

CHECK-UP TOOL: ENVIRONMENT

How Well Does Your Classroom Library Stack Up?

Use this tool with teachers to assess the effectiveness of classroom libraries. Have them read each statement and then check the appropriate answer. Ideally, each goal statement would be answered “yes” by elementary core-content teachers and secondary ELA/reading teachers. Secondary teachers other than ELA/reading teachers may have quite a few answers of “unsure” or “NA” depending on system/school initiatives. In a school or system that has an independent reading program, all secondary teachers should have libraries that meet the goal statements.

Goal	Yes	No	Not Sure	N/A
The core classroom library collection contains 30 books per student (or at least 300 books in the core collection).				
The classroom library contains a wide variety of fiction and nonfiction, appropriately divided into sections or subgenres to help students decide what to read.				
At least half the classroom library is nonfiction.				
The classroom library includes a variety of formats, including big books at the lowest grade levels and graphic novels/manga/comics in secondary.				
The classroom library includes reference books, including but not limited to dictionaries and thesauri.				
At least 30% of the books in the classroom library have been published within the last five years.				

Goal	Yes	No	Not Sure	N/A
The classroom library contains books reflecting populations and languages present in the school/system.				
There are sets/groups of the same title so that students can read together if they choose to do so.				
There are books that are at least two grade levels below my grade level for below-grade-level readers.				
There are books that are at least two grade levels above my grade level for advanced readers.				
The classroom contains materials other than books (magazines, etc.).				
The classroom library is contained in its own clearly delineated area.				
The classroom library has appropriate storage (shelves, tubs, baskets, etc.).				
There are special book displays, changed periodically (for ex., seasons, topics, favorite authors).				
The classroom library has a classification system and is labeled appropriately to facilitate ease of browsing and checkout.				