

Balanced Literacy Program

Mr. Ashraf Malkawi

Academic Coach / Educational Supervisor
Dhahran Ahliyya Schools

Ms. Fatima AlMahaqeri

Responsible of Student Support Unit
Dhahran Ahliyya Schools



Objectives

- Understand the importance and components of a balanced literacy program.
- Use the framework to develop reading and writing skills.
- Understand the role of classroom libraries in enhancing the balanced literacy program.
- Understand the role of intervention in the balanced literacy program.

Opening Activity

What is Balanced Literacy?

- A philosophical orientation that assumes that reading and writing achievement are developed through instruction and support in multiple environments using various approaches that differ by level of teacher support and child control (Fountas & Pinnell)
- Balanced literacy is a framework that gives equal attention to reading and writing instruction. As reading and writing are interdependent, instruction in one supports learning in the other.

Why Balanced Literacy?

- Gradually gives children more responsibility for their reading and writing.
- Children get the opportunity to learn in different ways.
- It works for children at all levels of literacy.
- It creates a rich literary environment.

Consideration for Balanced Literacy

- Gradual Release of responsibility
(I do , We do , You do)
- Differentiation
- Combination of instruction
- Types of texts

Components of a Balanced Literacy Program

Reading

Shared/Interactive Reading
Guided Reading
Independent Reading

Word Work

Concepts of print
Phonological awareness
Phonics
Vocabulary
Spelling & Word Study

Writing

Shared/ Interactive Writing
Independent Writing
Guided Writing
Modelled Writing

Reading

Shared/Interactive Reading
Guided Reading
Independent Reading

Shared/ Interactive Reading

- Teachers provide explicit comprehension instruction using mini lessons
- Same text
- One heterogeneous group
- Teacher's role
- Turn & Talk
- Flip chart



Guided Reading

The Guided Reading lesson plans for every leveled book provide a scaffolded approach to instruction.

- Using levelled readers
- Homogeneous (flexible grouping)
- Teacher's role



Independent Reading

Independent reading provides students the opportunity to apply reading strategies and skills in a text of personal interest.

- Completing the gradual release model
- Teacher's role
- Classroom Library



Reading Workshop Checklist

Reading Checklist

Shared Reading/Mini Lesson

- I use charts (class created) that are displayed throughout classroom
- My classroom is well organized and clean
- I have numerous displays of charts, student's writing, lists, etc.
- My students' work displayed reflects reading and writing
- I use different fiction and nonfiction texts for shared reading
- I use T & T (turn and talk) during shared reading
- I model reading and comprehension strategies and skills

Guided Reading

- I have sets (at least 4 levels) of leveled readers of different genre.
- I have matched students with leveled books (sets)
- I have flexible guided reading groups
- I have a record of leveled books used with each student
- I have a record of strategies introduced to students
- I have a record of changes that I made in groups
- All my students know the routine of guided reading
- I continuously assess students to check their reading level
- I make reading conferences and record information

Independent and Free Reading

- My class library is well organized and has at least 300 books
- All books are accessible and easily borrowed by my students
- I have a record of students' use of class library
- All my students have finished at least one bookworm booklet (each term).
- My students read different genre.
- I check my students reading log and guide them for their next reading
- My students love reading
- I create daily reading opportunities for my students
- I always encourage my students to read inside and outside the school
- My students have an opportunity to read books of their interest and level
- Finally, I have incorporated all aspects of a balanced reading classroom in my daily schedule.

Word Work

The primary goal of word work is to support students' development of the orthography knowledge that students can apply as they are reading and writing.

Component:

- Concepts of print
- Phonological awareness
- Phonics
- Vocabulary
- Spelling & Word Study



Writing

Writing

- Writing is multifaceted and it orchestrates thinking, language, and mechanics.
- The act of writing is the product of a constellation of habits and skills that place high cognitive and metacognitive demands on students.
- As with reading, writing must be taught with intention. It is not sufficient to simply provide writing opportunities and hope for the best.



