DLM Webinar #3: How do I prepare my students for the DLM?

October 9, 2025

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EDUCATION

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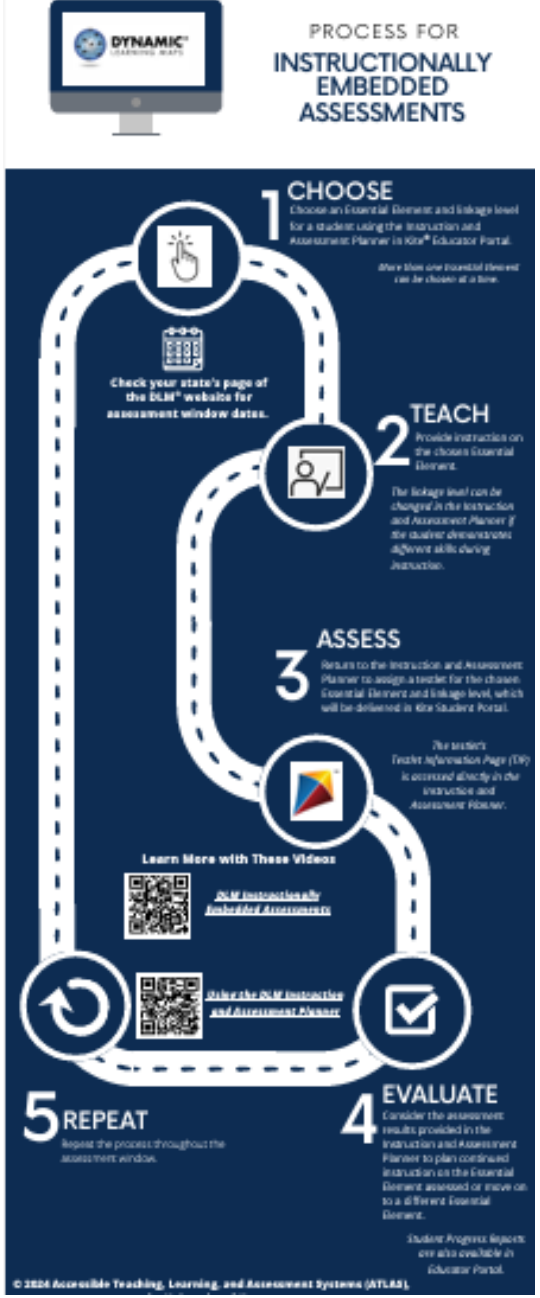
Instructionally Embedded Assessment

Assessment Cycle



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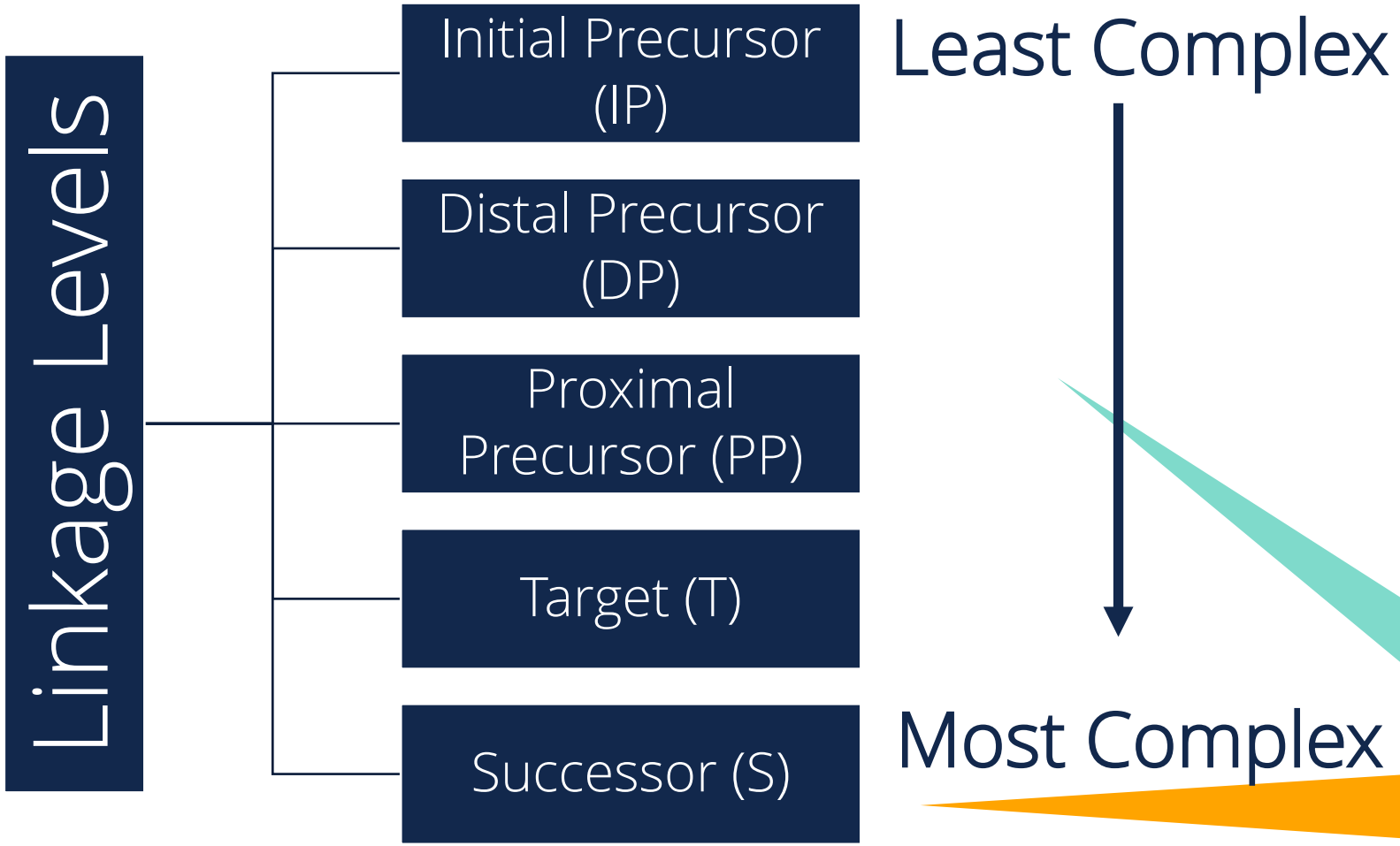
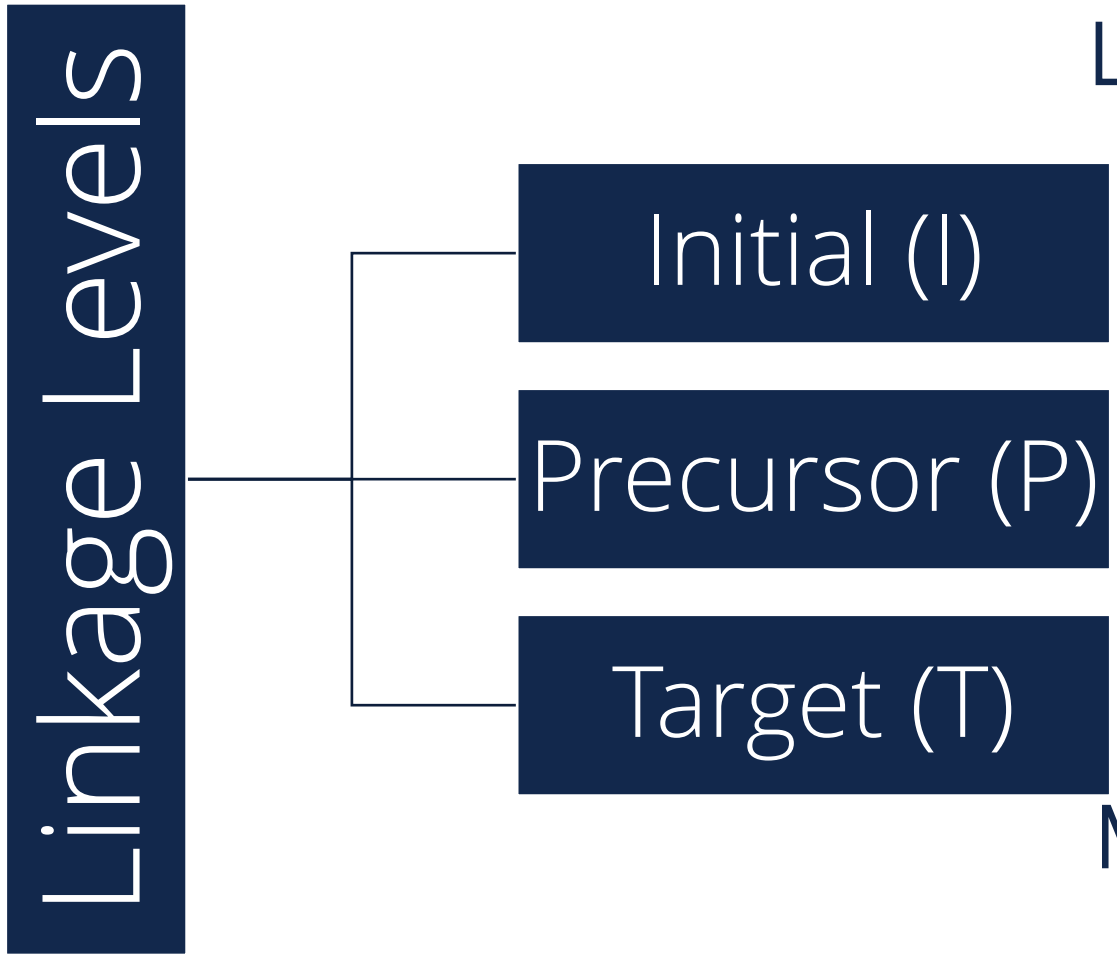
Linkage Levels: ELA and Mathematics

Items within a single testlet align to only one linkage level.



Linkage Levels: Science

Items within a single testlet align to only one linkage level.



Least Complex

Most Complex

Understanding the Testlets

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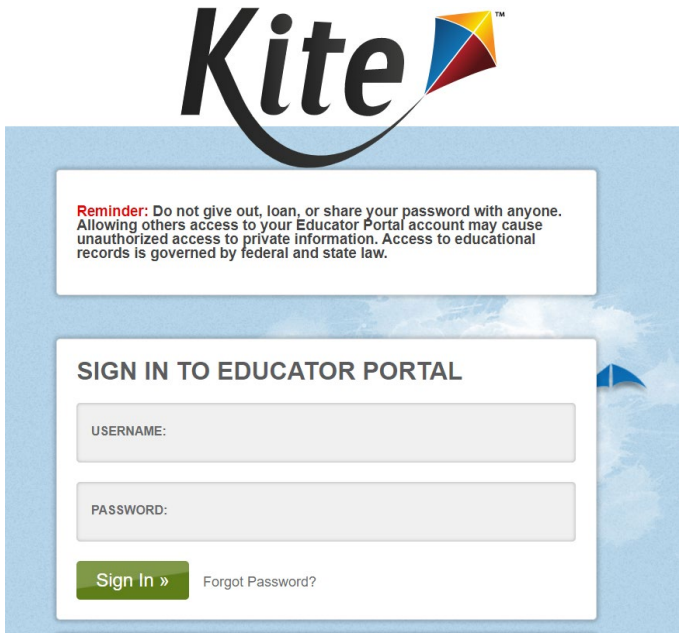
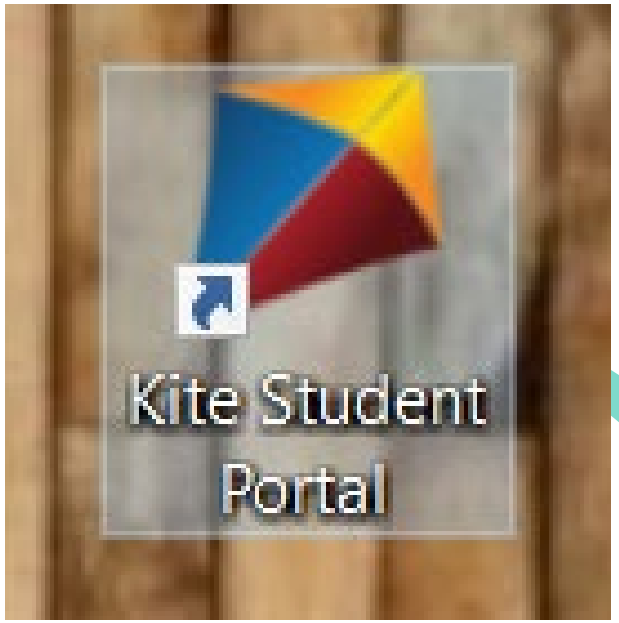
Kite Suite

