Return to Learn: Launching Instruction for Grades 1-2

A digital version of this document can be found at https://sde.ok.gov/covid19-instruction-support.

Introduction

This guidance is designed to support educators and school administrators as they plan for various instructional delivery models for the 2020-21 school year. It has never been more important to take time and plan to attend to the goals of supporting students' academic growth, supporting students' and educators' social-emotional well-being, and creating a safe environment for all students and educators.

Teachers and schools should be responsive to their local context and student needs as they develop plans for the 2020-21 school year. Therefore, **please note that the guidance and resources provided in this document are not meant to be a directive or limitation**, but rather a tool. Additional guidance about the planning educators may undertake in preparation for this school year

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can be found beginning on page 39 of the [Return to Learn Oklahoma: A Framework for Reopening Schools](#).

To provide feedback or make suggestions or requests for future guidance, please consider [completing this survey](#).

Questions to Consider While Planning for Instruction

Educators face unique circumstances as they plan for the 2020-21 school year. In grades 1-2, teachers should ensure previous grade-level work is connected to on-grade-level work throughout the school year, using a high-quality, standards-based curriculum. This section aims to provide general guidelines while also recognizing that local schools and districts have unique needs.

This document focuses on the **opportunities for learning,** rather than focusing on learning gaps, and asks educators and administrators to consider what content students know and what dispositions they currently have.

Standards and Pacing

What content and disciplinary skills should instruction focus on this year?

A central goal of instruction—even in this time of disruption—is to ensure each student learns grade-level content and is ready to progress to the next grade. Given that some students may start the school year further behind than typical and that disruptions are likely, focusing students on the most important content will be essential. Achieving this goal requires each teacher to understand the essential knowledge and skills from the current and prior grades to ensure curriculum and instruction are focused and coherent.

- Use the resources provided in the [Oklahoma Curriculum Frameworks](#), specifically focusing on the **objective analysis** provided for each standard, to fully understand the intent of grade-level standards and how content knowledge connects and progresses across grade levels. Keep in mind, all [Oklahoma Academic Standards](#) are deemed "essential standards."
- Bundle standards, competencies, or learning objectives to provide students with deeper connections across standards and reinforcement of learning of standards throughout the year.
  - **Example:** When addressing practice with foundational skills, use words and sentences that address the content from other areas when possible. For example, 1st graders might use the language from geography to practice phonics/spelling skills with

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multisyllabic words and to form more complex sentences about the content.
- Identify the content knowledge and disciplinary skills from previous grade levels that serve as prerequisite skills and knowledge for on-grade-level learning and identify what students might struggle within their current grade that may have been abbreviated or unaddressed in the 2019-20 school year. In particular, focus on serving English learners, students with disabilities and other special populations.
- Ensure all content areas are taught. Knowledge learned in content areas such as social studies and science is critical for building background knowledge that aids in reading comprehension and learning in these subjects at later grades.
- Eliminate extraneous aspects of curriculum that are not closely aligned to the learning goals of the standards at grade level. **For example,** textbooks will often provide well-intentioned extension activities, but the unique circumstances of this year mandate that the standards are the focus of instruction to prevent learning gaps.

The table below provides general guidance on the academic focus for each discipline in first and second grade. The resources listed serve as supports when planning for instruction or supporting families and caregivers with learning at home.

Discipline	Focus	Additional Resources
English Language Arts	In reading instruction for grades 1 and 2, prioritize word work, focusing on both phonemic awareness and phonics. To address language comprehension, students need a fluency routine to provide regular practice as well as explicit instruction in vocabulary. Provide students with well-written and engaging texts, using them to teach both decoding and comprehension skills. Second-grade students strengthen these same skills and build on them by not only accessing longer texts but also analyzing the features of the texts themselves. Use the ELA proficiency levels for Grade 1 and Grade 2, to better understand where students are at with the literacy skills and how to help them progress to grade-level proficiency.	- **Return to Learn: Launching Instruction for Foundational Literacy** available at https://sde.ok.gov/covid19-instruction-support. - First Grade ELA Family Guide - Second Grade ELA Family Guide - Strong Reader Family Guidance from the MS

