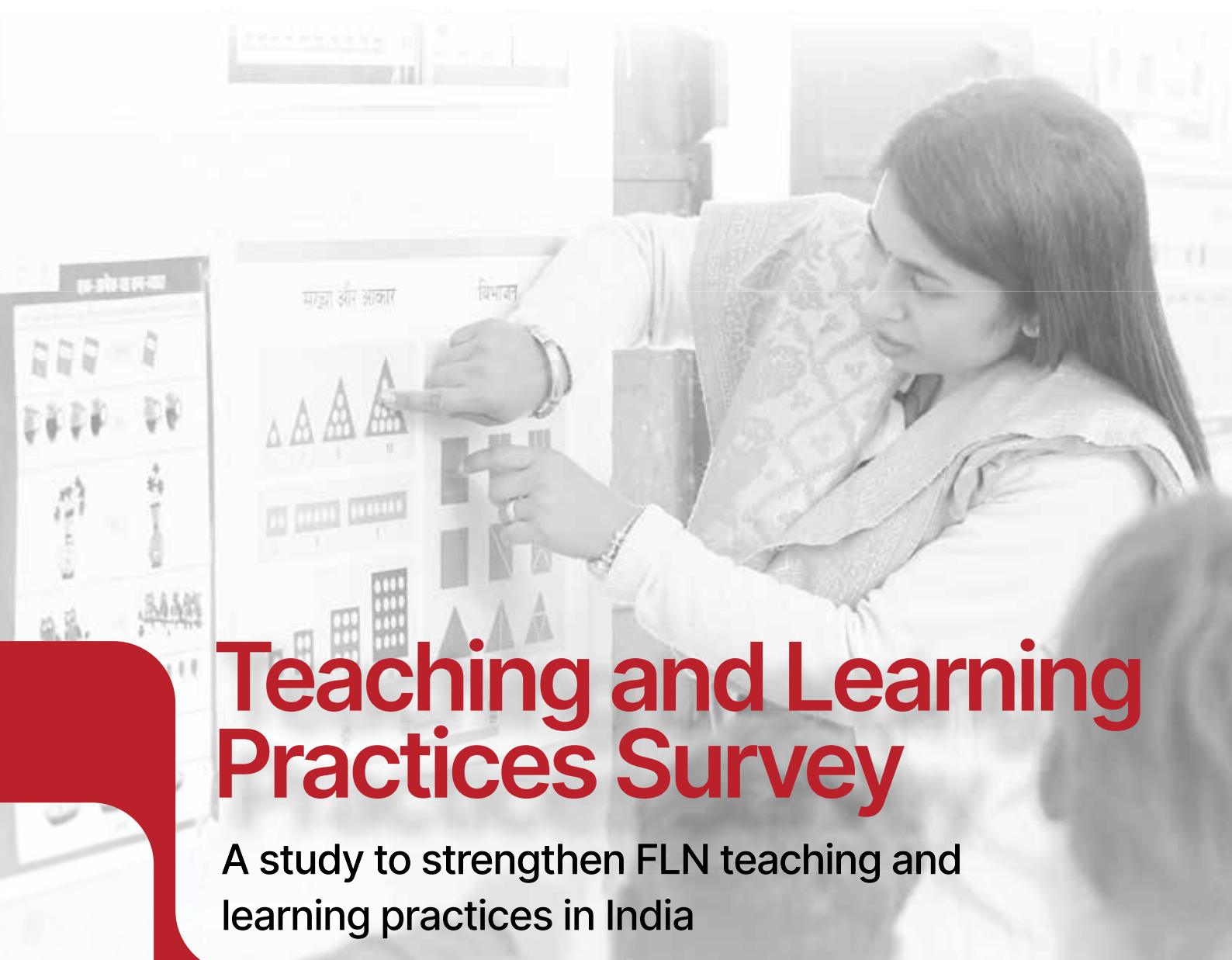




Teaching and Learning Practices Survey

A study to strengthen FLN teaching and
learning practices in India

2025

ASSAM

Implemented with



TLPS 2025

Teaching and Learning Practices Survey 2025. Assam

December 2025

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Acknowledgements

The Teaching Learning Practices Survey (TLPS) Assam report is the result of a collaborative effort involving state institutions, district and block-level functionaries, educators, and school communities committed to strengthening foundational literacy and numeracy (FLN) in the state.

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About TLPS Partners



Language and Learning Foundation

Founded in 2015, Language and Learning Foundation (LLF) is an education non-profit, dedicated to improving foundational literacy and numeracy (FLN) outcomes of students in primary grades at scale, in collaboration with the national and state governments in India. LLF is a system-focused and impact-driven organisation that takes a three-pronged approach for equitable foundational learning improvements through Continuous Professional Development (CPD) of teachers and mentors, District Demonstration Programmes and System Strengthening on FLN with a focus on inclusivity and equity. Since its inception, LLF has worked in 10 states, reaching 2.18 crore children and 11.8 lakh teachers and educators through State Level Technical Support and improved learning outcomes of 14 lakh children through District Demonstration Programmes and teaching-learning practices of 2.5 lakhs teachers and teacher educators.

TATA TRUSTS Tata Trusts

Established in 1892, the Tata Trusts are India's oldest and amongst Asia's largest philanthropic institutions. They have played a pioneering role in bringing about an enduring difference in the lives of the communities they serve, advancing equity, resilience and shared progress. Inspired by the vision of the Founder Jamsetji Tata and guided by a legacy of proactive philanthropy, the Tata Trusts work to catalyse systemic and sustainable change across diverse areas by building institutions, strengthening public systems and accelerating socio-economic development. The Trusts build meaningful solutions, bridging tradition and innovation, through collaborations that nurture grassroots efforts, empower change makers and touch lives across India.



Vikramshila Education Resource Society

Vikramshila Education Resource Society is a long-standing non-governmental organisation committed to making quality education a reality for children from marginalised communities through teacher development, curriculum support and pedagogical resources across multiple Indian states. Its work spans early childhood to secondary education with a focus on inclusive, resilient learning environments.



Educational Initiatives

Educational Initiatives (EI), founded in 2001, is a pioneering education research and PedTech organisation that combines pedagogical research with technology-driven solutions to improve student learning and teaching practices. Working across diverse economies and demographics, EI's research and assessment work informs classroom practice and education policy, alongside the design of diagnostic, personalised and adaptive learning solutions.

About the Teaching Learning Practices Survey

The Teaching and Learning Practices Survey (TLPS) was conceptualised to provide systematic and large-scale evidence on classroom practices in Grades 1 and 2 for language and mathematics. By examining what actually happens in early-grade classrooms across diverse contexts, the Survey aims to complement existing assessments and provide a direct lens into how children's learning materials, teacher training programmes and on site academic support are getting translated into classroom teaching and learning. It serves as a status report on the current state of teaching-learning practices—informing how system-level efforts translate into classroom-level pedagogical change and where further support is needed.

Importantly, the Survey aims not only to document current practices but also to identify needs for strengthening the instructional core of foundational learning. By identifying both strong practices and areas of support, the Survey contributes to building a more responsive FLN ecosystem, one in which classroom realities inform programme design, teacher support systems and academic leadership.

The Survey focused on six themes: classroom learning environment, lesson planning and delivery, language teaching practices, mathematics teaching practices, time distribution of teaching and learning tasks and perception of teachers on training, academic support, informal assessment methods and impact of NIPUN Bharat Mission. An array of tools were used to measure effectiveness of these themes, namely classroom observation, time-on-task, lesson sequence, pre- and post-observation, teacher interview questionnaire and profile of schools and children.

The Survey, therefore, plays a dual role:

- > Diagnostic, by providing a detailed, evidence-based picture of what is happening inside classrooms today
- > Developmental, by enabling governments and partners to shape teachers' professional development, mentoring structures and instructional materials in ways that directly respond to observed classroom needs

The Survey elevates this often-invisible dimension, viz. teaching and learning inside classrooms to the forefront of India's foundational learning agenda.

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Abbreviations

ARP	Academic Resource Person
BRP	Block Resource Person
CFU	Check-for-Understanding
CPD	Continuous Professional Development
CRC	Cluster Resource Coordinator
CRCC	Cluster Resource Centre Coordinator
CRO	Classroom Observation
DPMU	District Project Management Unit
ECCE	Early Childhood Care and Education
ELPS	Experience, Language, Pictorial, and Symbol
EVS	Environmental Studies
FLN	Foundational Literacy and Numeracy
FLS	Foundational Learning Study
GRR	Gradual Release of Responsibility
LLF	Language and Learning Foundation
LS	Lesson Sequence
MGML	Multi-Grade Multi-Level
Mol	Medium of Instruction
NCF-FS	National Curriculum Framework for Foundational Stage
NEP	National Education Policy
NIPUN	National Initiative for Proficiency in Reading with Understanding and Numeracy
SCERT	State Council of Educational Research and Training
SDMC	School Management and Development Committees
SMC	School Management Committee
SPMU	State Project Management Unit
SRG	State Resource Group
TLM	Teaching-Learning Material
TLPS	Teaching Learning Practices Survey
ToT	Time-on-Task

Glossary

- **Blending:** Orally combining individual sounds to form a spoken word (e.g., /k/ /æ/ /t/ → “cat”)
- **Classroom learning environment:** The overall physical, socio-emotional, and instructional conditions of a classroom that shape learner participation, comfort and learning.
- **Classroom Teaching Practices:** Observable strategies and methods teachers use to engage students in learning. This includes the management of class time and activities, delivering instructional content and using techniques like using TLMs, monitoring, questioning, providing feedback, and differentiated instruction to meet the needs of all students.
- **Choral response:** the whole class or most students answer together verbally in unison.
- **Continuous Professional Development (CPD):** A sustained, ongoing system of teacher training, coaching support and reflection designed to improve teacher knowledge and their classroom practice.
- **Decoding:** Association between written symbols and spoken sounds and words by using symbol–sound correspondences in a given language.
- **Differentiated instruction:** Deliberately adapting instructional tasks, grouping and support based on different learner levels/needs within the same classroom.
- **Expressive writing:** Writing where children share their own ideas and experiences rather than only copying or reproducing content.
- **Foundational Literacy and Numeracy (FLN):** The ability of children to read with understanding, express meaning through oral and written language, and perform basic mathematical operations with conceptual understanding and application, expected to be achieved by the end of Grade 3 by India’s NIPUN Bharat Mission.
- **Foundational numeracy:** Competence in early number concepts (counting, quantity, place value), basic operations and applying mathematical reasoning to everyday contexts.
- **Independent reading practice:** Time when children read on their own (or quietly in pairs/groups).
- **Instructional Time Loss:** The instructional time during which teaching-learning activities are not effectively engaged in, due to disruptions, poor classroom management, or administrative tasks.
- **Lesson plan:** A teacher’s structured preparation for a lesson, typically clarifying learning goals, sequence of activities, materials and how understanding will be checked and supported; ideally differentiated for children at different learning levels.
- **Multigrade classroom:** A classroom setup where one teacher teaches two or more grades simultaneously.
- **NIPUN Bharat Mission:** The national initiative launched by Government of India in 2021 that laid the mandate to achieve universal foundational literacy and numeracy by Grade 3 by 2026–27.

- **National Curriculum Framework for Foundational Stage (NCF-FS, 2022):** The curriculum framework for Foundational Stage (ages 3–8 years), integrating developmental goals and pedagogical guidance for early childhood and early primary education.
- **National Education Policy 2020 (NEP 2020):** India's overarching education policy that prioritises universal foundational literacy and numeracy in the early primary years and frames reforms across curriculum, pedagogy, teacher education and assessment.
- **Off-task:** Behaviour that is not aligned to the intended learning or teaching activity during instructional time [e.g., disruptive behaviour, inattention (for students); filling registers or reporting attendance for mid-day meals (for teachers)].).
- **Open-ended questions:** Questions that support comprehension and language development by requiring explanation, reasoning, or elaboration rather than a single, short answer.
- **On-task:** Student or teacher behaviours that are aligned to the intended teaching-learning activity or objective at that moment.
- **Oral language development (OLD):** Strengthening of children's spoken language knowledge and skills, including listening comprehension, oral expression, vocabulary, verbal reasoning and discourse skills.
- **Place value:** The value of a digit based on its position (ones, tens, hundreds), which is essential for multi-digit number understanding and operations.
- **Print-Rich Materials:** Printed or visual resources that are purposefully displayed and used in the classroom to support print awareness and learning. Examples include number charts, story or poem posters, labels, children's books, word walls, and so on.
- **Scaffolded Tasks:** Educational activities that provide support and guidance to students at different levels of learning. Scaffolded tasks help students build on their existing knowledge by breaking down complex tasks into smaller, manageable steps, with more support at the beginning and less as students gain independence.
- **Sound-symbol association:** Understanding the relationship between sounds of a language (phoneme or syllable) with their corresponding symbols or written representation (grapheme/ letter patterns/*varn* or *akshara*), forming the basis for reading and writing.
- **Time-on-task (ToT):** The proportion of observed classroom time during which learners (or teachers) are engaged in intended learning/instructional activity.



Executive Summary

Introduction

India's National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 positioned Foundational Literacy and Numeracy (FLN) as the country's highest priority for education. This renewed focus was further strengthened by the National Curriculum Framework for Foundational Stage (NCF-FS, 2022). To operationalise this vision, the Government of India launched the NIPUN Bharat Mission with a clear national mandate: Achieve universal FLN for all children by 2026-27. This has catalysed unprecedented efforts across states to improve the teaching and learning of FLN.



The Government of Assam is tracking progress in student learning through a range of large-scale assessments of FLN learning outcomes, via the NIPUN Axom Mission. Launched in 2021, this initiative is a welcome step towards qualitative improvements in early primary school education in the State.

About TLPS 2025

The Teaching Learning Practices Survey (TLPS) 2025 was conceptualised to provide systematic, national-level evidence on teaching practices for language and mathematics in Grades 1 and 2. By examining these practices in early-grade classrooms across diverse contexts, the Survey provides a direct lens into how children's learning materials, teacher training programmes, and on-site academic support are getting translated into classroom teaching and learning.