Educator Portal- teachers



Student Portal- students



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Testlet Structure and Types

Every testlet has an engagement activity and test items/questions

Computer-Delivered

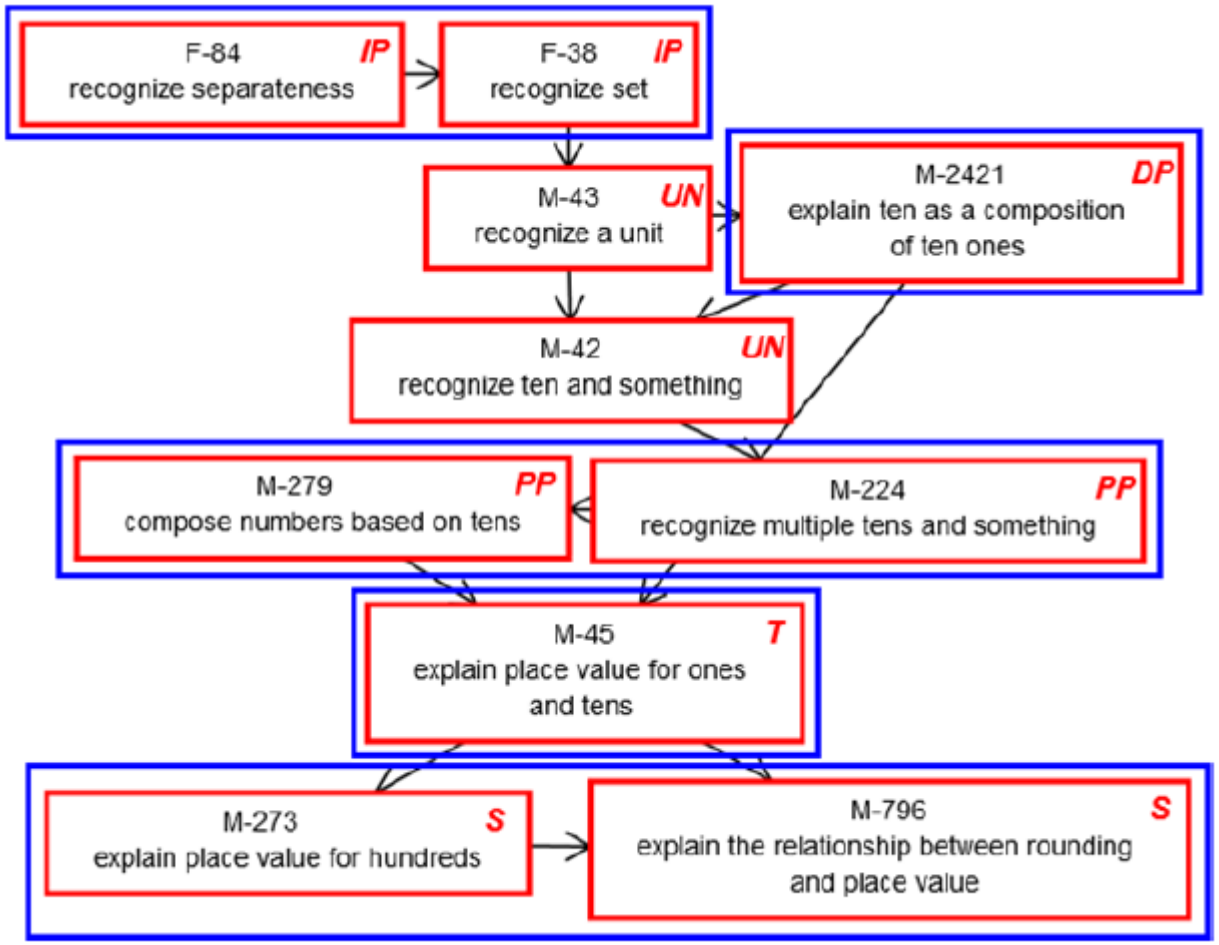
- Intended for the student to interact with the computer independently or with support.
- NOT assessing the student's ability to use the technology.
- Most common.

Teacher- Administered

- Used at lower linkage levels or when the content is not easily accessed with on-screen info.
- Provide the test administrator with a script to follow.

Using DLM Mini-Maps to Plan Instruction

M.EE.NBT.2 Demonstrate understanding of place value to tens.



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Testlet Information Page

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DYNAMIC® LEARNING MAPS

FALL ELA RI.3.2 IP 10651

Testlet Information Page: ELA10651

Testlet Type: Teacher-administered

Number of Items: 3

Materials Needed: Engagement Activity: three familiar objects. Item 1: one familiar object. Item 2: one familiar object not used in the previous item. Item 3: one familiar object not used in the previous items.

Materials Use: The student will seek a familiar object, once the object has been removed from immediate touch or view.

Suggested Substitute Materials: None

DLM Text Title: Fun on the Bus

Type of Text: Reading Informational Text **Familiar or Unfamiliar?** Familiar

DLM Source Book: Ramona Quimby, Age 8

Accessibility supports NOT allowed:

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DYNAMIC® LEARNING MAPS

FALL Math 3.G.2 PP 1638

Testlet Information Page: Math1638

Testlet Type: Computer-delivered

Number of Items: 3

Materials Needed: See attached pages for alternate text and materials for administration to students who are blind or who have visual impairments and have difficulty with on-screen content.

Materials Use: None

Suggested Substitute Materials: None

Calculator Use Allowed: Not Applicable

Math Vocabulary Used in the Testlet: rectangle, circle, row, column, equal

Accessibility supports NOT allowed:

Definitions (see "Other Comments")

Other Comments: Test administrator should not define the following word(s): divide.

Supports for the DLM Assessment

Three categories

1. Provided in Kite® Student Portal
2. Requiring additional materials
3. Provided by the test administrator

Category 1 Accessibility Supports

Category 1 Supports	In Combination with Other Supports?
Contrast Color: white background with green or red font; black background with gray or yellow font	Do not use Contrast Color AND Invert Color Choice or Overlay Color.
Invert Color Choice: black background with white font	Use Contrast Color or Invert Color Choice but not both. Do not use Overlay Color with Invert Color Choice.
Magnification: 2x, 3x, 4x, or 5x	The larger the magnification, the more scrolling is necessary. Consider projecting on a whiteboard.
Overlay Color: blue, gray, green, pink, and yellow options; font remains black	Do not use with Contrast Color or Invert Color Choice.
Spoken Audio: text only, text and graphics, or nonvisual (Text is highlighted in yellow as it is spoken.)	Do not choose Invert Color Choice or yellow for Overlay Color. Other colors in Contrast Color and Color Overlay may not be easy to see given the highlighted spoken text.

Category 2 Accessibility Supports

Category 2 Supports	In Combination with Other Supports?
Alternate Form-Visual Impairment	This can be used in conjunction with Braille or with any of the Category 1 supports.
Braille	Select Alternate Form-Visual Impairment as well as Braille. No other Category 1 supports are necessary.
Calculator	OK
Individualized Manipulatives	OK
Single-Switch System (Switch is used to scan and highlight each response option in yellow.)	Do not choose Invert Color Choice or yellow for Overlay Color. Other colors in Contrast Color and Color Overlay may not be easy to see given the highlighted text.
Two-Switch System (One switch is used to scan and highlight each response option in yellow. The other switch is used to enter the chosen response option.)	Do not choose Invert Color Choice or yellow for Overlay Color. Other colors in Contrast Color and Color Overlay may not be easy to see given the highlighted text. If using Spoken Audio as well, the test administrator would activate the Spoken Audio.

Category 3 Accessibility Supports

Category 3 Supports	In Conjunction with Other Supports?
Human Read Aloud	This can be used in conjunction with or instead of Spoken Audio. If the student has a visual impairment, TIPs contain alternate text descriptions for any visual components in testlets.
Language Translation	Spoken Audio is moot if using Language Translation.
Partner-Assisted Scanning (Test administrator points to and/or reads each item and response option to the student.)	This can be used instead of Spoken Audio. Human Read Aloud may be selected as well.
Sign Interpretation of Text	Sign Interpretation is akin to Language Translation. Spoken Audio is moot is using Sign Interpretation. The Alternate Form-Visual Impairment may be useful when signing for students with deaf-blindness.
Test Administrator Entering Student Responses	OK

Accessibility Manual

- Examples of accessibility supports
- Further guidance
- Common accessibility issues and example solutions
- Supports not allowed

Overview of the KSDE and DLM Website Resources

KSDE DLM website

Dynamic Learning Maps (DLM) & Essential Elements

The DLM® project is guided by the core belief that all students should have access to challenging grade-level content. The DLM Alternate Assessment System will let students with significant cognitive disabilities show what they know in ways that traditional multiple-choice tests cannot. The DLM system is designed to map a student's learning throughout the year. The system will use items and tasks that are embedded in day-to-day instruction. In this way, testing happens as part of instruction, which both informs teaching and benefits students.

Dynamic Learning Maps for Kansas: http://dynamiclearningmaps.org/kansas (external link)
Resources on Manuals and Blueprints, Videos, Training, and Educator Resources, Templates, Scoring & Reporting, and more.

Essential Elements are grade-level-specific expectations about what students with the most significant cognitive disabilities should know and be able to do. Essential Elements are related to college- and career-readiness standards for students in the general population at a reduced depth, breadth, and complexity.

