

Second Grade

Portrait of a Model Assessment System: SECOND GRADE

AUGUST (BEFORE SECOND GRADE BEGINS)



Reviewing Data; Meeting and Learning about Children and Families: Bus Tour and Open House

Mr. Ahmed begins getting to know his students by reviewing the notes and data from their first-grade transition and his notes from the transition meeting with first-grade teachers from June. Mr. Ahmed also meets many of his students and their families on the schools' summer bus tour, where teachers ride on a school bus to different stops in the community to meet children and their families and to provide backpacks with school supplies to start the year. Mr. Ahmed meets Ayesha, Emmanuel, and their families on the bus tour. He also meets Emma, who came with a friend because her parents were working during the tour.

Mr. Ahmed calls Emma's family after the bus tour to make sure they know about and are able to attend the upcoming open house at school. On the phone with Emma's parents, Mr. Ahmed learns that Emma is looking forward to second grade. He also learns that in addition to Emma attending summer school, she and her family completed activities over the summer that were shared by Ms. Jones and Ms. Robins to help Emma practice and build confidence about reading. Looking over Emma's summer-school data, Mr. Ahmed can see evidence that Emma does experience a boost in word reading during this time.

The district continues to ensure that Mr. Ahmed has daily planning time, and also encourages some planning hours to be used as "data days," in which teachers use the information in their data binders to inform their planning of individual, small-group, and whole-class lessons.

Emma's, Ayesha's, and Emmanuel's families attend an open house the week before school to meet Mr. Ahmed and to see their new classroom. Mr. Ahmed shows families and children different areas of the classroom, such as the rug where the class will gather for read-alouds. He shows them the classroom library, which Mr. Ahmed has filled with a large variety of narrative and informational texts that reflect the backgrounds of the school's students and focus on many different topics. In addition to texts on the classroom library shelves, Mr. Ahmed also has a variety of texts on display that are connected to the first social studies and science units of the year.

Mr. Ahmed takes some notes about what he learned about each family and child in a data binder he has created using his class list. The binder has a section for each child, as well as a section with many tables containing rows labeled for each child and specific standards (or components) to be observed heading each column. There are also blank pages for notetaking, to which he will continue adding throughout the year.



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SEPTEMBER – DECEMBER

Initial Observations in a Classroom Setting

Emma, Ayesha, and Emmanuel look forward to their first day of second grade. Mr. Ahmed does not administer any formal assessment in the first weeks of school; however, he spends time at the beginning of the year getting to know the children as readers and writers, closely observing the children throughout the day as they participate in reading, writing, speaking, and listening activities. For example, Mr. Ahmed pays

close attention to children's contributions during interactive read-alouds and to their speaking, drawing, and writing as they share about their summers and what they are excited to learn about in second grade. Mr. Ahmed uses notes and data from students' first-grade teachers for his initial formation of small groups for literacy instruction.

Assessments

Near the beginning of the year, Mr. Ahmed administers a home- and school-interest inventory to learn more about each child's interests. Through the inventory, he learns about Emma's interests in art, music, and acting. He learns that Ayesha not only is very interested in animals and wants to become a vet when she grows up, but she also loves superheroes and making crafts. He learns more about Emmanuel's interest in science, especially reading and learning about animals, such as insects. Mr. Ahmed pays close attention to the children's interests so that he can create small groups, select read-alouds, and help children select books for individual reading and writing topics based on their interests and experiences.

During the first month of school, Mr. Ahmed teaches and reinforces classroom routines and procedures. After about a month of school, students participate in the fall computer adaptive benchmark assessment, which screens students to determine who might need Tier 2 instruction, identifies broad domains of strengths and needs for literacy instruction, and provides information about trends in scores over time. Mr. Ahmed is

already familiar with patterns in students' first-grade scores. He finds that Emma's, Ayesha's, and Emmanuel's second-grade fall benchmark assessment scores are similar to their spring scores from first grade, although Ayesha's and Emmanuel's scores dropped slightly. He is pleased to see that Emma's word reading score increased from the spring (from 10th percentile to just below the 25th percentile), which he shares with Ms. Robins and Emma's parents. Mr. Ahmed is not concerned about the slight drop in Ayesha's and Emmanuel's scores at this time because he knows that it is not uncommon to see dips in scores on the fall assessment. He continues to closely monitor trends in all students' literacy progress through daily formative assessment.

