



NLI Literacy Leadership Implementation Toolkit

Building Sustainable Literacy Systems Through the Science of Reading, Structured Literacy, MTSS, Coaching, and Data-Informed Leadership

Facilitator & Participant Edition

How to Use This Toolkit

This toolkit is designed to guide literacy leaders through a complete implementation process. Complete the tools in order. The results from each section should inform the next section. By the end of the academy, participants will have a readiness assessment, MTSS alignment review, intervention framework, professional learning calendar, walkthrough tools, and a 90-Day Literacy Action Plan.



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NLI Literacy Transformation Framework

School: _____

District: _____

Leader/Team: _____

Directions: Complete this section and use the findings to support implementation planning.

Purpose

Use this tool to evaluate the strength of your school's literacy system and identify priorities for improvement.

NLI Literacy Transformation Framework

Leadership → Science of Reading → Structured Literacy → MTSS → Coaching → Data-Informed Leadership → Student Outcomes

Rating Scale

Rating	Description
--------	-------------

- | | |
|---|--------------|
| 1 | Not Yet |
| 2 | Emerging |
| 3 | Developing |
| 4 | Implementing |
| 5 | Sustaining |
-

Leadership

Indicator	1	2	3	4	5
School leaders communicate a clear literacy vision.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Literacy goals are aligned to campus priorities.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Literacy implementation is monitored regularly.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐



Science of Reading

Indicator	1	2	3	4	5
Staff understand Science of Reading principles.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Instruction aligns with evidence-based practices.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Professional learning supports implementation.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Structured Literacy

Indicator	1	2	3	4	5
Explicit instruction is evident.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Instruction is systematic and sequential.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Structured Literacy components are taught.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

MTSS

Indicator	1	2	3	4	5
Tier I supports are clearly defined.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Tier II interventions are implemented consistently.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Tier III interventions are monitored closely.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Coaching

Indicator	1	2	3	4	5
Coaches support implementation.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Coaching cycles are established.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Feedback is evidence-based.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Data-Informed Leadership

Indicator	1	2	3	4	5
Data meetings occur regularly.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Decisions are based on evidence.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Progress is monitored and adjusted.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐



Student Outcomes

Indicator	1	2	3	4	5
Literacy achievement is improving.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Intervention outcomes are monitored.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Students demonstrate literacy growth.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Priority Areas for Improvement

1.

2.

3.



NLI Effective Coaching System (8 Indicators)

School: _____

District: _____

Leader/Team: _____

Directions: Complete this section and use the findings to support implementation planning.

- Shared Vision & Instructional Clarity
- Culture of Coaching & Trust
- Strategic Coach Deployment
- Equity-Based Coaching Allocation
- Instructional Leadership Partnership
- Evidence-Based Feedback & Reflection
- Coach Growth & Learning Ecosystem
- Impact Planning, Data & Continuous Improvement

Rating Scale

Rating	Description
1	Not Yet
2	Emerging
3	Developing
4	Implementing
5	Sustaining

Indicator 1

Shared Vision & Instructional Clarity

Indicator	1	2	3	4	5
Staff share a common literacy vision.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Expectations are clearly communicated.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐



Indicator 2

Culture of Coaching & Trust

Indicator	1	2	3	4	5
Teachers view coaching as support.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Trust exists between coaches and teachers.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Indicator 3

Strategic Coach Deployment

Indicator	1	2	3	4	5
Coaching resources are allocated strategically.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Coaching time is protected.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Indicator 4

Equity-Based Coaching Allocation

Indicator	1	2	3	4	5
Coaching is prioritized based on need.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Support is differentiated.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Indicator 5

Instructional Leadership Partnership

Indicator	1	2	3	4	5
Coaches and administrators collaborate.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Leadership supports coaching implementation.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐



Indicator 6

Evidence-Based Feedback & Reflection

Indicator	1	2	3	4	5
Feedback is specific and evidence-based.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Reflection is built into coaching cycles.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Indicator 7

Coach Growth & Learning Ecosystem

Indicator	1	2	3	4	5
Coaches receive ongoing training.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Coaches participate in professional learning.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Indicator 8

Impact Planning, Data & Continuous Improvement

Indicator	1	2	3	4	5
Coaching impact is measured.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Data is used to improve coaching systems.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Top 3 Coaching Priorities

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

;



Science of Reading & Structured Literacy Readiness Survey

Purpose: To assess staff knowledge, confidence, and implementation readiness related to the Science of Reading, Structured Literacy, and MTSS.