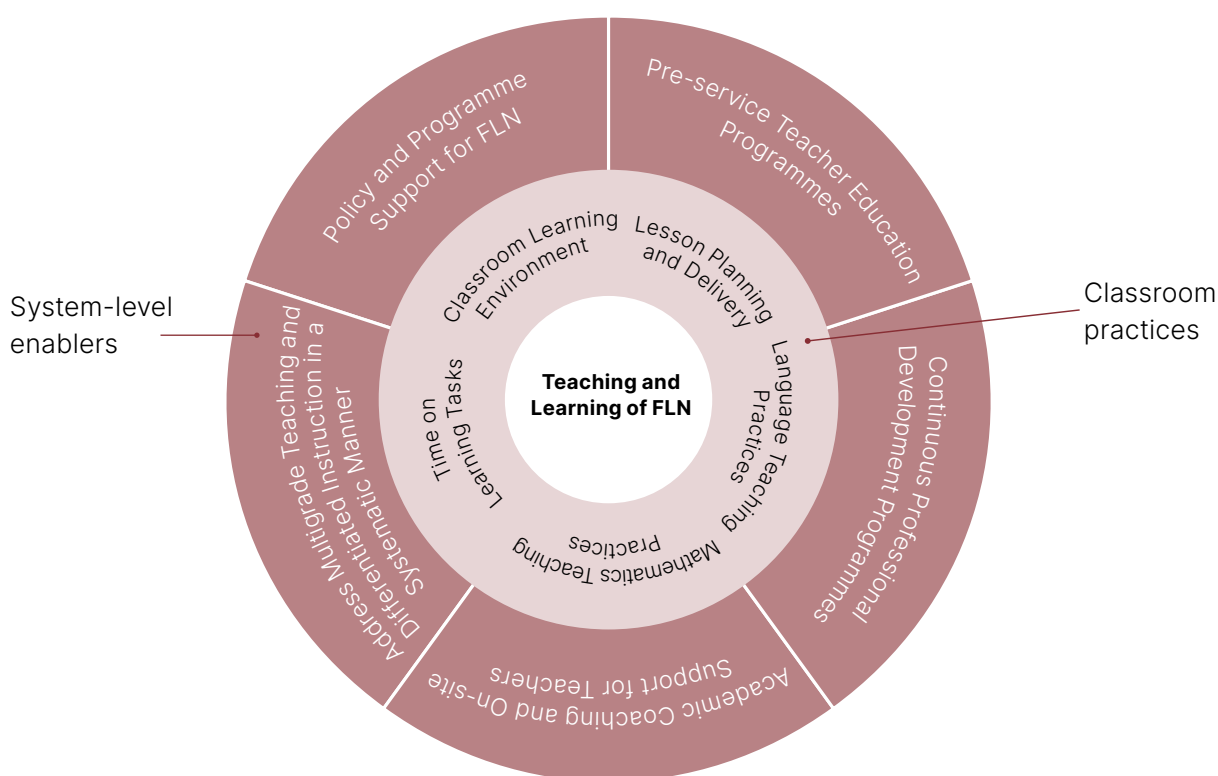
The Survey was conducted between November 2024 and March 2025 in nine states—Assam, Chhattisgarh, Haryana, Jharkhand, Maharashtra, Meghalaya, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu, and Uttar Pradesh, covering 21 districts and 1050 classrooms. By capturing a wide range of contexts, the Survey provides a rich snapshot of the current teaching and learning practices for FLN. This document serves as a status report on the current state of teaching and learning practices in the sampled schools in Assam. Informing how system-level efforts translate into classroom-level pedagogical change

and where further improvement is needed. A total of 100 classrooms were surveyed across Kamrup and Goalpara districts of the State.

Findings and Recommendations

The Survey presents findings under the following themes: classroom learning environment, lesson planning and delivery, language teaching practices, mathematics teaching practices, and time distribution for different classroom activities for both teachers and children. It also presents teachers' perceptions on some aspects of FLN and their professional development.

Priorities for classroom practices and system-level enablers



The Survey includes two types of recommendations:

- > Recommendations for strengthening classroom teaching practices, drawing directly on the Survey's main findings. These are presented in the following section along with the related classroom-level findings.
- > Recommendations for system-level changes that will enable and sustain effective teaching practices are presented in the section after the one on classroom teaching practices.

Findings and recommendations for classroom practices

Classroom learning environment

The Survey examined the following: classroom physical environment, teacher-child relationships and opportunities for children to participate.

Main findings

Almost all observed early-grade classrooms had a functional blackboard. Few classrooms (12%) displayed print-rich materials.

In 88% of classrooms, children were seated in rows and columns, and the arrangement was changed in few classrooms during the observed lesson.

In 43% of the classrooms, at least some children looked comfortable, spoke freely and engaged in conversation with the teacher, or learnt from one another. Teachers asked questions to individual children in over a third of the classrooms.

Children in sampled Assamese-medium schools spoke predominantly in Assamese (70%), followed by Bangla (26%).

Recommendations

There is scope for improving availability of print materials in classrooms and for placing them thoughtfully and using them actively during instruction to support learning.

Teachers should be encouraged to adopt flexible seating and grouping arrangements to foster more interaction and collaboration among children.

Strengthening teacher-child relationships in early-grade classrooms is important to help children become more confident, participate in discussions, and engage meaningfully in learning.

Lesson planning and delivery

The Survey examined the following: teachers' use of clear instructions with children, observation and monitoring of children's independent work, feedback on writing tasks, use of check-for-understanding (CFU) strategies, and use of differentiated instruction for different learning levels in the classroom.

Main findings

Around 53% of interviewed teachers reported planning for their lessons the next day. 17% of those teachers had documented plans during classroom observations.

Teachers in 64% of classrooms gave instructions before or during an activity. A majority of them did not confirm whether children understood those instructions.

Teachers in a third (32%) of classrooms observed and monitored children during independent or group activities at least sometimes.

Recommendations

In addition to giving clear instructions, teachers should model expected responses and verify that children have understood so that they can participate meaningfully and learn successfully.

Through regular and purposeful observation, teachers should identify errors, adjust instruction, and provide timely support.

There is scope for strengthening feedback practices through regular checking of children's work, clear explanations of mistakes, and simple steps for improvement.

Teachers in a majority (61%) of the classrooms checked at least a few children's written work. Few teachers (4%) provided meaningful feedback or guidance to help children improve.

In over half (59%) of the observed classrooms, teachers relied on asking questions to the whole class, which elicited a choral response from the children. Few teachers checked for individual children's understanding through varied methods.

During the limited observation period, few teachers used differentiated teaching strategies to support children at different learning levels.

In Assam, 52% of the observed classrooms were multigrade.

During lessons, teachers should use simple and varied checks for understanding, such as asking individual children to explain their thinking or giving children a quick task to demonstrate their learning.

Using targeted strategies such as flexible grouping, guided practice in level-based groups, and scaffolded tasks can support all learners. It is essential to provide extra attention and support to children who are struggling to learn, after proper identification.

Language teaching practices

The Survey examined the following: use of children's prior knowledge in discussions, asking open-ended questions, employing a variety of strategies for teaching decoding, use of comprehension strategies during read-aloud, opportunities to practise reading independently, and providing clear prompts for expressive writing.

Main findings

Effective use of children's real-life experiences and open-ended questions to encourage children to think and express themselves during oral language activities was observed in fewer than 30% of classrooms.

For teaching decoding, teachers in 50% of classrooms relied on using one activity to reinforce sound-symbol association. Teachers used two or more decoding strategies in 34% of the sampled classrooms.

In 76% of the sampled classrooms teachers asked some factual questions or simply repeated the text to support children's understanding.

Recommendations

Oral language activities need to encourage active engagement by connecting content and discussions to familiar contexts and experiences, asking children to predict, think, and infer, and giving them opportunities to respond more fully to open-ended questions.

Decoding teaching should be more systematic and include multiple activities that reinforce sound-symbol associations in different ways, including the use of simple teaching-learning materials (TLMs).

Teacher read-alouds of texts need to encourage greater participation from children, while offering stronger support for building comprehension.

Children got the opportunity to practise reading independently in 53% of the classrooms. In 13% classrooms, this was paired with teacher feedback and correction.

Independent writing tasks,* where children could write in their own words, were rarely observed in the sampled classrooms during the observation period.

Children need adequate time to practise reading in small groups or pairs, as well as independently, with more active guidance from the teacher.

Writing activities should move beyond copying exercises to include meaningful opportunities for children to compose their own texts and express ideas and emotions.

*Teaching of writing was observed in fewer than 30 classrooms, so results are only indicative.

Mathematics teaching practices

The Survey examined the following: use of TLMs by teachers and children, opportunities to practise mathematics tasks independently, use of children's real-life experiences for mathematics concepts, and use of 'why and how' questions by teachers.

Main findings

In around 85% of the observed classrooms, teachers used TLMs to explain mathematical concepts, though mostly in an unplanned manner. Children used TLMs in two-thirds (68%) of the classrooms. Most children consistently got the opportunity to do so in 9% of the classrooms.

About two-thirds of teachers (63%) did not use real-life examples to contextualise mathematical concepts and processes.

Few teachers (11%) posed 'why and how' questions.

Children were given independent tasks for practice in three-fourths of the observed mathematics classrooms. Teachers provided active feedback in 17% of the classrooms.

Recommendations

Teachers should use TLMs more consistently and in planned, learner-centred ways. This will ensure that children have regular opportunities to explore concepts hands-on and build conceptual understanding, rather than only observing demonstrations.

Mathematical concepts should be introduced using familiar and everyday contexts so that young children can relate mathematics to their daily experiences and develop practical problem-solving skills.

Teachers should ask questions that encourage children to explain their thinking and reasoning, helping shift learning away from rote mathematical procedures to deeper conceptual understanding.

During independent practice, teachers should actively monitor children's work and provide timely guidance and feedback so that practice goes beyond mechanical repetition and strengthens conceptual understanding and fluency.

Time on learning tasks

The Survey examined the time spent by teachers and children on different classroom activities.

Main findings

In sampled classrooms, children remained 'off-task' (i.e., not engaged in any learning activity) for 37% of the total class time. When they were 'on-task', mechanical or repetitive activities consumed most of their time.

Recommendations

There is scope for creating a better balance between teacher-centred instruction and learner-centred practices to enhance children's engagement with learning.

Teachers should plan and manage independent and group tasks more deliberately, particularly in multigrade contexts where their attention is divided.

Other findings

- > There is strong awareness among teachers (68%) about FLN goals and learning outcomes.
- > Nearly nine in ten teachers reported that they had attended an in-person training on FLN in the past six months.
- > Almost all teachers believe that the NIPUN/FLN Mission is having a positive impact.
- > Almost half (46%) of the teachers did not receive on-site academic support. Around 35% reported receiving academic support at least sometimes or regularly.



Recommendations for system-level changes

This section outlines key systemic levers that need to be strengthened to enable and sustain the classroom-level actions described in the previous section.

Continue and extend policy support to FLN

It is vital that policy support for FLN must continue beyond the current NIPUN Axiom Mission. While Grades 1 and 2 must remain the primary focus, the policy and programme focus for the consolidation of foundational skills needs to extend to Grades 3 to 5 (Preparatory Stage in NEP 2020) to prevent learning gaps from widening over time. As this support is extended, there is a need to broaden the vision of foundational learning itself to include critical thinking, strong oral expression and independent writing for language, as well as problem-solving and reasoning for mathematics. Such a shift helps move classroom practice beyond mechanical skill acquisition towards meaningful application to real-life situations.

Integrate FLN focus within pre-service teacher education programmes

Pre-service teacher education requires curricular revision to include a clear focus on early language and numeracy learning, play-based pedagogy, teaching in linguistically and culturally diverse situations and practical classroom strategies for multigrade and multilevel teaching. There is a need to move from lecture-based instruction towards practice-oriented and experience-based teacher preparation. Teacher education institutions should model effective FLN pedagogy through activity-based learning, demonstrations of effective teaching practices and reflective practice. Strengthening internships through structured mentoring, classroom observation and feedback can help ensure that teachers are better prepared to support foundational learning from the start.

Build a coherent and practice-focused system of continuous professional development (CPD)

There is a need to reimagine in-service teacher training as CPD rather than as isolated events. Effective CPD should offer multiple pathways for learning, including structured courses, blended and online programmes, in-person workshops and simple digital support such as WhatsApp nudges and short, on-demand learning resources. State-led training programmes need significant improvements to reduce loss of quality during cascade implementation. This includes better preparation of facilitators, shorter gaps between cascade levels and mechanisms for monitoring and feedback to ensure that the intent of training is retained. Creating opportunities for teachers to learn from one another through learning circles, peer observations, joint planning and sharing of effective practices can help reinforce training messages and support sustained change in classroom practice.

Strengthen academic coaching and on-site support for teachers

Teacher interviews reveal that academic support for teachers has scope to be more regular and instructionally strong. On-site academic coaching can be strengthened through regular classroom visits by academic resource persons (ARPs), CRCs, or equivalent roles. These visits should focus on observing classroom practice, demonstrating effective strategies and providing concrete, actionable feedback tailored to each teacher's context. Such support is vital for helping teachers translate training inputs into day-to-day practice. In addition, cluster-level meetings should be reoriented as structured academic forums rather than administrative gatherings. With clear agendas centred on FLN pedagogy, classroom challenges and shared problem-solving, these meetings can become an important platform for collective professional learning.

Address multigrade teaching and differentiated instruction in a systematic manner

These challenges require specific and systematic programme support, not just general suggestions or brief training efforts alone.

Multigrade teaching

Teachers working in multigrade settings require specific curricular guidance and pedagogical tools to manage multiple groups effectively. This includes support for planning parallel activities, organising independent work, using flexible grouping and managing time across grades. Addressing multigrade teaching systematically—rather than treating it as an exception—can help teachers use these classrooms more productively, even in less-than-ideal conditions.

Differentiated instruction

System-level efforts are required to help teachers understand children's learning levels, recognise the value of targeted support and use simple differentiation strategies—such as flexible grouping, scaffolded tasks and guided practice for small groups, especially for children who are struggling to learn. Providing extra attention and support to such children is key to reducing learning gaps within the classroom. Teacher guides, training modules and academic support systems should explicitly model how differentiation can be planned and implemented within everyday classroom routines.

NIPUN Assam Mission: Foundational Literacy and Numeracy Reform

CHAPTER

1

1.1 NIPUN Bharat Mission

The national NIPUN Bharat Mission, launched in 2021, aims to create a strong and enabling ecosystem that ensures every child acquires essential reading, writing, and numeracy skills by 2026-27. The Mission sets a clear mandate for children to achieve defined FLN competencies by the end of Grade 3, with an upper limit of Grade 5, thereby laying a strong foundation for lifelong learning and improved academic outcomes.

1.2 NIPUN Axom Mission: Strengthening foundational literacy and numeracy in Assam

In alignment with NEP 2020, the Government of Assam launched the NIPUN Axom Mission on 16 November 2021—the State’s contextualised adaptation of the national framework for its multilingual and diverse educational landscape.

