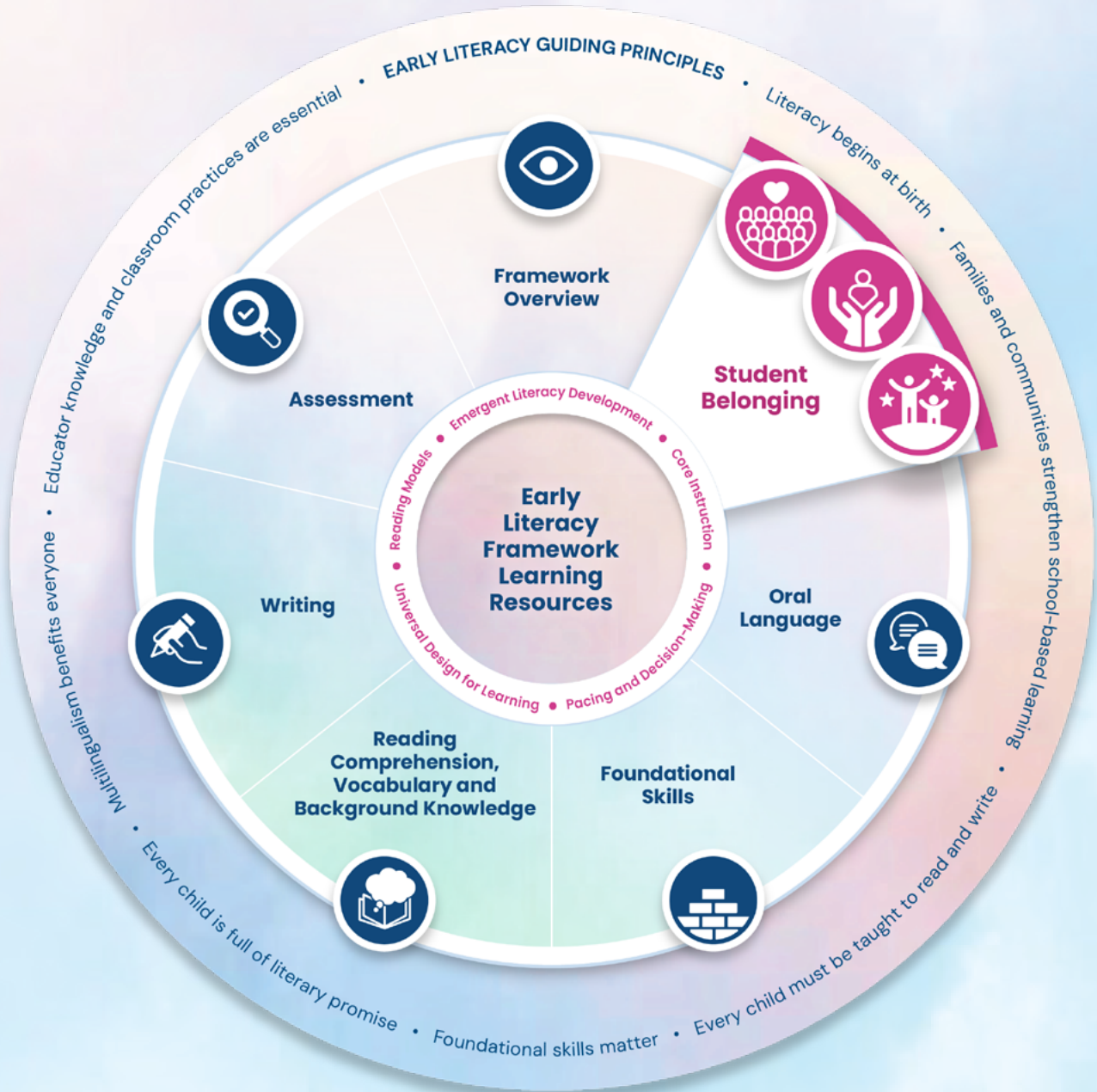


## COLLABORATIVE LEARNING SESSION GUIDE

# Student Belonging

## Fostering Student Belonging in Literacy Education



# Student Belonging

## Fostering Student Belonging in Literacy Education

### Overview

*This Collaborative Learning Session (CLS) is intended to complement and extend the learning in the Student Belonging module, an asynchronous online learning experience.*

### Student Belonging Module Review

In the [Student Belonging module](#), participants explored a comprehensive approach to fostering student belonging in support of high-quality literacy education. The key strategies within this approach include culturally responsive practices, integrating social-emotional learning, differentiating for all learners and family-school literacy partnerships. In the module, participants learned about these key strategies, reviewed a case study that exemplified the key strategies for fostering student belonging in literacy education, and considered extension activities or resources for implementing these key strategies in their own context.

