

Lesson Internalization Protocol and Template (ELA)



Simply using high-quality instructional materials (HQIM) doesn't guarantee that a teacher – or tutor, aide, or anyone supporting student learning – will teach them in a way that sets their specific students up to meet the ambitious goals listed in their state's standards. **To ensure students successfully engage with the materials in the ways outlined in the standards and the shifts, teachers must internalize lesson materials prior to teaching.**

Internalization describes the steps a teacher takes to intellectually prepare prior to teaching a unit or lesson. It includes analyzing the ways different components of the lesson support the learning goal and doing the work of students.

Teachers are busy and time is finite, which makes the following pitfalls common and appealing substitutes for internalization, but student learning suffers.

PITFALL 1



PRINT AND GO

Find the day's lesson, skim it over, press print, and teach.

Imagine....

You glance down at your teacher's guide and see that you are supposed to model determining the main idea and supporting details of an informational text on water around the world. What on earth is that? You decide to tell students to look up the terms "main idea" and "supporting details" in the dictionary instead.

What's the impact?

Students don't develop the conceptual understanding they need to master grade level reading standards leading to future difficulties mastering standards related to how the central idea of a text is established and developed.

PITFALL 2**NOTHING BUT THE ANSWER KEY**

Find an answer key, put it on your clipboard, and teach.

Imagine....

The majority of your students get stuck on “supporting details” as evidence from the text to support or justify the main idea. You have the definition, but since you haven’t internalized an example you’re not sure why they’re struggling with it.

What’s the impact?

Students’ misconception never gets addressed, and it continues to be a point of confusion in class as students wrestle with what supporting details are.

PITFALL 3**SKIM AND TWEAK**

Print the lesson, skim quickly to cut the lengthier sections, and teach.

Imagine....

You’ve been unable to get through an entire lesson, so you’ve started choosing just the first 1-2 text-dependent questions in the lesson, skipping the rest. Today, students do well on the questions you chose, which ask them to define key words in the text. You notice, however, that they struggle on the exit ticket, which asks them to identify the main idea and supporting details of a text excerpt.

What’s the impact?

By skipping some of the text-dependent questions, students missed out on important scaffolding and practice on how to identify the main ideas and supporting details of text, and they continue to struggle with this.

Succumbing to these pitfalls leaves us unprepared to teach and leaves students without the depth of understanding they deserve.

Lesson INTERNALIZATION helps in many ways:

1. **Internalization prepares teachers to teach to the depth students need and deserve** to fully meet the standards. When you haven't internalized a lesson it's easy to fall back on, "I guess I'll just teach it the way I was taught it," even if that approach doesn't match the work the standard and objective call for or that is best for your students.
2. **Internalization frees up teacher headspace.** Instead of figuring out what the gist of a text is while modeling how to find it in the moment, you have space to analyze student work and listen to their reasoning.
3. **Internalization gives you the chance to identify when you may have gaps in your own knowledge** that you need to fill in order to give your students the support they need (and deserve). It's really easy to assume that because you are an adult you know how to teach foundational skills or support reading comprehension for your elementary students. However, teaching requires the development of specialized knowledge that is different from what the average person needs to in their daily lives.

So how do you internalize a lesson? Below are four simple steps you can take to be prepared to teach a lesson along with a template to support you in that internalization process and a completed example template for your reference.

What is INTERNALIZATION and what are the steps:



1 Read and annotate the entire text of the lesson

- **WHY:** To familiarize yourself with the key features of the lesson and key features of the central text.
- **HOW:** While reading, make a running list of important points students need to make sense of the text in a way that aligns with the objective and what potential points they may struggle to understand in the text that may prevent them from understanding the important points.

2 Connect to the culminating task of the unit

- **WHY:** To understand how the work in this lesson sets students up for success on the unit assessment.
- **HOW:** After annotating the text, read the lesson in its entirety. Then look back at the lesson standard, lesson objective, and unit assessment. Then, reflect on how the texts, writing, strategies, and questions you noted support the goals of the lesson and unit.