Emma continues to work with Ms. Robins during What I Need time (a block in which all children are engaged in intervention and/or enrichment). Ms. Robins determines that Emma has mastered differentiating words with short- and long-vowel medial sounds, which they were working on at the end of first grade. As Emma continues to improve in decoding, Ms. Robins begins to work more with Emma on oral reading fluency, including reading

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SEPTEMBER – DECEMBER *continued*



Assessments *continued*

rate, accuracy, and prosody. Ms. Robins and Mr. Ahmed meet regularly to discuss Emma's progress. During individual and small-group instruction, Mr. Ahmed provides many opportunities for Emma to apply the decoding and oral reading fluency skills she is practicing during oral text reading, and he offers feedback. Because Mr. Ahmed knows that Emma loves acting in plays, he places her in a small group, with other students who are working on reading fluency, to practice and perform readers' theater for the class.

Several times a year, Mr. Ahmed administers vocabulary assessments based on words taught in the district. These assessments also focus on using strategies for determining the meaning of unknown words, such as using context clues in a sentence and morphological analysis (i.e., using roots, prefixes, and suffixes as clues to the meaning of unknown words). After a few cycles of

vocabulary instruction and assessment, Mr. Ahmed notices some patterns in students' performance. For example, although Emma continues to work on decoding with Ms. Robins, Mr. Ahmed learns that she has a vast knowledge of vocabulary, which she loves to share with the class during interactive read-alouds, text-based discussions, and content area learning. He notices that while Ayesha can decode and fluently read most words with ease, both oral and written vocabulary knowledge is a weakness for her. Mr. Ahmed adds notes about these trends in his data binder and plans for individual and small-group vocabulary-focused instruction for Ayesha. Emmanuel, in contrast, has very strong meta-linguistic awareness, which Mr. Ahmed knows is often the case in children who are bilingual. When teaching morphological analysis, Mr. Ahmed uses Emmanuel's strength in this area as a resource during class discussions.

JANUARY – MAY

Assessments

Students return from winter break energized and ready to begin new units of instruction across content areas. Mr. Ahmed revisits and reinforces classroom routines and procedures, and he has consulted his data binder over break to rearrange small groups to target students' instructional needs, based on classroom-based observation and assessment before break.

In late January, students again take the winter computer adaptive benchmark assessment to monitor their growth since the fall. This

assessment serves three purposes, each of which is important for making sure all children in the class are receiving instruction that targets their learning needs:

1. screening to determine whether students might need intervention,
2. identifying broad domains of strengths and needs for instruction, and
3. providing information about trends in individual students' and whole-class growth over time.



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JANUARY – MAY *continued***Planning**

Emma's scores on the winter benchmark assessment continue the upward trend that Mr. Ahmed noticed in the fall. Language comprehension continues to be a primary strength for Emma (scoring at the 75th percentile in language comprehension); her word reading score also increased (scoring at the 50th percentile), in part supported by her vast vocabulary knowledge. This score confirms the patterns recorded in Mr. Ahmed's data binder based on classroom formative assessment data collected during small group reading instruction with Emma as well as data collected by Ms. Robins during her work with Emma during What I Need time. Mr. Ahmed looks forward to sharing this information with Emma's parents at conferences in February.

Despite the small-group and one-on-one instruction that Mr. Ahmed designed to target Ayesha's challenges with reading comprehension throughout the fall, Ayesha's reading comprehension scores on the winter benchmark placed her at the 20th percentile for reading comprehension. Noticing this trend in Ayesha's data across first grade and the first two benchmark assessment administrations of second grade, Mr. Ahmed refers Ayesha to the reading specialist, Ms. Robins. Mr. Ahmed and Ms. Robins meet to discuss his observations and the classroom-assessment data he has collected since the fall that are consistent with Ayesha's lower reading comprehension scores on the benchmark assessment.

For example, Mr. Ahmed shares that, despite Ayesha's strong word reading and spelling skills and her enjoyment of reading aloud with partners, Ayesha has difficulty recalling key details of narrative and informational texts

during retellings, applying reading strategies (e.g., inferring, visualizing) without a lot of teacher support, and determining the meaning of unknown words in text. Based on this information, Ms. Robins administers additional assessment to identify Ayesha's specific areas of weakness and instructional needs. Ms. Robins' findings confirm what Mr. Ahmed has observed in class. While Ayesha reads aloud fluently and easily decodes unfamiliar words, she reads passively, engages in little inferring, and has difficulty processing phonological and semantic (i.e., meaning) aspects of text simultaneously. Ayesha's assessment results indicate that she needs Tier 2 intervention to support her comprehension development; Ayesha begins working with Ms. Robins during What I Need time on constructing meaning with text and coordinating multiple ideas while reading. For example, when working with Ayesha, Ms. Robins provides explicit instruction in scaffolded imagery, creating story maps, connecting her background knowledge and experiences to text, inference building, and using multiple comprehension strategies while reading.

