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Example Fidelity Rubric

In the context of literacy instruction, *fidelity* is how closely aligned implementation of a literacy intervention is to the way the intervention was designed. Implementing an intervention with fidelity makes obtaining the results you are looking to achieve much more likely. A lot of work goes into designing an evidence-based intervention, and fidelity helps make sure the aspects that make the intervention effective are not lost due to modifications or deviations by educators using it.

When measuring fidelity, it is important to track two different types. **Structural fidelity** measures if a teacher has adhered to an intervention by using the materials for the recommended time per session (e.g., 30 minutes), number of sessions (e.g., 15 sessions), or intervention duration (e.g., entire academic year). It also measures to what extent students have been exposed to specific intervention components (e.g., 30 minutes of small group, and 60 minutes of whole class). **Procedural fidelity** measures the manner in which the teacher delivers the intervention using the techniques, processes, or methods prescribed by the intervention. It also measures the quality of the intervention delivery and student responsiveness or engagement during those lessons.

Additionally, the differences between global and lesson-specific fidelity are important to understand in order to fully grasp the overall concept of fidelity (National Center on Early Childhood Development, Teaching, and Learning, 2016). **Global fidelity** addresses the intervention big picture and is tied to the guiding principles or learning theories that drive the intervention. **Lesson-specific fidelity** addresses the smaller chunks of the intervention such as specific activities or lesson components.

The following pages show a sample fidelity rubric. The rubric addresses both structural and procedural fidelity at the global and lesson-specific level. Note that this example fidelity rubric does not correspond with a specific intervention, curriculum, or practice. Rather, we have created example items that may correspond with a range of reading interventions. It is NOT intended for use because it does not correspond with a specific intervention.

The **green** section includes examples of global structural fidelity components that someone checking fidelity may look for related to the lesson in the intervention the teacher should be delivering. This is determined by the school's guidelines and by the intervention's guidelines for how much of the time should be allocated to specific activities. In addition, the green section includes global structural fidelity components for how closely intervention recommendations were met across the entire observation. The **blue** section includes examples of global procedural fidelity components that someone checking fidelity may look for related to the guiding principles of how instruction should be delivered across all intervention components. Finally, the **yellow** section includes examples of lesson-specific fidelity components which can be tailored to specific intervention components or lesson activities.

Additional Resource

For more information on fidelity, see our blog post **"Defining Fidelity When Implementing Reading Interventions"** by Dr. Jessica Sidler Folsom, Dr. Sandy A. Schmitz, and Dr. Deborah K. Reed.

References

National Center on Early Childhood Development, Teaching, and Learning (2016). *Curriculum implementation fidelity.* Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Health & Human Services, Administration for Children & Families, Head Start Early Childhood Learning & Knowledge Center. Retrieved from https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/pdf/1025-curriculum-fidelity-handout.pdf

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<table>
<tr><td colspan="2"><u>Global Structural Fidelity</u>: Keep these questions in mind when completing the section below: Were the important pieces of the intervention delivered? Was the instruction consistent with the scope and sequence of the intervention? Did students receive the recommended amount and types of instruction?</td></tr>
<tr><td>PRIOR TO OBSERVATION: Using school guidelines, identify where the teacher should be in the intervention. Use the intervention guidelines to identify how instruction should be delivered and how much time should be spent in each format.</td><td>DURING OBSERVATION: Using the school and intervention guidelines to the left, complete the following section based on what was observed in today's lesson.</td></tr>
<tr><td>According to the school's guidelines for the intervention, the teacher should be on Unit: _____ Lesson: _____
Notes:</td><td>Observed location in the intervention:
Unit:___ Lesson: ___ Day: ___
According to the school's guidelines for the intervention, the teacher was:
☐ behind schedule ☐ on schedule ☐ ahead of schedule</td></tr>
<tr><td>According to the intervention, instruction should be provided in:
☐ whole-group instruction for _____ mins
☐ teacher-led small-group instruction for _____ mins
☐ one-to-one teacher-led instruction for _____ mins
☐ peer work for _____ mins
☐ student independent work for_____ mins
☐ student computer work for _____ mins
Notes:</td><td>Teacher implemented:
☐ whole-group instruction for _____ mins
☐ teacher-led small-group instruction for _____ mins
☐ one-to-one teacher-led instruction for _____ mins
Students worked:
☐ individually with the teacher for _____ mins
☐ independently for _____ mins
☐ in teacher small groups for _____ mins
☐ in peer small groups for _____ mins
☐ on the computer for _____ mins</td></tr>
<tr><td>If known prior to the observation: Note the teacher and student materials that should be used in today's lesson (e.g., letter-sound card, Elkonin boxes, marker boards, sentence frames, specific trade books, etc.):</td><td>The teacher used the recommended:
☐ intervention ☐ teacher materials ☐ student materials
Were the teacher or students using additional curriculum or materials from another program? ☐ No ☐ Yes. If yes describe:</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Observation Notes:</td></tr>
</table>

Global Procedural Fidelity: Keep these questions about the entire observation in mind when completing the section below: *What was the nature of delivery and teacher-student interactions? Did the teacher provide the instruction in the manner expected? Did the students follow the directions and complete the activities as expected?*

DURING OBSERVATION: *Considering the entire observation and the guiding questions above, complete the following sections based on what was observed in today's lesson.*

As indicated in the teacher's manual, across the entire observation, the teacher…	**Select one**	**Explain any NA or no responses**
– Began with clear goals and expectations	NA ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐	
– Connected with and reviewed prior skills and knowledge	NA ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐	
– Used unambiguous language for instruction (e.g., clear, not vague descriptions of the skill or strategy)	NA ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐	
– Provided direct instruction		
○ Modeled instruction or "I do"	NA ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐	
○ Guided practice or "We do"	NA ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐	
○ Independent practice or "You do"	NA ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐	
– Scaffolded instruction	NA ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐	
– Broke down complex skills	NA ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐	
– Moved at a brisk pace	NA ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐	
– Ensured students were on task	NA ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐	
– Provided positive feedback	NA ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐	
– Used the corrective feedback procedures recommended within the intervention	NA ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐	

Lesson-Specific Fidelity: Keep these questions in mind when completing the section below: *What was the nature of delivery and teacher-student interactions? Did the teacher provide the instruction in the manner expected? Did the students follow the directions and complete the activities as expected?*

DURING OBSERVATION: *Considering the specific lesson component and the guiding questions above, complete the following based on what was observed today.*

If the criteria do not apply, circle NA. If the criteria are met, circle 1. If the criteria are not met, circle 0.

	Whole group						**Small group rotation**		
As indicated in the teacher's manual, the teacher…	**Phonological awareness & phonics**	**Word work & spelling**	**Sight words & fluency**	**Vocabulary & oral language**	**Listening & reading comprehension**	**Language arts**	**1**	**2**	**3**
Check this row if component skipped	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Completed all lessons and activities	NA 1 0	NA 1 0	NA 1 0	NA 1 0	NA 1 0	NA 1 0	NA 1 0	NA 1 0	NA 1 0
Followed the instructional routines	NA 1 0	NA 1 0	NA 1 0	NA 1 0	NA 1 0	NA 1 0	NA 1 0	NA 1 0	NA 1 0
Used the suggested language	NA 1 0	NA 1 0	NA 1 0	NA 1 0	NA 1 0	NA 1 0	NA 1 0	NA 1 0	NA 1 0
Used the suggested examples	NA 1 0	NA 1 0	NA 1 0	NA 1 0	NA 1 0	NA 1 0	NA 1 0	NA 1 0	NA 1 0
Explain any NA or no responses									