3 Familiarize yourself with the culminating task of the lesson and analyze opportunities for students to make meaning throughout the lesson

- **WHY:** To understand the nature of the work students are expected to do and how they will demonstrate mastery.
- **HOW:** Complete the exit ticket, discussion questions, and problems from the point of view of a student. Consider what students will need to know and do by the end of the lesson and which parts of the lesson are especially important for getting them there.

4 Anticipate areas where students may need support

- **WHY:** To understand the trajectory of student learning throughout the lesson and anticipate where students might struggle.
- **HOW:** Make a list of the areas where students may struggle and why. As you explain why students may struggle, consider the complexities of each task.

Elementary ELA Lesson Internalization Protocol

(Template)



Below is a template you can use to internalize a lesson followed by a completed example.

LESSON # AND OBJECTIVE:

1 Read and annotate the core text used in the lesson

Annotate:

While reading, make a running list of important points students need to make sense of the text in the ways outlined in the objective and what potential points they may struggle to understand in the text that may prevent them from understanding the important points.

Text Title:	
Key moments in the text: <i>(keywords, lines, or ideas students need to understand the text)</i>	Potential points of struggle within the text: <i>(keywords, lines or ideas students may struggle to understand; consider meaning, language, structure, and knowledge demands)</i>

2 Connect to the unit's culminating task

Connect:

After annotating the text, read the lesson in its entirety. Then look back at the lesson standard, lesson objective, and unit assessment. Then, reflect on how the texts, writing, strategies, and questions you noted support the goals of the lesson and unit.

Lesson Standard:	Lesson Objective:

Link to your unit assessment and list the assessment items from the unit assessment that this lesson is designed to teach toward (e.g., items 1, 8, and 10):

What is the purpose of using this particular text/media in today's lesson? How does the knowledge they will build today support them in making sense of this and future unit texts? What are students learning from the text/media that will support them in mastering the objective and unit goals? Consider both knowledge and skill in your answers.

3A Familiarize yourself with the culminating task of the lesson

Familiarize:

Do the exit ticket from the POV of a student using the texts/media found in the lesson.

Analyze:

Reflect on what you had to know and do in order to complete the exit ticket. What are the 1-3 most important things students have to know and/or be able to do in order to successfully complete the exit ticket?

Know / Do	Why is this important?

3B Analyze opportunities for students to make meaning throughout the lesson

Familiarize:

Complete the reading, writing, and any other lesson tasks from the POV of a student. Jot down an exemplar response to each discussion question.

Prioritize:

Think back on the student work you just completed. What are the 1-3 most important tasks and/or discussion questions for students to complete if they are to be able to KNOW and be able to DO what you listed in the row above?

Priority Tasks/Discussion Questions	Why are these important to prioritize?

4 Anticipate areas where students may need support

#	Tasks/Problems where students may need additional support and why

Elementary ELA Lesson Internalization Protocol

(Completed Example)



LESSON # AND TITLE: [Grade 3, Unit 1, Lesson 4](#)¹

High-quality instructional materials can come from a variety of sources. In this completed template, we use materials from EL Education. However, the process described can be used with other high-quality instructional materials.

1 Read and annotate the core text used in the lesson

Annotate:

While reading, make a running list of important points students need to make sense of the text in the ways outlined in the objective and what potential points they may struggle to understand in the text that may prevent them from understanding the important points.