NIPUN Axom Mission promotes competency-based, child-centred and activity-based pedagogy aimed at shifting classroom processes away from rote memorisation towards experiential learning. Assam has integrated FLN priorities within broader school education reforms linked to NEP 2020, including Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE), competency-based assessment, ICT-enabled learning, and teacher professional development. The State further strengthened implementation support through community engagement: School Management Committees (SMCs), School Management and Development Committees (SMDCs), and community members are encouraged to be actively involved in reading campaigns and other awareness activities.

1.3 Implementation structure under NIPUN Axom Mission

To support mission implementation, Assam established institutional mechanisms at state, district and block levels. These include the State Cell, Steering Committees, State and District Project Management Units (SPMU and DPMU), Academic Task Forces, and State Resource Groups comprising officials, DIET faculty, teacher educators, Cluster Resource Centre Coordinators (CRCCs), Block Resource Persons (BRPs), and teachers. These structures were created to support academic planning, teacher training, development of learning materials, monitoring, assessment, and implementation support. These structures ensure that mission priorities are embedded across the education system rather than confined to project-based interventions.

1.4 Large-scale teacher training

Teacher training and professional capacity building have been central to Assam's implementation approach. The State organised 4-day zonal-level capacity building programmes for 580 Master Trainers across six zones, 4-day block-level training programmes for 9,218 Resource Persons, cluster-level training programmes for 97,098 teachers under NIPUN Axom, and orientation programmes for more than 1,06,779 teachers through monthly cluster-level academic meetings.

1.5 Reading campaign

Consistent with NIPUN Bharat's emphasis on reading with understanding in the foundational years, Assam implemented the 100 Days Reading Campaign from January to April 2022 across all 45,144 schools, covering children from pre-primary to Class VIII. Schools organised storytelling sessions, recitation, reading activities, library engagement, story composition, and experience-sharing exercises. Parents, SMCs, SMDCs, and community members actively participated in the campaign, reinforcing the home-school connection central to early literacy development.

1.6 Assessment systems: NAS, FLS & Gunotsav

Assam employs multiple complementary assessment tools to track foundational learning outcomes and guide programme decisions. The National Achievement Survey (NAS) 2021 data and Gunotsav findings have helped identify persistent learning gaps at the foundational level, informing targeted remediation efforts. For example, NAS 2021 findings showed that a substantial proportion of children remained in the "Below Basic" and "Basic" proficiency categories across language, mathematics, and Environmental Studies (EVS) at the elementary level, underscoring the continued need for sustained FLN intervention, particularly in socio-economically vulnerable communities. The Foundational Learning Study (FLS) provides additional diagnostic evidence. Together these mechanisms reflect a data-driven approach to FLN improvement consistent with NEP 2020 goals.

1.7 SCERT handbook for school quality monitoring

In 2024, SCERT Assam developed the Handbook for Education Officers for Improving Quality of School Education, which embeds FLN priorities within structured school supervision frameworks. The handbook equips education officers with observation tools to monitor classroom practice, FLN kit usage, material availability, assessment practices, and achievement of learning outcomes—institutionalising a culture of continuous monitoring at the field level.

2.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the methodological framework used to study teaching and learning practices related to FLN in Grades 1 and 2 across the two districts in Assam. It describes the survey design and the rationale for adopting a mixed-methods approach, the sampling strategy, tool development, field procedures and the mechanism for quality assurance. The chapter also details the analytical approach used to interpret the findings generated from the different instruments used.

2.2 Scope of the Survey

TLPS 2025 examines classroom-level teaching and learning practices related to FLN in Grades 1 and 2 across selected schools in nine states including Assam. The focus is everyday instructional processes within classrooms, categorised into the following themes:

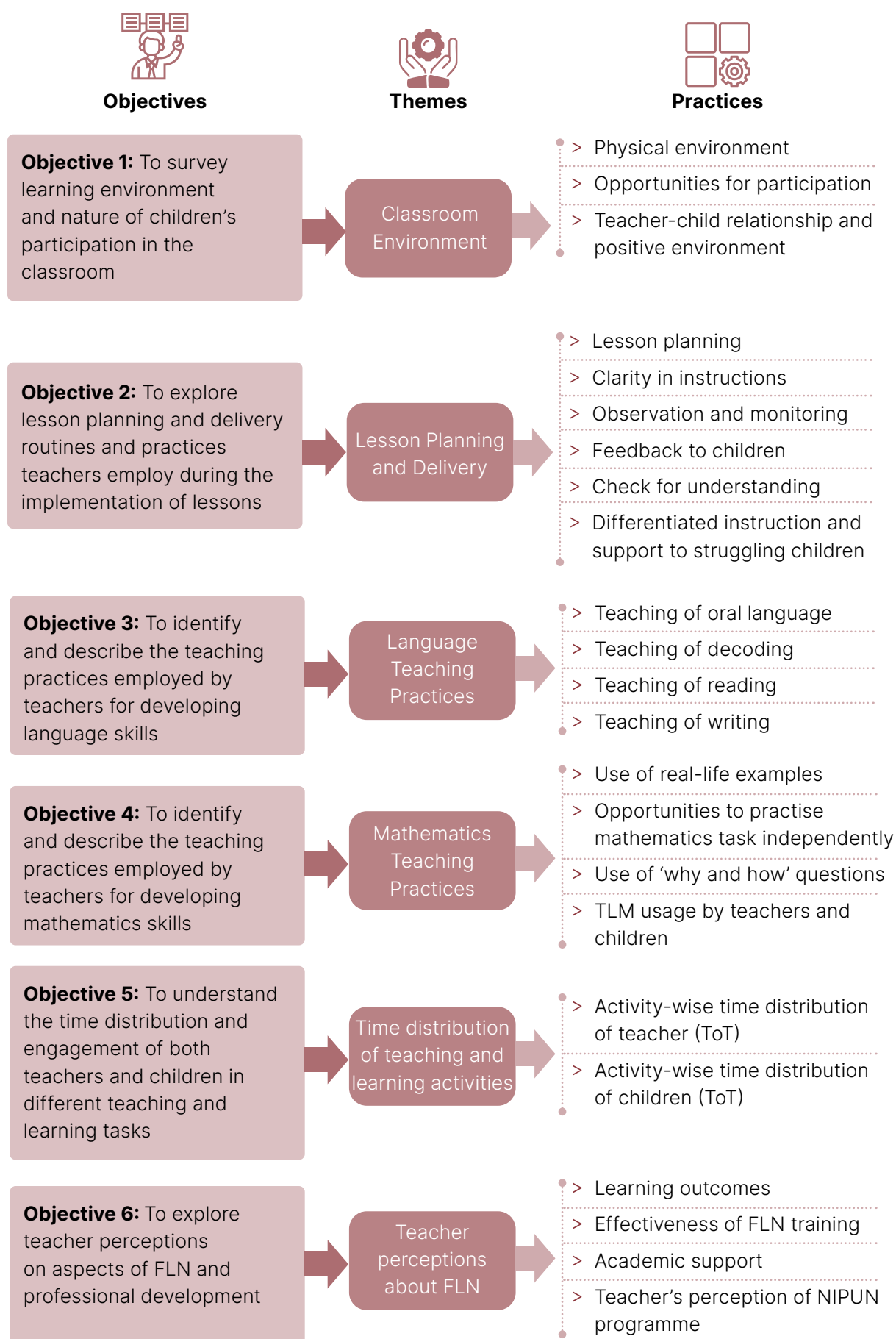
(i) Classroom Environment (ii) Lesson Planning and Delivery (iii) Language Teaching Practices (iv) Mathematics Teaching Practices (v) Time allocation of teaching and learning activities and (vi) Teacher perception of FLN and professional development.

The Survey draws on classroom observations, teacher interviews and Time-on-Task (ToT) data to provide a detailed picture of how teaching and learning unfold in early-grade classrooms. Classroom observations were conducted during the 2024-2025 academic year.

The scope of the Survey is limited to describing and analysing instructional practices and classroom processes at a given point in time. It does not assess student learning outcomes, measure teacher subject knowledge, or evaluate the impact of specific programmes or interventions. Nor does it examine system-level inputs such as curriculum design, teacher deployment, or infrastructure beyond what is directly observable in classrooms. Figure 2.1 presents the mapping of the Survey's objectives to the themes and core practices examined under the Survey.



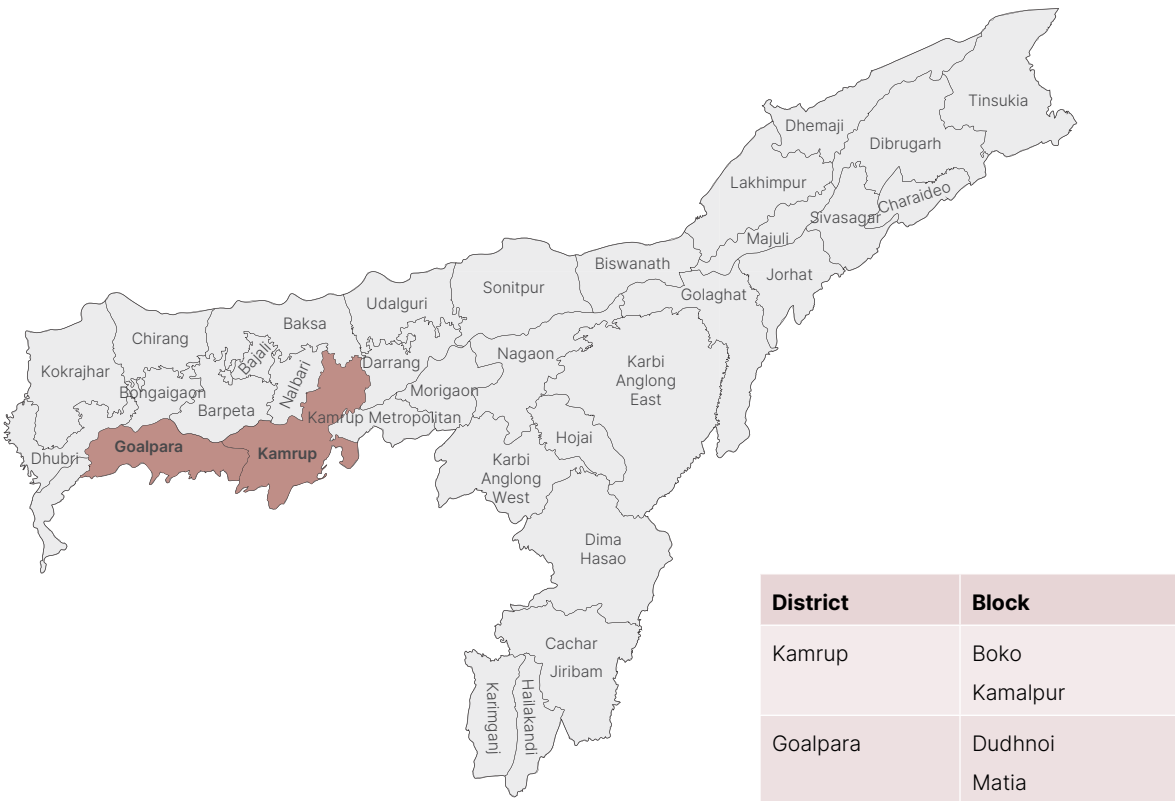
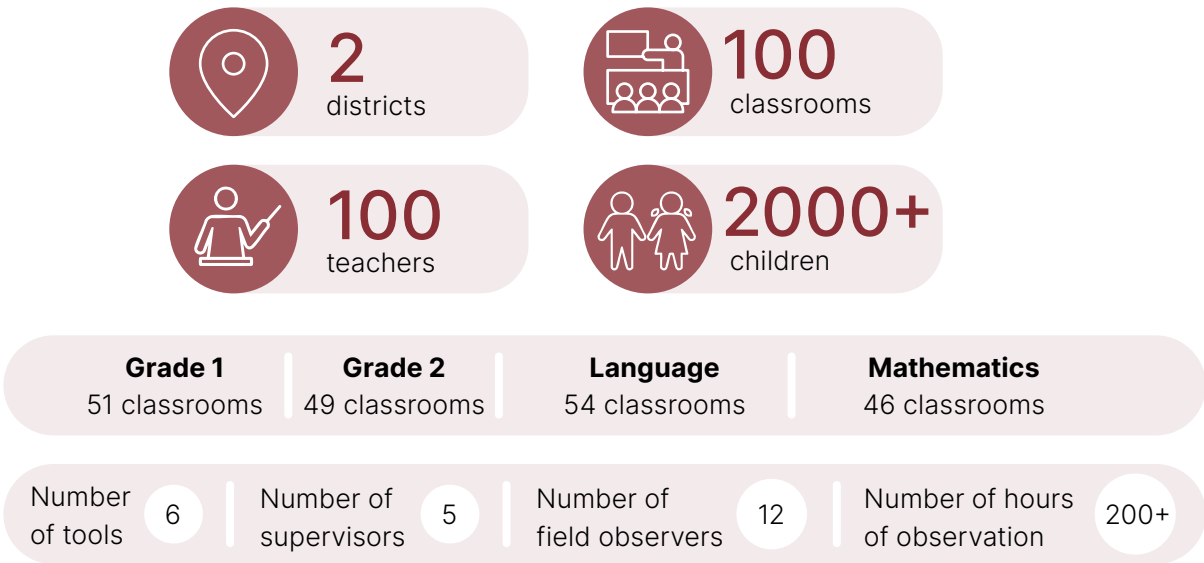
Figure 2.1: **Mapping of Survey objectives to themes and practices**



2.3 Coverage of the Survey

For the state of Assam, the Survey examined classroom teaching and learning practices related to FLN in Grades 1 and 2 in 100 schools in four blocks of two districts. In each classroom, language or mathematics lessons were observed for a duration of 40 minutes to capture teaching practices and classroom interactions during regular teaching periods.

Given the sample sizes, the results of the Survey cannot be considered representative at the State level.