Types of Writing

- Shared writing / Interactive writing
- Modelled writing
- Guided writing
- Independent writing

Shared Writing

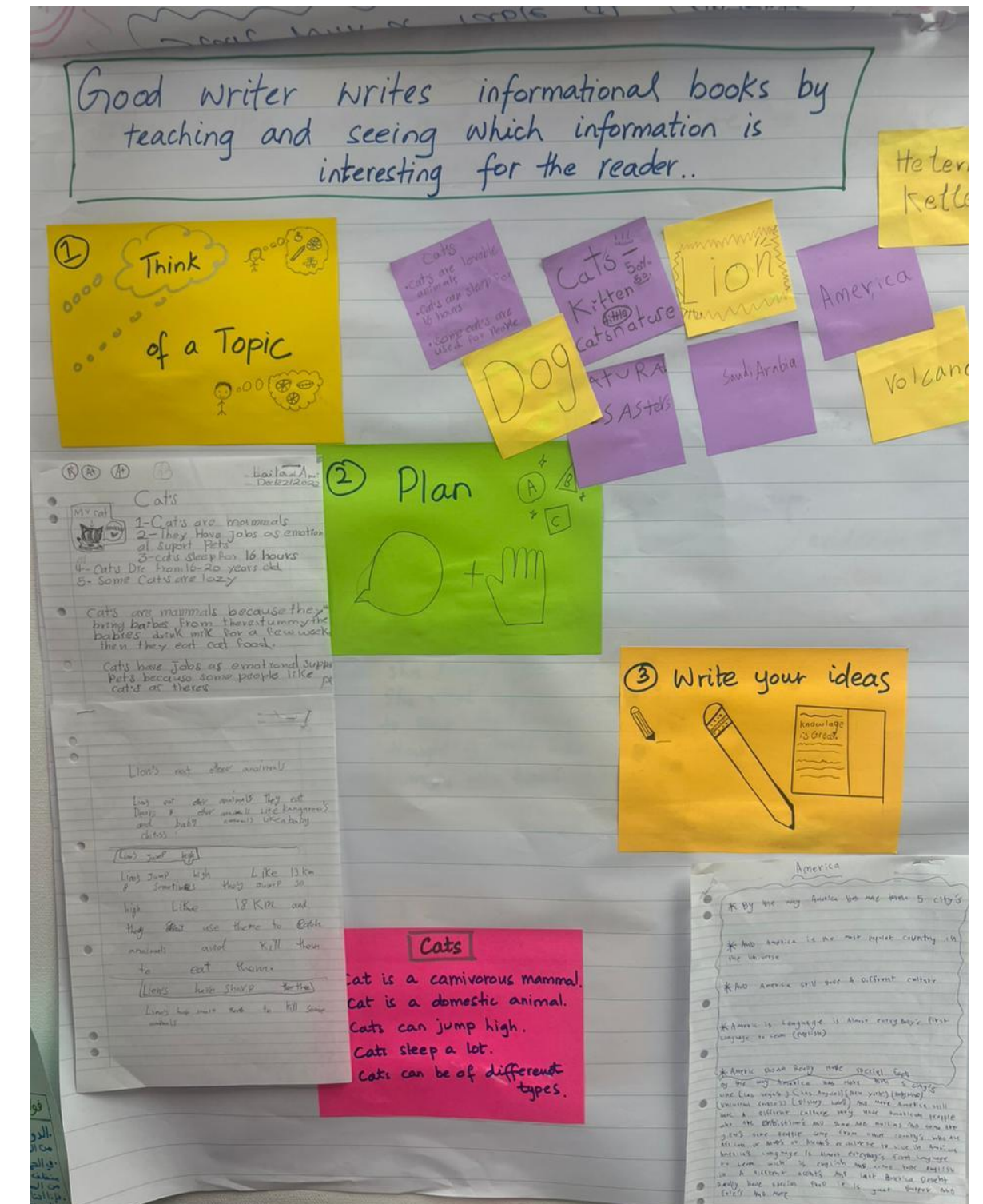