Section I: Knowledge of the Science of Reading

Statement	SD	D	N	A	SA
I can explain the Science of Reading to a colleague.					
I understand how students learn to read.					
I understand Scarborough's Reading Rope.					
I understand the relationship between decoding and language comprehension.					
I understand how vocabulary and comprehension fit within the Science of Reading.					

Section II: Structured Literacy Knowledge

Statement	SD	D	N	A	SA
I understand the principles of					

Structured Literacy.					
I can identify explicit instruction.					
I understand systematic instruction.					
I understand cumulative review.					
I understand diagnostic teaching.					

Section III: Instructional Practices

Statement	SD	D	N	A	SA
I regularly teach academic vocabulary.					
I explicitly teach comprehension strategies.					
I use think-alouds.					
I use discussion routines to support comprehension.					
I provide intervention					

based on student needs.					
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Section IV: MTSS Knowledge

Statement	SD	D	N	A	SA
I understand the purpose of MTSS.					
I understand Tier I instruction.					
I understand Tier II interventions.					
I understand Tier III interventions.					
I understand progress monitoring.					

Section V: Confidence Rating (1–5)

Area	Rating
Science of Reading	
Structured Literacy	
Vocabulary Instruction	
Comprehension Instruction	
Intervention	
MTSS Implementation	
Progress Monitoring	



Data Analysis	
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Section VI: Professional Learning Needs

- ☐ Science of Reading
- ☐ Structured Literacy
- ☐ Vocabulary
- ☐ Comprehension
- ☐ Writing
- ☐ Intervention
- ☐ MTSS
- ☐ Progress Monitoring
- ☐ Data Analysis
- ☐ Coaching
- ☐ Family Engagement
- ☐ AI for Literacy Instruction

Reflection Questions

What is your greatest strength as a literacy educator?

What area would you most like to improve?

What support would help you be more effective?

Leadership Scoring Guide

4.0–5.0 = Implementing
3.0–3.9 = Developing
2.0–2.9 = Emerging
Below 2.0 = Immediate Support Needed



NLI MTSS Alignment Tool

School: _____

District: _____

Principal/Leader: _____

Date: _____

Directions: Review each area and determine the level of alignment between your literacy system, MTSS framework, professional learning, coaching, and student supports.

Area	Fully Aligned	Partially Aligned	Not Aligned	Evidence/Notes
Literacy Vision				
Science of Reading Practices				
Structured Literacy Practices				
Tier I Instruction				
Tier II Intervention				
Tier III Intervention				
Universal Screening				

Progress Monitoring				
Data Meetings				
Coaching System				
Professional Development				
Family Engagement				
Leadership Support				
Accountability Systems				

Reflection Questions

What area is most aligned?

What area needs the most improvement?

What barriers are preventing alignment?



What is your first action step?

What must be in place by Fall 2026?

Leadership Commitment

Based on this review, our leadership team will prioritize the following actions:



Tier 2 & Tier 3 Intervention Menu

School: _____

District: _____

Leader/Team: _____

Directions: Complete this section and use the findings to support implementation planning.

Area	Strategy	Frequency	Progress Monitoring
Vocabulary	KIMS / Frayer	3x Week	Monthly
Comprehension	QAR / Getting the Gist	3x Week	Monthly
Fluency	Repeated Reading	4x Week	Weekly
Tier 3	Intensive Daily Supports	Daily	Weekly



NLI Schoolwide Literacy Strategy Implementation Planning Tool

School/District: _____

Team Members: _____

Part 1: Selecting Schoolwide Literacy Strategies

Strategy	Schoolwide? (Y/N)	Why?