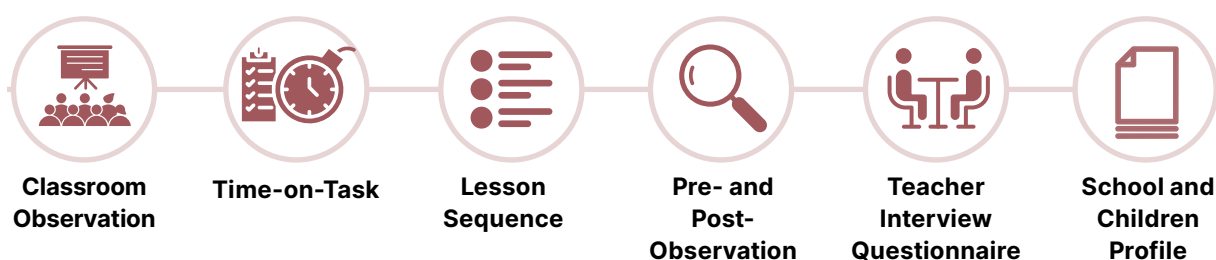


2.4 Survey design

2.4.1 Survey tools

The Survey combined quantitative and qualitative structured data collection tools designed to capture classroom environments, teacher-child interactions and teaching practices for language and mathematics. A total of six tools were developed, each with clearly defined objectives.

Figure 2.2: **Six key tools for data collection**



S. No.	Tool	Objective/Components
1	Classroom Observation (CRO)	The classroom observation tool has 21 indicators based on themes of learning environment, lesson planning and delivery, language teaching practices and mathematics teaching practices.
2	Time-on-Task (ToT)	Teacher and children's activities are recorded after every three minutes. The objective is to record the time distribution of teaching and learning tasks.
3	Lesson Sequence (LS)	The lesson sequence for language and mathematics sessions is a structured tool to capture both the flow and nature of teaching activities during a 40-minute observation. > Part A provides an open-ended account of the session flow, recording how teachers organise activities and engage children. > Part B uses a coded list of steps teachers use in language sessions to teach decoding, letter writing, <i>matra</i>-writing and reading. In mathematics sessions, steps for number understanding, teaching of place value and operations are also included. > Part C identifies the skills and competencies targeted in a 40-minute session, such as vocabulary, comprehension or fluency. > Part D documents the TLMs used, whether teacher-prepared or provided, to support instruction. In the mathematics tool, Part E is also designed to record the TLMs used by children in the classroom.

S. No.	Tool	Objective/Components
4	Pre- and Post-Observation	The Pre-Observation Sheet captures key school-level information, including the grade and subject observed, enrolment and attendance for the grade. The Post-Observation Sheet records details about the classroom environment, such as seating arrangements, presence of print-rich materials and availability of instructional materials.
5	Teacher Interview Questionnaire	Questions are included from the themes of lesson planning and delivery, language teaching practice and mathematics teaching practice. It also includes questions on teachers' beliefs and perceptions about grade-appropriate learning outcomes, academic support, trainings and impact of NIPUN Mission.
6	School and Children Profile	The profile includes information about schools' total enrolment, number of teachers and distance of the school from city centre. It also includes children's socio-economic details like age, religion, category, economic status.

2.4.2 Teaching-learning practices, indicators and rating scale

For each indicator, a rating scale was developed based on a clearly defined framework for the effectiveness of teaching-learning practices. These rating scales were designed for classroom learning environment, lesson planning and delivery, language teaching-learning practices, and mathematics teaching-learning practices.

Keeping the objectives of the Survey in mind, various terminologies such as practice, indicator, and rating scale were defined as follows:

Definitions



Practice

A specific, observable set of teacher actions that represents an identified part of a recommended pedagogical process.



Indicator

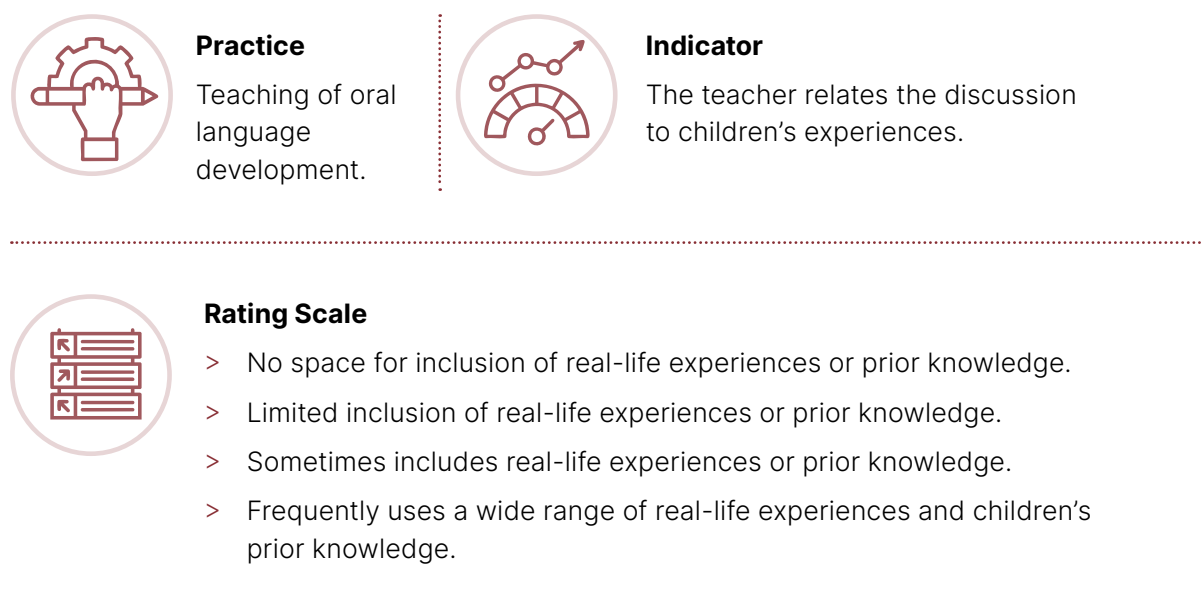
A specific, observable behaviour that provides evidence of a practice implemented in the classroom. (A practice can have more than one indicator)



Rating Scale

Each indicator was rated on a 4-point rating scale. Rating 1 indicated least effective practice, 2 – partially effective practice, 3 – effective practice and 4 – most effective practice.

An example of a practice with its indicator and rating scale from language teaching practices can be seen in the diagram below:



The indicators for each practice have been selected to include key behaviours and teaching activities.

The Survey included key practices for the learning environment and teaching of language and mathematics in early grades. Constraints such as a single 40-minute observation visit by a field observer with limited training necessitated keeping the indicators to a limited number.

2.5 Analysis framework

The analysis was guided by the Survey's objectives, which were further organised into specific practices and indicators to structure the inquiry. Indicators drawn from the CRO, ToT, pre- and post-observation, LS and teacher interview tools were systematically mapped to each objective to ensure analytical coherence and consistency. Triangulation across tools strengthened the robustness of interpretation and reduced the potential influence of field observer bias.

During the analysis, data from Grades 1 and 2 was found to be broadly similar with no significant differences. Accordingly, the findings presented in the report combine data from both grades to provide a consolidated picture of early-grade classroom practices. To refer to grade-wise disaggregated data, please see the QR code given in the end.

An example of how relevant indicators from different tools were mapped to answer a specific question:

Practice	Indicator	Tools
Use of TLM	Were TLMs available in the classroom?	Pre- and post-observation
	Were TLMs displayed at children's eye level?	Pre- and post-observation
	Did children get an opportunity to practise with TLMs?	CRO

The analytical approach followed a mixed-methods design, combining both quantitative and qualitative techniques. The table gives a detailed overview of the type of analytical approach with a description of the methods used.

S. No.	Tool	Type of analysis	Description
1.	Classroom Observation	Quantitative & Qualitative	Quantitative data were analysed descriptively (frequencies, averages) to identify patterns in classroom practices. Qualitative field observer notes were thematically analysed to capture nuances of teaching-learning interactions and classroom environment.
2.	Teacher Interview Questionnaire	Quantitative & Qualitative	Thematic analysis was applied to understand teachers' beliefs, perceptions and instructional strategies, complementing classroom observations.
3.	Lesson Sequence	Quantitative	Time-stamped sequencing of instructional steps was analysed to highlight the common steps followed for teaching of language and mathematics.
4.	Pre- and Post-Observation	Quantitative	Descriptive analysis of classroom context, including physical setup, enrolment, seating arrangements and availability of teaching-learning resources, was recorded both before and after observation.
5.	Time-on-Task	Quantitative	The proportion of instructional time devoted to various activities was analysed descriptively to assess engagement and efficiency of classroom processes.

2.6 Sampling framework: Selection of districts, blocks and schools

The Survey adopted a multi-stage sampling design. The sampling strategy was designed to balance methodological rigour with on-ground feasibility, while enabling a credible examination of classroom-level FLN teaching and learning practices.

Stage 1 – District selection

- > Districts where partner organisations were actively implementing FLN-focused interventions were deliberately excluded. This allowed the Survey to capture routine classroom practices without the influence of external programme support.

Stage 2 – Block and school selection

In this stage, blocks and schools were selected within each sampled district.

- > Two blocks were randomly selected within each district.
- > The sampling aimed to cover 50 schools per district.
- > To balance methodological rigour with field feasibility, around half of the required schools (approximately 12-13 per block) were selected through random sampling. The remaining schools were selected based on geographic proximity to sampled schools to minimise travel time.

Within each sampled school:

- > Classrooms were selected to ensure an approximate balance between Grade 1 and Grade 2 observations.
 - > Observations were evenly distributed across language and mathematics lessons within each district.
 - > Schools were included in the sample only if they had an enrolment of more than seven children, and classroom observations were conducted only when at least five children were present at the time of observation.
-

2.7 Training and field implementation

A structured, multi-tiered training and implementation strategy was adopted to ensure consistent, reliable and high-quality administration of survey tools across the State. The training approach was designed to strengthen both conceptual understanding of FLN processes and the practical skills required for systematic classroom observation using multiple data collection instruments.

Field observers underwent intensive training and worked under close supervision throughout the data collection period. Daily debriefs, ongoing validation of observations, and systematic monitoring processes were integral to field implementation. This integrated design enabled a robust, evidence-based understanding of classroom-level instructional practices in

government schools. Across all states, supervisors were directly supported by LLF's educational advisors and the Survey core team, who maintained a continuous field presence and provided real-time support and clarifications to ensure standardisation and quality across diverse contexts.

1

A five-day national orientation workshop, including two days of field visits, was conducted to orient consultants, supervisors and partner organisations to the Survey methodology, tool architecture, indicators and rating scales, particularly for the CRO instrument. The workshop was designed and facilitated by LLF's core TLPS team and combined detailed technical sessions with live classroom observations, enabling participants to apply the tools in real instructional settings and reflect collectively on their use. Structured debrief sessions followed each field visit during which observations were reviewed in detail, interpretations were discussed, and rating scales were systematically resolved. Insights from these field trials and discussions directly informed the refinement of tools.

2

A dedicated two-day supervision training was conducted at national level to strengthen field level quality assurance and supervision mechanisms for supervisors' adherence. Experienced consultants were deployed as supervisors. Each state had a minimum of two supervisors, ideally one for each district. In case of more districts, additional supervisors were also oriented in this workshop.

3

A six day training workshop was conducted in Assam in order to achieve reliability across the assessors. The field evaluators who undertook classroom and interviews with the teachers had at least one year of experience in teaching at the FLN level and were given a thorough grounding in the theoretical and practical aspects of the foundational literacy and numeracy mission.

The training structure included: Detailed tool walkthroughs with real-time CROs; practice sessions in actual school settings (two full days); hands-on data entry exercises with immediate feedback; indicator interpretation discussions using video recordings; and mock debrief sessions to prepare teams for daily review protocols. LLF supervisors continued providing on-ground support to field teams throughout the entire data collection period, ensuring adherence to Survey protocols.

The Assam training team included 14 potential field observers, including one monitoring and evaluation (M&E) member and two supervisors. After the training, the final team consisted of 12 field observers—based on their performance during the training.

Each observation team typically consisted of two field observers, supported by a supervisor who shadowed visits and monitored implementation adherence and provided on-site feedback.

Observer 1



- > CRO Tool
- > LS Tool
- > Teacher Interviewer

Observer 2



- > ToT Tool
- > Pre- and Post-Observation Tool
- > Note-taking of Teacher Interview

Before the lesson

Field observer 2 documented in relevant sections the pre- and post-observation tool.

During the lesson

Field observer 1 administered CRO and LS together for 40 minutes. At the same time, field observer 2 noted in ToT.

After the lesson

Field observer 1 asked questions from interview questionnaire. Field observer 2 made notes of the interview.

Field observers spent around two hours in each school following the protocol for CRO, note-taking, interviewing the teacher and collecting the school and children profile. The team then moved to the second school for the day to follow the same process for another grade or subject. The number of grades and subjects observed were recorded daily by the supervisor to maintain balance between the sample size. Field supervisors validated a sample of observations through shadow visits. Quality assurance was embedded into daily field routines.

Data Digitisation: Data in paper-pencil was daily digitised on an Application by the field observers. Random checks were conducted by the supervisors to identify missing data, incomplete survey forms and gaps in supporting evidence.

Across all data collection sites, daily debrief sessions of 2-3 hours were conducted during active fieldwork. These sessions, facilitated by supervisors with support from LLF consultants and in coordination with the Survey central core team, served as a space for validating interpretations and resolving ambiguities in ratings.