- Currently tested Essential Elements for ELA (External PDF)
- Currently tested Essential Elements for Math (External PDF)
- Currently tested Essential Elements for Science (External PDF)
-
- Kansas Essential Element Data - K-2 (PDF)
- Kansas Essential Elements by Linkage Level Data - Grade 3-Grade 11 (PDF)
- Kansas Essential Elements Blueprint/Selection Record - Math and English Language Arts by Grade (PDF)
- Kansas Essential Elements Alignment Of Kansas Math Standards (PDF)
-
- Kansas Alternate Early Literacy Screener (PDF) Webinar (Vimeo) / Slides (PowerPoint)
- Kansas Early Math Alternate Assessment Rubrics KDG-3rd grade (PDF)
- History, Government and Social Studies Alternate Rubric and Information (PDF)
- Alignment of Kansas English Language Arts Standards with DLM Essential Elements in English Language Arts (PDF)

Tools and Resources for IEP teams

- Dynamic Learning Maps (DLM) Fact Sheet (PDF)
- 1% Threshold Fact Sheet (PDF)
- AA-AAAS 1% Threshold FAQ (PDF)
- Academic Curriculum Review Guide (PDF)
- Alternative Assessment, Roadmap to Determine Eligibility (PDF)
- IEP Team Resource Making Decisions about Participation in the Alternate Assessment (PDF)
- DLM Test Administrator Checklist (PDF)
- How to Create Instructional Plans for the DLM Alternate Assessment (PDF)
- Instructionally Embedded Assessments Infographic (PDF)
- Kansas Alternate Assessment Flow Chart (PDF)
- Kansas Alternate Assessment Notification (PDF) / Spanish (PDF)
- Parent Information Brochure about DLM (PDF) Spanish (PDF)
- Participation Guidelines (PDF)
- Rubric for Determining Student Eligibility for the Kansas Alternate Assessment (DLM) (PDF)
  (Companion document to the DLM Participation Guidelines)
- Submitting Student Writing Samples in Educator Portal (PDF)

Tools and Resources for the WIDA Alternate ACCESS English Language Proficiency Assessment

- All WIDA resources can be found at: https://wida.wisc.edu/about/consortium/ka

Tools and Resources for Test Coordinators

- DLM Test Coordinator Checklist (PDF)
- DLM Test Administration Timing Considerations (PDF)
- Add a Student Record Manually (PDF)
- Creating a Roster Manually (PDF)
- Data Management Manual (External PDF)
  supports data managers with managing user, student, and roster data in Educator Portal
- Manage Special Enrollments (PDF)
- Special Circumstance Codes for Kansas Districts (PDF)
- DLM-Upload Enrollment Template (PDF)
- Test Administration Observation
  - Kite Collector Questions for Test Administration Observations
  - Using Kite Collector for DLM Test Administration Observations

For information about Kansas and Dynamic Learning Maps please contact Cary Rogers at crogers@ksde.org

DLM Tiered Technical Assistance Resources

DLM Training Webinar (Vimeo link) / Slides (PowerPoint)
Kansas Student Information Sheet (PDF)
Alternate Assessment Participation Monitoring (PDF)
DLM Red Flags Fact Sheet (PDF)

Webinars

The KSDE SETS team will continue to provide communication for special education teachers administering the DLM during the current school year. Communication will occur via an online meeting platform using Zoom. Participants will be asked to log in to view and download materials and engage with presenters. There will be opportunities for questions and the webinars will be recorded for future reference or for those unable to attend. The recordings will be posted on the KSDE website.
Brad Schwartz will produce the webinars and provide technical support as needed.
Link: https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89779273823?pwd=UW5JeUw3N2xDZ0lSWFJwW0JSZJMdz09
Meeting ID: 897 7927 3823
Passcode: 947213
One tap mobile: +13462487799,,89779273823#,,,,,,0#,,947213# US (Houston)

DLM Webinars

Register for entire 2025-26 Webinar Series
Content is subject to change at any time due to current events

- **August 21** What do I need to do to get ready for the fall test window? (Vimeo) / Slides (PDF)
- **September 4** How do I write instructional plans? (pre-recorded) (Vimeo) / Slides (PDF)
- **October 9** DLM resources – How do I prepare my students for the DLM? (TASN registration)
- **December 11** DLM fall test window wrap-up What needs to be finished by Dec 20th? (TASN registration)
- **February 5** DLM spring window (TASN registration)
- **April 9** DLM wrap-up What needs to be finished by April 24th? (TASN registration)

2024-25 Webinar Series

- **August 22** What do I need to do to get ready for the fall test window? (Vimeo) / Slides (PDF)
- **September 4** How do I write instructional plans? (Vimeo) / Slides (PDF)
- **October 10** October 10 DLM resources – How do I prepare my students for the DLM? (Vimeo) / Slides (PDF)
- **November 14** Instructionally Embedded Assessments to Guide Classroom Instruction (Vimeo)
- **December 5** DLM fall test window wrap-up What needs to be finished by Dec 20th? (Vimeo) / Slides (PDF)
- **February 6** DLM spring window (Vimeo) / Slides (PDF)
- **April 10** DLM wrap-up What needs to be finished by April 25th? (Vimeo) / Slides (PDF)
  Deciding What to Teach (Vimeo) / Slides (PDF)

Early Literacy Instruction for Students Taking the DLM Webinars

August 31, 2023: Assessment of Early Literacy Skills (Vimeo) / Slides (PDF)
September 7, 2023: Alphabet Knowledge and Phonological Awareness / Slides (PDF)
September 21, 2023: Shared and Independent Reading (Vimeo) / Slides (PDF)
October 19, 2023: Predictable Chart Writing and Independent Writing (Vimeo) / Slides (PDF) / 2-in-1 Writing-Storm Infographic (PDF) / 5-Tips for Supporting Student Writers (PDF)

Special Education Assessment Listserv

The Special Education Assessment Listserv is used to send out information about standard, assessments, and professional development for students with disabilities.

This listserv has information about the general and the general assessment with and without accommodation for students with disabilities as well as information about the alternate assessment for students with disabilities.

To sign up, send the information:
Subject line: KAA Listserv
Body of message: Email address, First Name, Last Name, USD Number, USD Name
Send to the address: cary.rogers@ksde.gov

You should get a confirmation email within 10 days.

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Resources Around the Essential Elements

- Kansas Essential Elements Alignment Of Kansas Math Standards (PDF)
- Alignment of Kansas English Language Arts Standards with DLM Essential Elements in English Language Arts (PDF)
- Kansas Essential Element Data - K-2 (PDF)
- Kansas Essential Elements by Linkage Level Data - Grade 3-Grade 11 (PDF)

DLM website

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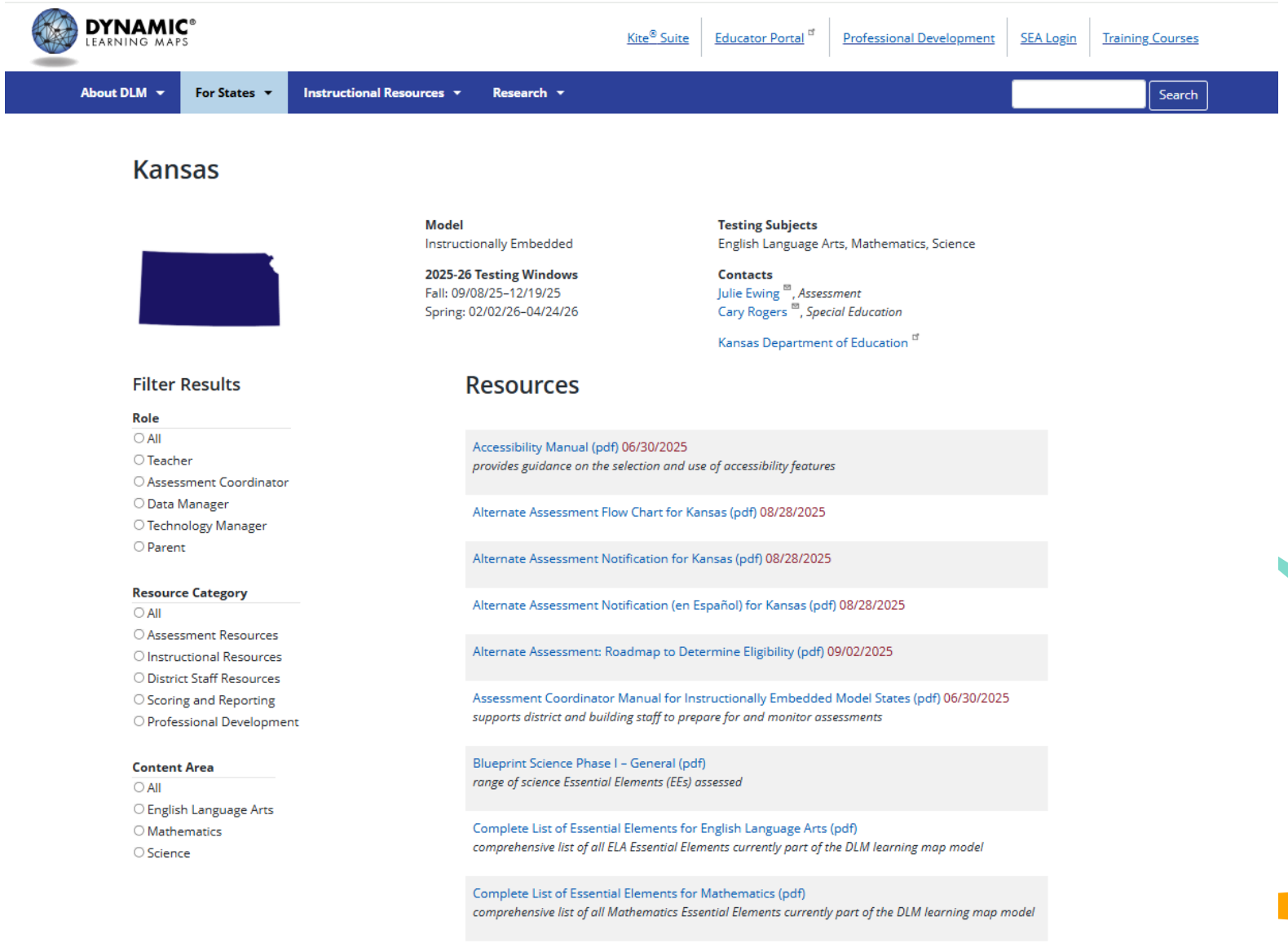
DLM Kansas page



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ELA – Assessment Resources

Kansas

Model
Instructionally Embedded

2025-26 Testing Windows
Fall: 09/08/25–12/19/25
Spring: 02/02/26–04/24/26

Testing Subjects
English Language Arts, Mathematics, Science

Contacts
Julie Ewing, *Assessment*
Cary Rogers, *Special Education*

Kansas Department of Education

Filter Results

Role
- All
- Teacher
- Assessment Coordinator
- Data Manager
- Technology Manager
- Parent

Resource Category
- All
- Assessment Resources
- Instructional Resources
- District Staff Resources
- Scoring and Reporting
- Professional Development

Content Area
- All
- English Language Arts
- Mathematics
- Science

Reset Filters

Resources

Alternate Assessment Flow Chart for Kansas (pdf) 08/28/2025

Alternate Assessment: Roadmap to Determine Eligibility (pdf) 09/02/2025

Complete List of Essential Elements for English Language Arts (pdf)
comprehensive list of all ELA Essential Elements currently part of the DLM learning map model

Currently Tested Essential Elements for English Language Arts (with Mini-Maps)
lists of PDFs for each Essential Element available for assessment. These PDFs provide the nodes at each linkage level and a mini-map showing the pathways between the nodes.

DLM Fact Sheet (pdf) 08/28/2025

DLM Familiar Texts for English Language Arts
resources and source books to assist in teaching students to comprehend text through listening or reading

DLM Writing Testlets Overview
training video designed to provide test administrators with specific information about DLM writing testlets

English Language Arts Selection Record (docx)

Mathematics – Assessment Resources

Kansas

Model
Instructionally Embedded

2025-26 Testing Windows
Fall: 09/08/25–12/19/25
Spring: 02/02/26–04/24/26

Testing Subjects
English Language Arts, Mathematics, Science

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Cary Rogers, *Special Education*

Kansas Department of Education

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- Technology Manager
- Parent

Resource Category
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- Instructional Resources
- District Staff Resources
- Scoring and Reporting
- Professional Development

Content Area
- All
- English Language Arts
- Mathematics
- Science

Reset Filters

Resources

Alternate Assessment Flow Chart for Kansas (pdf) 08/28/2025

Alternate Assessment: Roadmap to Determine Eligibility (pdf) 09/02/2025

Complete List of Essential Elements for Mathematics (pdf)
comprehensive list of all Mathematics Essential Elements currently part of the DLM learning map model

Currently Tested Essential Elements for Mathematics (with Mini-Maps)
lists of PDFs for each Essential Element available for assessment. These PDFs provide the nodes at each linkage level and a mini-map showing the pathways between the nodes.