Part 2: Implementation Timeline

Strategy	Daily	Weekly	Unit-Based	Intervention

Part 3: Roles & Responsibilities

Strategy	Teachers	Coaches	Administrators



Part 4: Evidence of Implementation

Strategy	Evidence

Part 5: NLI Literacy Walkthrough Checklist

Vocabulary

- ☐ Academic vocabulary visible
- ☐ Vocabulary explicitly taught
- ☐ Student-friendly definitions used
- ☐ Students discussing vocabulary
- ☐ Vocabulary applied in writing

Comprehension

- ☐ Think Aloud evident
- ☐ Text-dependent questions used
- ☐ Students discussing text
- ☐ Students summarizing learning
- ☐ Students citing evidence



Structured Literacy

- ☐ Explicit instruction evident
- ☐ Guided practice evident
- ☐ Corrective feedback provided
- ☐ Systematic instruction evident
- ☐ Cumulative review evident

Student Engagement

- ☐ Students actively responding
- ☐ Partner discussion evident
- ☐ Writing about reading evident
- ☐ Students explaining thinking

Part 6: Coaching Support Plan

- ☐ Modeling
- ☐ Co-Teaching
- ☐ Observation & Feedback
- ☐ Planning Support
- ☐ PLC Facilitation
- ☐ Resource Development

Part 7: Reflection

Which strategy will have the greatest impact on student outcomes?



What barriers could prevent implementation?

What coaching support is most needed?

How will we know implementation is successful?



Fall 2026 Professional Learning Calendar

School: _____

District: _____

Leader/Team: _____

Directions: Complete this section and use the findings to support implementation planning.

Month	PD Focus	Coaching Focus	Evidence
August			
September			
October			
November			
December			



Fall 2026 Professional Learning Calendar

School: _____

District: _____

Leader/Team: _____

Month	PD Focus	Coaching Focus	Evidence
August	Introduction to the Science of Reading; The Simple View of Reading; Scarborough's Reading Rope; What is Structured Literacy?	Classroom observations to establish baseline practices; coach support with lesson planning and literacy block expectations	Teacher sign-in sheets; baseline walkthrough data; teacher self-assessment survey
September	Phonological Awareness & Phonics; Explicit and Systematic Instruction; Structured Literacy Foundations	Modeling lessons; co-teaching phonological awareness and phonics routines; feedback cycles	Lesson plans; coaching logs; walkthrough data; student work samples
October	Vocabulary Development; Oral Language; Morphology (prefixes, suffixes, roots)	Support teachers in implementing daily vocabulary routines and vocabulary walls	Vocabulary walkthrough tool; student vocabulary journals; classroom observations
November	Comprehension and Knowledge Building; Background Knowledge vs. Prior Knowledge; Think Alouds and Text Discussions	Coaching on comprehension routines, text-dependent questions, and writing about reading	Comprehension walkthrough data; student writing samples; PLC meeting notes
December	MTSS & Literacy Intervention Systems; Tier I, Tier II, and Tier III Supports; Data-Informed Leadership	Facilitate data meetings; review intervention groups; plan adjustments for spring implementation	MTSS alignment tool; intervention plans; progress-monitoring data; semester implementation review



Monthly PLC Focus (Optional)

August: Why Science of Reading?

September: Explicit Instruction in Action

October: Building Vocabulary Every Day

November: Comprehension Through Knowledge Building

December: Using Data to Drive Literacy Decisions

Monthly Leadership Team Meeting Focus

Month	Leadership Focus
August	Literacy Vision & Expectations
September	Classroom Implementation Review
October	Vocabulary Walkthrough Review
November	Comprehension Walkthrough Review
December	Mid-Year Literacy Systems Audit

End-of-Semester Deliverables

By December, the school should have:

- ☒ Science of Reading Leadership Team
- ☒ Schoolwide Vocabulary Expectations
- ☒ Structured Literacy Walkthrough Tool
- ☒ Vocabulary Walkthrough Tool
- ☒ MTSS Alignment Tool
- ☒ Intervention Menu
- ☒ 90-Day Literacy Action Plan for Spring 2027



For a school brand new to the Science of Reading, I would **not introduce everything at once**. I would focus on:

August–September: Foundations & Structured Literacy

October: Vocabulary

November: Comprehension

December: MTSS & Data Systems



NLI Vocabulary Walkthrough & Coaching Tool

School: _____

Teacher: _____

Grade/Content: _____

Date: _____

Observer: _____

Purpose: This tool is designed to support implementation of schoolwide vocabulary expectations and provide meaningful coaching feedback to teachers.