These sessions operated as intensive quality assurance checkpoints where:

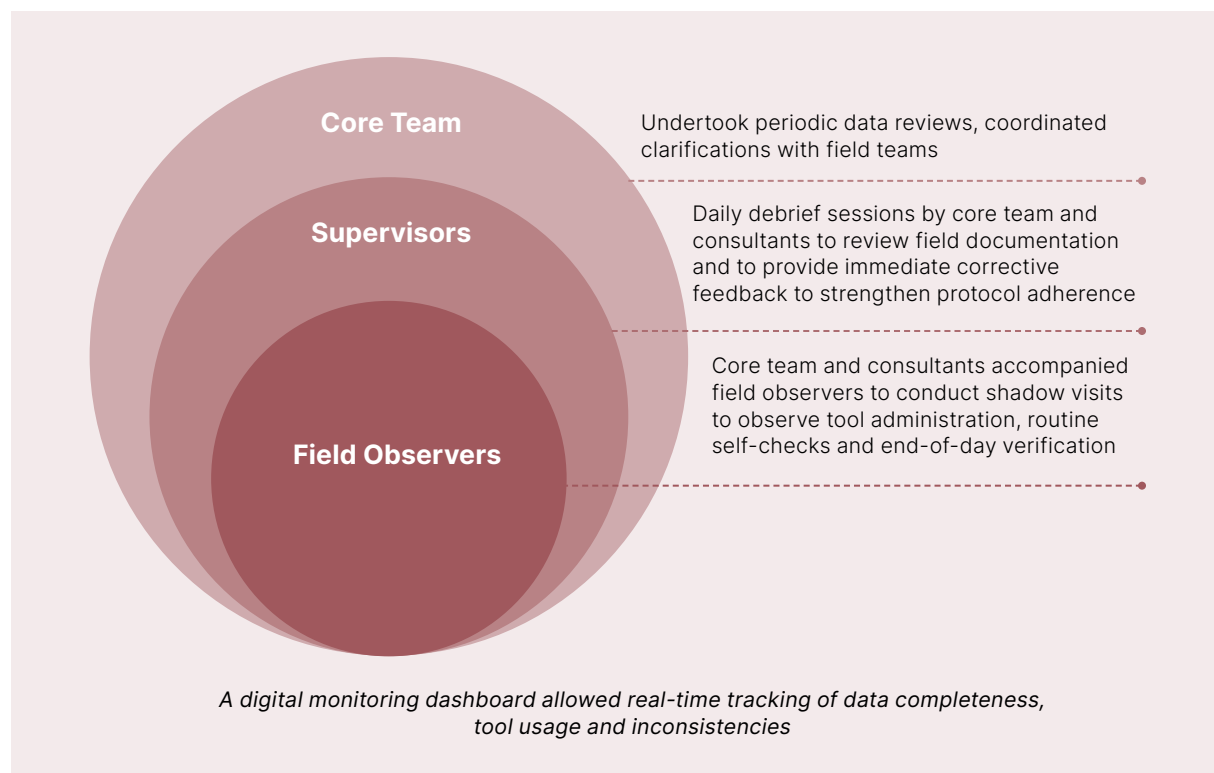
- > Every completed observation tool was reviewed in detail.
- > Field observers read examples aloud for group discussion.
- > Rating interpretations were validated against the established framework.
- > Doubts about ratings were identified and corrected before digitisation.

Following these rigorous debriefs, field observers digitised their data. All digitised entries underwent random verification by LLF supervisors and M&E team members to ensure accuracy between paper tools and digital records.

2.8 Quality assurance and supervision

To ensure the quality of the Survey, an intensive monitoring system was established. Quality-checking procedures were included at every stage of data collection so that the reliability of all digital data entries could be ensured and the impact of errors in assessment and potential observer bias could be minimised.

The monitoring system was designed at three levels: at the observer level, at the supervisor level, and at the level of LLF's Survey team and M&E team.



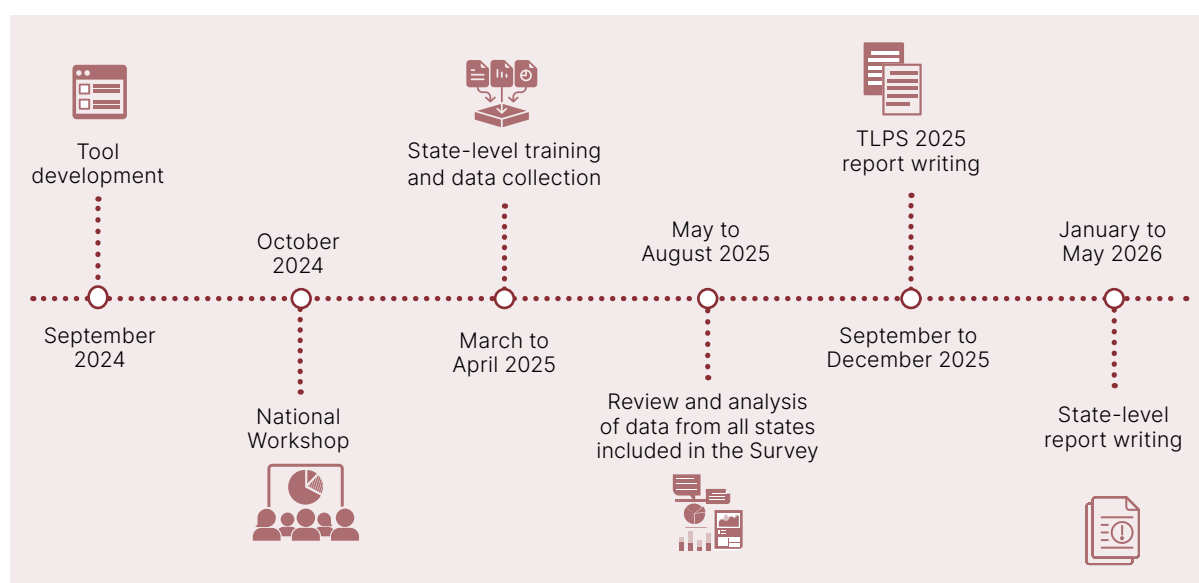
2.9 Data review

Following the completion of data collection, LLF and Ei implemented a structured, multi-stage data review protocol to ensure completeness, accuracy and cross-state consistency.

- > After initial validation at the State-level, consolidated datasets underwent centralised cleaning, duplication checks and review of score distributions.
- > An in-house data review workshop enabled joint examination of outliers and alignment of coding interpretations across partners.
- > Discrepancies were resolved through discussion and consensus to ensure that the final dataset reflected genuine variation in classroom practices rather than procedural or coding artefacts.

2.10 Timeline

The Survey's major milestones and timelines are given below.



2.11 Challenges

- > Permissions from the state for data collection in the district were received within a limited operational window, which constrained the possibility of revising the schedule.
- > Supervisors had to invest considerable time and effort for liaisoning in the newly-added districts (the surveyed districts are not programme districts for the implementing partner).
- > Data collection activities in one district were delayed due to school closures caused by adverse weather conditions. During this period, the team strategically utilised the time to conduct data collection in another district.

- > The presence of geographically distant schools posed logistical challenges and required extended working hours for the field teams.
 - > Variations in regular student attendance across districts — notably lower attendance in Kamrup Rural and higher attendance in Goalpara — necessitated adaptive scheduling during the data collection process.
-

2.12 Limitations

The scope of the Survey was limited to describing and analysing classroom teaching and learning practices at a given point in time. It did not assess children learning outcomes, measure teachers' content knowledge, or evaluate the impact of specific programmes or interventions. Aspects like the curriculum design, teacher deployment, or infrastructure were also not part of the inquiry, apart from what was directly observable in classrooms.

The Survey findings should be interpreted in the light of the following methodological constraints.

- > The districts were selected to ensure diversity in geographic location, social groups and learning outcomes, rather than being a statistically representative sample for a state. The selection of schools within a district was based on a random sampling for half the schools, the remaining half being chosen based on proximity to the randomly selected schools.
- > Classroom observations were limited to a single 40-minute language or mathematics lesson on one day. As for all such observations, the presence of observers could influence teaching practices during the period of observation. For example, many teachers may have repeated a lesson or activity which they had already done with children earlier.
- > The practices and indicators selected for observation are not exhaustive; rather, they were chosen because they are both important for effective teaching in the early grades and observable in a reliable manner within the limited scope of a single observation.

These limitations do not diminish or undermine the value of the evidence but underscore the need for cautious interpretation and the need for complementary research.

2.13 Conclusion

The Survey methodology provides a rigorous and coherent framework for the study of classroom teaching and learning practices at scale. Through the use of standardised observation and interview tools and by combining quantitative measures with qualitative insights, the Survey generates evidence that is both comparable across states and grounded in classroom realities. The multi-tiered approach to training, supervision and quality assurance ensured consistency in data collection and analysis, thereby strengthening the credibility of the findings. From tool development and piloting to field implementation and data review, methodological rigour was embedded at every stage of the Survey.

By foregrounding classroom processes and employing high-rigour methodology, from tool development to data analysis, the Survey offers a replicable model for studying foundational

FLN teaching and learning practices at scale. The tools of this Survey (QR code at the end) can be used by government and other organisations to conduct similar surveys.

To facilitate the smooth and successful completion of the data collection process, a WhatsApp group was created for observers and the State Survey team. Members of LLF's Survey team were also included in this group, which enabled immediate resolution of field-level queries, inconsistencies, and contextual challenges.

Quality checks were integrated into the daily field implementation process. A systematic end-of-day review ensured that the completeness and consistency of observations were verified before digitisation, thereby preventing possible data-entry errors.

Note: Detailed TLPS methodology and tool development process can be found in the TLPS National Report: <https://languageandlearningfoundation.org/teaching-learning-practices-survey>



Summary and interpretation

Observations were conducted in 100 classrooms for their learning environment, including 51 Grade 1 and 49 Grade 2 classrooms.

This chapter presents the TLPS 2025 findings related to classroom environment, drawing on quantitative and qualitative insights gathered primarily through classroom observation and qualified by data from teacher interviews, pre- and post-observation and ToT tools.

A total of three indicators were assessed to generate insights on the classroom learning environment—physical environment, teacher-child relationship and opportunities for participation.

The Survey included key aspects of the classroom learning environment in early grades. Constraints such as a single 40-minute observation visit by a field observer with limited training necessitated keeping the indicators to a minimum.

Consolidated summary of findings across four indicators

-  Functional blackboards were available in almost all the observed classrooms. Print-rich materials were displayed in a few **(12%)** classrooms.
-  In **43%** of the classrooms at least some children looked comfortable in the presence of the teacher and asked questions freely to the teachers and to others.
-  In over a third **(37%)** of the classrooms, teachers often included multiple children in discussions by asking them individual questions. However, teachers in very few **(3%)** classrooms consistently waited for children to process and respond.
-  Around **88%** of classrooms had a row-and-column seating style; seating was changed in very few classrooms to suit teaching-learning activities.

Overall, few sampled classrooms in Assam had adequate print-rich materials displayed. Encouragingly, some teachers try to include multiple children in discussions by asking them individual questions. Ensuring more availability and use of appropriate print-rich material, intentional organisation of classroom spaces to support learning goals and greater attention to nurturing supportive teacher-child relationships can significantly enhance inclusion and engagement.



Classroom Learning Environment

3.1 Overview of classroom learning environment

The classroom environment plays a crucial role in shaping children's learning experiences and overall development. A positive, accepting, well-organised, and stimulating environment not only enhances academic performance but also fosters social and emotional growth. A supportive classroom is where children feel safe, motivated, and encouraged to explore, engage, question, and collaborate. It holds the power to transform learning into an engaging and meaningful journey. NCF-FS 2022 recommends that a safe, secure, comfortable and happy classroom environment can help children to learn better and achieve more.

3.2 Effective practices of classroom learning environment and their indicators

The Survey focused on three critical environment-building practices: physical environment, teacher-child relationship and opportunities for participation. These components were examined through multiple indicators of effective practice (see Table 3.1).

Table 3.1: Practices and indicators of classroom learning environment

Practices	Indicators of Effective Practice
Physical environment	Physical space and sitting arrangement
	Availability of a functional blackboard
	Availability and accessibility of print-rich material
Teacher-child relationship	Children feel confident and express freely with the teacher and each other
Opportunities for participation	Teacher asks questions to individual children
	Teacher gives time to children to respond when asking individual children

3.2.1 Physical environment

The physical space and arrangement of a classroom significantly influence children's engagement, behaviour, and teaching and learning processes. Beyond basic infrastructure, seating arrangements that allow for flexible grouping are more effective in encouraging better interactions, teacher monitoring, and supporting learning objectives through both small-group and whole-class activities.

Another enabling factor is the display and use of a variety of classroom print material during teaching and learning. Children who are exposed to books and other print material at home often pick up basic concepts about print easily. For children who lack such exposure, a reality for many Indian children, it is even more important that classrooms have a print-rich environment at school. In a print-rich environment, children get many different opportunities to interact with different forms of print in meaningful contexts. This shows children that print carries meaning and that reading and writing serve real, everyday purposes. Over time, children become motivated to try to read and write themselves.

3.2.2 Teacher-child relationship

A warm, trusting teacher-child relationship is the cornerstone of a positive classroom environment. Young children who experience caring, respectful and responsive relationships with their teachers are more excited about learning, more positive about coming to school, more confident, and achieve more in the classroom. Such relationships help children feel safe to express ideas, ask questions, make mistakes, and take learning risks. This not only supports academic progress but also nurtures emotional growth, resilience, and motivation in learners. Simply put, a positive teacher-child relationship is the critical foundation affecting children's learning and progress in school, without which refinements in pedagogy, curricula and TLMs may be largely meaningless. The NCF-FS 2022 recommends that classrooms must offer inclusive and enabling learning environments that provide every child freedom, acceptance, meaningfulness, belonging and challenge.

3.2.3 Opportunities for participation

An inclusive classroom environment is one in which every child, irrespective of ability, language, gender, or socio-economic background, feels valued, heard, and able to participate meaningfully in the learning process. Such environments foster a sense of belonging and promote collaboration, empathy, and equity. Creating this environment means more than physical access to schooling; it requires classroom practices that cultivate participation, dialogue, and respect. In the Survey, two indicators were used as proxies to assess whether teachers were taking steps towards such inclusivity: first, whether they made efforts to engage individual children in discussions, and second, whether they provided adequate wait time for children to think and respond. Allowing adequate wait time after asking a question is just one strategy. Other examples include giving children the option to pass and return to the question later, or incorporating 'turn-and-talk' routines (or variations like think-pair-share and write-share). These approaches enable all children to engage with the question, while also tempering the dominance of those who are quick to respond, thus creating more balanced opportunities for participation.

Both of these practices are central to an inclusive classroom environment because they ensure that children are not only present, but are genuinely involved in learning—offering ideas, processing information at their pace, and developing confidence through supported participation.

3.3 Findings of classroom learning environment

3.3.1 Physical environment

Source	Indicators
Pre- & Post-observation Survey	Physical space and seating arrangement
	Availability of a functional blackboard
	Availability, nature and accessibility of print-rich material

Functional blackboards were available in almost all the observed classrooms. A large majority (88%) of classrooms had a row-and-column seating style. Seating arrangements were changed in only 2% of the classrooms as the session progressed, whether to suit the nature of activity being conducted or to support peer learning.

The observed classrooms showed a low presence of print-rich materials, with adequate display observed in 12% of surveyed classrooms and some display in a further 30%. More critically, materials were positioned at children's eye-level in just 5% of classrooms—a basic condition for children to independently access and engage with print. These figures fall below the overall TLPS 2025 average.