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Math	For early learners, math instruction needs to be diverse, covering numbers and operations, but also geometry, measurements, patterns, and data analysis. These early math concepts must be taught following a developmental progression, meaning that skills build and expand over time and concepts are revisited as new concepts are introduced. At these grades, students must understand the connections or relationships between previous math ideas or concepts and those being introduced. Review Grade 1 and Grade 2 **Suggested Learning Progressions** in the Oklahoma Math Curriculum Framework to see how concepts connect and build within a grade. Suggested lessons are also linked within each progression.	● First Grade Math Family Guide ● Second Grade Math Family Guide ● Guidance for Developing Procedural and Conceptual Fluency ● Oklahoma Math Curriculum Framework
Science and Social Studies	In grades 1 and 2, students are learning about citizenship, economics, geography and history through social studies and engaging in investigations in science that allow them to explore the world around them. The concepts and skills students learn through social studies and science provide students opportunities to practice listening and speaking, noticing and wondering, and reading and writing skills. Consider exploring these resources to gain ideas for teaching science and social studies, and to see how effective instruction in both disciplines provide opportunities for robust literacy integration. Explore science instructional bundles for grade 1 and grade 2 and review the objective analyses for grade 1 and grade 2 in social studies (click on each objective in the list to see the resources).	● Learning Science in Places ● Science Inquiry Investigations for first grade ● First Grade Science Family Guide ● Second Grade Science Family Guide ● First Grade Social Studies Family Guide ● Second Grade Social Studies Family Guide

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Effective Instructional Routines

How will each student learn the content and disciplinary skills associated with this discipline, whether through in-person or during distance learning?

In a school year where many aspects of the school day will likely look different than previous years, a consistent instructional routine can support teaching with planning and students with learning. The following instructional routine or cycle of learning can be utilized when teaching English language arts, math, science and social studies. For specific guidance on teaching foundational early literacy skills see **Return to Learn: Launching Instruction for Foundational Literacy** available at https://sde.ok.gov/covid19-instruction-support.

	In-Person	**Distance**
Provide students with a **hook** that will engage them.	Use a storybook, video, picture, object, or interesting question to get students interested in the content. Ask students to start forming initial ideas, then have students discuss their ideas in pairs, groups, or as part of a whole-class discussion. **Examples:** Consider focusing on a social studies topic like, **"How can you protect the things around you from not being destroyed?"** or a science investigation like, **"Does the sun stay in the same spot all day? Share your thinking."**	Use similar hooks, but provide them on the platform that is accessible to the student at home. If instruction is provided synchronously, consider asking a few students to be ready to share after some "think time". If asynchronous, provide questions that caregivers can ask to prompt students to share their thinking.
Explain the **purpose** of the learning activity.	Share the topic of the lesson, why it is important for students to learn, and how they will learn it. Provide any important context or vocabulary students will need to be successful in the lesson. **Examples:** "Today we will learn about what it means to be a good citizen" or "this week we are going to observe how the position of the sun may or may not change in a day."	Share purpose/objective in a live or recorded video lesson. If using packets or another platform that will not include video, the introduction section may be geared more towards the caregiver helping the student with their learning.

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Introduce **new information** or allow students to **engage in investigation**	This is where any new learning concepts are introduced to students. This could be through literature, videos, exploration, or simply telling. **Examples:** Students might read a story about what it means to be a good citizen or share what they noticed in their observations of the sun over the course of a day. Anchor charts can help capture important information for future reference. For concepts that have been previously introduced but need to be revisited or practiced, this section is simply a review.	Any new material for students in a distance learning scenario will need to have something tangible for students to learn from. This could be a live or recorded video of the teacher, a video from another resource (like YouTube or Khan Academy), or a written guide or set of instructions. If caregivers will need to facilitate the new learning, consider making materials geared towards them as the audience, teaching them how to teach this concept to their students.
Provide opportunities for **guided practice.**	Students have the opportunity to practice and internalize new content with high levels of support from their teacher. This may include making a chart or visual together, having students answer a question or question set with the teacher or with a peer, or walking through a task or experience together.	This part of the lesson may be particularly hard in a distance learning scenario, especially if a lesson is not delivered synchronously. Doing "catch and release" instruction, where students are given a task, asked to do it, then brought back together can help, and this method can even be used in recorded videos by telling students to pause the video at key moments. If digital tools are not available, caregivers may need to step into the role of the teacher, working through the material with a student.
Check for **understanding.**	Teachers can listen to the conversations students are having in pairs or groups and observe their work during guided practice to gain a sense of their understanding. Teachers may also consider having students do a self check-in on where they believe their	There are many tools available as an aid to formative assessment. The lists here and here provide ample examples to explore. In synchronous lessons, simple features like polls, hand raising, and yes/no response buttons can help