Participation in the Student Belonging module is not required for participation in the CLS, but it is highly recommended.

### Student Belonging Collaborative Learning Session

This CLS builds upon the foundational knowledge from the Student Belonging module to consider strategies and conditions necessary for fostering a strong sense of belonging in literacy education. In this collaborative learning session, participants will have an opportunity to return to the case study in the module as a tool for better understanding the conditions and approaches required to meaningfully implement these key strategies. Utilizing the Student Belonging Assets Inventory and Action Plan, educators will reflect on their current practices and resources, and brainstorm adaptations to enhance student belonging. Through this session, participants will examine their own instructional contexts, share experiences and collaboratively develop tailored action plans to foster an inclusive learning environment that nurtures student belonging.

### Preparing for the Collaborative Learning Session

This CLS is scheduled to take 40 minutes with an opportunity to extend the meeting up to 90 minutes.

## Facilitator Preparation

### Review Oregon Early Literacy Framework (OELF) Resources

- Revisit the Student Belonging module as a refresher
- Read the [Case Study: Student Profile of Aaliyah, Grade 2](#)
- The Student Belonging module contains additional resources that provide more background about the topic and strategies.

### Schedule the CLS

- Communicate with your team about the session date, time, location and goals.
- Consider sending a meeting reminder one to two days prior.
- Print or send out the materials in advance of the meeting.

### Prepare for Facilitation

- Closely read the facilitator agenda below.
- Review the facilitator goals and reminders below.
- Explore the additional resources, if helpful.

## Facilitator Reminders

*Focus on student belonging particularly for literacy education.* As you facilitate dialogue and learning about student belonging in literacy education, pay close attention to focusing discussion and examples on fostering student belonging specifically for literacy learning. While participants may allude to norms and foundations of student belonging they co-create with students in the beginning of the year, try to focus participants' considerations for how these foundations impact and afford opportunities for high-quality literacy education and outcomes specifically.

*Create a safe space for speaking about identity.* When facilitating this CLS, try to foster the community conditions required for participants to speak about identity and reflect on their own cultural, linguistic and racial backgrounds. This may require some modeling and vulnerability from the facilitator and/or setting community norms.

*Delve deeper beyond surface level strategies for fostering student belonging.* Encourage discussion of robust and meaningful examples or strategies for fostering student belonging in literacy. Help participants move beyond diverse representation in literature and multicultural

celebrations to authentic opportunities to learn about and integrate students' complex identities into reading and writing comprehension, to explore how the race, culture, and language of an author influences their writing, or to provide meaningful opportunities for student choice in their own literacy learning.

## Responsive Facilitation

The agenda in this guide serves as a reference for those who prefer an agenda that is ready to implement. Facilitators can decide to adjust the agenda to better meet the needs of the team. This may include additional reflection time, work time for teachers to engage in activities, review of materials and/or feedback opportunities.

# Suggested Meeting Agenda

## Materials

- [Case Study: Student Profile of Aaliyah, Grade 2](#)
- [Student Belonging Assets Inventory \(extension\)](#)
- [Student Belonging in Literacy Action Plan \(extension\)](#)

## Learning Goals

Participants will:

- review the key strategies for fostering student belonging in literacy education and develop adaptations of these key strategies for the communities with which they work; and
- deepen their understanding of the conditions and resources needed to implement key strategies for fostering student belonging in their own instructional context.

## Success Criteria


Participants will:


- annotate and discuss the conditions and resources required to implement the key strategies for fostering student belonging using evidence from the case study and observations from their own contexts; and
- use guiding questions and the Student Belonging Assets Inventory and Student Belonging in Literacy Action Plan to reflect on the approaches, resources and networks they already employ in their own contexts to craft next steps.

## Essential Questions for Discussion

- How can we learn more about the students and families in our context and use this information to create a greater sense of belonging in our classroom or school climate?
- What existing practices, resources or relationships can I build on to increase the conditions for student and family belonging in my context?
- How can we adapt and implement culturally responsive and social-emotional instructional practices to increase student belonging in their literacy learning?