Text Title: One Well		Pages 6-7
<p>Key moments in the text: (keywords, lines, or ideas students need to understand the text)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">"This surface water is found in oceans, lakes, rivers, streams, marshes, even in puddles and the morning dew." <p>Strauss lists the places where Earth's water may be seen.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">"But there is also water we can't see, beneath the Earth's surface." <p>This sentence gives part of the main idea.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">"it fills the cracks in rocks and the spaces between rocks, grains of sand and sod. Most groundwater is close to the Earth's surface, but some of it is buried quite deep. Water is also frozen in glaciers and polar icecaps. And there is water in the atmosphere." <p>These sentences support the main idea.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">"but some of it is buried quite deep. Water is also frozen in glaciers and polar icecaps. And there is water in the atmosphere." <p>Here, Strauss lists the places where Earth's water is not seen.</p>	<p>Potential points of struggle within the text: (keywords, lines or ideas students may struggle to understand; consider meaning, language, structure, and knowledge demands)</p> <p>Knowledge demands: e.g., Understanding of the concept of planets within space, atmospheres around planets, vapor, condensation, average, precipitation, etc.</p> <p>Language demands (Vocabulary): e.g., percent, surface, marshes, sod, polar icecaps, sources, well, "glacier," "quenched," "amount," "cycle," "evaporates," and "vapor". In this instance, these include technical language (e.g., groundwater, atmosphere).</p> <p>Language demands (Conventionality): e.g., Strauss uses repetition and specific visual imagery to describe why the Earth would appear blue from space. Also, technical language (e.g., groundwater, etc.)</p> <p>Language demands (Sentence Structure): e.g., This text uses the em dash after the word "everywhere –" to set off extra information, such as examples, explanatory or descriptive phrases, or supplemental facts. In this case, the examples "cracks in rocks and the spaces between rocks, grains of sand and sod." and "in glaciers and polar icecaps." are examples for the word "everywhere." Also, "hail," "snow," "or rain." existing in the sentence as a series of nouns separated by commas, similar to "oceans," "lakes," "and rivers" in the following sentence.</p>	

2 Connect to the unit's culminating task

Connect:

After annotating the text, read the lesson in its entirety. Then look back at the lesson standard, lesson objective, and unit assessment. Then, reflect on how the texts, writing, strategies, and questions you noted support the goals of the lesson and unit.

Lesson Standard:	Lesson Objective:
CCSS SL.3.2: Determine the main ideas and supporting details of a text read aloud or information presented in diverse media and formats, including visually, quantitatively, and orally.	I can determine the main ideas and supporting details of a text read aloud of One Well by Rochelle Strauss.

Link to your unit assessment and list the assessment items from the unit assessment that this lesson is designed to teach toward (e.g., items 1, 8, and 10):

- Part A:** What is one of the main ideas of the passage? Underline the best answer. (RI.3.2)
 - People should stop polluting water by not dumping things into it and by not polluting the air.
 - We use the same water over and over again because of the water cycle.
 - Water is being polluted by people dumping things into it and by acid rain falling into clean water.
 - Water pollution is destroying aquifers.
- Part B:** Which three details from the passage best support the main idea? Underline the three best answers. (RI.3.1, RI.3.2)
 - People are polluting our water.
 - For millions of years, the water we have has been used again and again.
 - Businesses and cities dump chemicals and waste products into our rivers, lakes and oceans.
 - The acid rain, caused when pollution in the air mixes with rain, falls and poisons water on the surface of the earth.
 - We call the water in the aquifer groundwater.
 - We cannot create new water.

What is the purpose of using this particular text/media in today's lesson? How does the knowledge they will build today support them in making sense of this and future unit texts? What are students learning from the text/media that will support them in mastering the objective and unit goals? Consider both knowledge and skill in your answers.

This assessment requires students to demonstrate their understanding of determining the main idea and supporting details from a text as practiced in the lesson. The lesson also notes in the "Down the Road" section, that students will go on to answer text-dependent questions, such as this assessment question.

- Knowledge:** Students deepen background knowledge and vocabulary about water on Earth, how water is connected, and the impacts that water treatment can have on all life.
- Skill:** Students gain practice in reading for the main idea in a section of "One Well," and understanding how it contributes to the development of the central theme of water around the world.

Students gain practice in identifying supporting details that support that main idea in the reading of "One Well," and understanding how they contribute to the development of the central theme of water around the world.

3A Familiarize yourself with the culminating task of the lesson

Familiarize:

Do the exit ticket from the POV of a student using the texts/media found in the lesson.

Analyze:

Reflect on what you had to know and do in order to complete the exit ticket. What are the 1-3 most important things students have to know and/or be able to do in order to successfully complete the exit ticket?