	understanding to determine who might need additional support during guided practice. After checking for understanding, teachers should understand how students are progressing in their learning.	the teacher identify the current understanding of students relative to the content being presented.
Provide opportunities for **independent practice.**	Independent practice allows students to apply their learning to a new situation or scenario. These practice opportunities are most meaningful when students are not simply following rote steps or regurgitating information, but instead using their learning in a meaningful way. Independent practice can be done with students working independently, in pairs, or small groups. **Examples:** Students might identify ways they can be good citizens in their classroom or investigate if other things are different outside during the course of a day (e.g., temperature).	Anything students are being asked to work on in between meetings or check-ins would be considered independent practice. Make sure any tasks assigned to students are not dependent on the materials they may or may not have available at home. Since first and second graders are still learning to read, caregivers may need to get this started, but the goal should be for students to be able to complete the task largely on their own. Choice boards are one method of independent practice that allows for student choice and differentiated student products.
Support learning through **small group instruction**	When students are not ready to successfully complete independent practice on their own, or there is a misconception identified during the check for understanding, small groups of students can be brought together to continue the learning with teacher support.	Specific considerations for small group instruction are included in the Blended or Distance Learning section of this document.

In blended or distance learning, this cycle may need to be completed over multiple asynchronous (on students' own time)/synchronous (common class time) experiences.

NOTE: For specific guidance related to Special Education and English Learner instruction, visit the OSDE Office of Special Education and Office of English Language Learner websites.

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Blended or Distance Learning

How can I adapt my instruction for blended or distance learning approaches?

Some schools are already planning to offer students opportunities to engage in blended or distance learning for a semester or the full school year. When planning for long-term blended or distance learning models, instructional planning considerations above should be leveraged.

For districts using the in-person model, schools and teachers should consider developing week-long distance learning units that can be easily deployed if the need arises. Effective instructional routines can be used with in-person and distance learning environments, and even taught to families and caregivers so they can engage their students in them if learning has to happen at home. Think about these key shifts between in-person and distance learning as you plan:

Key Shifts from In-Person to Distance Learning	
In-Person Learning	**Distance Learning**
Learning happens in school with consistent access to resources and materials	Learning happens in a variety of physical environments with varied access to resources and materials
Explicit instruction, independent and/or group work, and one-on-one support during daily class periods	Explicit instruction, independent and/or group work, and one-on-one support through flexible scheduling of asynchronous and synchronous learning Synchronous learning sessions may occur with small or whole groups 1-2 times a day for 15-20 minutes, or through some other version of flexible scheduling with asynchronous learning rounding out instruction. Daily independent reading is encouraged and can be leveraged across subject areas.
Evidence of ongoing student learning is readily visible or understood through discussions, student work, and other representations	Evidence of ongoing student learning is collected in intentional ways through digital tools such as email, Learning Management Systems,

	video recordings, etc.
Teacher and peer feedback through written feedback on student work, classroom discussions, and conferring	Teacher and peer feedback through comments in collaborative platforms, audio- or video-recorded feedback, using synchronous meeting opportunities to provide complex feedback in real-time
Daily interactions with students to understand student progress, struggles, and well-being	Intentionally designed check-ins to understand student progress, struggles and well-being

For general guidance on distance learning, reference the OSDE document Distance Learning Grades 1-2.

The following are some suggestions to consider when planning for blended or distance learning for elementary students.

- Students may not be proficient with technology tools. If blended, consider spending some of the in-person time helping students learn to navigate the most important tools they will use at home.
- Not all students have access to technology at home, and if there are more children then devices, younger students are less likely to be prioritized for device usage. Create non-technology-based alternatives for these scenarios.
- In certain situations, making videos specifically for families and caregivers can be even more effective than videos made for students. In videos for families and caregivers, teach them instructional routines, provide overviews of academic content and concepts, or share any other pertinent information that they can view at any time.
- Interacting with others and building relationships is an important part of a first- or second-grade classroom. Where you can, try to build opportunities for students to connect. Consider doing some virtual instruction in small groups where students can interact with you and with each other.
- Check in with families and caregivers to see how they are doing and how to make blended or distance learning work better for them. There are likely to be many unforeseen challenges, but open lines of communications and ample opportunities for them to provide feedback can make a better experience for all.
- As you create plans, please consider that children can focus for about 2-5 minutes times the year of their age. This means a 7-year-old has an attention span of about 14-35 minutes *if* they are interested in what they are being asked to pay attention to. With this in mind, virtual

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instruction will need to be broken up into smaller sections over the course of the day rather than long chunks of time.

