

Initial Instructional Checklist for Grade 1 Teacher's Guide

Applicable for Weeks 1-10

This checklist is intended to help classroom or home educators analyze their instruction to determine if they consistently implement the actions listed in the Checklist and the Teacher's Guide. Behaviors that reflect the Spalding philosophy are listed first because they are the foundation of *The Method*. Observations of experienced teachers have identified actions that frequently need refinement. These are highlighted. There will be a midyear checklist posted in February and again at the end of the year. Send questions to our Spalding Forum.

Philosophy
Do I ...
1. Make children's physical and mental well-being a primary concern?
• Ensure that children's feet rest comfortably on the floor.
• Ensure that children's arms rest comfortably on the desk.
• Have all children face the front for whole group instruction.
• Maintain a well-organized classroom.
• Praise children for good performance.
• Demonstrate a positive feeling tone.
2. Have high expectations for children of differing ability levels?
3. Have children explain the purpose for each task?
4. Consistently encourage higher-level thinking by all children? Examples:
• "In the word <i>me</i> , why does the <i>e</i> say /e/?"
• "Why does each sentence need a noun and a verb?"
• "What is the difference between narrative and informative writing?"
5. Provide direct, sequential instruction?
• Use the Collins Model to model, check understanding, coach, scaffold/fade.
• Follow the sequence in the First-Grade Teachers' Guide.
6. Consistently provide multisensory instruction?
• Have children see, say, write, and read phonograms, words, etc.
• Have children compose oral/written sentences and read their own.
7. Encourage active participation by all children in each lesson?
• Have children say phonogram sounds in unison?
• Have children read decodable books in unison?
8. Demonstrate diagnostic teaching?
• During OPR, stop to correct mispronunciations.
• Identify handwriting needs from WPR.
• Rephrase or reteach following inappropriate student responses.
• Let children who already read, read independently.
• Have small group instruction for children who have difficulty.
9. Demonstrate integrated language arts instruction?
• Use spelling words to teach pronunciation, rules, grammar, and reading.
• Demonstrate the connection between spelling, writing, and reading lesson objectives.

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Spelling: *Phonemic Awareness, Phonograms with Handwriting, Dictation*

Do I ...

1. Have children explain what phonograms are?
2. Introduce new phonograms using procedures on WRTR 19-29 (if appropriate)?
3. Provide daily *Oral Phonogram Reviews* ?
 - Step 1 (Delivering 10-11, 13, WRTR 39):*
 - Use maximum 30 cards at one time.
 - Pass cards back to front, showing only one card at a time.
 - Listen for precise pronunciation of sound(s) *only*, e.g., /b/, not cue words.
 - Cover card if mispronounced, then pronounce precisely, e.g., /b/ (not
 - Have children repeat sound(s) precisely.
 - Step 2 (Delivering 10-11, 13, WRTR 39):*
 - Use maximum 20 cards at one time.
 - Show phonograms a second time.
 - Listen for precise pronunciation of *only* sounds in unison.
 - Ask questions that clarify which pronunciation or phonogram to use?
 - Have children respond and explain.
4. Provide daily *Written Phonogram Reviews* ? (*Delivering 14-17, WRTR 41-42*)
 - Coach children's accurate and legible handwriting. Set handwriting focus
 - for each WPR, e.g., "Today focus on beginning clock letters at 2 on the clock."
 - Pronounce phonograms precisely.
 - Require children to say sounds in unison.
 - Give cues as needed.
 - Require children to say sounds softly as they write.
 - Give immediate feedback, e.g., show card or write each phonogram.
 - Have children evaluate their handwriting based on the day's focus.
5. Follow daily spelling dictation procedure? (*Delivering 25, WRTR 49*)
 - Say word in normal speech.
 - Give sentence for each word.
 - Use fingers for *all* sounds (two hands for multisyllable words).
 - Have children say sounds in unison, then sound and write the word.
 - Have children dictate word to teacher.
 - Write word on board.
 - Have children dictate markings, then read word.
 - Have children give rule when appropriate.
 - Have children *read for spelling*.
 - Have children *read for reading*.

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Writing: *Sentence Construction*

Do I ...

1. Model composing oral/written sentences that demonstrate usage and meaning of week's *unfamiliar* EA words?
2. Coach as children compose oral/written sentences that demonstrate usage and meaning of week's EA words?
3. Model writing objectives in *Teachers' Guide*?
4. Coach as children perform the task?

Reading: *Literary Appreciation, Text Structure*

Do I...

1. Coach as children read a decodable book in unison?
2. Coach as children identify author, author's purpose, and basic narrative/informative elements in a McCall-Harby/Crabbs or literature