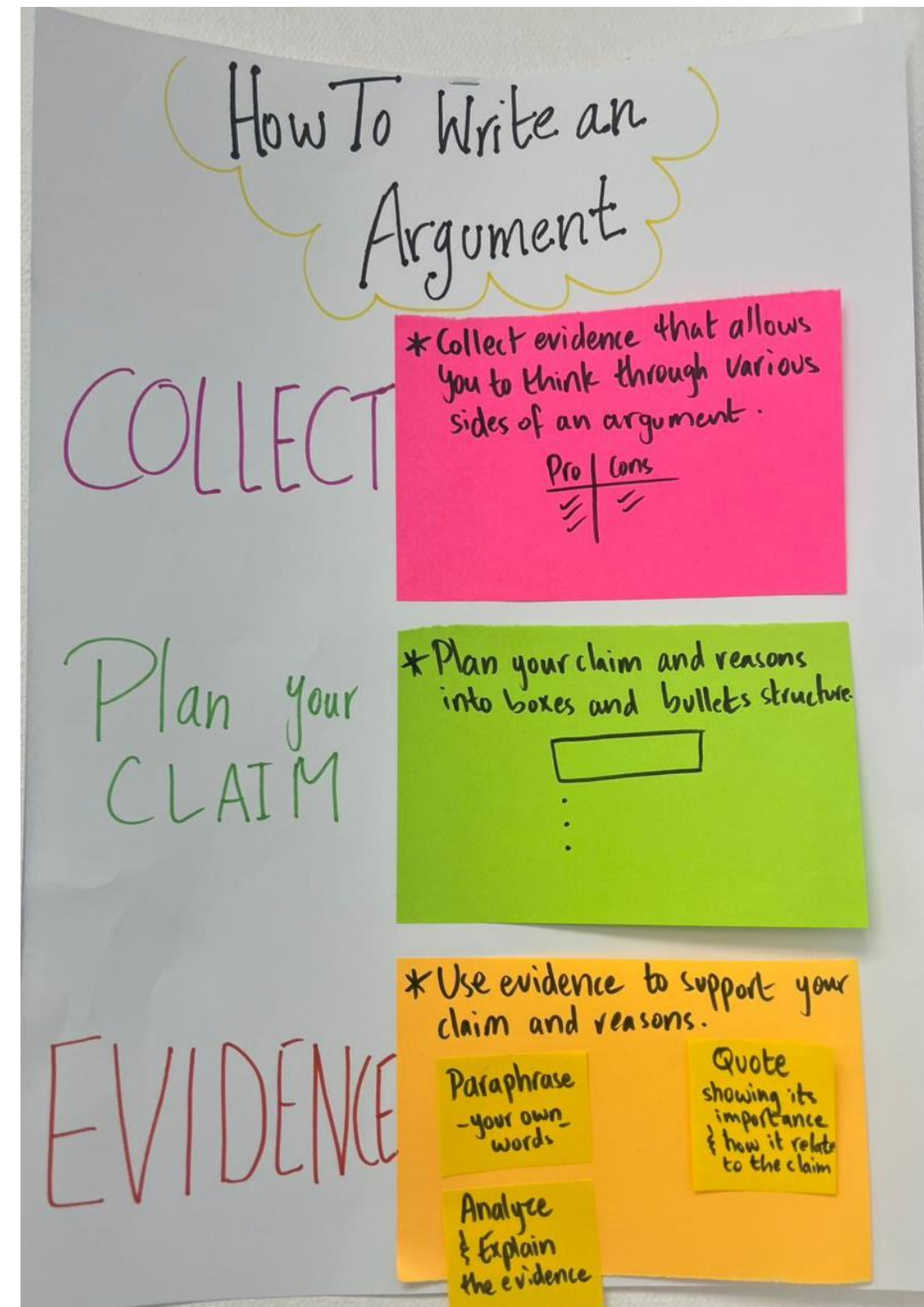
- The teacher and the students compose a text together.
- The teacher is the scribe.
- Students compose each word of the composition and reread it many times.