- Create class norms or agreements with special attention to norms that are different from in-person learning.

The following table includes some parts of the day that are often found in first- and second-grade classrooms, what they are, and how they might be adjusted for distance learning. Please note that this is not a comprehensive list of everything that may need to be part of a distance learning plan, nor do all of the following components need to be in your specific plan. Many of the parts of the day below provide an example of how to provide that instruction synchronously, but that does not mean it is always the preferred method of delivery.

Keep in mind, synchronous learning can be difficult for families, especially with multiple students schooling from home and/or working caregivers. As always, defer to your school and district guidance for expectations on distance learning.

Part of the Day	Definition	Options for Distance Learning
Morning Meeting	Morning Meeting is a time to set the tone for the day, establish and review the schedule, and build classroom community. At-home morning meetings should, as much as is possible, align with what students are used to in-person to maintain continuity in the student experience.	- Ask students to join a live video call at the same time each morning. - Post a video each morning for students to watch as they start their day. *Teaching Little Leaders* explains in this blog post. - Share a morning message (either through a digital platform, email, social media post, text message, or distributed paper packet) for families or caregivers to read to students that require some type of interaction, like responding to a question of the day with a drawing. Edutopia provides examples of morning messages for each day of the week. - Responsive Classroom provides additional ideas for maintaining a positive community remotely.
Reading	Read-alouds help students develop their language skills, reading comprehension skills	**NOTE:** Please ensure you are following copyright guidelines. The American Association of School Librarians has helpful tips and information

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	and strategies, and love of reading and books. They also serve as a good model for writing and are an essential part of an early elementary classroom.	about protecting intellectual property rights. ● Live read-alouds enable students to engage with the teacher and each other. The University of Florida Literacy Institute provides guidance on virtual lesson structure and instructional activities. ● Record yourself doing a read-aloud with a specific comprehension goal in mind. Plan your think-alouds ahead of time so thinking can be explicitly modeled. Then have students practice that thinking with their own text. ● Support and encourage families to read to and with their students every single day. Connect families with resources like their local library to provide access to a wider selection of books. ● The National Council of Teachers of English has additional resources for virtual instruction and online learning.
Phonics and Phonological Awareness	Early readers need explicit and systematic phonics and phonological awareness instruction. For more details on the skills that form the foundations for learning to read, visit Read Naturally's information on the essential components of reading and review the **Return to Learn: Planning Instruction for Foundational Literacy** guidance at https://sde.ok.gov/covid19-instruction-support.	● Having students online at the same time for phonics and phonological awareness instruction may not be necessary, but if so, teach and use routines that are familiar to students. ● Use pre-recorded videos of yourself or videos found online (like these examples from Sparkling in Second). ● Free online tools like IXL or other personalized online learning platforms available through your district can be utilized to reinforce concepts. ● Provide hands-on activities for families to do with students. The Florida Center for Reading Research has lessons and activities for first and second grade. You may consider creating videos geared towards families and caregivers showing them how to complete the activity or play a learning game with students.

Writing	Students need direct instruction in writing and a variety of opportunities to engage in writing throughout the day. Guided writing is a way to provide this instruction for small groups in a targeted way.	● Small group virtual guided writing is a good way to provide explicit support while also bringing students together to build community. ● Provide writing assignments and include step-by-step instructions through a video or written guidance for caregivers. This scaffolding helps students who may need additional support. ● Incorporate fun writing activities into distance learning plans. This list from Scholastic can get you started.
Small-Group Instruction	Students in first and second grade are still developing foundational skills, many of which need to be strengthened and refined. Small-group instruction on targeted skills gives teachers time to reinforce concepts and students time to practice skills with the support of their teacher.	● Give families a choice on when they can attend a live small group session. Sites like Calendly can help with scheduling. ● Students may not have the materials at home that are typically used during small group reading or math. Consider using common household objects in place of manipulatives, and ask students to come to the virtual lesson with their materials ready to go. ● Plan ahead! Check out these examples of scaffolded plans for small group writing and reading.
Math	In first and second grade, students are still building the foundation for conceptual mathematical understanding. Students need routine exposure and ample opportunities to explore mathematical concepts. Providing physical opportunities for students to engage with	● If you choose to do a live math lesson, keep it "short and sweet." Consider using movement to keep students engaged. ● Online games, like these, can reinforce math concepts for students. Khan Academy provides video instruction for first and second grade that can be used for supplemental support. ● Use Learning Menus for math activities that allow students to get hands-on practice while fitting into their schedule. See a sample for first and second grade here. ● Check out the No-Tech, Low-Tech, and High-Tech Distance Learning Instructional