# Agenda

TIME	LEARNING PROGRESSION AND FACILITATOR GUIDANCE	MATERIALS
5m	<p><b>Opening and Welcome</b></p> <p>Consider opening the learning session with introductions or with a question that sparks participant prior knowledge about belonging.</p> <p>Potential questions may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>⦿ Describe a time when you felt like you belonged or were included.</li> <li>⦿ What is one way you try to foster student belonging in your context?</li> <li>⦿ Did you feel like you belonged in your own K-12 education? Why or why not?</li> </ul> <p>Make connections from participants’ responses to the purpose and learning goals of the session.</p> <p>Create or use previous community agreements to set the tone for shared learning and discussions.</p>	<p>Select your favorite opener for a meeting.</p> <p>Chart paper or a shared platform to write down community agreements.</p>
5m	<p> <b>Meet Aaliyah and Her Family</b></p> <p>Begin the session by stating that we are focusing on ways to foster student belonging to achieve high-quality literacy education. Stress that a first step is to know the students and families in your context.</p> <p>Encourage a volunteer or volunteers to read aloud the Background Information section in the <a href="#">Case Study: Student Profile of Aaliyah, Grade 2</a>.</p> <p>Then encourage participants to keep in mind one student, family or student group for whom they would like to increase student belonging.</p>	<p>Student and family profile about Aaliyah in <a href="#">Case Study: Student Profile of Aaliyah, Grade 2</a></p>

TIME	LEARNING PROGRESSION AND FACILITATOR GUIDANCE	MATERIALS
25m	 <p><b>Case Study of Student Belonging in Literacy Education</b></p> <p>Have a plan to allow participants to annotate, such as using sticky notes, highlighter, pens or pencils. Participants could also annotate digital copies of the resources.</p> <p>Follow <a href="#">Protocol for Annotating and Discussing the Student Belonging Case Study</a>.</p> <p>Conclude this section by summarizing a few major takeaways from the group discussion.</p>	<p>Sticky notes, highlighters, pens or pencils. May also annotate digitally.</p> <p><a href="#">Case Study: Student Profile of Aaliyah, Grade 2</a></p>
5m	<p><b>Closing and Reflection</b></p> <p>When closing, ask participants to consider the community or student they first brought to mind in the beginning of the learning session. Ask them to share out a next step that will foster student belonging in literacy education for this community or student.</p>	

## Extension Ideas

- Support participants to consider the assets they already have to foster student belonging in literacy education using the [Student Belonging Educator Assets Inventory Protocol](#).
  - **Participant Materials:** [Student Belonging Assets Inventory](#)
- Consider creating a more formal action plan to foster student belonging in literacy education using the [Student Belonging in Literacy Action Plan Protocol](#).
  - **Participant Materials:** [Student Belonging in Literacy Action Plan](#)
- Suggest the extension activities for classroom implementation from the Student Belonging Canvas module.

# Suggested Participant Agenda

## Essential Question

- How can we adapt and implement key strategies to increase student belonging in their literacy learning?

## Learning Goals

Participants will

- review the key strategies for fostering student belonging in literacy education and develop adaptations of these key strategies for the communities with which they work; and
- deepen their understanding of the conditions and resources needed to implement key strategies for fostering student belonging in their own instructional context.

## Success Criteria

Participants will

- annotate and discuss the conditions and resources required to implement the key strategies for fostering student belonging using evidence from the case study and observations from their own contexts; and
- use guiding questions and the Student Belonging Assets Inventory and Student Belonging in Literacy Action Plan to reflect on the approaches, resources and networks they already employ in their own contexts to craft next steps.

## CLS Meeting Agenda

TIME	AGENDA
5m	Welcome and Purpose/Community Working Agreements
5m	Taking Stock of Student Belonging in Our Context
25m	Annotating and Discussing the Student Belonging Case Study
5m	Closing and Reflection



# Facilitator Protocols

## Protocol for Annotating and Discussing the Student Belonging Case Study

**PURPOSE:** This protocol guides participants to read or re-read the case study of Aaliyah and Mr. Thompson from the Strand B module with an investigative lens. Participants will annotate and discuss specific examples of how and under what conditions key strategies for fostering student belonging in literacy education occur within the case study.

### Suggested Protocol Outline:

**STEP 1** — Review the Four Key Strategies to foster student belonging using the PowerPoint in the Belonging module or encourage the participants who engaged with module materials to recall the key strategies and provide a brief summary of each strategy.

**STEP 2** — Provide an opportunity for participants to first read through the case study on their own before beginning the annotation process together.

**STEP 3** — Facilitator guides participants through a close reading and annotation of the case study using the guiding questions below to highlight the Four Key Strategies for student belonging in literacy education throughout the case study.

First, as a whole group, model taking and providing opportunities to practice annotations of the case study section “Background Information” and “Accommodations and Interventions,” using the following prompts:

- Underline key information about Aaliyah.
- How does this compare to the information you know about the students in your context?