Lesson elements include the following:

1. A shared experience to write about
2. Planning and composing the message
3. Constructing the message
4. Rereading the message

Modelled Writing

- It is used at every grade level.
- The teacher demonstrates the process of writing in a particular genre.
- Thinking aloud is used to reveal what's going on to show the purposeful wiring decisions.



Guided Writing

- It is a small group approach involving the teacher meeting with a group of students with similar writing needs.
- This process is undertaken strategically in response to an identified challenge faced by the selected students.



Independent Writing

- This is a time when students accomplish their own writing by using the knowledge, skills, and strategies under focus during instruction time.
- The students develop writing stamina which helps them become independent writers.



Classroom Libraries



Importance of Classroom Libraries

- Heart of literacy
- Creates a reading environment
- Supports reading instruction
- Enriches the curriculum
- Reinforces language acquisition
- Encourages independent reading
- Increases vocabulary

Making the Classroom Libraries



- Sends a powerful message
- Choose an inviting place
- Put pillows, or low mood lighting to make the classroom library into a comfortable place
- Group books into similar titles, levels and themes
- Display books with eye-catching covers facing out
- Label shelves with signs

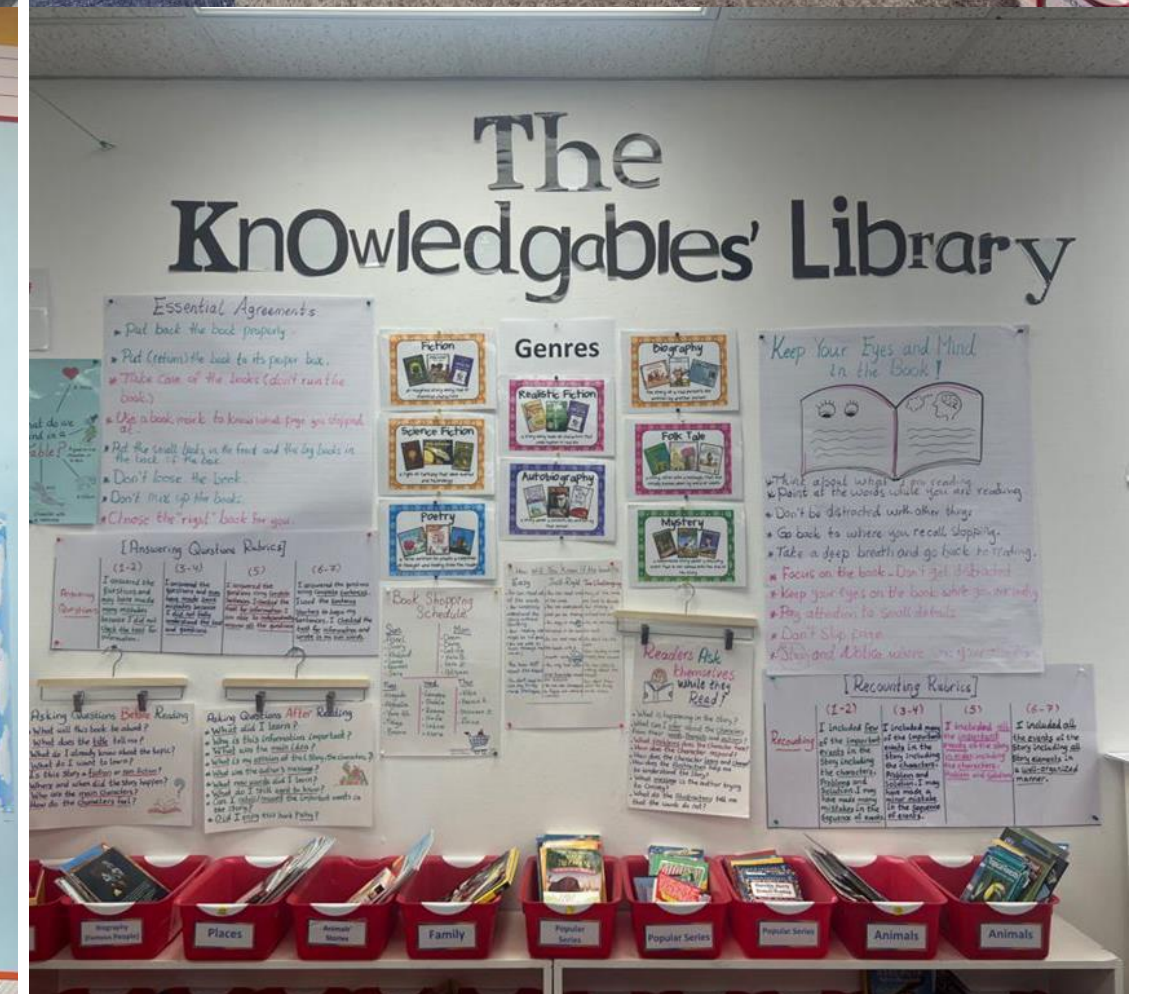
Introducing the Classroom Library

- Make an announcement
- Engage students
- Create eagerness
- Talk up your library
- Teach kids about the content and organizational structure of the library
- Communicate information to kids' families



Activating the Library

- Essential agreements
- Check in and check out system
- Changing the book displays fairly often
- Model how to choose and use books
- Keep adding and extending the existing structure