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	manipulatives, drawings, or games helps students to gain a deep understanding of complex concepts in math.	Resource Database, part of the Oklahoma Math Curriculum Frameworks.
Science/ Social Studies	One of the most effective ways of teaching students about the world around them is by using themed units of study that include content aligned to grade-level standards. Students can investigate something related to their lives through social studies or investigate interesting phenomena or real-world situations connected to science. Units of study can then engage students in practicing reading and writing or using math in purposeful ways.	● Consider using an essential question to drive learning. Have your question of the day, read-alouds, and math activities, and explorations connect to this question. ● Use technology to give access to science and social studies topics. Virtual field trips, games, and videos are an easy way to incorporate technology into distance learning. ● Use Learning Menus for science activities that allow students to get hands-on practice while fitting into their schedule. ● PBS Learning Media has a wealth of materials well suited to use in building distance learning lessons in social studies or science.
Recess and Physical Activity	The American Academy of Pediatrics states that recess has "cognitive, social, emotional, and physical benefits" (AAP, 2013). Giving students a break from learning, even at home, can make the learning time more	● Share with families the importance of recess, and encourage them to make it a part of their daily schedule. ● Give families ideas for recess time. This list of screen-free gross motor development has options for inside and outside to account for weather. ● Review Return to Learn: Launching Instruction for Health and Physical Education for additional ideas.

	effective.	

Launching Instruction with Digital Tools

For more guidance for effectively implementing virtual instruction, blended learning, or creating digital variations of instruction to enact social distancing, the Return to Learn: Launching Instruction with Digital Tools will be available soon at https://sde.ok.gov/covid19-instruction-support. The guidance is organized around the following principles to support all learners:

- select appropriate digital tools and implement with care,
- create clear and effective communication strategies,
- build and maintain community, and
- empower student choice.

Classroom Assessment

How will students be provided opportunities to showcase their learning and for teachers to provide feedback to students on their learning?

The goal of assessment in any classroom should be to better understand where a student is in their current learning so the teacher can make the most appropriate instructional choices. In early elementary classrooms, this often means using a combination of observation, analysis of student work, and more formal assessments to gauge where each student is. In most traditional learning scenarios this fall, assessment will continue as it has in the past and be incorporated throughout a cycle of learning or instructional routine for students. Providing students multiple opportunities to showcase their thinking will allow teachers to better understand what students are currently capable of and support equitable, on-grade level approaches to assessment. Below are some considerations for collecting information about students who are spending a significant amount of their learning time away from a physical school building. **Please look to your school or district leadership for additional information on assessment expectations during distance learning.**

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How can families and caregivers be partners in collecting information about student learning?

- There should be two-way communication between the teacher and families or caregivers. Offer multiple modes of communication (phone, video call, texting, email, etc.) and use them frequently.
- Ask families to share thoughts and insights on their student's development. Using open-ended questions and prompts (e.g., describe your child's reading habits) can help give a more complete picture of the skills and progress students are exhibiting at home.
- Ask, **but do not expect**, families to send pictures or recordings documenting student work and play.
- Teach families and caregivers how to give simple assessments (e.g., reading words with diphthongs or counting by 2s).

Social and Emotional Well-Being

How can instruction in this discipline support social-emotional learning for students?

Students will return to school this fall amid two profound crises: an unprecedented global pandemic and social upheaval as the nation reckons with its legacy of systemic racial oppression. For this reason, as educators plan for a strong start to the 2020-21 school year, it will be critical to prioritize well-being and connection, which research shows are prerequisites to effective teaching and learning.

> **NOTE:** Consider incorporating sample teaching activities provided by the Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL) to support core competencies of social-emotional learning for students this year.

The Minnesota Department of Education provides examples of how social-emotional student learning competencies can be integrated across subject areas. Here are a few examples:

- Have students draw pictures of faces showing different emotions and display pictures in the room or in a virtual platform, which connects to English Language Arts standards for Speaking and Listening.
- Help students with strategies for taking turns during conversations and class discussions, which connects to demonstrating civics skills in social studies.