**STEP 4** — Ask participants to annotate the rest of the case study individually or in teams. Depending on the background knowledge of participants in the group, give participants time to consider guiding questions together before re-reading the case study to annotate their ideas, and then discussing their annotations as a whole group. Or you may ask participants to select the key strategy and guiding question that they are most interested in before annotating the rest of the case study using that lens.

- **Focus on Key Strategy 1: Fostering Family–School Literacy Partnerships:**
  - Guiding question: What explicit actions did Mr. Thompson take to cultivate a relationship of mutual learning and communication with Aaliyah’s family?
- **Focus on Key Strategy 2: Differentiating Core Instruction**
  - What were specific instances of differentiated core literacy instruction for Aaliyah that you could use in your own context?
  - Who was involved in helping create that differentiated core instruction? What relationships did Mr. Thompson rely on to create and sustain that differentiation?
- **Focus on Key Strategy 3: Implementing Culturally Responsive Literacy Practices**
  - What culturally responsive literacy practices did Mr. Thompson implement for the students in his classroom? Why were they culturally responsive for the students?
- **Focus on Key Strategy 4: Integrating Social–Emotional Learning and Literacy Education**
  - What social–emotional learning supports provided to Aaliyah throughout the case study could you adapt for the students in your context?
- **General Reflection Questions to Consider Across All Key Strategies:**
  - What knowledge or conditions would be helpful for me to try out this strategy in my context?
  - What could I add, shift or continue in my current practice that supports this strategy?
  - Wonderings?
  - Connections?

**STEP 5** — Whole group discussion: Have participants share their annotations and takeaways as a whole group for each of the key strategies for fostering student belonging in literacy.

## Student Belonging Educator Assets Inventory Protocol (Extension)

**PURPOSE:** The Student Belonging Educator Assets Inventory Protocol prompts participants to consider the “assets” (i.e., tools, resources, networks and skills) the participant already has to foster student belonging in literacy education.

### Suggested protocol outline:

**STEP 1** — Participants will think about a student and their family that they would like to learn more about to ensure their belonging in the classroom. Participants can either write the name

of the family or make notes about the student group in the inventory and/or share aloud with a partner. Remind participants that fostering student belonging is only possible if we give ourselves opportunities to fully get to know the students and families with whom we work.

**STEP 2** — Participants will then individually or in a team reflect on the assets and conditions educators bring to foster student belonging in literacy using the Student Belonging Educator Assets Inventory. Organized by the four key strategies for fostering student belonging, educators will complete the first section of the inventory which entails guiding questions to prompt thinking about the assets they bring or have for each strategy.

## Student Belonging in Literacy Action Plan Protocol (Extension)

**PURPOSE:** In the Student Belonging in Literacy Action Plan Protocol, participants create concrete next steps using the key strategies to increase student belonging in literacy learning.

### Suggested protocol outline:

**STEP 1** — Participants will return to the Student Belonging Educator Assets Inventory and choose one key strategy or quadrant they would like to focus on to increase belongingness in literacy education for the student group or family they chose in part one.

**STEP 2** — After selecting the key strategy or quadrant with which they will craft their next steps, participants can break into small groups by key strategies and share out approaches they have implemented in their classroom or extension activities they have tried from the modules, and reflections from that implementation.

**STEP 3** — Participants will then craft specific next steps based on sentence starters under the key strategies that are provided in the Protocol. Participants who have not yet tried the extension activities might consider implementing them in the classroom as their next steps.



## Case Study: Student Profile

# Aaliyah, Grade 2

### Background information:

Aaliyah is a kind and creative second grade student with a multitude of educational strengths and aptitudes in her home language, Spanish, and second language, English. Aaliyah is a great collaborator and is always thinking of her friends and little sister. Aaliyah's favorite activities are drawing, dancing and playing soccer with her friends, and when she grows up, she hopes to be an artist. When Aaliyah began kindergarten, she was identified as an English Language (EL) learner. During kindergarten, she also exhibited some academic and emotional challenges that led to an intervention process. After three tiers of interventions, the process culminated in her being evaluated and qualifying for a developmental delay and receiving an Individualized Education Program (IEP). Aaliyah, whose English proficiency is at the "Developing" level, can identify main details of a narrative and retell simple stories or relay past experiences. She requires more support with foundational skills such as phonemic awareness and alphabetic principles and is improving in understanding words and phrases when they are read to her, developing academic vocabulary, sequencing events, and providing descriptive responses to comprehension questions. Tasks perceived as challenging can overwhelm her, often causing her to shut down. As a dually-identified student, Aaliyah receives both special education instruction and English Language Development (ELD) services. She spends the majority of her day in her general education classroom and goes to three 30-minute pull-out groups a week for ELA intervention with the special education teacher, in addition to receiving ELD instruction with an ELD teacher and her other EL peers.