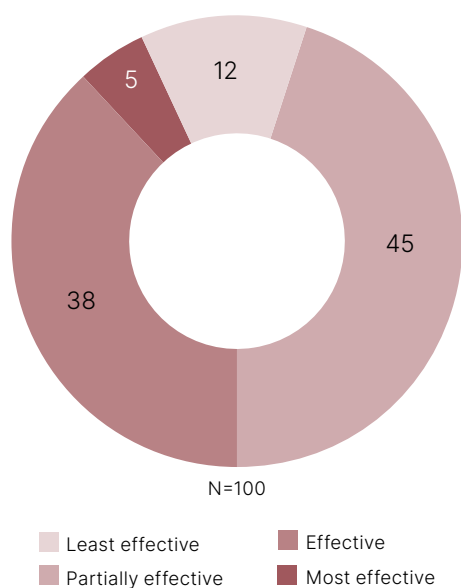
Taken together, the findings indicate that while basic infrastructure such as blackboards is widely available, the physical space can be used in more effective ways that support teaching and learning. Further, few classrooms saw changed seating arrangements during lessons. This suggests that teachers are missing opportunities to support peer learning, facilitate movement, and enable small-group or whole-class interactions aligned with lesson goals.

To create truly enabling classroom environments, teachers need to design flexible seating arrangements that suit the lesson objectives and the nature of the task. Ensuring that classroom print material is available, accessible, age-appropriate, and regularly used during lessons, and not just meant for decoration, would go a long way in supporting early language learning.

3.3.2 Teacher-child relationship

Indicator	1	2	3	4
Children feel confident and express freely with the teacher and each other	Children are quiet throughout the period and do not talk to the teacher or other children	Only a few children talk/ask questions amongst each other or to the teacher	Some children look comfortable in teacher's presence and talk or ask questions freely with others and the teacher	Most children are comfortable in the teacher's presence and talk freely or ask questions with others and the teacher

Figure 3.1: Percentage of classrooms where children felt confident and expressed freely with teachers and each other



In 43% of the sampled classrooms, at least some children looked comfortable in the presence of the teacher and asked questions freely to the teachers and to others. Only in a small proportion (5%) of classrooms surveyed, did most children appear comfortable, and engage effectively with the teachers and with others. In these classrooms, children actively asked and answered questions, shared personal experiences, interacted confidently with both teachers and peers (including helping one another), showed willingness to participate in activities and were unafraid to make mistakes.

In a majority (57%) of the observed classrooms, children either remained silent throughout the lesson or only a few participated in discussions. In these settings, children quietly followed instructions or stayed largely silent—often because teachers did not provide opportunities to speak, scolded children or engaged with only a small group of children.

These findings highlight a scope for strengthening teacher-child relationships in early-grade classrooms in the State. The current learning environment does not adequately support children's academic or socio-emotional growth. Any improvements in pedagogy, curriculum, or TLMs will have limited impact unless accompanied by deliberate efforts to create warm, responsive classroom relationships.

3.3.3 Opportunities for participation

Indicator	1	2	3	4
Teacher asks questions to individual children	Teacher does not ask individual children	Teacher occasionally asks individual children only	Teacher sometimes asks individual children	Teacher mostly asks individual children
Teacher gives time to children to respond when asking individual children	Teacher does not wait for responses	Teacher occasionally waits for children's responses	Teacher sometimes waits for children's responses	Teacher mostly waits for children's responses

In 37% of the observed classrooms, teachers asked questions to individual children at least sometimes whereas in a fourth (24%) of them, teachers did not direct questions to individual children. In many classrooms, teachers relied on children's choral responses to their questions rather than engaging children one-on-one.

A gap also emerged in giving children adequate wait time, defined as allowing at least 3-10 seconds after posing a question for children to think and respond. Where teachers did ask questions to individual children, few (3%) of them consistently waited for children's answers.

In almost half (45%) of the classrooms, teachers did not wait at all and instead supplied the answers themselves. This practice limits children’s opportunities to think, participate, and express their ideas, particularly for learners who already struggle to keep pace.

Figure 3.2: **Percentage of classrooms where teachers asked questions to individual children**

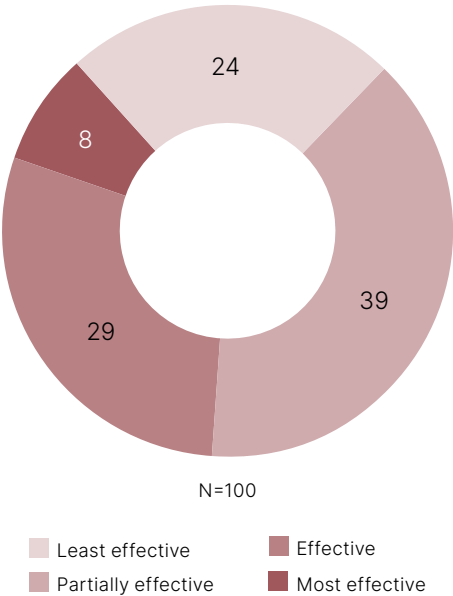
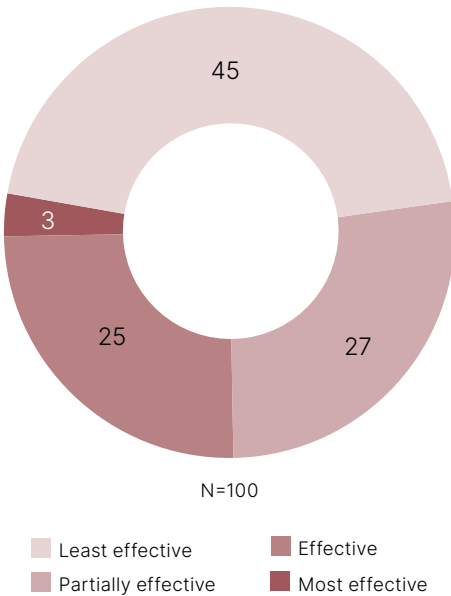


Figure 3.3: **Percentage of classrooms where teachers wait for children to respond when asking individual children**



The findings suggest that a considerable proportion of classrooms have much scope for creating an inclusive environment where every child is encouraged to think, participate, and express themselves. When teachers do not actively engage individual children or allow them sufficient time to respond, children cannot contribute to shared meaning-making, weakening the foundations of an inclusive classroom environment that values every learner’s voice.

3.4. Conclusion

The findings from this chapter indicate that many observed classrooms in Assam have made progress in establishing basic physical infrastructure like functional blackboards. At the same time, the findings point to clear opportunities for strengthening the classroom environment and practices to support active learning. Ensuring more availability and use of appropriate print-rich material, intentional organisation of classroom spaces to support learning goals, greater attention to nurturing supportive teacher-child relationships, and guided opportunities for every child to speak and participate can significantly enhance inclusion and engagement.



Summary and interpretation

Classroom observations were conducted in 100 classrooms for lesson planning and delivery practices, including 51 Grade 1 and 49 Grade 2 classrooms.

This chapter presents the Survey findings related to lesson planning and delivery. These findings draw on quantitative and qualitative insights gathered primarily through classroom observation, teacher interviews, and pre- and post-observation tools. The following indicators were assessed to generate insights into lesson planning and delivery practices: planning for the lesson, use of clear instructions, observation and monitoring of independent tasks, feedback on writing tasks, use of CFU strategies, use of differentiated instruction for children at different levels of learning, and engagement in multigrade, multilevel situations.

The Survey included some key teaching practices for lesson planning and delivery in early grades. Constraints such as a single 40-minute observation visit by a field observer with limited training necessitated keeping the indicators to a minimum.

Consolidated summary of findings from the sampled classrooms across six indicators

-  In teacher interviews, **53%** of teachers reported planning for the next day's lessons. However, **17%** of teachers had written lesson plans during classroom observations.
-  In almost two-thirds (**64%**) of the observed classrooms, teachers gave instructions before or during an activity. In **17%** of them, teachers confirmed whether at least some children understood their instructions.
-  In a third (**32%**) of classrooms, teachers observed and monitored children during independent or group activities at least sometimes.
-  In **33%** of the classrooms, teachers at least checked some children's work and defined the mistake.
-  In over half (**59%**) of the classrooms, teachers relied on choral responses to confirm children's understanding, which does not reveal what individual children have learnt.
-  In about two-thirds (**62%**) of classrooms, teachers did not appear to recognise that children had varied learning levels, nor did they use differentiated strategies in their teaching.

Overall, while many teachers value lesson planning and delivery practices, there is much scope for implementing them effectively and consistently in classrooms. Key aspects of lesson delivery, such as giving clear instructions, monitoring children's work, checking individual children's understanding, and offering meaningful feedback, are used consistently by a small proportion of teachers. As a result, children often participate in activities without sufficient guidance or support, and individual children's learning needs remain largely unidentified. Strengthening these core teaching practices offers substantial potential to improve learning and to prevent gaps from widening in the early grades.

Lesson Planning and Delivery

4.1 Overview of lesson planning and delivery

Thoughtful lesson planning and purposeful lesson delivery form the bedrock of effective teaching. They are central to creating meaningful learning experiences for young children. When teachers plan with intention, communicate expectations clearly, observe how children engage with tasks, and respond to their needs through timely guidance and support, they create classrooms where every child has a genuine chance to learn. These practices help teachers understand what children know, where they struggle, and how to adjust instruction so that all learners can progress.

Just as a supportive classroom environment is essential, strong lesson planning and delivery practices form the foundation for more specific teaching strategies that build early language and mathematics skills.

4.2 Effective practices of lesson planning and delivery and their indicators

Classroom observation during the Survey focused on the following indicators for lesson planning and delivery practices: lesson planning, use of clear instructions, observation and monitoring of children's tasks, giving feedback on written work, checking for understanding, as well as use of differentiated instruction for children at different learning levels (see Table 4.1).

Table 4.1: Practices and indicators of lesson planning and delivery

Practices	Effective Practice Indicators
Lesson planning	Teacher plans for the lesson
Clarity in Instructions	Teacher provides clear instructions before, during, and after the activity
Observation and monitoring	Teacher observes and monitors independent and group activities of children
Feedback	Teacher gives feedback/support on written work done by children
Check for understanding	Teacher uses questions, prompts or other strategies to check children's understanding
Differentiated instruction and support to struggling children	Teacher employs differentiated instruction or support for children at different levels

Additionally, data was taken from teacher interviews on the following questions:

Lesson planning

- > Do you plan the lesson you will teach the next day? If yes, how do you plan for the lesson? If no, why?

Differentiated instruction

- > Do you have children who have not learnt some of the basic skills that have been taught? What do you think could be the reasons for some children not being able to learn well?
- > How do you support children who have not yet learnt?

4.2.1 Lesson planning

Planning for a lesson is an essential part of teaching practice. It helps to ensure that teaching is purposeful, coherent and aligned with children's developmental and learning needs. When teachers plan, they are better able to select and sequence activities, anticipate challenges, and create meaningful learning experiences that build on what children already know.

The NCF-FS 2022 highlights that planning includes developing and organising classroom tasks as per target competencies and outcomes, pedagogy to be followed, resources to be used and assessment to be carried out. Planning also includes practice activities for children, home assignments, and displays in the class relevant to what is being taught.

4.2.2 Clarity of instructions

Clarity of instructions is a key part of good teaching, especially in the early years of schooling. Many young children take time to learn how school works and may not understand the expectations of formal, classroom-based learning. When teachers give clear, step-by-step instructions, children know what they are supposed to do, how to do it, and what a good result looks like. In addition to giving clear directions, teachers also need to show examples and model the task for young children. When teachers give clear instructions and reinforce them through modelling, children are more likely to stay focused, complete tasks, and learn better.

4.2.3 Observation and monitoring

Observation and monitoring are essential parts of good lesson delivery. When teachers watch how children work, both on their own and in groups, they gain valuable insights into what children understand, how they think and apply new learning and where they need help. Such information helps teachers adjust their explanations, change activities, or provide extra support when needed. In this way, observation not only helps identify learning gaps but also guides teachers in making timely decisions that improve classroom learning.

4.2.4 Feedback

Providing feedback on children's work is an important aspect of effective lesson delivery. When teachers comment purposefully on children's work, they not only acknowledge children's efforts but also help them understand how and why their responses can be improved. Timely, balanced and specific feedback enables children to recognise what they have done well and what needs further attention. The NCF-FS 2022 also recommends that feedback be constructive and focused on effort and growth rather than merely evaluating outcomes. By directing children's attention to strategies, concepts or steps they may have missed, effective feedback guides learners to reflect on their work, improve their skills, and take ownership of their learning over time.

4.2.5 Check for understanding

Regular CFU is vital for effective lesson delivery, especially in the early years, when children are still building foundational skills. CFU helps teachers know whether children have understood key ideas before moving on, allowing them to identify misconceptions and provide support when needed. Simple strategies, such as asking questions, using quick tasks, or observing children's responses, give teachers real-time insight into children's learning.

Choral responses can help build participation but they often mask individual differences. A few confident voices may lead, while other children simply repeat without understanding. Relying only on group responses does not show teachers what individual children understand. Thus, consistent and varied CFU practices are required to ensure that teaching remains clear, inclusive and responsive to all learners.

4.2.6 Differentiated instruction and support to struggling children

Differentiated instruction is essential for effective lesson planning and delivery. In the foundational years, especially, classrooms include learners with varied backgrounds and developmental levels, making it important for teachers to adjust their teaching so all children can participate meaningfully. This means planning lessons that modify content, methods, or activities to support those who struggle as well as those who are ready to move ahead. As highlighted in the NCF-FS 2022, teachers are expected to use multiple pedagogical approaches so that no learner is left behind and every child can access learning successfully.

4.3 Findings of lesson planning and delivery

4.3.1 Lesson planning

Source	Indicators
Teacher interviews	Do you plan the lesson you will teach the next day?
	If yes, how do you plan for the lesson? If not, why?
Pre- and post-observation tool	Teacher has a documented lesson plan/strategy for the period. (Yes/No with explanation and comments)

In teacher interviews, over half (53%) of teachers reported planning for the lesson they would teach the next day. Documented plans were observed with 17% of teachers during classroom observation, while the rest presumably relied on mental or informal lesson planning that was not systematically recorded. Both these data points for the sampled schools in Assam are lower than the respective TLPS 2025 averages of 75% and 51%.

