Nebraska Instructional Materials Collaborative English Language Arts (ELA) Observation Rubric

This tool allows instructional leaders to provide content-specific feedback to classroom teachers throughout cycles of observation. The core actions within describe the standards-alignment and grade-appropriateness of content, teacher actions, and the depth of student ownership and engagement. Instructional leaders can use the tool to inform the district's vision of excellent literacy instruction and identify areas of strength and growth. This tool is not meant to be evaluative in nature nor should it replace an established system or framework for the assessment of educator effectiveness. For more information about the selection and implementation of high-quality instructional materials, please visit nematerialsmatter.org.

Standard Alignment: Does the lesson reflect the demands of the standards?	
Instruction meets the demand of the standard or pairing of standard(s).	The instruction meets the demand of the standard or pairing of standard(s). **4 –** Fully meets **3 –** Mostly meets **2 –** Partially meets **1 –** Does not meet

Core Action 1: Is the text appropriately complex for the grade level and is the majority of the time spent engaging with the text?	
AB. The text(s) is at or above the quantitative and/or qualitative complexity expected for the grade-level and a majority of the lesson is spent reading, writing, and/or speaking about text.	**4 —** The text is appropriately complex for the grade level and most of the lesson is spent reading, writing, and/or speaking about the text as evidenced by students reentering the text. **3 —** The text is appropriately complex for the grade level and some of the lesson is spent reading, writing, and/or speaking about the text as evidenced by students reentering the text. **2 —** The text is not appropriately complex for the grade level or only a brief part of the lesson is spent reading, writing, and/or speaking about the text as evidenced by students reentering the text. **1 —** Students are speaking or writing about the text but do not have the actual text (or any resources) open, or there is no text in the lesson.

Core Action 2: Does this lesson employ questions and tasks, both oral and written, which integrate the standards and help students understand the content and meaning of the text(s)?	
A. Questions and tasks address the text by attending to its particular qualitative features: its meaning/purpose and/or language, structure(s), or knowledge demands.	Questions and tasks attend to the qualitative features of the text that matter most and how they are used in the text to build understanding. **4 –** Most questions **3 –** Many questions **2 –** Few questions **1 –** No questions
B. Intentionally sequenced questions and tasks build knowledge, support grade-level analysis, and enable all students to make meaning of, and think deeply about, the text's complexities.	Text dependent questions and tasks are intentionally sequenced to build knowledge and arrive at grade-level analysis. **4 –** Most questions and tasks **3 –** Many questions and tasks **2 –** Few questions and tasks **1 –** No questions or tasks
C. All students, including children living in poverty, English learners, and children with disabilities, consistently receive supportive feedback that affirms their abilities and potential as readers and writers.	**4 —** The teacher consistently provides feedback that affirms the abilities and potential of a variety of individual students and includes precision and nuance unique to students' work. **3 —** The teacher consistently provides feedback that affirms the abilities and potential of a variety of individual students and extends beyond stating answers are right or wrong. **2 —** The teacher provides feedback that affirms the abilities and potential of a limited set of individual students and extends beyond simply stating answers are right or wrong. **1 —** The teacher does not provide feedback that affirms the abilities and potential of individual students beyond stating answers are right or wrong.

Core Action 3: Does the lesson and instruction provide support for all students to engage in the work of the lesson?	
A. Students productively struggle to arrive at meaning making through reasoning and appropriate scaffolding such as leveraging background knowledge building, fluency, vocabulary, and syntax.	**4 —** Most students are engaging in productive struggle with sufficient scaffolding in service of grade-level standards. **3 —** Many students are engaging in productive struggle with sufficient scaffolding in service of grade-level standards. **2 —** Few students are engaging in productive struggle with sufficient scaffolding in service of grade-level standards, **OR** students are engaging in productive struggle, but that struggle is NOT in service of grade-level standards. **1 —** Students are not engaging in productive struggle.
B. Students provide accurate text evidence to support the explanation of their ideas and display precision in their oral and/or written responses.	**4 —** Most students are providing accurate and precise text evidence to support an explanation of their ideas in service of grade-level standards. **3 —** Many students are providing accurate and precise text evidence to support an explanation of their ideas in service of grade-level standards. **2 —** Few students are providing accurate and precise text evidence to support an explanation of their ideas in service of grade-level standards, **OR** students are providing accurate, precise text evidence but NOT in service of grade-level standards. **1 —** Students are not providing text evidence.

Student Mastery: Did students master or move towards mastery of the content of the lesson?	
Students exhibit a strong grasp of the content of the lesson.	Students are moving toward a strong grasp of the content of the lesson. **4 –** Most students **3 –** Many students **2 –** Few students **1 –** No students or little evidence

Observation Notes

Classroom/Teacher/Objective/Standard(s)	

Content/Task(s)	Teacher/Student Evidence
3 Summary Bullet Points:	

This tool has been adapted with permission from Instruction Partners; nomenclature and general structure by Student Achievement Partners' Instructional Practice Guides for mathematics, English Language Arts, and Foundational Skills.

Revised 2/19/26 per federal accessibility guidelines; wording/clarity edit CA.2B.