



Improving Level of Instruction

MAGIC **8** PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT SERIES



METRO
NASHVILLE
PUBLIC
SCHOOLS

THE “MAGIC 8” CLASSROOM PRACTICES

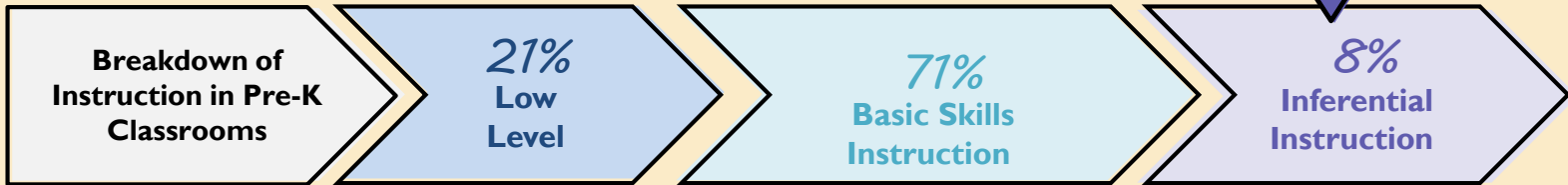
1. Reduce time spent in transition
2. Improving level of instruction
3. Creating a positive climate
4. Increasing teacher listening to children
5. Planning sequential activities
6. Promoting associative and cooperative interactions
7. Fostering high levels of engagement
8. Providing math opportunities

★ 2017-18 Initiative: Focus on Literacy ★

Which classroom practices and experiences improve children's outcomes?



WHY LEVEL OF INSTRUCTION MATTERS



Children in classrooms with teachers who engaged in higher levels of instruction demonstrated greater gains in:

- Letter & Sight Word Recognition
- Vocabulary*
- Self-Regulation
- Early Math*
- Early Writing*

**Stronger effects for children who entered pre-k with lower skills than their peers.*

BASIC SKILLS INSTRUCTION	INFERENTIAL INSTRUCTION
Requires children to...	
Give the right answer (e.g., recite facts, identify objects)	Draw from experiences, background knowledge, context clues
Sit quietly and take in new information (e.g., listen to a story)	Actively construct links between experiences and ideas, past/present content; interact with peers and teachers



DISCUSSION POINT:

Why is higher level instruction **especially** beneficial for children who entered pre-k with lower skills than their peers?

UNPACKING LEVEL OF INSTRUCTION



Most instruction observed in Pre-K is at a “Basic Skills” level.

Low Level Instruction

Assisting with developmental demands of fine and gross motor activities

- Helping spread glue or hold scissors
- Singing along to a song without a clear academic focus



Basic Skills Instruction

Asking questions with predetermined answers, with the goal of having children learn or recite the correct response

- What sound does “g” make?
- Do we have more boys or girls here today?



Inferential Instruction

Exploring a topic using authentic, open-ended questioning with several turns

- What do you think is going to happen next?
- Why do you think that?
- Katie, do you agree with Sean’s prediction? Why not?



DISCUSSION POINT:

What are some supports within your curriculum for achieving a higher level of instruction?

MOVING BEYOND BASIC SKILLS

The key to moving beyond basic skill instruction is to help children make inferences. Inferential questions are **open-ended**, have **more than one possible answer**, and **require abstract thought**.

TRY ASKING CHILDREN TO...

Explain their thought process to a teacher or peer

Predict based on context clues or prior knowledge

Connect content with personal experiences

Reflect back on parts of previous activities or lessons



DISCUSSION POINT:

What is a recent activity where you could have used the above strategies to increase level of instruction?

How do you know...?
Why do you think...?
What makes you say...?

Tell your friend about a time when you...

What would happen if...?
How could we...?

What do you remember about ...?
What was your favorite part of...?

SPECIAL THANKS & ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

We are grateful to the following MNPS Pre-K Instructional Coaches and Multi-Classroom Leaders for their invaluable feedback in developing these materials:

SeTara DeThrow
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Stephanie Mullins
Holly Stone
Ashley Aldridge Wilson
Rhiannon Wilson

Where can I find resources and more information on each of the Magic 8 classroom practices?



<https://my.vanderbilt.edu/mnpspartnership/>

INDIVIDUAL IMAGE SOURCES

FREQUENTLY USED IMAGES*

- [Lightbulb](#) | [myiconfinder.com](#)
- Designed by Vexels.com:
 - [Hand drawn magnifying glass](#)
 - [Hand drawn bar graph](#)
 - [Pie chart hand drawn doodle](#)
 - [Hand drawn wall clock](#)
 - [Hand drawn cloud bubble](#)
 - [Hand drawn open book](#)
 - [Cog wheel hand drawn icon](#)

*These graphics are used as icons throughout the series. For example this [lightbulb](#) clipart appears beside most “Discussion Point” questions.

ADDITIONAL IMAGE SOURCES

Slide 4: [glue](#) | [clker.com](#); [scissors](#), [music notes](#), [beaker](#) | [kisspng.com](#)