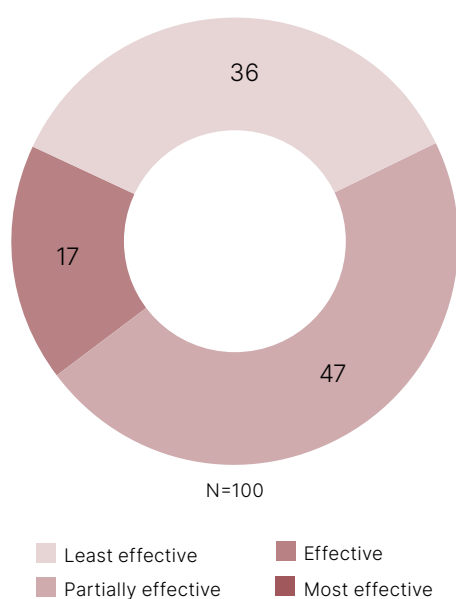
Teachers reported using various resources to plan lessons, such as textbooks, teacher guides, and online platforms like YouTube. A small number of teachers said they adapt their plans based on children's learning levels. However, because field observers did not examine the quality of these plans, it is not possible to draw conclusions about the effectiveness of planning practices.

Overall, the findings suggest that teachers increasingly recognise the importance of lesson planning, but there is a gap between intent and actual practice. As most of the teachers did not have written lesson plans, this indicates that planning may be inconsistent, informal, or overly dependent on memory, which can limit the quality and continuity of teaching.

4.3.2 Clarity in instructions

Indicator	1	2	3	4
Teacher provides clear instructions before, during and after the activity	Teacher begins activity without giving any instruction (before, during or after)	Teacher gives instructions before or during an activity but does not confirm if all children understand them	Teacher gives instructions before or during an activity, and confirms with some children if they have understood them	Teacher clearly communicates instructions to ensure all children understand them at each stage, before, during, and after every activity

Figure 4.1: Percentage of classrooms where teachers provided clear instructions before, during and after the activity



In around 64% of the observed classrooms, teachers gave instructions before or during an activity. In 17% of classrooms, teachers also confirmed with at least some children whether they understood what was expected of them. In over a third of the observed classrooms (36%), teachers conducted learning activities without any instructions to children on what is expected of them before, during or after those activities.

The findings reveal wide variations in how teachers communicate instructions during classroom activities. Although some teachers did provide directions before or during classroom activities, few did so in a structured and complete way. As a result, many children may be engaging in tasks without fully understanding what they are expected to do or why. In early-grade classrooms where children are still developing familiarity with

classroom routines and academic language, unclear or incomplete instructions can cause children to become confused, go off-task and lose learning time. These gaps highlight the need for teachers to give clear, step-by-step instructions, model expected responses, and verify that children have understood so that they can participate meaningfully and learn successfully.

4.3.3 Observation and monitoring

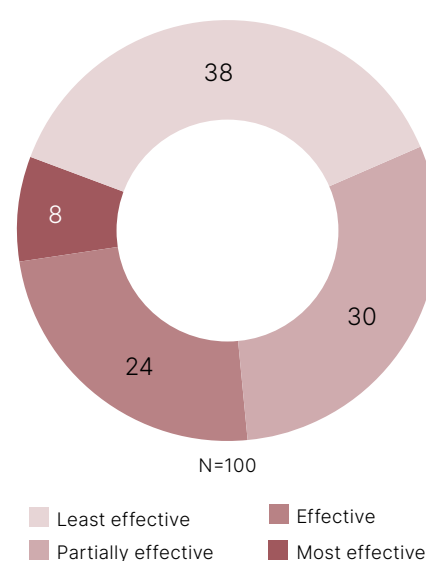
Indicator	1	2	3	4
Teacher observes and monitors independent and group activities of children	Teacher does not observe or monitor independent or group activities of children	Teacher occasionally observes and monitors a few children	Teacher sometimes monitors independent/group activities of some children	Teacher mostly observes and actively monitors the group activities or independent work of most children

In 32% of the observed classrooms, teachers observed and monitored independent/group activities of children at least sometimes. In 38% of the surveyed classrooms, teachers did not observe or monitor children at all during independent tasks or group activities.

A small proportion (8%) of teachers actively observed and monitored most children during classroom tasks. Data from ToT observations show that, on an average, teachers spent 10% of lesson time (40 minutes) supervising group or individual work of children.

These findings show that regular and purposeful observation is not a common part of classroom practice. When teachers do not closely monitor children's work, they miss important information about what children understand and where they struggle. With only a few teachers actively monitoring most children, there are very limited opportunities to adjust instruction, offer timely feedback, correct errors, or provide other forms of support that strengthen learning.

Figure 4.2: Percentage of classrooms where teachers observed and monitored independent and group activities of children

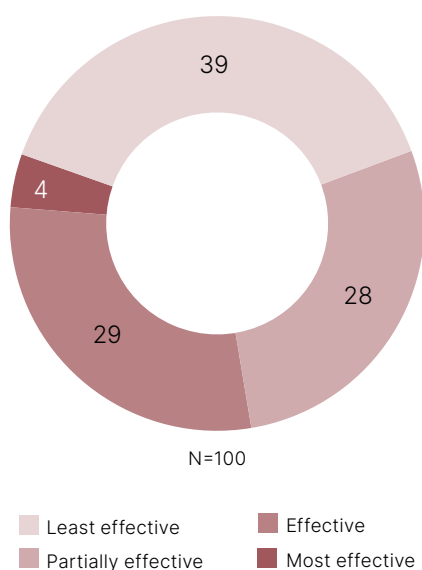


4.3.4 Feedback

Indicator	1	2	3	4
Teacher gives feedback/support on written work done by children	Teacher does not check any children's work	Teacher checks a few children's work and corrects it himself/herself but does not share the feedback	Teacher checks some children's work and defines the mistake	Teacher gives constructive feedback to most of the children based on the mistakes, explains the concept again, asks to rework and re-checks

In 28% of observed classrooms teachers checked a few notebooks and corrected errors themselves. In a further 29%, teachers went a step ahead by identifying mistakes for some

Figure 4.3: Percentage of classrooms where teacher gives feedback/support on written work done by children



children but did not provide sufficient guidance on how to correct them. Only in very few of the sampled classrooms (4%), teachers demonstrated effective feedback practices, reviewed most children's work, explained errors, revisited the concept where needed, and asked children to redo and resubmit their work. In over a third (39%) of the sampled classrooms, teachers did not check children's written work at all.

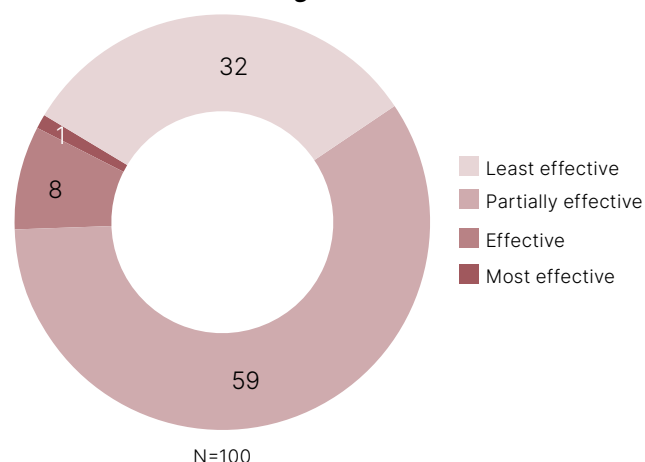
These findings suggest that there is much scope for improvement in constructive feedback practices. When teachers do not check children's work at all, and many others only identify or correct errors without explanation, children miss the support they need to learn from their mistakes. Without timely and specific feedback, children continue to complete tasks without fully knowing how to improve or deepen their learning.

Teachers can strengthen feedback practices by regularly checking most children's work, clearly explaining why an answer or approach is incorrect, and providing simple steps to improve. Encouraging children to reflect on, correct, and resubmit their work helps them apply the feedback and see their own progress.

4.3.5 Check for understanding

Indicator	1	2	3	4
Teacher uses questions, prompts or other strategies to check children's understanding	Teacher does not use any question or other strategies to check children's understanding	Teacher accepts choral response to confirm children's understanding	Teacher sometimes confirms through questions, prompts or other strategies for children's understanding	Teacher mostly confirms children's understanding through questions, prompts and other strategies

Figure 4.4: Percentage of classrooms where teachers used questions, prompts or other strategies to check children's understanding



In more than half (59%) of the classrooms, teachers relied mainly on children's group or choral responses to check for children's understanding (CFU). Such group responses do not show what individual children understand. In a third (32%) of the classrooms, teacher did not use any questions or CFU strategies. In just one classroom did the teacher consistently use questions, prompts, or other strategies to check for children's understanding actively.

Further, in most classrooms, teachers asked questions that focused on recalling facts from the recently covered content. Few went beyond this. In such classrooms, teachers posed questions that required children to explain their reasoning, assigned individual and group practice tasks, invited children to solve problems on the board, or checked classwork during the lesson. In a few classrooms, teachers also used hands-on activities, such as showing numerical reasoning with bundles of tens and ones or sequencing story pictures, to see whether children had understood concepts or story events correctly.

Overall, these findings reveal an inconsistent use of checks for understanding in classrooms. Many children are not getting enough opportunities to show what they have understood during a lesson. When teachers do not check for understanding or rely only on choral responses, they cannot see which children are confused or need extra help. As a result, lessons may continue even when key ideas are not clear to many children.

To improve this, teachers can use a few simple checks during the lessons, such as asking individual children to explain their thinking, to demonstrate how they solved a problem, to give a quick task, or to observe how children complete a step. Using different types of questions and short activities helps teachers notice misunderstandings early and respond before moving ahead, ensuring that all children are learning, not just the more confident ones.

4.3.6 Differentiated instruction and support for struggling children

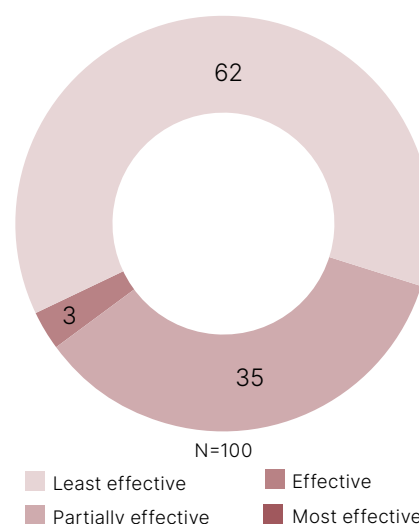
Indicator	1	2	3	4
Teacher employs differentiated instructions or support for children at different levels	Teacher does not know children's learning needs and does not use any differentiated instructions	Teacher knows the learning needs of children but does not have a plan to use differentiated instructions	Teacher knows the learning needs of the children but can apply differentiated instructions on only some children	Teacher knows the learning needs of the children, forms group/ groups based on the needs and gives level-based instructions and need-based support to most children

Additional insights were drawn from teacher interviews as related to the following questions:

- > Do you have children who have not learnt some of the basic skills that have been taught?
- > What do you think could be the reasons for some children not being able to learn well?
- > How do you support the children who have not learnt yet?

In 62% of the observed classrooms, teachers did not use differentiated strategies during the limited observation time, nor did they appear to be aware of children's learning needs. It is encouraging to

Figure 4.5: Percentage of classrooms where teachers employed differentiated instructions to varying levels of effectiveness



note that in another 35% of them, teachers were aware of children's varied learning needs. None of the observed teachers demonstrated full awareness of this practice by grouping children according to ability and offering targeted support, such as guided reading, individualised writing tasks, or graded mathematics activities, tailored to children's learning levels.

In interviews, 97% of teachers acknowledged having children who were struggling with basic language and mathematics skills. Almost all of them attributed these learning gaps to factors outside the classroom, such as a lack of parental support (82%) or children's absenteeism (47%) rather than to limitations in teaching and learning processes.

Among teachers who attempted to support children lagging behind their peers, most reported using the following strategies: giving them separate or remedial tasks while continuing instruction for the rest of the class (45%) or offering them additional time after class (27%). Other approaches like individually re-explaining concepts were used less frequently.

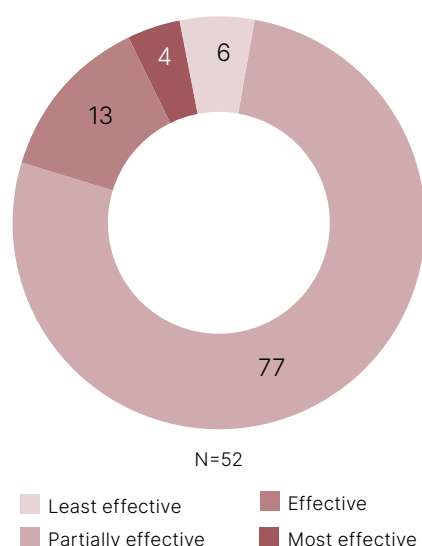
These findings suggest that while most teachers know that some children are struggling, they either do not recognise their role in offering support to these children or are not equipped to adapt instruction accordingly. To improve, teachers would need to understand children's learning levels, plan for varied needs, and use simple differentiated strategies. Even small shifts like flexible grouping, guided practice in level-based groups, or providing scaffolded tasks during regular lessons, can help ensure that all children are meaningfully included.

4.3.7 Multigrade teaching

Multigrade teaching situations, where children of two or more grades sit together, were found in 52% of the sampled schools—lower than the TLPS 2025 average of 66%. Children of Grades 1 and 2 were seated together in the same classroom in about 24% of the observed schools. Separately, Balvatika children were present in 20% of the multigrade classrooms.

The classroom observation included an indicator about 'teacher engaging both the grades in meaningful learning' with performance ranging from 'the teacher does not engage any grade meaningfully' to 'skilfully integrates activities to engage children from both the grades meaningfully.'

Figure 4.6: Percentage of classrooms where, in a multigrade situation, teachers engaged both the grades in meaningful learning



Teachers in 17% of the multigrade classrooms were able to engage the two grades to some degree of effectiveness. Owing to small class and school sizes in several states and districts, multigrade teaching situations are likely to see high prevalence. Better teacher deployment can help improve the problem to some extent. However, teachers working in multigrade and multilevel settings need specific guidance and pedagogical support to manage more than one grade or group effectively.

4.4 Conclusion

The findings from the indicators of lesson planning and delivery suggest that there is a lot of scope for improvement. Lesson planning is often informal or undocumented, limiting continuity and preparedness. Similarly, teachers' monitoring of children's work, checking for individual understanding and providing feedback have been less frequent, likely leaving many children without guidance on how to improve.

At the same time, the findings highlight several dimensions for strengthening instructional practice. Structured lesson planning, clear step-by-step instructions and modelling the expected response, and regular observation of children's work can help teachers respond more effectively to learners' needs and offer specific feedback to them. While differentiated instruction is currently limited, broad level-based grouping and providing guided practice or scaffolded tasks can help ensure that all children are meaningfully included in learning.



