Creating a Literacy-Rich Classroom Environment

Adolescent Literacy
The Middle School Years

Module 2- A: Reading to Learn – Guided Reading Modeled Lessons

Segment 1: Essential Components of a Literacy Rich Classroom

Viewing Time: 6 minutes

Adolescent Literacy
Module 2 - Activity 1

Principals and teachers are charged with ensuring that all classroom environments are organized for learning. The proper literacy environment will enhance and strengthen instruction and provide students with an engaging and enriched learning experience.

Activity Objective(s):

1. **Assess your literacy-rich environment.**
2. **Identify your classroom's strengths and set improvement goals.**

Overview: It is essential to provide students with a literacy-rich environment. For this activity you will review the components of a literacy-rich classroom environment and assess and analyze your own classroom or a classroom at your school.

Estimated Time: One hour

Materials: *Literacy-Rich Classroom Self-Assessment* Tool (included with this activity)

Step1: Observe your classroom environment. If you are not a classroom-based teacher, identify a classroom to observe.

Step 2: While in the identified classroom, complete the reflection questions on the *Literacy-Rich Classroom Assessment Self –Assessment* Tool.

Adaptations/Extensions for this Activity:

For Professional Reflection: After completing the *Literacy-Rich Classroom Self-Assessment Tool*, make a plan to carry out one or more of your plans from Column Three of the tool. After you have made these additions to the classroom setting, reflect on the effectiveness of the new literacy-rich classroom you have created. Does it make a difference in the effectiveness of your reading instruction and in your students' learning process? What will you do next to make your classroom even more literacy rich?

For your Professional Portfolio: Does this activity help accomplish a school-wide improvement goal or an individual goal for professional growth? If so include it in your professional portfolio as evidence of your application of the new knowledge you have gained. It is also evidence of your use of reflective practice. This activity demonstrates your effort to apply what you have learned to improve instruction.

For Professional Learning Groups/Independent Study (peer or small group): Identify a peer partner from your *Professional Learning Group*. Complete the *Literacy Rich Classroom Self-Assessment* Tool for each other's classrooms. Fill out column two, by observing your partner's classroom while she or he observes yours. Share the results with each other. Work together to complete the final column of the assessment tool. Ask for feedback and ideas to add to your goals. Implement your goals. Meet with your *Professional Learning Group* again to discuss the results.

Course facilitator for this course (university or professional development setting): Utilize this activity to further your participant's knowledge about this topic. Have participants observe a classroom and complete the assessment tool based on their own classroom. If they are pre-service teachers or do not have their own classrooms, they can use the assessment tool to evaluate another teacher's classroom. As a final step, have participants create a mini-presentation to describe the classroom they observed and suggestions for improvement.

Creating a Literacy-Rich Classroom Environment

Literacy-Rich Classroom Environment Self-Assessment Tool

The proper literacy environment will enhance and strengthen instruction and provide students with an engaging and enriched learning experience.

The **Essential Components** of **Literacy-Rich Classrooms**		
Classrooms should have:	**Your reflections:** What do you see/do in your classroom that addresses this aspect?	**Your plans:** What can you add to your classroom to improve this component?
A variety of print materials		
Labeled items around the room		
Teacher and student-created word walls		
Thematic or alphabetic word charts		
Visual representation (posters, charts, etc.) of classroom procedures and skills. *For example:* • Directions		

Educational Impact

Creating a Literacy-Rich Classroom Environment

The **Essential Components** of **Literacy-Rich Classrooms**		
Classrooms should have:	**Your reflections:** What do you see/do in your classroom that addresses this aspect?	**Your plans:** What can you add to your classroom to improve this component?
• Rules • Charts • Steps for use of reference materials • Writing process steps • Reading strategies		
Variety of books for a variety of purposes • Guided reading • Independent reading • Interactive reading • Read aloud reading		
Teacher and student-made materials for re-reading and reference		
Easy access to reference materials — dictionaries, encyclopedias and technology		

Creating a Literacy-Rich Classroom Environment

The **Essential Components** of **Literacy-Rich Classrooms**		
Classrooms should have:	**Your reflections:** What do you see/do in your classroom that addresses this aspect?	**Your plans:** What can you add to your classroom to improve this component?
Student/classroom library organization that involves students, increases accessibility and use, and enables students to quickly locate books		
Space for whole group instruction and teacher reading aloud to the whole class		
Organized space for guided reading groups • Used to instruct small groups of 4-6 students • Consist of table and chairs or special carpeted area Stocked with supplies for guided reading, such as: - Whiteboard or easel		

Educational Impact

Creating a Literacy-Rich Classroom Environment

The **Essential Components** of **Literacy-Rich Classrooms**		
Classrooms should have:	**Your reflections:** What do you see/do in your classroom that addresses this aspect?	**Your plans:** What can you add to your classroom to improve this component?
- Paper - Writing implements - Sentence strips - Teacher clipboard for anecdotal data - Teacher chair or stool - Overhead projector - Pointer - Magnetic letters		
Space for small group work (used for learning centers or places for children to work together in small groups) • Space, furniture and materials for children to work • Space work centers designed for specific learning activities independently or in groups • Visual location		

Educational Impact

Creating a Literacy-Rich Classroom Environment

The **Essential Components** of **Literacy-Rich Classrooms**

Classrooms should have:	Your reflections: What do you see/do in your classroom that addresses this aspect?	Your plans: What can you add to your classroom to improve this component?
for clear and concise directions for completion of work that helps avoid confusion and allow for independence • Space for a variety of work center activities that may be open-ended, inviting, inquiry-based and hands-on		
Personal space for independent work • Organized for easy access to work in progress and finished work • Used for work on reading and writing projects • A quiet place where students can work without distraction • Access to personal materials		

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The **Essential Components** of **Literacy-Rich Classrooms**		
Classrooms should have:	**Your reflections:** What do you see/do in your classroom that addresses this aspect?	**Your plans:** What can you add to your classroom to improve this component?
Space for interaction with learning partners		