

Balanced Literacy Checklist

**Geared toward primary grades (can be adapted for upper)*

Each classroom should have the basics in place by _____

A well-developed whole group (**crafting**) area should include:

| The Basics | Ideally Should Also Include |
|--|---|
| defined area for whole group meeting | post-it notes |
| teacher chair | big books |
| easel | read aloud books |
| chart paper | sentence strips |
| teacher white board | correction tape |
| markers | reading pointer |
| places to display anchor charts from lessons | pocket charts |
| carpet | magnetic letters organized on a cookie sheet or in a tackle box |

A well-developed **small group** (guided/book club/invitational) area should include:

| The Basics | Ideally Should Also Include |
|--|---|
| defined area for small groups | familiar texts |
| leveled books | organized magnetic letters on a cookie sheet or in a tackle box |
| magnetic letters | Conversation tips chart |
| white boards | |
| white board markers | |
| teacher conference folder (or other documentation system) example: tabbed notebook, index cards, individual notepads | |
| Group management chart of students and the schedule of when each group is seen during the week | |
| guided reading lesson plans | |
| post its | |
| Chart paper /markers | |
| | |
| | |

A well-developed **classroom library** should include:

| The Basics | Ideally Should Also Include |
|--|--|
| sorted and labeled baskets of books example: reading level, content area, genre, and author | library checkout system for bringing books home (defined and posted) |
| designated place to showcase new books, familiar read alouds, or class favorites | library shopping times (defined and posted) |
| library shopping procedures (defined and posted) "Choosing just right books" | |
| book bags or book boxes for each student | |
| all library books and baskets organized in one general area | |

A well-developed **word wall** should include:

| The Basics | Ideally Should Also Include |
|--|-----------------------------|
| uninterrupted space to fit A-Z or two stacked horizontal rows of A-N and M-Z | Environmental print |
| words are large enough for every student to see from their desk | |
| displayed at student eye-level | |
| all words are written in black | |

Well-developed **literacy stations** should include: (if applicable)

| The Basics | Ideally Should Also Include |
|--|--|
| all materials organized and clearly labeled | book baskets at each station for early finishers |
| work board with student names and pictures (icons) for management and rotation | |
| labeled stations with expectations and rules | |
| | |

A well-developed **writer's workshop** should include:

| The Basics | Ideally Should Also Include |
|--|--|
| all materials organized and clearly labeled | clipboards |
| 6 Trait / Writing Process Anchor Charts | spider legs (notebook paper cut into strips) |
| writer's notebook (for collecting ideas) | tape |
| writing portfolio (for storing published work) | stapler |
| writing folders (for work in progress) | scissors |
| teacher conference folder (or other documentation system) example: tabbed notebook, index cards, individual notepads | thesauruses |
| places to display anchor charts from lessons | spelling dictionaries |
| Genre Characteristics Chart (evidence of current study) | map pencils or colored pens (for editing) |

A well-developed **balanced literacy classroom** should include:

| The Basics | Ideally Should Also Include |
|--|---|
| Student work neatly/creatively displayed | charts of interactive, shared, and guided writing done with students on chart paper |
| meaningful print displayed | a message board for a daily message to be read as children come into the classroom |
| reader's notebooks <i>example sections:</i> reading goals, reading response, reading interests (topics and genres that are interesting), genre definitions, reading log, books on deck (books waiting to be read) | Meaningful anchor charts that students will use as a scaffold (not every chart ever created!) |
| Objectives (WILF) posted | |