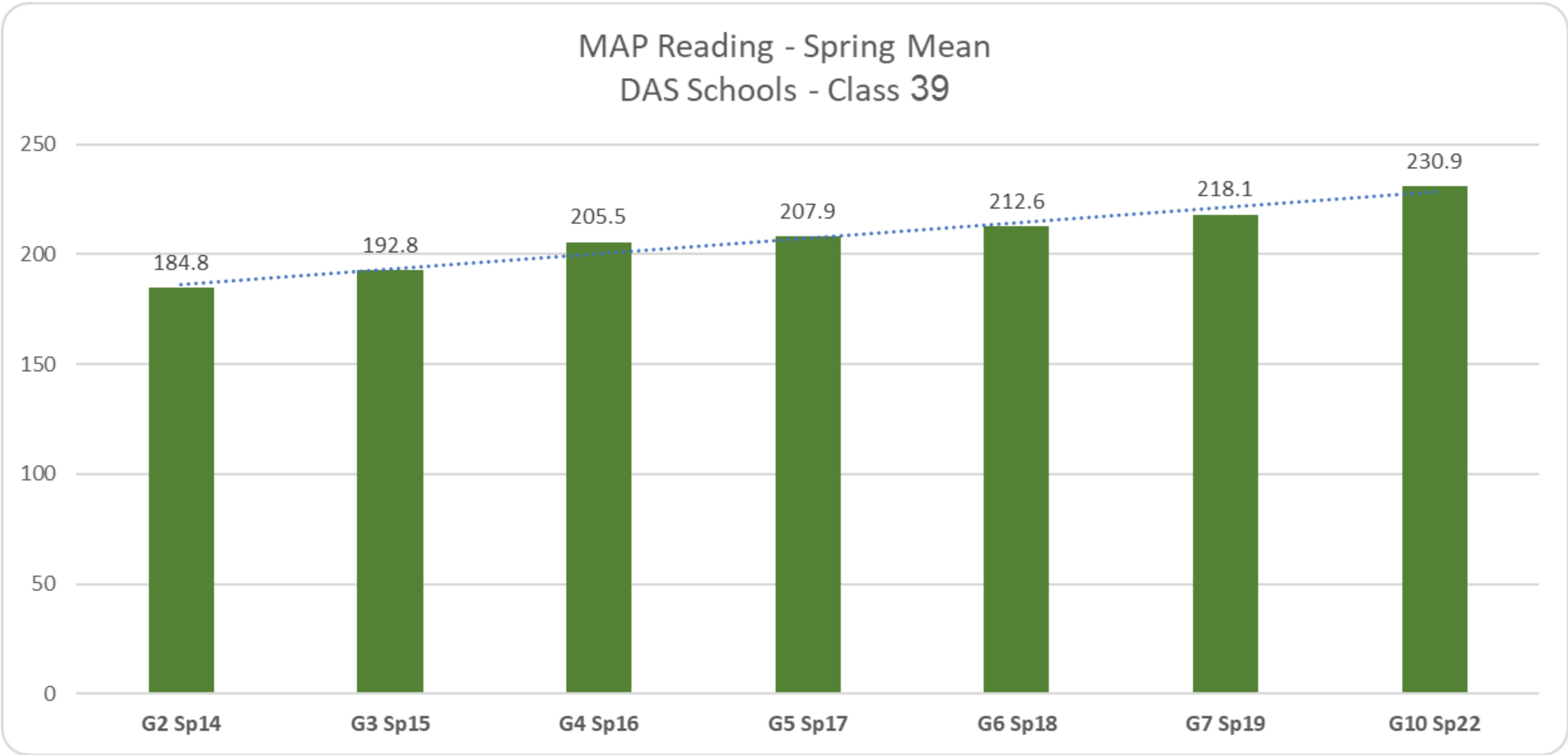


Bilingualism

DAS Model of Bilingualism

Grades	Percentage of time given to Arabic	Percentage of time given to English
KG	77%	23%
Grade one	68%	32%
Grade Two	68%	51%
Grade Three	58%	42%
Grade Four	51%	49%
Grade Five	49%	51%
Grades 6-8	49%	51%
Grade 9 and above	35%	65%

Impact of Balanced Literacy in Reading



Role of Intervention in Supporting Literacy

- Intervention aims to shift educational resources towards delivery and evaluation of instructions that work best for students.
- At risk children are provided individualized instructions in regards the core curriculum.