Emmanuel's scores on the winter benchmark assessment are back up from the slight dip in his fall scores. On the winter assessment, he scores at the 85th percentile in word reading and the 80th percentile in reading comprehension. While Emmanuel is reading above grade-level text, Mr. Ahmed notices that, as text complexity increases, Emmanuel needs continued practice in reading fluency, particularly prosody. To work on this, Mr. Ahmed sometimes pairs Emmanuel with Emma for partner and echo reading because Emma's reading comprehension scores are also above grade level. In addition, Emma continues to benefit from hearing models of fluent reading of grade-level text. Emmanuel

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JANUARY – MAY *continued*



Planning *continued*

and the other students in the class also have many opportunities to select and engage in independent and partner reading of texts about topics and in genres that interest them, and in connection to their content area instruction. For example, in their current science unit, Mr. Ahmed's class is gathering information using first-hand observations, maps, photographs, and texts to learn about where water is found in Michigan. Students synthesize information from multiple sources to develop models that represent the

land and bodies of water in their community and around the state. As an extension, the students are researching the Great Lakes using print and digital texts in small groups—working on vocabulary knowledge, fluency, and comprehension in the process. Mr. Ahmed helps Emmanuel identify related texts that he is able to learn from, and he challenges Emmanuel with extensions that support continued disciplinary knowledge building and applying reading comprehension skills with challenging texts.

MAY – JUNE

Continued Observation

Emma, Ayesha, and **Emmanuel** continue to enjoy second grade. Based on Emma's good progress in word reading, she works with Ms. Robins less frequently, although Mr. Ahmed and Ms. Robins continue to regularly touch base about Emma's performance on classroom-based formative assessment. Ayesha enjoys the one-on-one time that she spends with Ms. Robins working on constructing meaning and coordinating multiple ideas while reading, and her attitude toward both recreational and academic reading is becoming more positive. Mr. Ahmed notices that Ayesha is beginning to contribute more of her ideas during text-

based discussions and interactive read-alouds in class, especially when he gives time for students to turn-and-talk about questions before sharing out with the class. However, she continues to struggle with inferring, including key details when retelling grade-level text, and applying comprehension strategies during independent reading. Emmanuel continues to thrive across areas of literacy development. Mr. Ahmed continues to look out for ways to keep Emmanuel engaged by helping him identify texts that interest him and assigning challenging tasks that call for higher-order comprehension and application.

Assessments and Planning

Mr. Ahmed frequently engages in formative assessment of student learning after introducing particular topics or skills to identify how students are progressing, which students need additional instruction in particular areas, and next steps for whole-class and small-group

instruction. For example, during one ELA unit, in which students learned about different text features and how to use them to support their comprehension of informational text, he assessed students' understanding and use of the features multiple times throughout the unit. On one of



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MAY – JUNE *continued***Assessments and Planning** *continued*

these learning checks, Mr. Ahmed found that Emmanuel doesn't understand some specific informational text features (e.g., sidebars, index, labeled diagrams). Mr. Ahmed predicts that this might be due to Emmanuel missing nearly a week of school because he is home with the flu. To provide additional instruction in this area, Mr. Ahmed puts Emmanuel in a small group to continue working on this with three other students who similarly showed gaps in understanding of informational text features on the learning check. During these small-group sessions, Mr. Ahmed engages the students in "text feature walks," in which students revisit texts they have read before, then read and discuss how the information in each text feature relates to the main idea of the text. Mr. Ahmed places Ayesha in this small group to provide her additional practice using text features to support her comprehension of grade-level text.

Emma's scores on the spring benchmark assessment show continued growth in word reading and consistent strength in reading comprehension, again supported by her vast vocabulary knowledge. Due to her growth throughout the year, Emma no longer needs Tier 2 support in reading.

Ayesha's scores on the spring benchmark assessment continue to show strength in word reading and some improvement in reading comprehension; however, she continues to work regularly with Ms. Robins to strengthen both listening and reading comprehension, and Ms. Robins and Mr. Ahmed begin to plan for Ayesha to receive continued support in third grade.

Emmanuel's scores on the spring benchmark assessment show continued strength across areas of literacy. This is consistent with his performance in the classroom and supported by the time he spends reading recreationally outside of school.

Data Sharing

As done by teachers in previous grades, Mr. Ahmed completes a transition form to share with the children's upcoming third-grade teacher. The document includes descriptive information about the children as well as the spring computer adaptive benchmark assessment data and a few samples of student writing from the spring. Mr. Ahmed highlights key information about each child that he thinks will be helpful to next year's teacher, such as specific skills they were working

on during small group reading instruction near the end of the year. As in previous years, the school holds transition meetings for teachers so that, for example, second-grade teachers can share important observations and data about their students and third-grade teachers can ask questions about their incoming class of students. This process provides valuable information that allows third-grade teachers to use data to inform their instruction beginning at the start of the new school year.