DLM Fact Sheet (pdf) 08/28/2025

Kansas ELA and Mathematics Essential Elements Blueprint/Selection Record (pdf) 08/28/2025
pool of available ELA and mathematics Essential Elements and the requirements for coverage within each conceptual area

Essential Elements by Linkage Level Data for Kansas (pdf) 08/28/2025

Guide to Practice Activities and Released Testlets (pdf) 08/05/2025
familiarizes educators and students with testlets and Student Portal

K-2 Essential Elements Data (pdf) 08/28/2025

Science – Assessment Resources

Kansas

Model
Instructionally Embedded

2025-26 Testing Windows
Fall: 09/08/25–12/19/25
Spring: 02/02/26–04/24/26

Testing Subjects
English Language Arts, Mathematics, Science

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Kansas Department of Education

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- Scoring and Reporting
- Professional Development

Content Area
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- English Language Arts
- Mathematics
- Science

Reset Filters

Resources

Alternate Assessment Flow Chart for Kansas (pdf) 08/28/2025

Alternate Assessment: Roadmap to Determine Eligibility (pdf) 09/02/2025

Blueprint Science Phase I – General (pdf)
range of science Essential Elements (EEs) assessed

Currently Tested Essential Elements for Science (with Mini-Maps)
lists of PDFs for each Essential Element available for assessment. These PDFs provide the nodes at each linkage level and a mini-map showing the pathways between the nodes.

Development of DLM Essential Elements for Science (pdf)
a short description of how Essential Elements in Science were developed

DLM Fact Sheet (pdf) 08/28/2025

Essential Elements by Linkage Level Data for Kansas (pdf) 08/28/2025

Essential Elements for Science (pdf)

Guide to Practice Activities and Released Testlets (pdf) 08/05/2025
familiarizes educators and students with testlets and Student Portal

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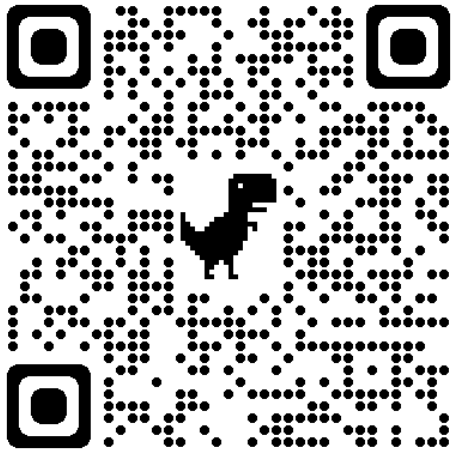
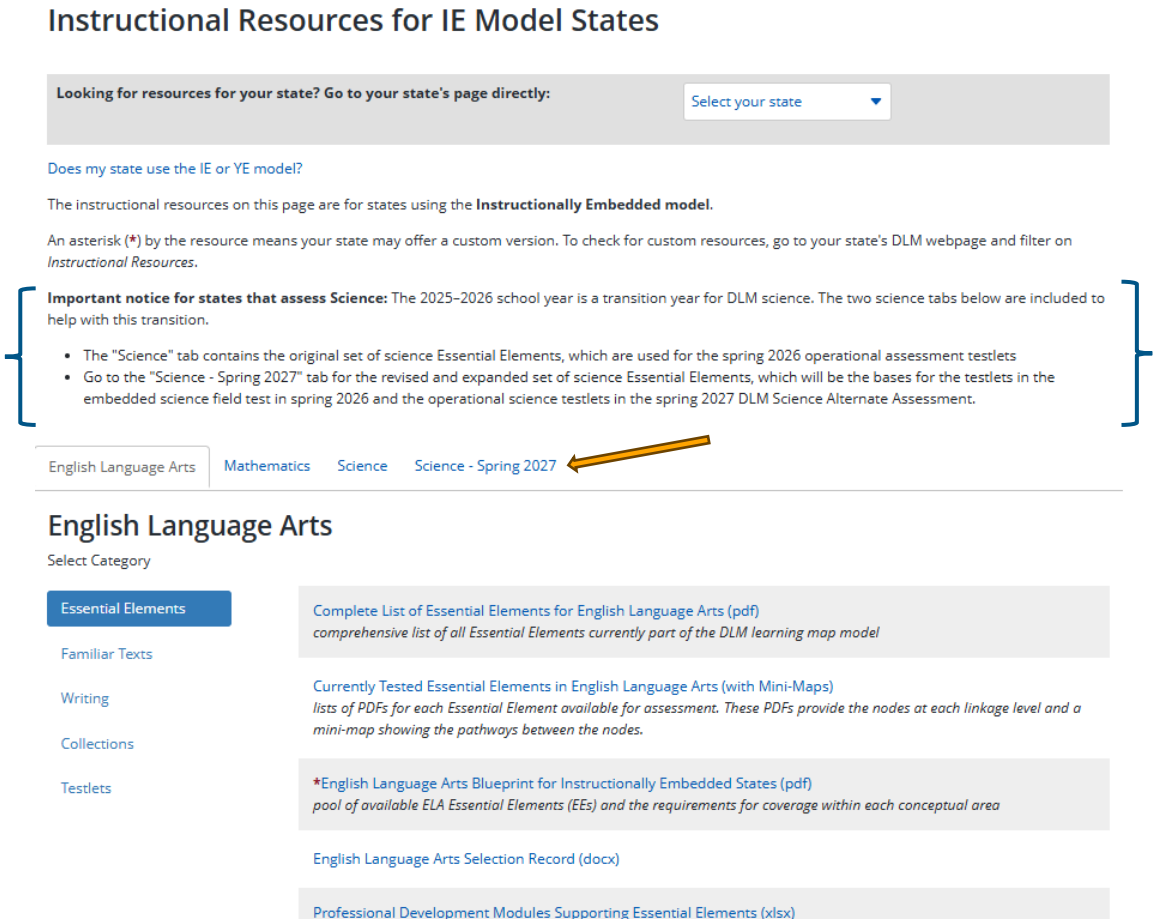
Instructional Resources for IE States





Instructional Resources for IE Model States

Looking for resources for your state? Go to your state's page directly: Select your state

Does my state use the IE or YE model?

The instructional resources on this page are for states using the **Instructionally Embedded model**.

An asterisk (*) by the resource means your state may offer a custom version. To check for custom resources, go to your state's DLM webpage and filter on *Instructional Resources*.

Important notice for states that assess Science: The 2025–2026 school year is a transition year for DLM science. The two science tabs below are included to help with this transition.

- The "Science" tab contains the original set of science Essential Elements, which are used for the spring 2026 operational assessment testlets
- Go to the "Science - Spring 2027" tab for the revised and expanded set of science Essential Elements, which will be the bases for the testlets in the embedded science field test in spring 2026 and the operational science testlets in the spring 2027 DLM Science Alternate Assessment.

English Language Arts | Mathematics | Science | Science - Spring 2027

English Language Arts

Select Category

Essential Elements
Familiar Texts
Writing
Collections
Testlets

Complete List of Essential Elements for English Language Arts (pdf)
comprehensive list of all Essential Elements currently part of the DLM learning map model

Currently Tested Essential Elements in English Language Arts (with Mini-Maps)
lists of PDFs for each Essential Element available for assessment. These PDFs provide the nodes at each linkage level and a mini-map showing the pathways between the nodes.

*English Language Arts Blueprint for Instructionally Embedded States (pdf)
pool of available ELA Essential Elements (EEs) and the requirements for coverage within each conceptual area

English Language Arts Selection Record (docx)

Professional Development Modules Supporting Essential Elements (xlsx)

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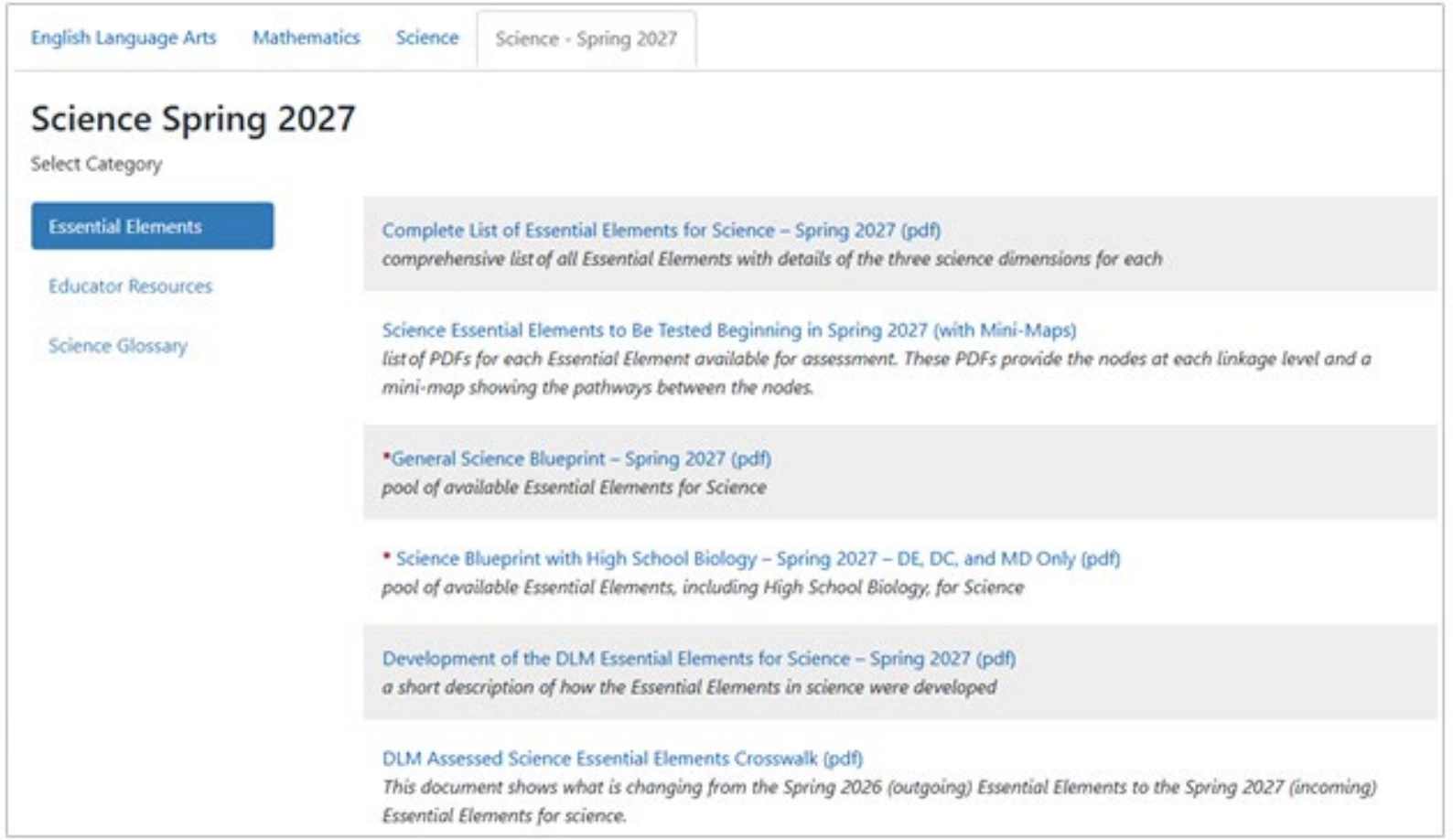
Science – Spring 2027