Intervention Model

Tier III

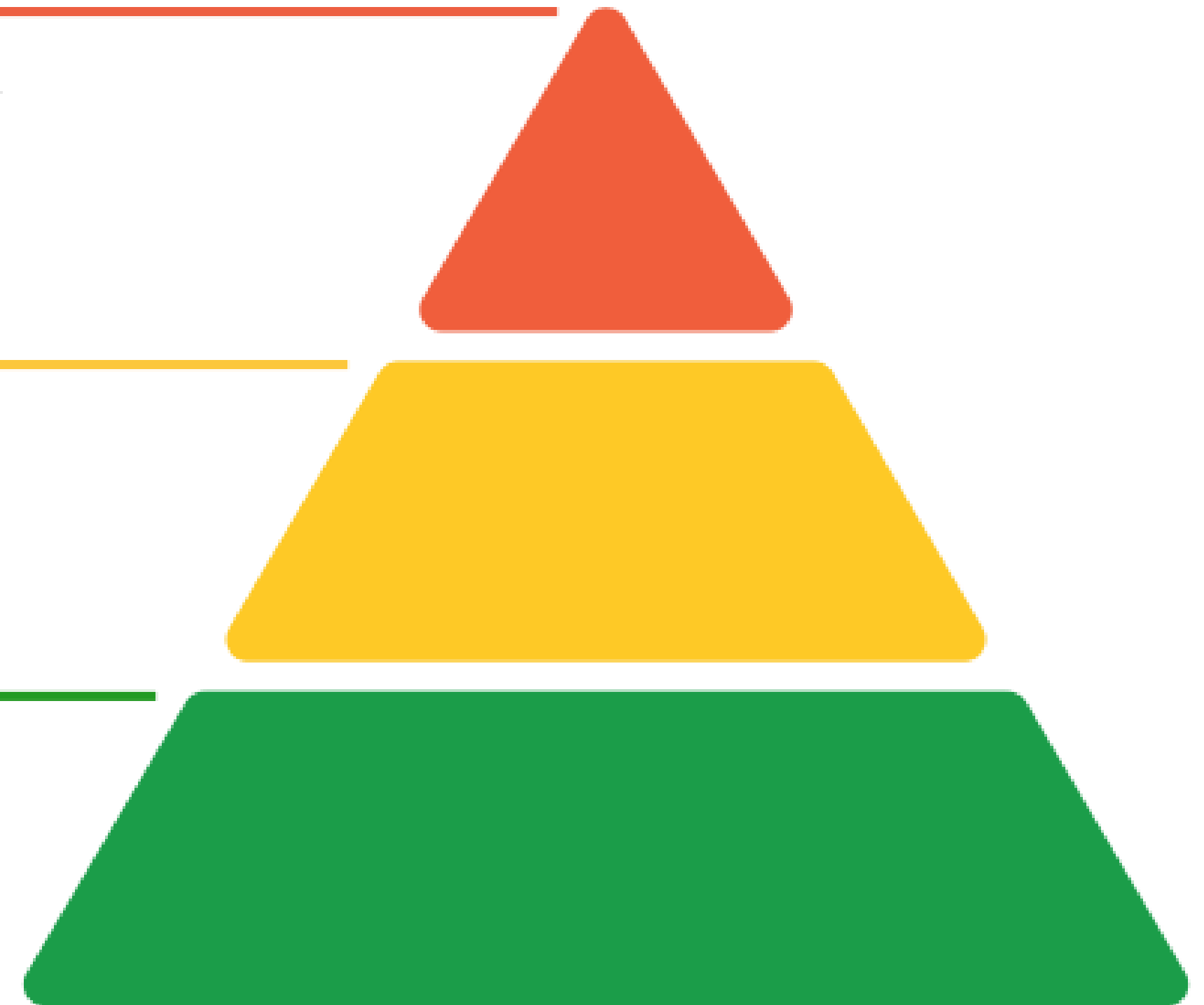
Individualized intensive interventions

Tier II

Targeted small group interventions for at-risk students

Tier I

Whole class research-based core instruction



Intervention in DAS

- Support is provided during guided reading.
- Support is provided in Arabic, English and Math either inside or outside of the main classroom.
- Support is provided either individually or in a small group setting based on the needs of students.
- Each student has an individualized intervention plan according to his/her current level of performance and skills that need to be worked on and is shared with parents.
- We monitor and revise the intervention plan based on data from standardized assessments, formative assessments, summative assessments, and overall student academic performance.
- Students are referred by the homeroom teachers based on the students' academic performance or parents.





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