### Accommodations and interventions:

To address her unique needs, Aaliyah's IEP team, including her parents, general education teacher, special education teacher, and ELD specialist, have implemented several culturally and linguistically appropriate accommodations:

- **Extra Time:** Allowing Aaliyah more time to complete tasks reduces pressure and supports her learning pace.
- **Graphic Organizers and Manipulatives:** These tools help organize her thoughts and engage with content in a hands-on manner.
- **Emotion Chart:** This chart is something that Aaliyah has on her desk and takes with her to different activities. This assists her in expressing feelings and managing overwhelming situations.

- **Sentence Stems and Transition Word List:** These linguistic scaffolds support her writing efforts, providing structure she can build upon.
- **Native Language Supports:** Incorporating Spanish resources helps bridge learning concepts from her first language to English.
  - **Revising Checklist in Spanish:** This tool supports her writing process, making it accessible and comprehensible.
  - **Manipulatives:** Hands on materials that aid students in understanding abstract concepts.
- **Classroom Strategies:** Including the use of emotion cards for self-expression and manipulatives for interactive learning.

Through these targeted supports, Aaliyah’s learning environment is tailored to foster her academic growth and emotional well-being, ensuring she can participate fully and effectively alongside her peers during core literacy instruction.

## How does the teacher foster belonging for literacy education by building strong partnerships with Aaliyah’s family?

Aaliyah’s teacher, Mr. Thompson, began the school year by proactively establishing a strong foundation with Aaliyah’s family. Understanding the critical role family plays in a student’s educational journey, he used an interpreter during their initial meeting to facilitate clear communication and ensure an informational and collaborative meeting. During this meeting, which included Mr. Thompson, the special education teacher, the ELD teacher, and Aaliyah’s parents, the group reviewed Aaliyah’s IEP goals, collaboratively filled out and discussed a family/student inventory, discussed areas of concerns that the parents had, and outlined a support plan for Aaliyah. From filling out the inventory, the team learned a lot about Aaliyah as a daughter and sibling; discussed some of her likes, dislikes and triggers that happen at home; and gained a deeper insight into Aaliyah’s cultural and linguistic background, including learning about cultural traditions that hold significance for Aaliyah and her family. Additionally, the group discussed how they would communicate with each other. Aaliyah’s parents prefer texting, and the team decided to send weekly text updates on Fridays to keep the parents informed of her progress, along with regular class updates on larger announcements. In addition, Mr. Thompson made sure that Aaliyah’s parents are set up to receive class updates through text messaging to make sure they are included in larger classroom announcements including any community and schoolwide events. The group decided that when they met in a couple months for the first parent–teacher conference, they would see how this communication style was working and make any changes necessary.

The team also discussed how they could support Aaliyah’s literacy at home. Aaliyah’s parents

indicated they wanted tools to support Aaliyah at home. Building the information in the family inventory, Mr. Thompson encouraged Aaliyah's family to continue their own literacy practices, such as singing and family discussions, and developed a shared resource for the parents that included reading and writing strategies, a curated list of diverse books, and information about local literacy events. Mr. Thompson relied on other bilingual staff to make sure the information was provided in Spanish. After sharing the resources with Aaliyah's family, Mr. Thompson provided a space for her family to provide any feedback and request any additional resources he did not include at first.

After the full group meeting, the instructional portion of the team created their own meeting schedule. In addition to communicating with the family every Friday, Mr. Thompson, Aaliyah's special education teacher, and ELD teacher would meet biweekly to discuss her progress and adjust strategies as needed. These discussions ensure that Aaliyah's accommodations are effectively integrated into her daily learning experiences. This meeting also allows each teacher to know what lessons are being taught and what subjects will be addressed in the future, helping them to align their instruction with each other.