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What supports are available for families and caregivers?

While educators are trained in the specific skills and strategies that help promote social-emotional learning, families and caregivers will likely need some additional support to prioritize this kind of learning at home. CASEL (Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning) has resources, including videos about social-emotional learning designed for caregivers available in English and Spanish to share with families.

> **NOTE:** Consider sharing these additional documents with families of students:
> Self-Care for Parents and Caregivers | Guidance for Distance Learning Environment: Helpful Tips for Families | Family Guide to Positive Behavior in Distance Learning Environments.

What are ways to ensure regular self-care as an educator?

Before teachers can be expected to provide healthy and safe environments for students, it is important that they also take time to attend to their personal care and well-being. Doing a personal check-in using the questions below can be a good place to start.
- How am I taking care of my physical needs, including getting enough sleep, exercise, and nutrition?
- Do I have a routine? If so, which parts of the routine are working well, and which could be improved? If not, how can I use a routine to reduce stress and encourage healthy behaviors?
- Do I have a sense of balance between work and other life demands? How can I take steps to "turn off" work and spend time doing other things that bring joy?
- Am I staying connected with friends and family? How do I need to make adjustments given current limitations?

Here are a few additional resources to support teacher well-being at this time:
- Self-Care for Teachers and Educational Professionals
- Free interactive sessions from Pure Edge, to support self-care.
- Social-Emotional Toolkit for Educators

How can students experiencing chronic stress be supported?

Students are going to have a variety of reactions to the realities of 2020, largely based on where they are in their development and the kind of coping mechanisms they possess. For some, a sudden and drastic change in routine or the anxiety and fear their caregivers are experiencing can lead to a loss

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of previously acquired developmental skills. This may manifest in the way children are able to separate from their caregivers, play and interact with others, and even sleep (NCTSN, p. 1). Here are a few examples of how to create a safe space for students who may be experiencing trauma:

- Leverage the SEL Hacks and read this blog showing how to create a safe, nurturing, relationship-based environment for students both in-person or through distance learning.
- Encourage the student to verbalize their feelings. Helping them put their emotions into words can give them a sense of control in the situation.
- Provide age-appropriate and factual information to students, but try to focus on the positive and that adults are working hard to keep them safe. Educators should also consider the effect the discussions have on students who may have experienced the effects of COVID-19 and other diseases in family and acquaintances. Caution should be generously applied in any case where such context may create discomfort or harm for any students.
- Consider reactions students may have to the pandemic and ways to support them (English | Spanish).
- Help students build connections, with you and with each other. This may be more challenging given the need for social distancing or distance learning, but caring connections with others is more important than ever. Edutopia has some ideas for fostering a strong classroom community in a virtual setting.
- Routine and predictability are important. If possible, try to communicate with children about any changes before they happen. Given potentially quick changes that may happen this year, explaining the changes as or after they happen can help students adjust as well.
- Explore The National Child Traumatic Stress Network Resource Guide for Trauma-Informed School Strategies During Covid-19. This document gives deeper insight into Covid-19 related trauma and tangible strategies for teachers and administrators.

Equity and Inclusion

What curriculum choices and instructional practices support equity and access to quality instruction?

While the guidance provided throughout this document promotes equitable teaching and learning practices through research-based practices, educators need to spend time reflecting on, planning for, and implementing strategies that support more equitable and inclusive learning environments for students in the 2020-21 school year. In addition to the equitable instructional practices referenced throughout the document, the chart below lists practices to keep in mind given the current realities of returning to school:

More Equitable Practices	Less Equitable Practices
Making sure that students and families have what they need to access instruction or communication, and shifting practices where necessary to ensure access for all.	Deciding on one form of instructional delivery or family communication and sticking to only that.
Providing all students grade-level learning, regardless of their starting points. All students are capable of progressing to the next grade level this fall and mastering that content.	Never giving students access to on-grade-level content because of the perceived deficits they entered this school year with or providing "over-remediation" instead of focusing on below-grade-level work only when it is necessary for a student to complete grade-level work.[1]
Noticing/paying attention to students' thinking to see how students position and identify themselves and each other. Learning about the different worlds your students live in, and incorporating content that comes from those worlds.	Using examples and other materials that are limited in their diversity and/or representation of cultures and experiences or "leave out" students' identities.
Offering multiple opportunities and methods for students to demonstrate their proficiencies.	Using only one form of assessment to measure student progress.
Providing opportunities for self-reflection and student-reflection.	Continuing with a pacing guide or curriculum map without pausing for reflection or making adjustments based on student need and reflection.
Focusing on preventive and proactive discipline practices.	Relying heavily on exclusionary (actions that remove students from instruction) or punitive discipline.
Including family voice and choice in the classroom. Caregivers are seen as partners with a wealth of knowledge to support student learning.	Making assumptions about family wants and needs. Caregivers are seen as a hindrance to the instructional environment.