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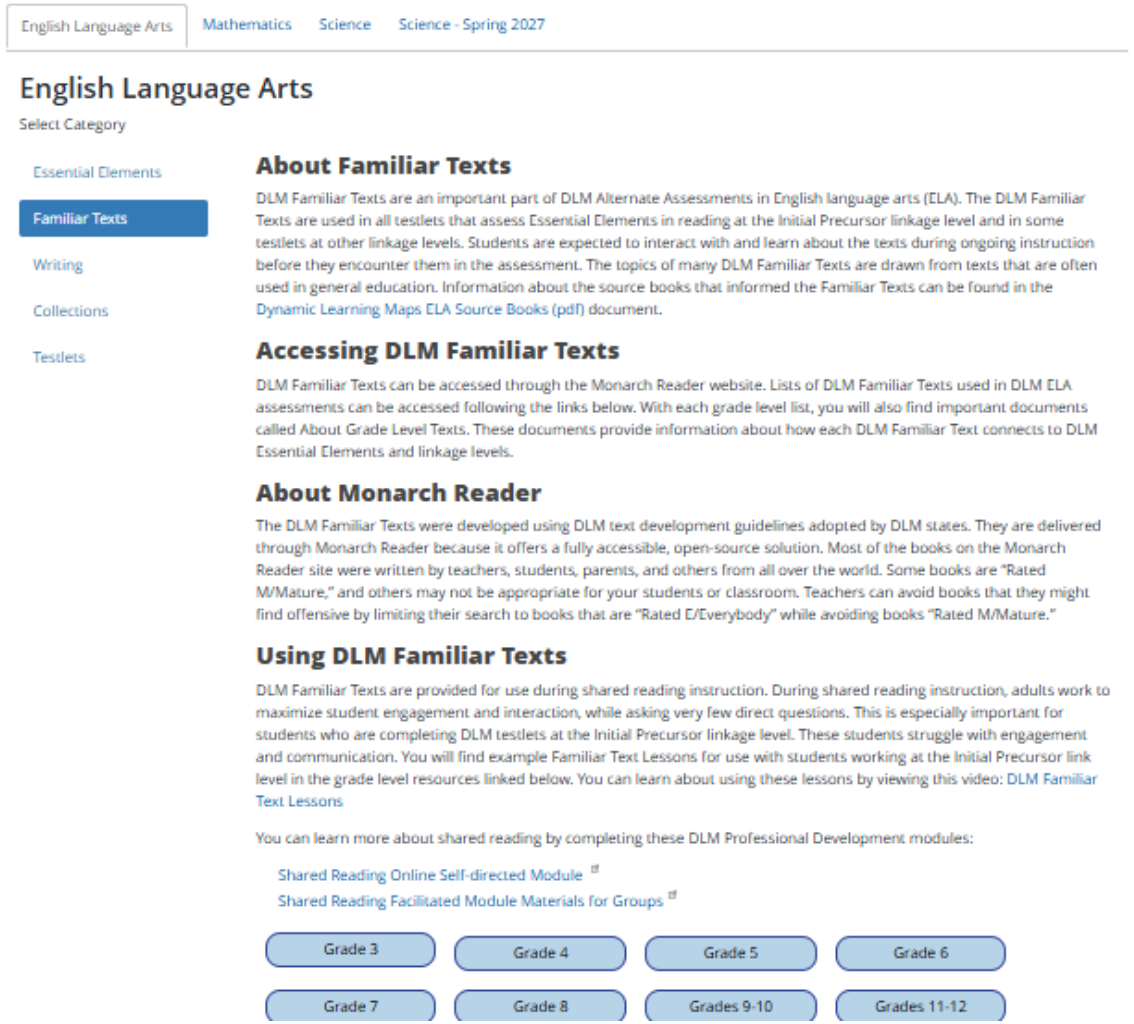
Familiar Text Resources



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System of Professional Development

Professional Development Tab

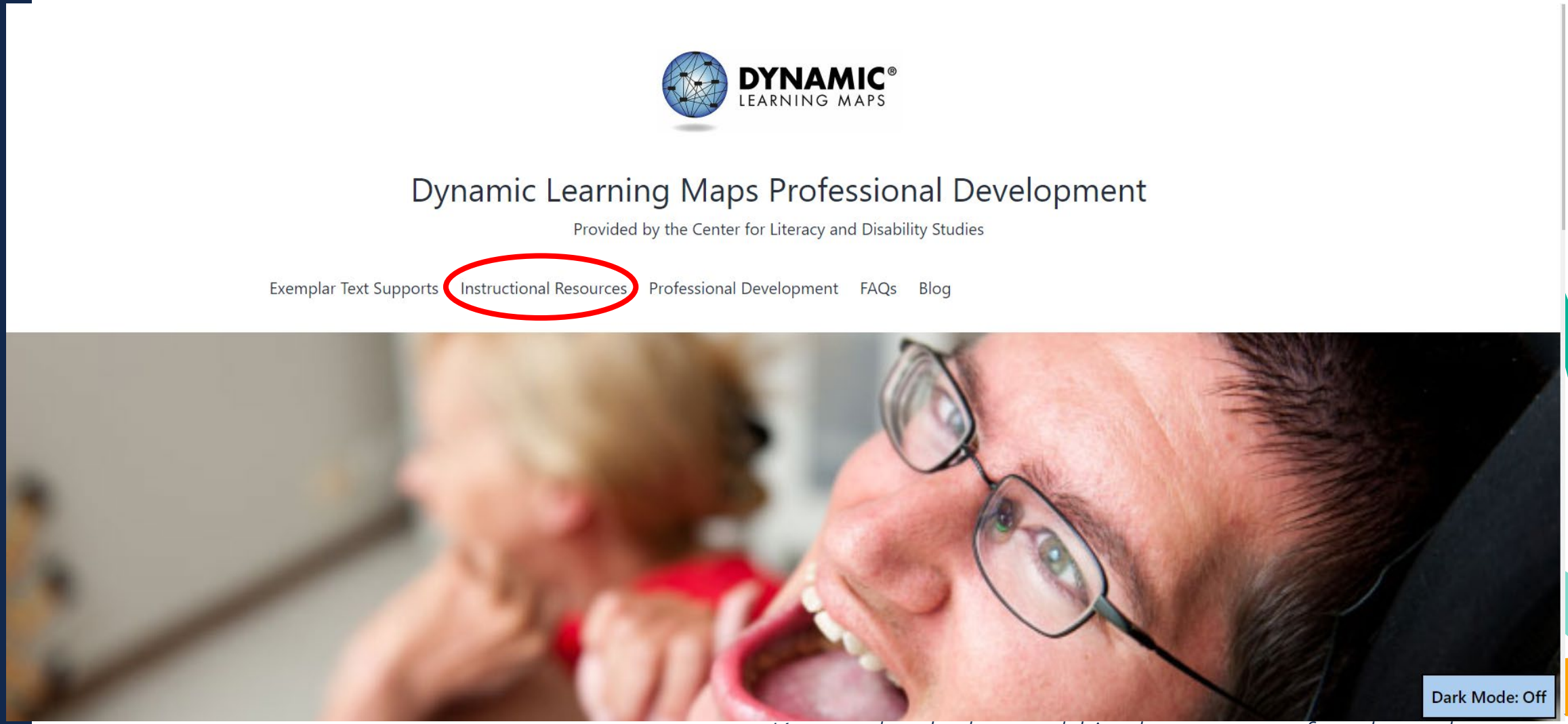
Components: DLM Instructional Professional Development Modules

- 62 Professional Development modules
  - Facilitated and self-directed formats
    - DLM system: 8
    - ELA: 18
    - Mathematics: 25
    - Science: 12
  - Combined in 5-10-hour Professional Development Packages Arranged by DLM Claim and Conceptual Area
- Crosswalk of Professional Development Modules Supporting Essential Elements

Professional Development Packages

- Foundations of Instruction in DLM
- Getting Started with Students Working at an Initial Precursor Linkage Level
- From Shared Reading to Reading Comprehension
- From Emergent Writing to Written Composition
- Moving Students from Initial to Distal Precursor Linkage Levels in Mathematics

Instructional Resources Tab



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Instructional Resources

- DLM Essential Elements Unpacking
- Text Resources
- Communication Supports
- Writing Resources
- Lesson Supports

Components: Text Resources

- Unpacked Essential Elements in ELA and mathematics.
- Text comprehension lesson planning supports.
- Shared reading vignettes.
- DLM Familiar Text lesson supports.

GRADE 3

- About grade 3 familiar texts

Henry and Mudge

My Father's Dragon

Ramona Quimby, Age 8

STORIES

Drop Everything and Read
Getting Sick
Mary Buys School Supplies
Max and Ava at Lunch
Ramona and the Egg
Ramona and the Parade
Ramona and the Rainy Day
Ramona and Willa Jean
Ramona Gets Ready for School
Ramona Goes to Bed
Ramona's Family
Ramona's First Day of School
Ramona's Letters
Ramona's New Sister
The Extra Nice Day

INFORMATIONAL TEXTS

Babysitting
Book Reports
Buses
Cleaning the House
Drawing
Fun on the Bus
Parades
Riding on a Bus
Selling and Buying

Familiar Texts

- Found on the DLM website (filter – teacher, instructional resources, ELA) and DLM professional development site.
- Listed by Grade.
- Include grade-level titles.
  - Each subdivided into a series of stories and informational texts.
- Will appear directly in a testlet, but may be downloaded/printed from the website for classroom use.

About Familiar Text (information by grade level and EE)

Grade 4 Familiar Texts for Instructionally Embedded Model States

DLM Familiar Texts are provided for use during shared reading instruction. During shared reading instruction, adults work to maximize student engagement and interaction, while asking very few direct questions. This is especially important for students who are completing DLM testlets at the Initial Precursor linkage level. These students struggle with engagement and communication. As such, adults have to work to recruit and sustain student interest and engagement while teaching them to communicate using gestures, images in the book, and objects. Shared reading interactions can also help students learn to respond to simple yes/no questions using a gesture or movement (e.g., head shake/nod, looking up/down, hand up/down).

You can learn more about shared reading by completing these DLM Professional Development modules:
Shared Reading Online Self-directed Module
Shared Reading Facilitated Module Materials for Groups

Or the modules and supports provided by our partners at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill at https://sharedreader.org

About Grade 4 Familiar Texts (pdf)

Texts with an asterisk (*) contain material that some students may find sensitive.

- **The Birchbark House**
- **Bud, Not Buddy**
- **Tales of a Fourth Grade Nothing**

ELA.EE.RL.4.1

Use details from the text to recount what the text says.

Initial Precursor | Can identify familiar people, objects, places, and events

General Text Description

Texts include plots in mostly familiar settings such as home, school, or neighborhood. People, objects, and events are associated with these familiar settings. Home includes family members and home-based routines, like getting ready in the morning or helping with dinner. School includes teachers, friends, and school-based routines like packing a bag. The neighborhood includes friends, neighbors, and play routines, like taking a walk or going to the park.

DLM-Specific Text Descriptions

Collection Source Books	Corresponding DLM Book Title	DLM Book Summary
The Birchbark House	*Learning from Family*	Omakayas was a young girl who was adopted by a Native American family. Mom and Dad worked very hard and traded goods in the village. Omakayas learned from Mom and Dad how to make and trade goods.
Bud, Not Buddy	*Searching for Herman**	Bud was a young boy who was looking for his father. Bud planned out his trip at the library and then packed a bag for his trip.
Tales of a Fourth Grade Nothing	*The School Project*	Peter was a boy in the fourth grade. He and his classmates were assigned a group project at school. They worked together to complete the assignment.
Tales of a Fourth Grade Nothing	*Fudge's Birthday*	Fudge was a little boy who was turning three. Peter was Fudge's older brother. Mom planned a birthday party for Fudge. Grandma helped Fudge get dressed for his party. Example DLM Familiar Text Lesson: Fudge's Birthday
Tales of a Fourth Grade Nothing	*Fudge's New Shoes*	Fudge went to the shoe store with his mom and brother, Peter. Fudge needed a new pair of sandals. Peter helped Fudge pick out sandals that fit just right.