Vocabulary Environment

Indicator	Yes	No	Evidence
Vocabulary wall is visible.			
Vocabulary wall is current and aligned to instruction.			
Academic vocabulary is displayed.			
Students can access vocabulary supports.			
Vocabulary resources are actively used.			

Explicit Vocabulary Instruction

Indicator	Yes	No	Evidence
Vocabulary was explicitly taught.			
Student-friendly definitions were provided.			
Examples and non-examples were used.			
Morphology was addressed when appropriate.			
Multiple exposures to vocabulary were provided.			

Student Engagement

Indicator	Yes	No	Evidence
Students discussed vocabulary with peers.			
Students explained word meanings.			
Students used vocabulary orally.			
Students used vocabulary in writing.			

Students made connections between words.			
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Vocabulary Application

Indicator	Yes	No	Evidence
Vocabulary was connected to reading.			
Vocabulary was connected to writing.			
Vocabulary was connected to content learning.			
Students applied new vocabulary independently.			

Student Evidence

- ☐ Students accurately explain vocabulary
- ☐ Students use vocabulary during discussion
- ☐ Students use vocabulary in writing
- ☐ Students reference vocabulary supports
- ☐ Students demonstrate understanding of academic language

Coaching Feedback

Celebrations



Recommendations

Next Coaching Action

- ☐ Model Lesson
- ☐ Co-Teach
- ☐ Observation Follow-Up
- ☐ PLC Discussion
- ☐ Planning Support
- ☐ Resource Development
- ☐ Walkthrough Follow-Up

Implementation Rating

- ☐ 4 - Exemplary
- ☐ 3 - Implementing
- ☐ 2 - Developing
- ☐ 1 - Beginning

Reflection Question

Is vocabulary being taught intentionally, systematically, and consistently—or is it being left to chance?

Coach Signature: _____

Teacher Signature: _____



NLI Comprehensive Literacy Walkthrough Tool

School: _____

Teacher: _____

Grade/Content: _____

Observer: _____

Date: _____

Purpose

This walkthrough tool is designed to monitor the implementation of evidence-based literacy practices aligned with the Science of Reading, Structured Literacy, MTSS, and disciplinary literacy expectations.

Section 1: Literacy Environment

Indicator	Observed	Not Observed	Evidence
Literacy-rich environment evident	☐	☐	
Academic vocabulary displayed	☐	☐	
Student work displayed	☐	☐	
Reading materials accessible	☐	☐	
Writing opportunities evident	☐	☐	

Section 2: Vocabulary Instruction

Indicator	Observed	Not Observed	Evidence
Vocabulary explicitly taught	☐	☐	
Student-friendly definitions used	☐	☐	
Morphology instruction evident	☐	☐	
Students discuss vocabulary	☐	☐	
Vocabulary applied in speaking/writing	☐	☐	

Section 3: Comprehension Practices

Indicator	Observed	Not Observed	Evidence
Background knowledge activated	☐	☐	
Think Aloud evident	☐	☐	
Text-dependent questions used	☐	☐	
Students discuss text	☐	☐	
Students cite evidence	☐	☐	
Students summarize learning	☐	☐	

Section 4: Reading & Writing Integration

Indicator	Observed	Not Observed	Evidence
Students read grade-level text	☐	☐	
Students write about reading	☐	☐	
Writing supports comprehension	☐	☐	
Evidence-based responses required	☐	☐	

Section 5: Student Engagement

Indicator	Observed	Not Observed	Evidence
Students actively engaged	☐	☐	
Students collaborate appropriately	☐	☐	
Students explain thinking	☐	☐	
Students use academic language	☐	☐	

Section 6: MTSS Look-Fors

Indicator	Observed	Not Observed	Evidence
Differentiation evident	☐	☐	
Intervention supports visible	☐	☐	
Student needs addressed	☐	☐	
Progress-monitoring evidence present	☐	☐	



NLI Structured Literacy Walkthrough Tool

School: _____

Teacher: _____

Grade: _____

Observer: _____

Date: _____

Purpose

This tool is designed to monitor implementation of Structured Literacy practices aligned to the Science of Reading

Section 1: Explicit Instruction

Indicator	Observed	Not Observed	Evidence
Learning target communicated	☐	☐	
Teacher models skill explicitly	☐	☐	
Concepts clearly explained	☐	☐	
Students receive guided practice	☐	☐	

