

Balanced Literacy @ KHS

is an approach to literacy education that ensures all **components** of language instruction are systemically covered

1. Oral Language

- is foundational to all components
- has rich, higher order thinking discussions that transfer to writing

2. Motivation for Literacy

- anything we do to encourage interest in books, reading & writing
- includes: reading enthusiastically, relating to everyday life (e.g. reading for pleasure, reading signs, labels & magazines, writing notes, messages & completing forms)

3. Foundational Skills (word work)

3.1. Sight Words

- recognize & memorize words through explicit instruction; Dolch, Frye, BAS Where to Start
- e.g. to, from, was, there, come, do, months & days of week

3.2. Phonemic Awareness

- sounds heard in a word, distinguishing sounds & understanding that words are combinations of sounds

3.3. Phonics

- sound - symbol connections; explicit teaching linking sounds to letters

3.4. Letter Formation

- printing letters; explicit instruction, specific practice & personal signatures

3.5. Spelling

- explicit teaching of how words are spelled, word analysis & special strategies (e.g. word families, prefixes, dictionary...)

3.6. Concepts of Print

- Includes specific instruction/practice in learning about print:
 - at the beginning: how a text works (front to back, top to bottom, left to right, picture walks, read the text, retell the text)
 - later: different types print material (textbooks, magazines, newspapers...), table of contents, index, glossary, headings, captions, tables, diagrams, illustrations, maps, legend, formatting

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4. Language Development

- teacher guided activities that promote the proper use of language in oral and written forms (e.g. grammar, syntax, vocabulary)
- formal (expository texts) *and* slang/short hand (Facebook posts, texting, author's voice)
- includes reading & discussing stories, sharing information & experiences, questioning, composing texts (expository)

5. Listening & Thinking Skills

- listening to figure something out, integrate information or answer upcoming questions (Bloom's Taxonomy, Prompting Guide)
- graphic organizers, Smart Ideas — organization of information learned

6. Word & World Knowledge

- Activities where students learn about the world, how it works in a variety of subject areas & how it connects to them (e.g., discussions, videos, field trips, personal experiences...)
- emphasis is on knowledge not skills
- geared to help increase vocabulary & understanding (e.g. word walls, word study, personal dictionaries)

7. Real Reading

- Read Aloud (Modelled Reading in Sr H), Shared Reading, Guided Reading (closest to LLI), Independent Reading
- Explanation: guidance for upcoming reading assignment
- Modelling of a comprehension strategy or fluency
- Doing: student participation to develop

8. Real Writing

- Modelled, Shared, Guided & Independent Writing, Writers Workshop
- Explanation: writing process, composition strategies, conventions, language structures (grammar, computer formatting: tabs, italics, bold, fonts, underline) & development of ideas
- culminating in the Alberta English Diploma Exam

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Resources we use:

Daily 5

Listen to Reading - words read by a machine

Read to Self - independent reading

Read to Others - Read Aloud, Shared Reading, Guided Reading, Round Robin

Word Work - phonetics, phonemic awareness & spelling

Work on Writing: modelled, shared, guided & independent

Writers' Workshop

Mini Lesson 5-15 min

Status of Class 2-5 min

Writing Time 20-45

Sharing 5-15 min

Levelled Classroom Libraries

Accessing the text

Scholastic

Guided Reading; Literacy Place, Moving Up & Stepping Up (Book Clubs, Strategy Units, Inquiry Units)

Lexia Core5

web based literacy software for students & teachers; primarily in Word Work

LLI

Alberta Diploma Exam Resources

Gradual Release of Responsibility

Bloom's Taxonomy, Prompting Guide

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Here is the source used to compile the 8 components of Balanced Literacy.

This book was used by the Learning Coaches in their training.