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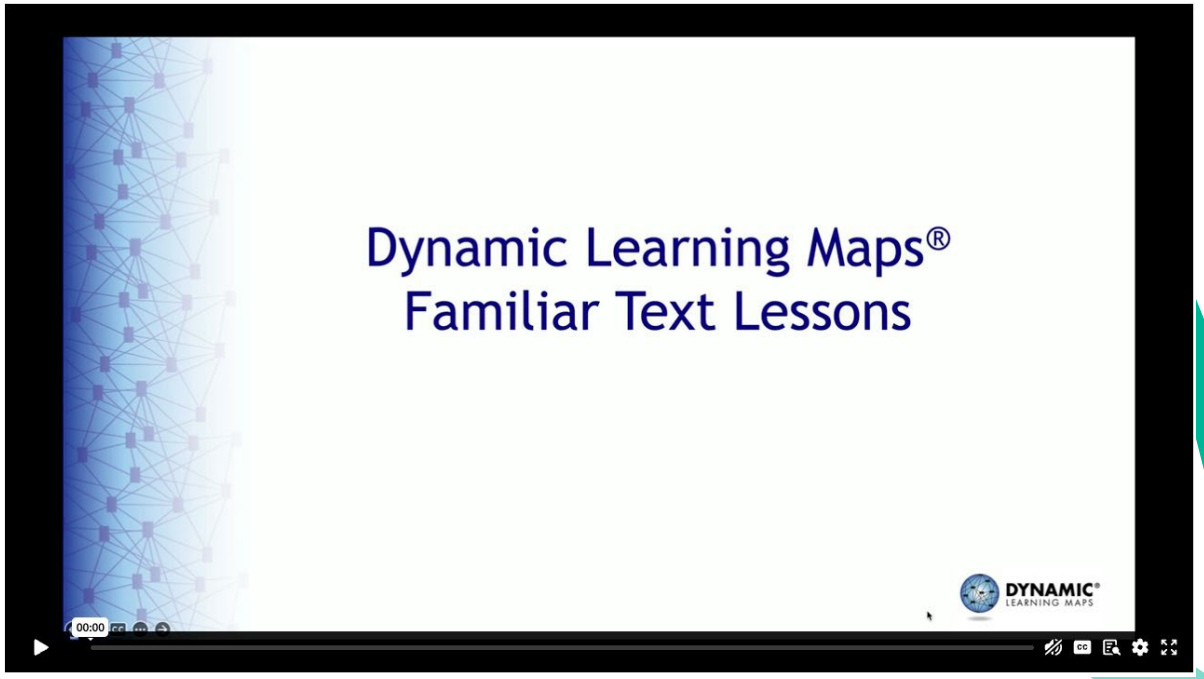
Familiar Text Lesson Resources

*Pages marked with an asterisk specifically address the intent of the linkage level node.

Text	Teacher Directions
Cover Text: Fudge's Birthday	**Spoken comment:** *This text is called* Fudge's Birthday. *It is about getting ready for Fudge's birthday party.* **Pause & Wait**

Text	Teacher Directions
Page 2 Text: It was Fudge's birthday	**Pause & Wait** **Read the text** **Pause & Wait** **Spoken Comment:** *SOME people have birthday cakes on their birthday.* (Point to the AAC symbol SOME. Then point to the illustration.) **Pause & Wait** **AAC Comment:** *You could say SOME.* (Point to the AAC symbol SOME.) **Pause & Wait** **Student Question:** *DO YOU have cake ON your birthday?* (Point to the AAC symbols DO YOU ON. Then watch the student for any response.) **Pause & Wait**
*Page 3 Text: Fudge was a little boy. He was turning three years old.	**Pause & Wait** **Read the text** **Pause & Wait** **Spoken Comment:** *HE is a little boy* (Point to the AAC symbol HE. Then point to the illustration.) **Pause & Wait** **AAC Comment:** *You could say HE.* (Point to the AAC symbol HE.) **Pause & Wait** **Student Directive:** *Fudge is a boy. Look at/point to/show me the picture of the boy.* (Gesture to the illustration.) **Pause & Wait**

New Video: DLM Familiar Text Lessons



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Exemplar Text Supports

- Professional Development Site

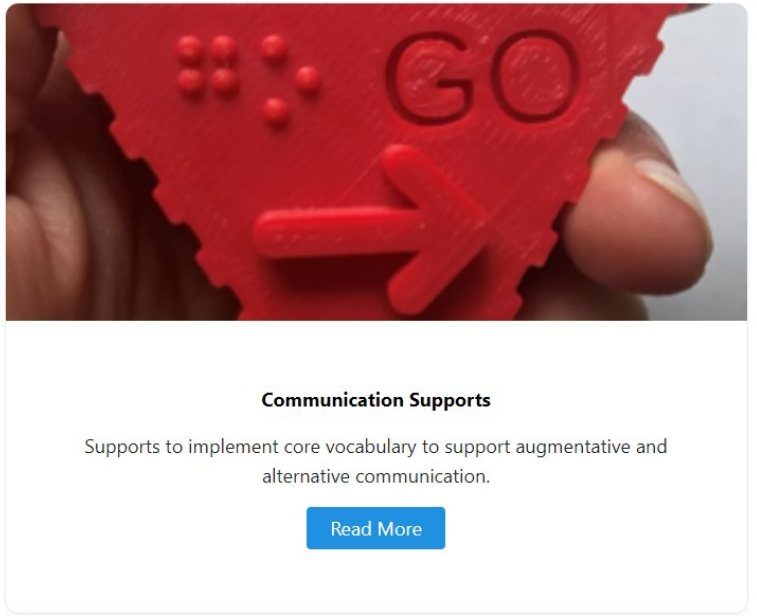
Sarah, Plain and Tall by Patricia MacLachlan

Home. A list of different things a home can be for people.
Homesteaders. A book about homesteaders and how they lived.
Sarah, Plain and Tall. A retelling of the book *Sarah, Plain and Tall.*
Sarah, Plain and Tall Vocabulary. Vocabulary from the book *Sarah, Plain and Tall,* with definitions.
Then and Now. A book comparing a boy's life to the life of his grandfather.
Writing a Letter. A list of items needed to write a letter.
Tar Heel Reader *Sarah, Plain and Tall* Collection

Communication Supports

- Focus on Beginning Communicator Supports
- More about DLM Core Vocabulary
  - DLM Core Vocabulary Overview
  - DLM “First 40” Core Vocabulary
  - DLM Core Vocabulary-Resource
- 3D Printer Tactile Symbols for Core Vocabulary

[Project Core website]



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Writing Resources

Writing Resources

Writing resources and alternate pencils.

Read More

- Eye Gaze Frames
- Flip Charts
- Description of Alternate Pencils

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Conditions of Literacy Learning Success

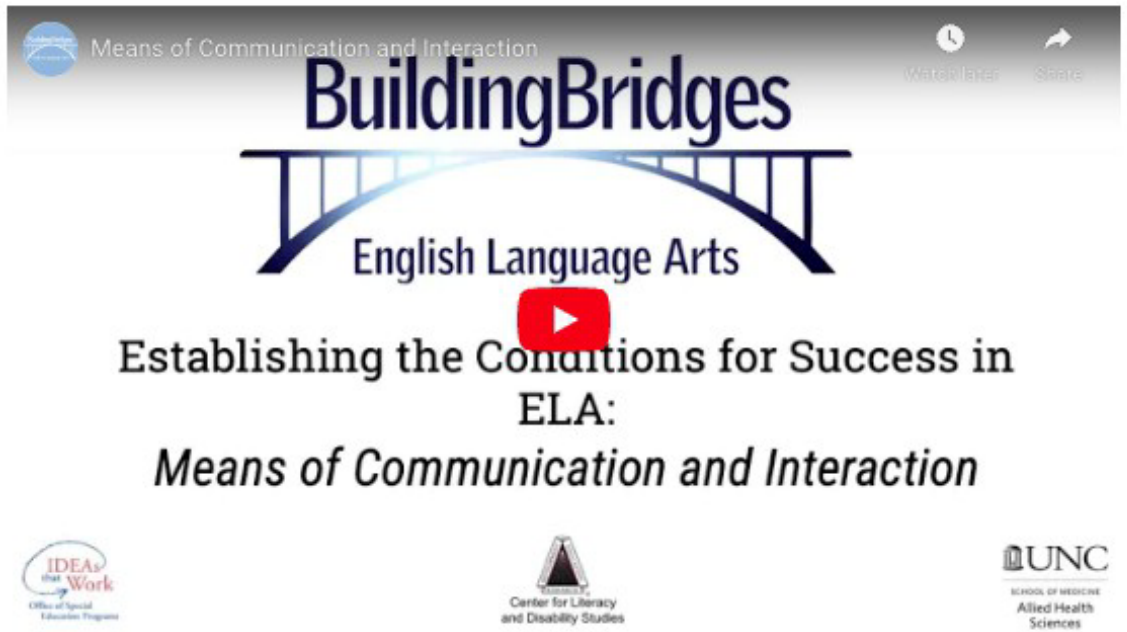
Important Conditions of Learning Success

- Knowledgeable others
- Means of communication and interaction
- Repetition with variety
- Cognitive engagement
- Cognitive clarity
- Personal connection to the curriculum
- Encouragement of risk-taking
- Comprehensive instruction
- Significant time allocation
- High expectations

Building Bridges

- **Means of Communication & Interaction**
- Knowledgeable Others
- Comprehensive Instruction
- Repetition with Variety
- Cognitive Engagement
- Cognitive Clarity
- Personal Connection
- Significant Time Allocation

Learn about the importance of students having ways to communicate, whatever the means, to engage in literacy learning.



YouTube Link

Download

BuildingBridges
English Language Arts

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Means of Communication and Interaction

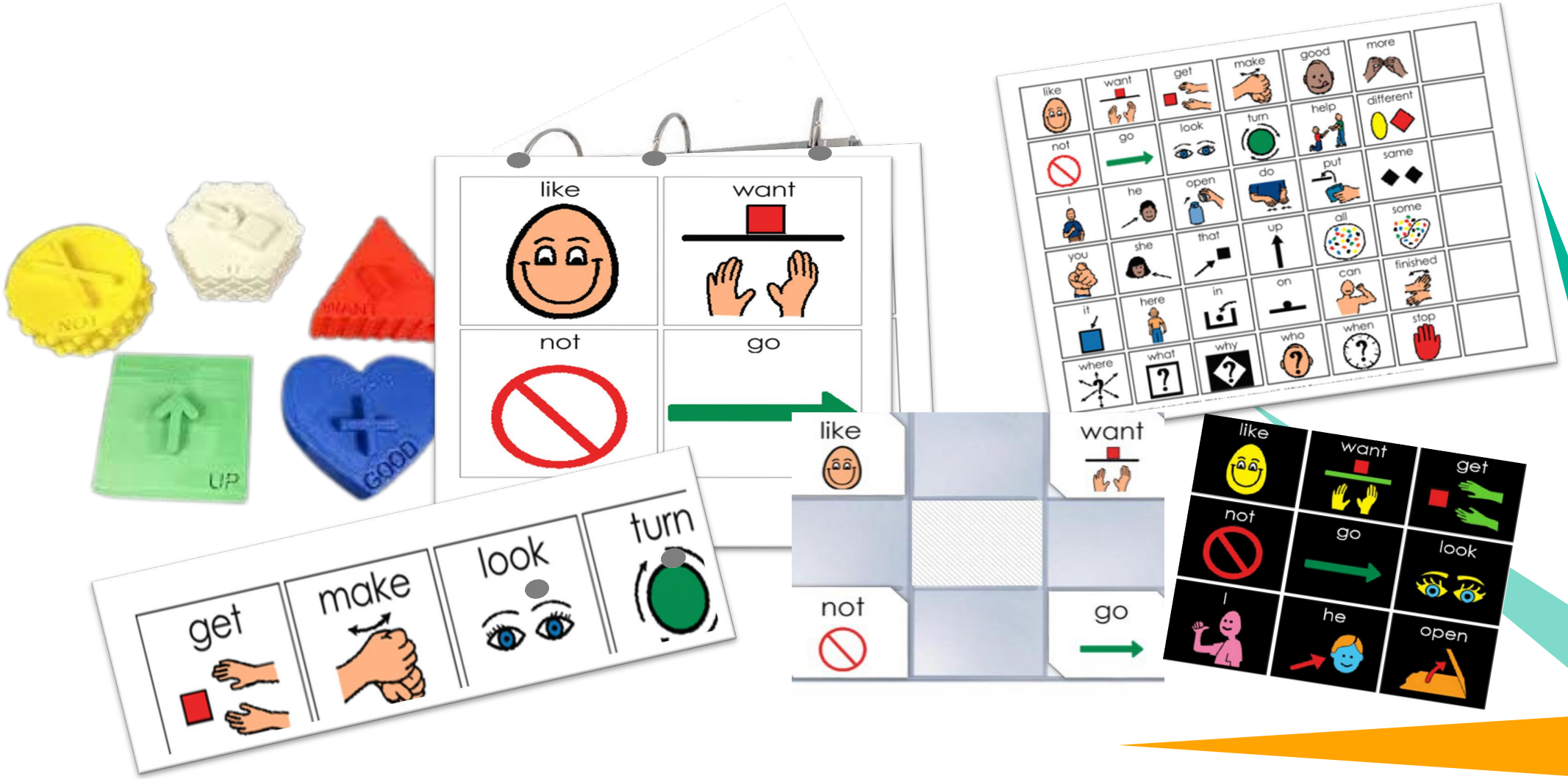
Interactive Communication and Participation