Section 2: Systematic Instruction

Indicator	Observed	Not Observed	Evidence
Instruction follows a planned sequence	☐	☐	
Skills build on previous learning	☐	☐	
Cumulative review evident	☐	☐	
Mastery monitored before progression	☐	☐	



Section 3: Diagnostic Teaching

Indicator	Observed	Not Observed	Evidence
Teacher monitors understanding	☐	☐	
Errors identified immediately	☐	☐	
Corrective feedback provided	☐	☐	
Instruction adjusted based on need	☐	☐	

Section 4: Structured Literacy Components

Component	Observed	Not Observed
Phonology	☐	☐
Sound-Symbol Association	☐	☐
Syllable Instruction	☐	☐
Morphology	☐	☐
Syntax	☐	☐
Semantics	☐	☐

Section 5: Student Engagement

Indicator	Observed	Not Observed
Active participation evident	☐	☐
Students respond frequently	☐	☐
Students practice skills independently	☐	☐
Students demonstrate mastery	☐	☐



NLI 90-Day Literacy Action Plan

School: _____

District: _____

Leader: _____

Date: _____

Before You Begin

Complete the following NLI tools before developing your action plan:

- ☐ NLI Science of Reading & Structured Literacy Readiness Survey
- ☐ NLI MTSS Alignment Tool
- ☐ Schoolwide Literacy Strategy Implementation Workbook
- ☐ Fall 2026 PD Calendar

Step 1: Identify the Need

What does the data tell us? What literacy system needs the most attention?

Step 2: Establish a SMART Goal

Write a measurable 90-day literacy goal.

Step 3: Determine Action Steps

List the actions required to achieve the goal.



Step 4: Assign Responsibility

Determine who owns each action step.

Step 5: Establish Timelines

Map actions from August through December.

Step 6: Monitor Progress

Identify evidence and progress-monitoring measures.

Step 7: Apply the NLI 5A Framework

Assess, Adopt, Adapt, Align, and Abandon.



Action Plan Table

Action Step	Responsible Person	Timeline	Evidence of Success	Status



Secondary Literacy Scheduling & Planning Tool

School: _____

District: _____

Leadership Team: _____

Class Length: ☐ 50 Minutes ☐ 75 Minutes ☐ Other _____

Recommended Literacy Time Allocations

Component	50-Minute Class	75-Minute Class
Bell Ringer / Retrieval Practice	5 min	5 min
Vocabulary Instruction	10–15 min	15–20 min
Explicit Instruction	10 min	15 min
Reading / Content Processing	10 min	15 min
Writing About Learning	10 min	15 min
Small Group / Intervention	As Needed	10–15 min
Exit Ticket / Reflection	5 min	5 min

Mathematics

Component	Minutes
Bell Ringer	_____
Vocabulary	_____
Explicit Instruction	_____
Reading/Writing Task	_____



Small Groups	_____
Exit Ticket	_____

Total Minutes: _____

Science

Component	Minutes
Bell Ringer	_____
Vocabulary	_____
Explicit Instruction	_____
Reading/Writing Task	_____
Small Groups	_____
Exit Ticket	_____

Total Minutes: _____

Social Studies

Component	Minutes
Bell Ringer	_____
Vocabulary	_____
Explicit Instruction	_____
Reading/Writing Task	_____
Small Groups	_____
Exit Ticket	_____

Total Minutes: _____

ELA

Component	Minutes
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Bell Ringer	_____
Vocabulary	_____
Explicit Instruction	_____
Reading/Writing Task	_____
Small Groups	_____
Exit Ticket	_____

Total Minutes: _____

CTE / Electives

Component	Minutes
Bell Ringer	_____
Vocabulary	_____
Explicit Instruction	_____
Reading/Writing Task	_____
Small Groups	_____
Exit Ticket	_____

Total Minutes: _____

Schoolwide Literacy Commitments

Vocabulary Routine: ☐ Frayer Model ☐ KIMS ☐ Morphology Routine ☐ Word Mapping ☐ Other _____

Writing Routine: ☐ Quick Writes ☐ CER Responses ☐ Summaries ☐ Exit Tickets ☐ Constructed Responses ☐ Other _____ Implementation Goal

By December 2026, every classroom will consistently implement:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____