teacher's dignity while prioritizing student learning and classroom safety.

# Zones of Comfort

Goal Setting



Scan here





Using the Zones of Comfort anchor charts around the room created earlier in the presentation, **are there any changes you would like to make based on today's learning?**

### ***Potential Coaching Tasks or Topics:***

*creating professional development, conferencing with teachers, principal debriefs, model lessons, HQIM, phonemic awareness, phonics, vocabulary, comprehension, writing, co-teaching, observing, writing S.M.A.R.T. goals, creating and utilizing needs assessments, presenting to teachers, facilitating PLCs*

## Activity: Creating a S.M.A.R.T Goal

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Using the S.M.A.R.T Goals worksheet on your table, choose a ***Risk*** or ***Danger*** that you want to be a focus in your building and turn it into a S.M.A.R.T Goal. Please be prepared to share your S.M.A.R.T Goal with your table.

### S.M.A.R.T. GOALS WORKSHEET

Crafting S.M.A.R.T. Goals are designed to help you identify if what you want to achieve is realistic and determine a deadline. When writing S.M.A.R.T. Goals use concise language but include relevant information. These are designed to help you succeed, so be positive when answering the questions.

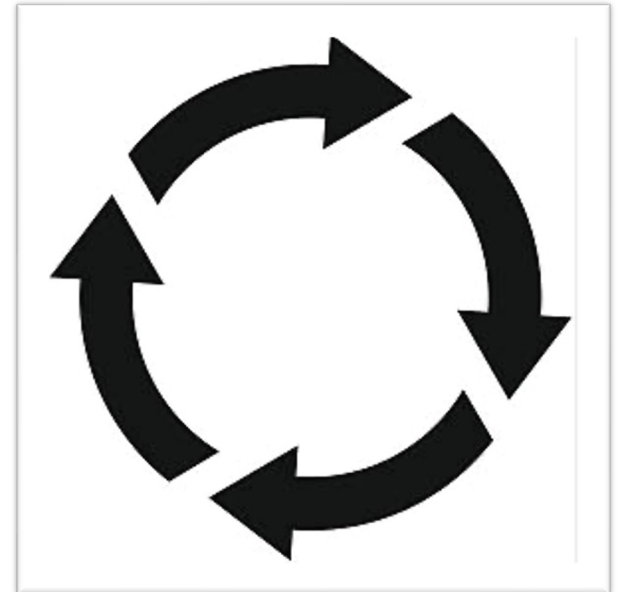
INITIAL GOAL	Write the goal you have in mind
S SPECIFIC	What do you want to accomplish? Who needs to be included? When do you want to do this? Why is this a goal?
M MEASURABLE	How can you measure progress and know if you've successfully met your goal?
A ACHIEVABLE	Do you have the skills required to achieve the goal? If not, can you obtain them? What is the motivation for this goal? Is the amount of effort required on par with what the goal will achieve?
R RELEVANT	Why am I setting this goal now? Is it aligned with overall objectives?
T TIME-BOUND	What's the deadline and is it realistic?

### S.M.A.R.T Goal

Take turns sharing your individual S.M.A.R.T. goal for the remainder of the school year with your table group.



- Instructional coaches may be impactful in different **roles**: facilitator, collaborative problem solver, or teacher/learner.
- Coaching **characteristics** include being knowledgeable, maintaining and updating instructional expertise, mentoring and advocating, communicating clearly, leading, and learning.
- The **coaching cycle** process includes collaboration with teachers through setting goals, preparation, monitoring progress, and reflection.
- The **coaching cycle** must include pre-conferencing, action, post-conferencing, and improvement.
- Recognizing **zones of comfort** and committing to setting smart goals will set the stage for effective coaching.



- <https://fcrr.org/literacy-walkthrough>
- <https://padlet.com/literacycoachMS/the-coaching-cycle-in-action-empowering-educators-enhancing--1pgdaik2o3fxk5g8>
- <https://eric.ed.gov/?id=ED581452>
- <https://blog.brookespublishing.com/3-essential-roles-of-student-focused-instructional-coaches/>

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