- Provides means of:
  - more active participation by students;
  - more self-initiated learning opportunities;
  - less frustrating instructional day; and
  - opportunities to informally assess student understanding.

Project Core

- Systematic supports for teaching early symbolic communication.
- Takes a core vocabulary approach.
- Built on early work developing the DLM First 40.
- Focus on communication intervention strategies.

Universal Core Vocabulary



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Moving to Robust AAC

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Repetition with Variety

- New information is taught in a familiar experience.
- Helps students focus on the important information.
- Provides many learning opportunities.
- Increases the quality of learning opportunities.

Repeated Reading for Different Purposes Offers Repetition with Variety

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The Value of Routines

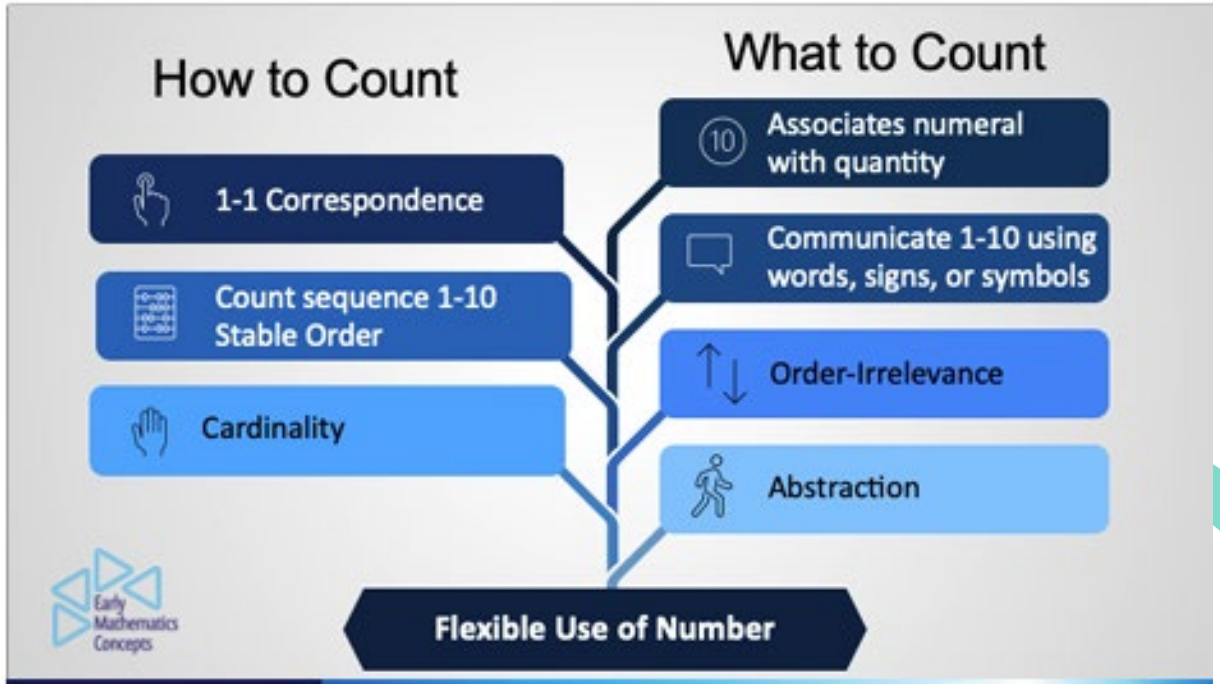
- Create a predictable and supportive learning environment (de Jong, 2010)
- Support repetition with variety (Erickson & Koppenhaver, 2020)
- Foster perseverance through challenging tasks (Rhodes et al., 2023)
- Help students to:
  - consider new ways of applying their experience and knowledge
  - develop executive functioning skills (e.g., attention to detail, flexible thinking, working and long-term memory, and organizational skills) (Mulcahy et al., 2021)
- Allow teachers to:
  - focus on and observe student thinking (Leinwand et al., 2014)
  - provide critical feedback (Benson-Goldberg et al., 2021)

Routines in DLM from the Beginning

- Emergent writing
  - Support learning about oral and written language
  - Embedded in ELA writing testlets across grade levels
- Shared reading
  - Support learning about oral and written language
  - Embedded in ELA reading testlets across grade levels

Routines to Teach Foundational Concepts

- Counting Routine (Greer & Erickson, 2019)
  - Number name identification
  - Counting collections
  - Make collections
  - Compare collections
  - Count to tell how many



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Counting Routine (Greer & Erickson, 2019)

Step	Directions
1. Number name Identification (1 minute).	1. Show or write the number. 2. Practice naming this number. 3. Show or write the number, then remove/erase it, and students write it.
2. Count collections (3 minutes).	4. Count and label a collection of items. 5. Practice counting: Show the number, then count and label the given items. Change the order or orientation of the items at least two times, asking students to count each time.
3. Make collections (4 minutes).	6. Show the number and create collections that equal it.
4. Compare collections (4 minutes).	7. Create two sets of items.
5. Count to tell how many (4 minutes).	8. Practice counting how many. 9. Rearrange and recount.

Other Foundational Concepts in Mathematics

Attribute (color, shape, size, and texture)

- Helps students describe and sort
- Important for counting and other more advanced skills

Pattern (rhythms, sequences, and regularities)

- Allows students to predict and anticipate what comes next
- Contributes to later algebraic thinking and problem-solving

Comparison (comparing objects, representations, symbols)

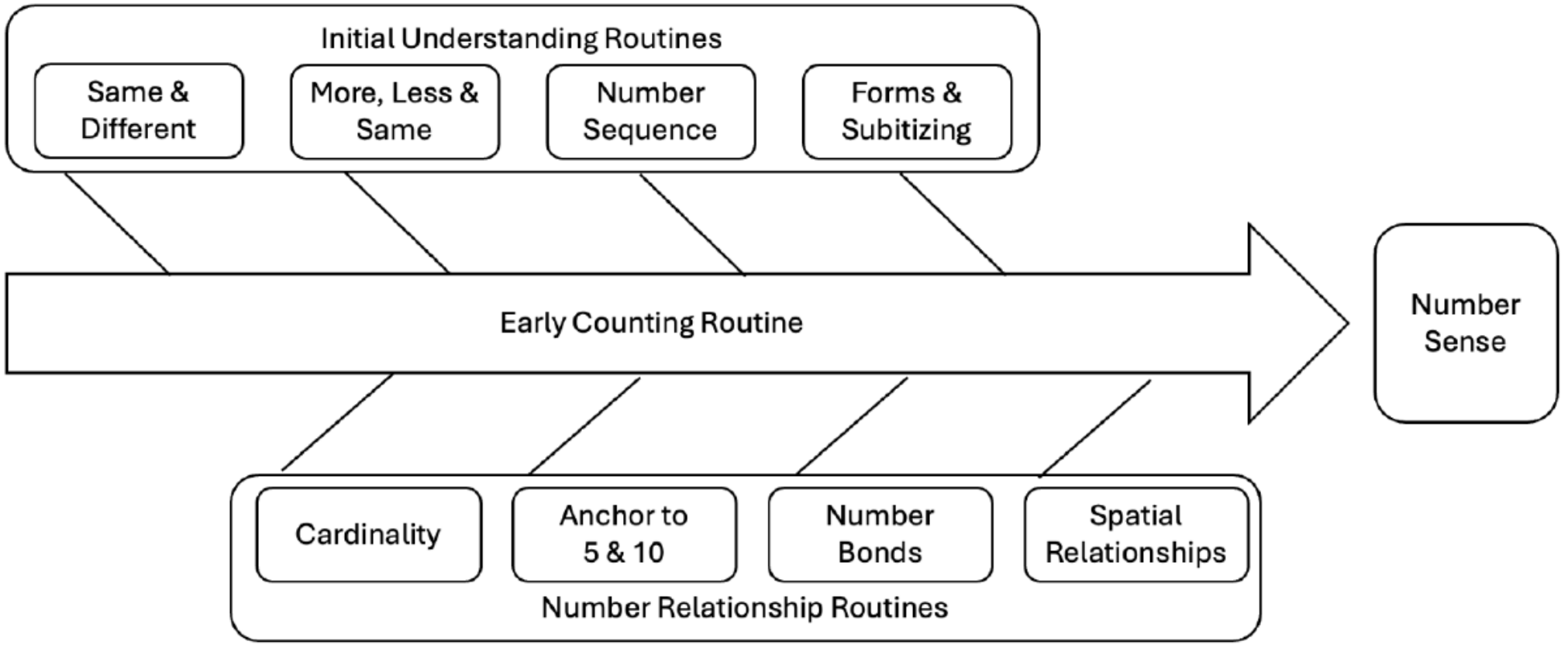
- Essential for building problem-solving skills

Change (noticing qualitative and quantitative differences)

- Helps students learn about growth, transformation, and the passage of time

(Hynes-Berry et al., 2021)

Routines That Build on One Another



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Same and Different Routine

- Exact match – attribute
- Identify attribute – attribute, pattern, comparison
- Sort attribute – attribute, pattern, comparison, change
- Attribute and quantity – attribute, pattern, comparison, change

- The routine can be used across domains
  - Number sense
  - Geometry
  - Measurement and data analysis
  - Algebraic thinking and functional reasoning

Routine for Inquiry-Based Science Teaching

- Scientific Inquiry Routine
  - Engage with a science phenomenon
  - Collect data
  - Make sense of the data
  - Test it out again
  - Make and evaluate a claim

Cognitive Engagement

Applying your brain to attempt to learn, remember, and understand.

Benefits of Cognitive Engagement

- Leads to more time on task.
- Deeper comprehension and learning.
- Increased interaction and participation in lessons.
- Increased persistence during challenging tasks.
- More reading in and out of school.

Cognitive Clarity

Understanding **why** you do the things you are doing.

DLM Writing Routine

- Choose a topic.
- Communicate about the topic.
- Write about the topic using a pencil or full access to the alphabet.

Risk Taking

- Requires a sense of security and safety in the classroom.
- Encourage risk-taking by:
  - Demonstrating repeatedly that you will accept approximations.
  - Modeling the thinking and other behaviors you want to see.