## Fostering a Sense of Belonging Within the Classroom

Using knowledge from the student-family inventory and family meetings, Mr. Thompson was able to foster a stronger sense of belonging for students in his class by strategically incorporating students' identities, preferences and cultural backgrounds into literacy instruction and the classroom environment. To set a tone of mutual respect and openness, Mr. Thompson first shares his own cultural background and personal interests with the students at the beginning of the year. He then gathers information about each student's identity through an inventory that includes questions about their likes, dislikes, strengths, and preferred ways of learning. This process not only helps him tailor his instructional strategies, but also ensures that each student feels seen and valued for their unique selves. Aaliyah and the other students who are classified as ELs fill out the inventory in a small group setting with Mr. Thompson providing one-on-one support when needed. In addition to having students fill out the inventory, Mr. Thompson conducts one-on-one conversations with each student. These discussions are structured around the inventory that the students filled out and are aimed at understanding students' personal experiences, educational preferences, and self-perceived strengths. For Aaliyah, this was an opportunity to express her interests and discuss her familial background, which further informed Mr. Thompson's approach to supporting her in the classroom. Learning that many of his students, including Aaliyah, come from Mexican heritage, Mr. Thompson enriched his classroom library with stories featuring authentic Mexican characters and traditions. He consulted Aaliyah's parents and other Mexican parents for book recommendations, using the initial conversations he had to shape a classroom environment that reflects students' cultural diversity. By integrating culturally relevant materials, Mr. Thompson not only fosters a welcoming and inclusive

atmosphere but also encourages educational dialogue among students about diversity and inclusion.

Moreover, Mr. Thompson makes it a point to display student work around the classroom, including students' self-portraits, and academic and creative projects. By seeing their culture and experiences reflected in classroom materials and contributions visibly acknowledged, Mr. Thompson's students feel a deeper connection to the classroom community. The teacher's initial conversations with students and their families are particularly instrumental in shaping a classroom environment that mirrors the cultural diversity of its occupants. By integrating books and materials that reflect the students' cultural backgrounds, Mr. Thompson not only fosters a welcoming and inclusive classroom culture but also promotes an educational dialogue among students about diversity and inclusion.

## What classroom supports does the teacher offer to reach all learners?

In their commitment to meeting the diverse needs of all students, including Aaliyah, Mr. Thompson adeptly implements a variety of supports and accommodations designed to optimize each student's learning experience. This tailored approach is evident in several key strategies they employ throughout the academic year.

### Implementation of Accommodations

Aaliyah, who benefits from specific accommodations outlined in her IEP, receives conscientious support from her teachers. Mr. Thompson, in collaboration with the special education and ELD teacher, ensures that all accommodations—such as extra time on assignments, the use of graphic organizers, emotion cards, and sentence stems—are seamlessly integrated into daily classroom activities.

### Multiple Formats for Expression

Recognizing the varied learning styles and strengths of all his students, Mr. Thompson incorporates multiple formats for students to showcase their learning. By leveraging technology, writing assignments, and speaking opportunities, he provides a rich array of avenues for student expression. This approach is particularly beneficial for Aaliyah, allowing her to engage with content in ways that align with her learning preferences and strengths. Whether it's through a digital presentation, a written story, or a narrated art piece, Aaliyah and her classmates have the flexibility to choose how they demonstrate their understanding and mastery of the topics studied. Mr. Thompson brings these different examples of expression to his progress meetings with the educational team, leveraging their expertise to explore new formats that cater to Aaliyah's diverse learning and linguistic needs.



## Progress Monitoring and Collaboration

Mr. Thompson conducts bi-weekly progress monitoring for all students, including Aaliyah. This systematic tracking of academic and developmental progress is crucial for making informed decisions about teaching strategies and accommodations. The data collected from these sessions are meticulously analyzed and shared with Aaliyah's IEP team, which includes her parents, special education teacher, and ELD specialist. This collaborative approach ensures that all partners are informed and involved in discussing Aaliyah's progress and adjusting her learning supports as necessary. The ongoing dialogue between Mr. Thompson and the rest of the IEP team facilitates a responsive educational environment where adjustments can be made proactively to meet Aaliyah's evolving needs.

Through these supportive strategies, Mr. Thompson not only enhances the educational experience for Aaliyah but also fosters an inclusive, adaptive learning environment that benefits all students. This approach reflects a commitment to educational equity and demonstrates the teacher's dedication to reaching every learner in the classroom.

## Classroom Excerpt

### Lesson context

Mr. Thompson has just completed a read aloud of the Mexican folktale, "Borreguita and the Coyote"—a book that was recommended to him by some parents of students in his class. He carefully introduced key vocabulary and background knowledge, setting the stage for the students to deeply engage with the story's themes and language. In a previous lesson, the class filled out this information using a graphic organizer. Mr. Thompson has the following learning targets:

- **Standard:** Recount stories, including fables and folktales from diverse cultures, and determine their central message, lesson or moral.
- **Goal:** Students will be able to recount "Borreguita and the Coyote" including the characters, setting and plot, by using various methods of communicating including, but not limited to, writing, making a video, performing a skit or recording an oral recount.

### Lesson excerpt

After the read aloud, Mr. Thompson facilitated the transition of the class into various stations designed to cater to diverse learning styles. Aaliyah and three classmates began with a small group discussion with Mr. Thompson to recap the story and decide how they would each like to recount the story.