ET Question:

Complete the “E: Evidence, and L: I learned,” and “Source” columns, based on today’s read aloud and in response to the Guiding Question: Why are the world’s freshwater sources threatened?

Know / Do	Why is this important?
Possess adequate background knowledge of various water forms and basic planetary science.	Without background knowledge of water forms and the basic planetary science, students might struggle to access the rest of the text.
Demonstrate that they understand the academic and technical language used, as well as a firm grasp of the central idea(s) of the text.	In order to be successful in this lesson, the unit and the culminating assessment, students will need to be able to apply their understanding of the academic and technical (in this case, scientific and mathematical) terminology as well as the literal language in this informative text to identify the central idea of the text. This type of reading for gist and core ideas is central to comprehension since missing the main point impedes any further or more detailed textual engagement.
Support their assertions about the central idea(s) with supporting evidence from the text.	Identifying the central idea is a foundational skill – but just as important is being able to demonstrate why and how an author builds and develops those central ideas. Without being able to make connections between specific textual evidence and the overarching point of the text, students are unlikely to be able to demonstrate how the text functions.
Indicate the source from where their evidence has been pulled.	Citing sources is a necessary skill that will also be required in future lessons.

3B Analyze opportunities for students to make meaning throughout the lesson

Familiarize:

Complete the reading, writing, and any other lesson tasks from the POV of a student. Jot down an exemplar response to each discussion question.

Prioritize:

Think back on the student work you just completed. What are the 1–3 most important tasks and/or discussion questions for students to complete if they are to be able to KNOW and be able to DO what you listed in the row above?

Priority Problems/Tasks/Discussion Questions	Why are these important to prioritize?
<p>Determining the Main Ideas Note-catcher (after the Read Aloud)</p> <p>What is the main idea and supporting details of the text and what explicit information from the text supports your thinking about the main idea?</p>	<p>The note-catcher activity supports students in accessing the big idea of the text and the evidence in service of substantiating the big idea.</p> <p>This activity is particularly important because they invite students to develop the skills of reading for the core ideas and their supporting details, which is central to comprehension. This activity also allows the teacher an opportunity to gauge student understanding and support any students with necessary corrections prior to moving on to the more rigorous activity.</p>
<p>Text-Dependent Questions activity</p> <p>1. What is surface water? 2. Where is surface water found? 3. What is groundwater? 4. Where is groundwater found?</p>	<p>These questions support students in accessing the key ideas of the text and the language Strauss uses to describe the water in and around our planet. Without the key vocabulary, students are less likely to build knowledge that is needed to fully comprehend the main idea of the text.</p> <p>These questions are particularly important because they invite students to build knowledge that allows them to access the broader meaning of the text. E.g., surface vs. groundwater, etc. This activity also allows the teacher an opportunity to gauge student understanding and support any students with necessary corrections prior to moving on to the more rigorous activity.</p>

4 Anticipate areas where students may need support

#	Tasks/Problems where students may need additional support and why
1	Students are asked to determine the gist of the read aloud (what pages 6–7 are mostly about), followed by the main idea. Students may be inclined to offer a simplified, vague, or even incorrect response to this prompt, such as “water” or “Earth” and may need additional support in reviewing how to go about determining a more complete gist. Reviewing the key components of a text’s gist (including the key subject, it’s setting, and important action of the text) would support students’ abilities to optimally engage in this activity.
2	After determining the gist of the read aloud (what pages 4–5 are mostly about) and the main idea, students are asked to find the details that support their main idea. After settling on an accurate Main Idea (“ <i>There is a lot of water on Earth that we can see and that we can’t see</i> ”), students may struggle to locate evidence from the text that directly supports the main idea. They may need the reminder that supporting details should help to prove the main idea true.

This resource is part of Deans for Impact’s High-Quality Instructional Materials Modules, a suite of four asynchronous modules that support educators to identify and effectively use high-quality instructional materials to support student learning.

To learn more about these instructional modules or about how to access additional instructional resources and support from Deans for Impact, contact us at info@deansforimpact.org or reach out via deansforimpact.org/work-with-us.