Comprehensive Instruction

- Instruction that addresses each of the elements that is required for a student to learn a domain, each day.

Significant Time Allocation

- 90–120 minutes devoted to instruction in reading, writing, language, and communication.
- 60 minutes devoted to mathematics, science, social studies.

High Expectations

"It is not our job to make students do anything. It is our job to make them want to."

(Erickson & Koppenhaver, 2020, pg. 21)

Other resources

Monarch Reader

- Previously Tar Heel Reader.
- Building Wings agreed to continue supporting open- source book authoring and reading.

Deaf-Blind Model Classroom

Downloadable Teaching Resources for Students with Multiple Disabilities, Including Deaf-Blindness

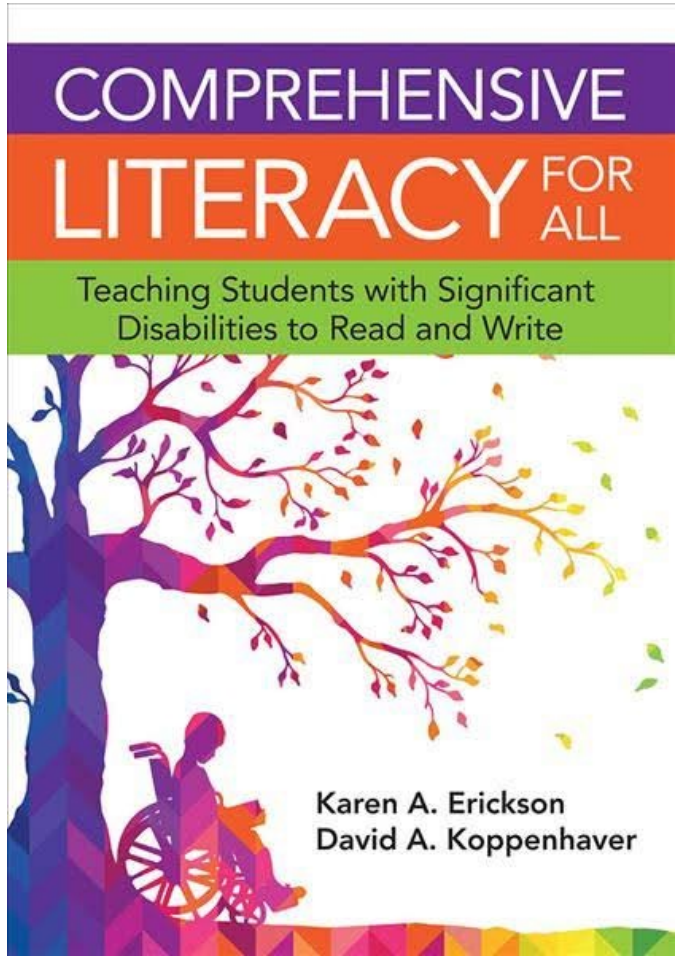
- Alternative Pencils
- Deaf-Blind Model Classroom Resources
- DLM Core Vocabulary
- Early Childhood Resources
- Emergent Literacy Interaction Inventory
- Emergent Literacy Goals
- New Voices Teacher Resources
- Tactual Book Directions
- Remnant Books
- Top Tools from the Trenches
- Predictable Chart Writing

5E Model Professional Development in Science Education for Special Educators

Purpose is to provide science professional development to special educators, so they design effective, universally-designed, inquiry-based instruction aligned to DLM science Essential Elements and so students learn science.

This research supported by the Institute of Education Sciences, U.S. Department of Education, through Grant R324A180202 to University of Kansas. The opinions expressed are those of the authors and do not represent views of the Institute or the U.S. Department of Education.

Comprehensive Literacy for All
Karen A. Erickson &David A. Koppenhaver



- Comprehensive Literacy for All Book Study
- Facebook Group – Comprehensive Literacy for All Book Study
- Project Core Alphabet Knowledge and Phonological Awareness, Shared Reading, Predictable Chart Writing , Independent Reading, Independent Writing (PD modules)

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Early Literacy Instruction for Students Taking the DLM Webinars

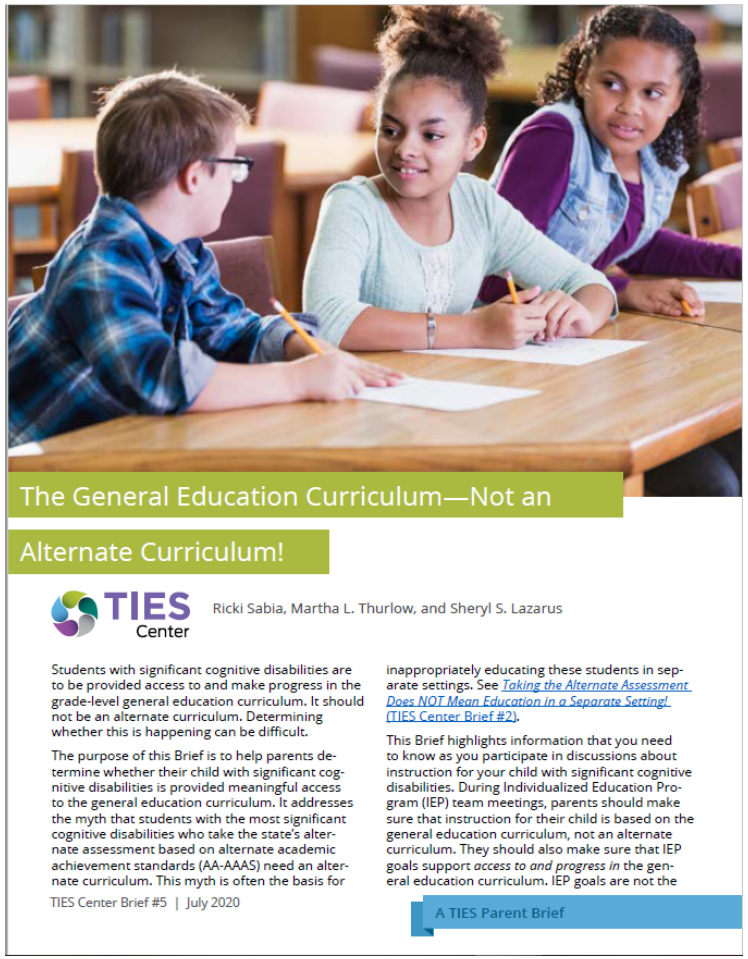
August 31, 2023: Assessment of Early Literacy Skills (Vimeo) / Slides (PDF)

September 7, 2023: Alphabet Knowledge and Phonological Awareness / Slides (PDF)

September 21, 2023: Shared and Independent Reading (Vimeo) / Slides (PDF)

October 19, 2023: Predictable Chart Writing and Independent Writing (Vimeo) / Slides (PDF) / 2-Is It Writing-Sturm Infographic (PDF) / 5-Tips for Supporting Student Writers (PDF)

The General Education Curriculum- Not an Alternate Curriculum!



The General Education Curriculum—Not an Alternate Curriculum!

TIES Center

Ricki Sabia, Martha L. Thurlow, and Sheryl S. Lazarus

Students with significant cognitive disabilities are to be provided access to and make progress in the grade-level general education curriculum. It should not be an alternate curriculum. Determining whether this is happening can be difficult.

The purpose of this Brief is to help parents determine whether their child with significant cognitive disabilities is provided meaningful access to the general education curriculum. It addresses the myth that students with the most significant cognitive disabilities who take the state's alternate assessment based on alternate academic achievement standards (AA-AAAS) need an alternate curriculum. This myth is often the basis for inappropriately educating these students in separate settings. See *Taking the Alternate Assessment Does NOT Mean Education in a Separate Setting!* (TIES Center Brief #2).

This Brief highlights information that you need to know as you participate in discussions about instruction for your child with significant cognitive disabilities. During Individualized Education Program (IEP) team meetings, parents should make sure that instruction for their child is based on the general education curriculum, not an alternate curriculum. They should also make sure that IEP goals support *access to and progress in* the general education curriculum. IEP goals are not the

TIES Center Brief #5 | July 2020

A TIES Parent Brief

[TIES Center Brief#5]

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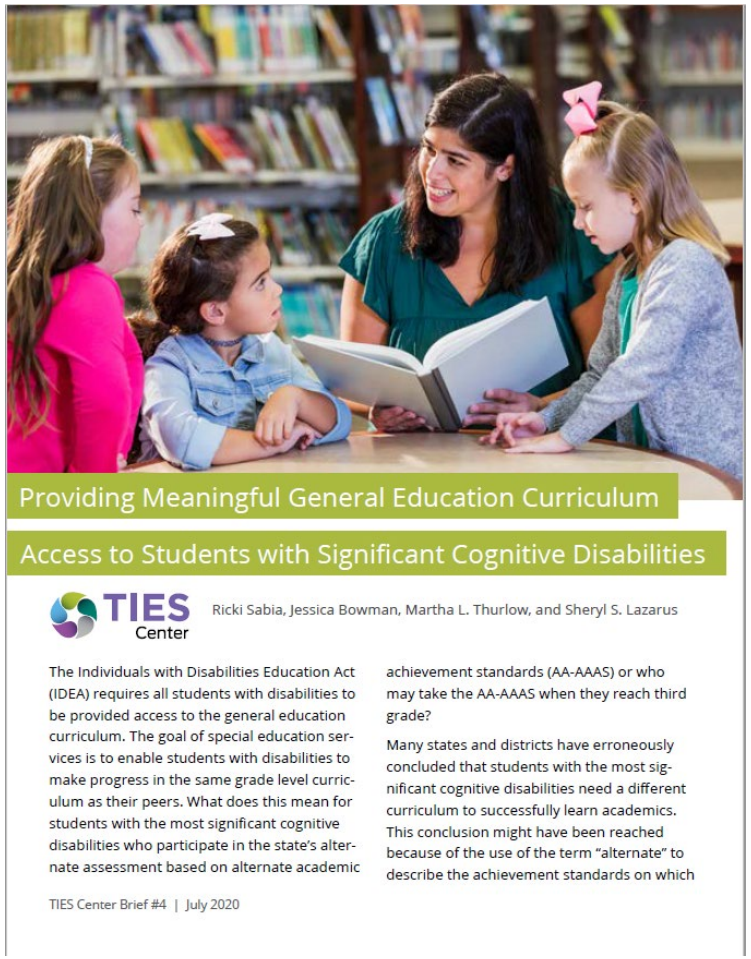
Resource for Standards Based Academic Instruction



Providing Meaningful General Education Curriculum

Access to Students with Significant Cognitive Disabilities

TIES Center

Ricki Sabia, Jessica Bowman, Martha L. Thurlow, and Sheryl S. Lazarus

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) requires all students with disabilities to be provided access to the general education curriculum. The goal of special education services is to enable students with disabilities to make progress in the same grade level curriculum as their peers. What does this mean for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities who participate in the state's alternate assessment based on alternate academic achievement standards (AA-AAAS) or who may take the AA-AAAS when they reach third grade?

Many states and districts have erroneously concluded that students with the most significant cognitive disabilities need a different curriculum to successfully learn academics. This conclusion might have been reached because of the use of the term "alternate" to describe the achievement standards on which

TIES Center Brief #4 | July 2020

[TIES Center Brief #4]

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DLM webinars for 2025-2026

Register for entire 2025-26 Webinar Series

Content is subject to change at any time due to current events
December 11 DLM fall test window wrap-up What needs to be finished by Dec 19th? (TASN registration)
February 5 DLM spring window (TASN registration)
April 9 DLM wrap-up What needs to be finished by April 24th? (TASN registration)

Join Zoom Meeting

Meeting ID: 897 7927 3623

Passcode: 947213

One tap mobile: +13462487799,,89779273623#,,,,,,0#,,947213# US (Houston)

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