**Mr. Thompson:** “Let’s go over the story again. What clever tricks did Borreguita use to outsmart the Coyote?”

*As they talked, Aaliyah used her bilingual dictionary to aid her recall of specific vocabulary.*

**Aaliyah:** “She told the Coyote to use his tail to catch fish in the river, but it didn’t work!”

**Mr. Thompson:** “Right, Aaliyah! Now, it’s time for each of you to share what happened in the story. You get to choose how you want to show what happened. You can write, act it out with a partner, film a video on the computer, or you can ask me to do something different.”

**Aaliyah:** “I want to draw.”

**Mr. Thompson:** “Drawing out the story is a great idea! You are such an incredible artist, so I know this is going to be beautiful. After you draw out the story, could you also write a few sentences about each drawing?”

*Aaliyah hesitated, her expression shifting. She shook her head no and put her head in her hands.*

**Mr. Thompson:** “Aaliyah, I’m noticing that you seem like you’re not as excited about the activity anymore. Can you tell me how you’re feeling right now?”

*Aaliyah kept her head in her hands and didn’t answer.*

Mr. Thompson used one of Aaliyah’s accommodations: “Can you show me how you’re feeling using your emotion chart?”

*Aaliyah slowly lifted her head up and pointed to the sad face on the chart.*

**Mr. Thompson:** “I see you picked the sad card. Are you feeling sad about having to write something about your drawing?”

*Aaliyah shook her head yes and shared, “I’m not good at writing... It’s too hard.”*

**Mr. Thompson:** “I understand writing can be challenging, but you are a great problem solver and know how to use your resources when you feel stuck. Let’s use the sentence stems and vocabulary we practiced, and remember, I’m here to help you through it. You also have the worksheet we filled out (graphic organizer) and vocabulary book (bilingual dictionary) to help you.”

*Reassured, Aaliyah began to sketch her scenes. After she was done drawing, Mr. Thompson sat with her as she began to narrate her drawing, using her sentence stems, graphic organizer and her bilingual dictionary with Mr. Thompson’s guidance.*

*As the session neared its end, Mr. Thompson invited students to share their work with a*

*partner and then opened the floor for students to share with the entire classroom. With newfound confidence, Aaliyah shared her drawings and narration with a partner.*

**Mr. Thompson:** “Aaliyah, this is wonderful work! Is it okay if I hang up your drawing on our class art wall? I also want to take a picture and send it to your parents!”

*Aaliyah smiled and enthusiastically nodded yes.*

## Teacher Reflections and Next Steps

Reflecting on this lesson, Mr. Thompson noted several positive outcomes that affirmed his approach to culturally responsive teaching. He observed a marked improvement in Aaliyah’s engagement and confidence, particularly when provided with the tools that catered to her linguistic needs and creative strengths including the bilingual visuals and sentence stems. Additionally, the strategic use of emotion cards was particularly effective in helping Aaliyah communicate her feelings of anxiety around writing, which allowed Mr. Thompson to provide immediate and appropriate support. This intervention not only aided Aaliyah in overcoming her immediate hurdles but also helped her feel understood and supported in her learning environment. Feedback from Aaliyah’s family was also overwhelmingly positive, especially regarding the integration of cultural content that resonated with their heritage. This connection not only enhanced Aaliyah’s learning experience but also strengthened the family’s involvement in her education.

Mr. Thompson plans to integrate more stories from the various cultures represented in his classroom in future lessons by sourcing materials that reflect his students’ backgrounds and organizing activities that allow students to explore and share their own stories. Additionally, in recognizing the challenges Aaliyah faces with writing, Mr. Thompson will continue to use graphic organizers and sentence stems, as well as individual and small group sessions focused on writing skills. He will also introduce peer review sessions where students can give and receive feedback on their writing in a supportive setting.

Mr. Thompson will continue to attend regular planning meetings to align and integrate strategies that support Aaliyah’s development across her learning environments. He plans to collaborate with her special education teacher and ELD teacher on collectively supporting Aaliyah’s writing skills. In addition, seeing the positive impact of emotion cards, Mr. Thompson will work with the school psychologist/social worker and special educator to expand his repertoire of emotional support tools, including incorporating role-play exercises, group discussions about feelings and coping strategies, and mindfulness activities tailored for young learners.

# Student Belonging Educator Assets Inventory

**STEP 1** — Select a student and their family or a student group whom you would like to learn more about to enhance their sense of belonging in the classroom.