[1] TNTP. (2020, April). *Learning Acceleration Guide.* TNTP. https://tntp.org/assets/covid-19-toolkit-resources/TNTP_Learning_Acceleration_Guide.pdf

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While it can be easy to dismiss early elementary students as "too young" to join the conversations about systemic racism happening all around them, research suggests that "children not only recognize race from a very young age but also develop racial biases by ages three to five" (PACE 2009, p. 1). Educators of young children both must interrogate their own biases and help create spaces for anti-bias work in their classrooms.

Teacher Self-Reflection

- Harvard's Project Implicit offers Implicit Association Tests for several topics. Participating in these assessments can give you insight into your own unconscious biases.
- Learn about the Me/They/We strategy for checking in on how biases might be playing out in responding to student behavior.
- Dig deeper into the research on bias in the classroom. The US Department of Education Office for Civil Rights released an Early Learning Data Snapshot in 2014 highlighting the disparities around retention and suspension rates related to race and gender.

Creating an Anti-Bias Early Elementary Classroom

- Don't ignore differences in students. Instead, explore and celebrate student similarities and differences! Teaching for Change provides specific strategies for learning about physical differences in a productive way.
- Challenge traditional stereotypes. When you see associations that are negative (that girls aren't strong, for example), help students understand why that association is incorrect. This article from the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) gives a great example of how this could look when students create a "no girls allowed" clubhouse.
- Use texts that represent diversity and help children explore inequity.

Safety Considerations: Physical Environment and Supplies

Educators planning for in-person, blended, and distance learning instructional delivery models should always defer to the safety guidelines provided by your school or district. As the Covid-19 situation continuously develops, also consult the current Oklahoma Department of Health (OSDH) and Centers for Disease Control (CDC) health and safety guidelines.

Students working and playing together, as well as using hands-on materials regularly, is at the core of an elementary classroom. Teachers may need to modify many normal instructional practices to prevent the spread of viruses and other disease-causing organisms. The following elementary classroom safety considerations are not intended to replace a district's emergency or crisis safety

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plan and are not an exhaustive list of the health and safety needs to be considered.

Physical Learning Environment

First- and second-grade classrooms utilize a variety of classroom spaces: carpet, tables, centers, small group meeting areas, and sometimes sinks/drinking fountains and bathrooms. Often materials are shared between students. Some physical considerations:

- Desks and students should remain spaced at least 6 feet apart, to the extent possible, and face the same direction rather than students facing each other or working in physical groups. Spacing could also be encouraged through markings on tables and the floor. Utilize digital tools and class discussions to maintain collaborative learning opportunities.
- Utilize the outdoors as much as possible. Consider moving some carpet time activities, like read-alouds, to an outdoor location when the weather allows.
- Where students typically wait in line, place tape markings to indicate social distancing.
- Educators are strongly encouraged to use assigned seating.
- Handwashing and Drinking Fountains
  - Make washing hands a game. Have students sing a song, or put a stamp on their hand that they need to get off while washing. Have designated time for handwashing periodically throughout the day rather than relying on students to do it properly after using the bathroom. Immediately before using manipulatives or moving to a new physical space is a good time for this.
  - Consider having students use a cup or a water bottle over a communal water fountain. Students can fill their water bottles when they are doing their handwashing procedure.

Classroom Materials

- Student and Teacher Mask Usage
  - If feasible, have students attach their facemask to a lanyard they wear around their neck. This way it is easy for the mask to come off for eating and drinking without getting lost.
  - If possible, early childhood teachers should wear a facemask with a clear panel to allow students to see their mouths (and a face shield as appropriate). This can help in phonological awareness and phonics development, as well as building connections with the teacher.

