

Directions for Color-Decoding Head Start Big Sheets

1. Print Big Sheets on **11 X 17 inch paper** using a separate piece of paper per domain. There are 5 domains or subject areas included in the Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Framework, 2015.
2. Follow the directions provided for color-coding the big sheets and identifying the most important information within the standards.
 - a. Use a **yellow highlighter** and highlight only the **verb(s)** in standards. The verb provides important information about teachers' and children's performance expectations. Teachers estimate the level of RIGOR or amount of thinking and reasoning required for young children to achieve the outcome in each standard.
 - b. Use a **light blue highlighter** and highlight a few **KEY WORDS** (nouns) that identify the instructional purpose and intended outcome in standards (what children are supposed to know and be able to do at the **END of a year or by a certain age**). Highlight enough words to support recall; no adjectives or adverbs need to be highlighted.
 - c. Use an **orange highlighter** and highlight words that indicate **teacher support** (e.g., with adult guidance or support). These standards should not be assessed for mastery since children are developing the foundational knowledge and skills, not demonstrating mastery.
3. Administrators, teachers and caregivers may color-code the big sheets by working independently or in small groups. **Only work on a few standards each time.** Then take a break, return and read the color-coded words aloud, and then restate what the words mean using your own words.
4. **Compare and discuss outcomes in standards within and across age levels.** Identify learning progressions (how skills develop over time). Discuss what children need to know in order to understand concepts or apply a skill (e.g., What prerequisite or foundational skills are needed to build understanding or new concepts or skills?)
5. Remember that **standards reflect END-OF-YEAR OUTCOMES** that children perform **after** sufficient instruction and guided practice have been provided all year. **Instruction and practice should be scaffolded** from easy to more complex over the course of the year.
6. **The design of standards or guidelines is cumulative and developmental**, building upon each other year to year. Locate where new information or skills are introduced, practiced collaboratively, then independently, or assessed for progress or mastery if required.
7. **Identify best practices and instructional routines** that teachers can use to maintain consistency in messaging when teaching or engaging children in activities. Ensure instructional practices are integrated together in ways that make sense.
8. **Identify what success looks like and determine how children's responses or outcomes will be assessed.** Discuss how classroom practices (instruction, collaborative practice, independent practice, and assessment) will be integrated and differentiated to include more explicit teaching and collaborative learning experiences with feedback for guidance. Include multiple repeated exposures to enhance learning and comprehension.
9. **Provide explicit teaching and practice with feedback** in small groups so all children have more opportunities to talk, share ideas, ask questions for clarification, and learn successfully.
10. **Allow children to manipulate and act out routines and procedures to enhance their comprehension and learning.** Build word knowledge and oral language skills!