**STEP 2** — Review the four key strategies listed below for fostering student belonging.

**Individually or as a team, consider the strengths and resources you currently bring to your classroom that help foster student belonging in literacy for this student or student group that you chose. Write your answers in each quadrant on the following page.**

If helpful, use the guiding questions to consider the assets you and your team have, including resources, skills, personal and professional knowledge, current practices, and networks, for fostering student belonging in literacy.

## The Four Key Strategies for Fostering Student Belonging & Guiding Questions:

- **KEY STRATEGY 1: Fostering Family–School Literacy Partnerships** — Bi-directional and collaborative relationships where families and school staff support and learn from one another to create the conditions for literacy learning. These partnerships include families and their practices as an important part of literacy learning and foster a culture of literacy inside and outside of the classroom.
- **KEY STRATEGY 2: Differentiating Core Instruction for Diverse Learners** — Differentiating core literacy instruction for learners with varying literacy backgrounds and abilities sends a message that all students can have meaningful learning experiences during core literacy instruction. Designing literacy instruction for access and engagement encourages students to reflect on and name what they need.

- **KEY STRATEGY 3: Culturally Responsive Literacy Instruction** — Centering the identities, preferences, and experiences of students and their families into literacy materials and instruction supports students to see themselves as a part of literacy learning and promotes student achievement. This provides opportunities for students to reflect on their own identities as they learn about diverse perspectives and foster a greater understanding of the world around them through text and multimedia.
- **KEY STRATEGY 4: Social-Emotional Learning and Literacy Education** — Teaching social-emotional skills, such as collaboration, self-expression and a growth mindset during literacy instruction, can provide a rich context and condition for student engagement. Providing opportunities for students to have choice in their literacy learning communicates to them that they are important and their ideas matter.

# Review of the Four Key Strategies for Fostering Student Belonging & Guiding Questions:

<h3>1 – Fostering Family–School Literacy Partnerships</h3> <p>How are you currently fostering family–school partnerships with this student or student group’s family or families? How do you currently incorporate this student or student group’s family expertise to support literacy instruction?</p>	<h3>2 – Differentiating Core Instruction for Diverse Learners</h3> <p>How do you differentiate literacy instruction for this student or student group in your context? What are some current modifications and accommodations that you utilize for diverse learners (i.e., multilingual learners, students with IEPs)?</p>
<h3>3 – Culturally Responsive Literacy Instruction</h3> <p>How do you incorporate the student or student group’s cultural and linguistic background in your classroom? How are the cultures and language of students reflected in your literacy instruction?</p>	<h3>4 – Social–Emotional Learning and Literacy Education</h3> <p>How do you currently support the social–emotional learning of this student or student group in your classroom? What types of opportunities do students have to practice social and emotional skills while developing literacy?</p>

# Student Belonging in Literacy Action Plan

**DIRECTIONS:** Consider a student/student group for whom you'd like to increase student belonging in their literacy learning.

Choose one key strategy that you would like to implement or improve upon to increase belonging for this student or student group.

If possible, share with a partner or small group.

Then, in the Action Plan Template below, write next steps to use your selected key strategies to increase the student belonging of the original student or student group you recalled at the beginning of the Collaborative Learning Session. Use the following language frames to create your action step, if helpful.

## Language Frames for Key Strategies

### KEY STRATEGY 1: Fostering Family-School Literacy Partnerships

- "I will \_\_\_\_\_ to create more opportunities to learn about and from the \_\_\_\_\_ family."
- "I will create a culture of literacy in and out of my context by \_\_\_\_\_."

### KEY STRATEGY 2: Differentiating Core Instruction for Diverse Learners:

- "I can collaborate with \_\_\_\_\_ to increase differentiations and modifications in my core literacy instruction."

- "Based on this student/student group's strengths and needs, I will incorporate \_\_\_\_\_ to support their access to rigorous literacy learning."

### KEY STRATEGY 3: Culturally Responsive Literacy Instruction:

- "I will learn more about the backgrounds, cultures and languages of this student or student group by \_\_\_\_\_."
- "I will incorporate the backgrounds, cultures and languages into my literacy instruction by \_\_\_\_\_."

### KEY STRATEGY 4: Social-Emotional Learning and Literacy Education:

- "I will implement additional opportunities to check-in about the social-emotional status of (the student or student group) by \_\_\_\_\_."
- "I will scaffold opportunities for the student or student group to collaborate meaningfully with peers/practice a growth mindset/have opportunities for self-expression in their literacy learning by \_\_\_\_\_."

# Action Plan Template

Name a key strategy you would like to implement or improve upon:

ACTION STEPS	KEY PERSONNEL	TIMELINE	INTENDED OUTCOMES (Short and Long Term)