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- Try limiting the objects coming from home to school. If backpacks or other materials are completely necessary, cubbies and/or storage outside of the classroom may be easiest to prevent accidental contamination.
- Limit student material sharing as much as possible. Each student will likely need to have their own set of daily materials. For example, each student may need a pencil box with their own personal pencils, crayons, scissors, and glue stick.
- For other often used small manipulatives, like counters, pattern blocks, or playdough, separate them out into individual zip-lock baggies and label with student names. Keep each student's belongings separated from those of others and in individually labeled containers, cubbies or areas. Classrooms should reduce the use of shared items that may be difficult to clean. Consider using digital manipulatives as an alternative, when appropriate.
    - [ELA digital manipulatives](#)
    - [Math digital manipulatives](#)
- Instead of turning in paper copies of assignments, consider taking a picture to view/submit student work digitally, allowing for closer examination and/or digital collaboration.

Additional Considerations for In-Person Learning

Learning relies on the interaction between students and teachers and among students to construct knowledge and skills. Teachers may need to modify collaborative learning practices to maintain collaboration while minimizing risk.
- Considerations for Centers
    - Try making some centers portable, where students bring the materials to their desk/table instead of moving around the room.
    - Clustering students into small groups or "pods" that travel from center-to-center together can limit exposure.
    - Allow students to do center time in the morning and afternoon, choosing one center each time and sanitizing materials in between.
    - While it is the responsibility of the teacher to ensure that materials are properly sanitized, start teaching students how to clean off materials after they use them. This is an extra layer of protection and a healthy habit for students to be practicing.
    - Have a "CLEAN ME PLEASE" bucket. Students can place materials they have used in this bucket for disinfecting prior to another student using the item. The [CDC has guidelines for Cleaning and Disinfecting Community Facilities](#).

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- Limit guests and visitors to the classroom while remaining mindful that parents and families play a vital role in their child's education; involve guest speakers through virtual means.

- Evaluate planned student activities for safety and student interactions but also their value for engaging students in meaningful thinking and learning. Consider alternatives that teach the same concepts and skills. Build in extra time for sanitizing activities.

- Include instruction that teaches the routines and procedures that students should use in the class and out of school. Consider the traffic flow when distributing materials and other movements. Minimize the number of students that need to move. Establish personal student practices such as wearing masks, washing hands, and sharing materials. Use signage that encourages the practices.

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Ongoing Support for Instruction

OSDE will continue to provide ongoing support for instruction during the 2020-2021 academic year. Go to the Curriculum and Instruction page on the OSDE website to find each content area's website. Each page will have upcoming professional learning opportunities and additional instructional resources.

Professional Learning Opportunities

- Tech Tool Tuesday Recordings- Learn about different education technology tools for instruction.
- EngageOK Sessions - Access videos on various topics by going to the EngageOK website.
- The Reading League and The Reading League Oklahoma
- Oklahoma Council of Teachers of English
- Oklahoma Council of Teachers of Mathematics
- Oklahoma Council for the Social Studies
- Oklahoma Science Teaching Association

OSDE Hosted Virtual Meetings

Join OSDE staff and teachers around the state for monthly professional learning opportunities during the 2020-21 school year.

Grades 1-2 Virtual Meetings

- Every 4th Tuesday of each month, 4:30-5:30 p.m.
- First meeting will occur on August 25, 2020
- Zoom information will be communicated through the ELAOK Elementary, OKMath Elementary, Science and Social Studies Newsletters. Subscribe here!

Reading Sufficiency Virtual Meetings

- First meeting will occur on Tuesday, August 18th, at 2:00 p.m.
- Every 2nd Tuesday of each month, 2:00-3:00 p.m.
- Zoom information will be communicated through the OKRSA Newsletter. Subscribe here!
- These virtual meetings are also appropriate for RSA coordinators and school administrators.

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Social Media Connections			
ELA	**Math**	**Science**	**Social Studies**
Join Facebook groups: ● #ELAOK ● #ELAOK Elementary ● #OKEarlyEd	Join Facebook groups: ● #OKMath ● #OKMath Elementary	Join Facebook groups: ● All grades #OKSci ● #OKSci Elementary ● #OKSci5th	Join Facebook groups: ● OKCSS ● #OKSS Elementary ● OKeconed
Twitter accounts to follow: ● Deb Wade ● Melissa Ahlgrim ● #elaok	Twitter accounts to follow: ● Christine Koerner ● #okmath ● #ElemMathChat ● #MTBoS	Twitter accounts to follow: ● Heather Johnston ● @ngsschat ● #oksci	Twitter accounts to follow: ● Brenda Beymer-Chapman ● @OKCSS ● @OKECONEDU

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