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Summary and interpretation

Classroom observations were conducted in 100 classrooms, of which language teaching practices were systematically observed in 54 classrooms, including 34 Grade 1 and 20 Grade 2 classrooms.

This chapter presents the Survey findings related to teaching language, drawing on quantitative and qualitative insights gathered primarily through classroom observation, teacher interview and lesson sequence tools. A total of six indicators were assessed to generate insights into language teaching practices: including children's prior knowledge in discussions, asking open-ended questions, employing a variety of decoding strategies, using comprehension strategies during read-alouds, giving opportunities to practise reading independently, and providing clear prompts for expressive writing.

The Survey included some key practices for language teaching in early grades. Constraints such as a single 40-minute observation visit by a field observer with limited training necessitated keeping the indicators to a minimum.

Consolidated summary of findings from the sampled classrooms across six indicators

Due to the small sample sizes, the findings given here are indicative and not statistically representative:

- 

Of the **35** classrooms where oral language teaching was observed, most teachers (**94%**) had scope for improvement in relating discussions and themes to children's real-life experiences or prior knowledge. A somewhat similar trend was seen in teachers asking open-ended questions during language instruction.
- 

Of the **32** classrooms where decoding teaching was observed, in **11** classrooms (**34%**), teachers used two or more types of activities for decoding instruction.
- 

In three-fourths of the **38** classrooms observed for teaching of reading, teachers asked factual questions or repeated the text by way of supporting children's understanding of the text read aloud to them.
- 

In 20 (**53%**) of the observed **38** classrooms, teachers gave children some opportunities for independent reading but there is scope for improvement in teachers actively observing and giving input to children during the reading practice.



Of the **28** classrooms where writing was observed, teachers in 21 (**75%**) of them did not give any activities or prompts where children could write in their own words. The focus was on handwriting practice or copying from the blackboard or textbook.

Overall, the classroom routines in the observed classrooms were teacher-led, with a focus on teacher talk, choral repetition, and without much support to build children's comprehension. Children's tasks and practice had limited scope for free expression, either oral or written. This is also supported by the ToT data. On an average, teachers spent 56% of their time on teacher-centred activities, compared to 13% on learner-centred activities.



Language Teaching Practices

5.1 Overview of language teaching practices

Language is the medium of most learning. Talking, thinking and reasoning, reading and writing, all involve the use of language. Developing higher-order comprehension skills like reasoning, analysing and forming opinions in the early years is critical to all future learning. The basic purpose of early language teaching is to enable all children to read fluently with comprehension, respond to questions about what they read, and express themselves with clarity, both orally and through independent writing. In addition, children should develop an interest in the habit of reading.

A balanced approach to early language and literacy requires teaching to focus on all the four blocks of oral language development, decoding, reading and writing, as recommended in NCF-FS 2022.

Figure 5.1: **Four components of language teaching**



Source – NCF-FS 2022, page 114

5.2 Effective practices of language teaching and their indicators

The Survey examined language teaching across the four practices using six indicators of effective practice, two for oral language, two for reading, and one each for decoding and writing (Table 5.1).

Language teaching was observed across 49 classrooms. Within the sampled language classrooms, different practices were observed in different classrooms. As a result, the sample sizes for these practices are smaller and varied.

Table 5.1: Language practices and indicators of language teaching

Language Practices	Indicators of Effective Practice
Teaching to develop oral language	Teacher relates the discussion or theme to children's prior and contextual knowledge and experiences
	Teacher asks open-ended questions during language instruction, for example oral language sessions or reading lessons
Teaching of decoding	Teacher uses a variety of activities to help children develop sound-symbol association and blending
Teaching of reading	Teacher reads aloud and supports comprehension of the text
	Children are given opportunities to practise reading independently
Teaching of writing	Teacher provides prompts that encourage children to write in their own words

5.2.1 Teaching to develop oral language

Oral language development is the foundation for learning to read and write. Classroom activities such as conversations, storytelling, interactive read-alouds, narration, retelling, and role-play help develop skills such as vocabulary, listening comprehension, verbal thinking, reasoning, and oral expression.

When teachers relate discussions to children's real-life experiences, it enhances children's participation and engagement. It provides opportunities to construct knowledge with reference to their familiar contexts and to move from the known to the unknown. For example, during a lesson on seasons, the teacher could include the impact of seasons on children's food, daily routines and clothing.

Similarly, when teachers ask open-ended questions (for example, 'Why?' 'How?' or 'What do you think?') during oral discussions and interactions for any theme or lesson, and build the discussion by including children's responses, it improves comprehension, reasoning and other higher-order thinking skills.

5.2.2 Teaching of decoding

Decoding is a foundational reading skill that helps children convert written text into spoken language. It begins with learning sound-symbol associations and progresses to blending, the ability to combine individual sounds to form meaningful words. For example, joining /म/-/ट/-/का/ produces “मटका” (earthen pot).

The teaching of decoding should be systematic and explicit. It is effective if teachers use a variety of decoding activities to strengthen the association between symbols and their sounds. A combination of activities like: (a) Identify the letter in the print material and pronounce it, (b) Pick a letter-card (varn/flash card) and tell the letter to your friend, (c) Find the letter and encircle, (d) Bingo, (e) Trace the letter on floor, (f) Make the letter with pebbles, (g) Blend the sound of two symbols on a letter or CV grid and say it aloud, and (h) Using TLMs like letter wheel, dice or grids for practice by children.

Providing varied, guided practice, especially for children who need additional help, can strengthen decoding fluency and prevent early reading difficulties. Using a variety of activities to teach decoding ensures that all children, irrespective of background or learning style, develop fluent decoding skills.

5.2.3 Teaching of reading

Reading is a complex process of constructing meaning from written texts. It requires understanding of oral language, phonological awareness, decoding skills, reading fluency and comprehension. Simply put, the two broad dimensions of skilled reading are (a) fluent decoding and (b) strong language comprehension. Effective teaching and learning of reading could follow the gradual release of responsibility (GRR) process of ‘I do it’ followed by ‘We do it’, and then ‘You do it together and later ‘You do it alone’. Many important reading routines roughly map on to this sequence. Thus, the teaching of reading would begin with interactive read-aloud by the teacher followed by shared reading by teacher and children together, followed by guided reading where children read in small groups, pairs or individually under the guidance of the teacher and, finally, opportunities for independent reading by children. Across all these reading routines, comprehension should be at the heart of the process.

During the interactive read-aloud process, the teacher must use various strategies to promote comprehension before, during and after the read-aloud process by activating background knowledge, asking factual and open-ended questions, and encouraging children to make predictions.

Reading skills improve by reading. Children who read more are better readers. Children must get opportunities to practise their reading skills in groups, pairs and individually, with support from the teacher as needed.

5.2.4 Teaching of writing

Writing is the process of expressing thoughts and ideas through written symbols in a structured, meaningful way that others can understand.

The focus of instruction for writing in the early grades has to be both on: (a) basic writing skills, viz. letter shapes, spellings, grammar, syntax, and (b) composing skills including thinking and drafting in a logical manner. By the end of Grade 2, children should be able to write short, simple sentences to express their thoughts (NCF-FS 2022).

Early writing requires extensive support from the teacher. Teachers should share their writing samples, discuss the writing task with children and jointly compose the main points to be written. It is important for the teacher to generate prompts that are meaningful and engaging for children and to support children with feedback during the writing process.

5.3 Findings of language teaching practices

Due to the small sample size on which the six language indicators were observed, the percentages given in the findings are indicative rather than statistically representative. However, these findings suggest some general trends in language teaching that merit further consideration.

5.3.1 Teaching to develop oral language

Instruction to support oral language development was observed across 35 classrooms in Assam. Due to the small sample size, the findings given here are indicative rather than statistically representative. However, these findings suggest some general trends in teaching of writing that merit further consideration.

Indicator	1	2	3	4
Teacher relates discussion to children's experiences	No space for inclusion of real-life experiences or prior knowledge	Limited inclusion of real-life experiences or prior knowledge	Sometimes includes real-life experiences or prior knowledge	Frequently uses a wide range of real-life experiences and children's prior knowledge
Teacher asks open-ended questions during lessons	Does not ask open-ended questions	Asks a few open-ended questions without waiting for children's responses	Asks a few open-ended questions and includes some responses	Builds discussion through children's responses to open-ended questions

Figure 5.2: **Percentage of classrooms where teachers related discussions to children's experiences**

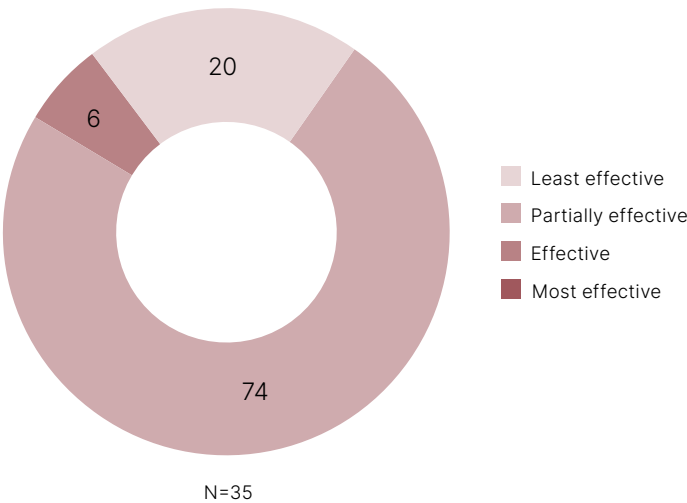
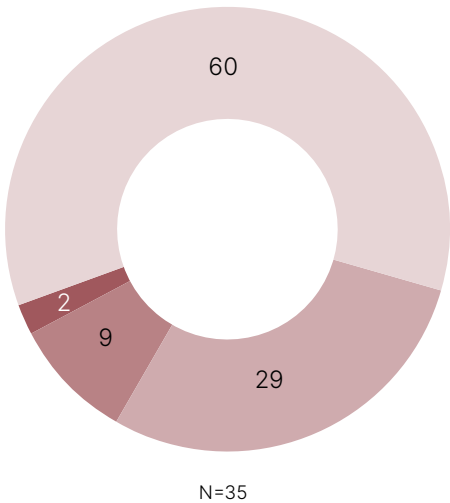


Figure 5.3: **Percentage of classrooms where teachers asked open-ended questions during lessons**



Teachers had much scope for improvement in relating the discussion and themes to students’ real-life experiences and prior knowledge in 33 of the 35 classrooms (94%); either not doing so at all or doing it to a very limited extent.

A somewhat similar pattern was seen in the use of open-ended questions. In 21 of 35 classrooms (60%), teachers did not ask open-ended questions. In another ten (29%) classrooms, teachers asked some open-ended questions but did not wait for children’s responses, which does not serve the purpose of using such questions to encourage elaborate discussions. In four classrooms, teachers asked a few open-ended questions and built on some children’s responses during discussions. These indicate a pattern where oral language development activities were largely dominated by teacher talk and literal questions that require yes/no or one-word responses, to which children usually respond in unison.

A shift is needed in the nature of oral language activities in early-grade classrooms to include activities that encourage active engagement of children by relating what is being taught to their immediate contexts and experiences, and by asking them to predict, think, infer in response to open-ended questions.

5.3.2 Teaching of decoding

Decoding was observed across 32 schools in Assam. Despite the small sample size, some trends can be inferred from the classroom observation data on decoding instruction.

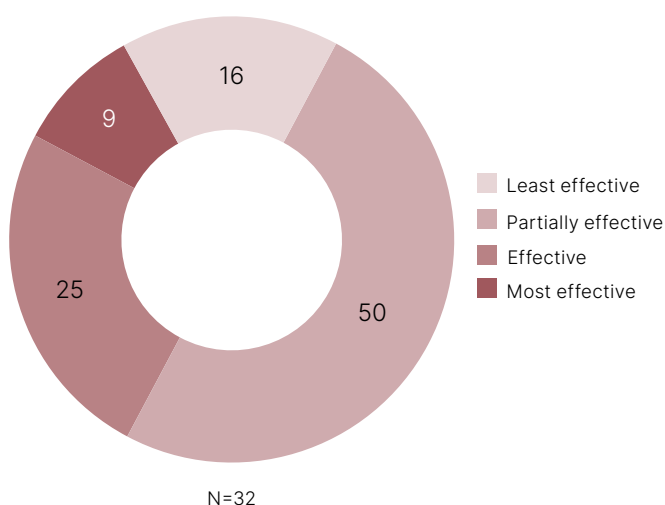
Indicator	1	2	3	4
Teacher uses varied activities for sound-symbol association or blending	Children copy letters from the board only	Uses one activity type	Uses two activity types	Uses more than two activity types

Teaching of decoding was observed more in Grade 1 classrooms than in Grade 2 classrooms. Overall, in 21 of the 32 sampled classrooms (66%), teachers instructed children to copy letters from the board or used only a single activity for teaching sound-symbol associations and blending. In 11 classrooms (34%), teachers used two or more types of activities for decoding instruction, above the TLPS 2025 average of 22%.

The findings show that most teachers relied on using just strategy or activity to teach decoding. Copying letters from the board or using just a single type of activity are not effective in helping children understand how written symbols map onto sounds or blend individual sounds to form meaningful words.

Key principles of teaching decoding include systematic teaching of sound-symbol relationships, ensuring that words are meaningful to children and using multiple activities that allow children to apply their emerging decoding knowledge to become active “word solvers”. When decoding is reduced to rote copying, children may learn to read and spell those particular words but may not develop the strategic skills needed to read unfamiliar words independently and become confident readers.

Figure 5.4: Percentage of classrooms where teachers used varied activities for sound-symbol association or blending



5.3.3 Teaching of reading

Reading was observed across 38 schools in Assam. Despite the small sample size, some trends can be inferred from the classroom observation data on teacher’s support for building children’s comprehension and opportunities given for reading practice.

Indicator	1	2	3	4
Teacher reads aloud and helps comprehension	No strategy for comprehension	Only factual questions or repetition	Limited factual and open-ended questions at the end of reading	Builds context before reading, asks prediction and open-ended questions throughout
Children practise reading independently	No opportunities for practice	Reading independently without observation	Paired reading with limited teacher input	Independent reading with teacher feedback and correction

In 32 (76%) of 38 observed classrooms, teachers either asked factual questions or repeated the text to support children’s understanding of the text read out to them. In another six classrooms, teachers did not use any strategy to build children’s comprehension during or after the read-aloud. None of the observed teachers used diverse comprehension strategies during the read-aloud.

Figure 5.5: Percentage of classrooms where teachers read aloud and supported children's comprehension

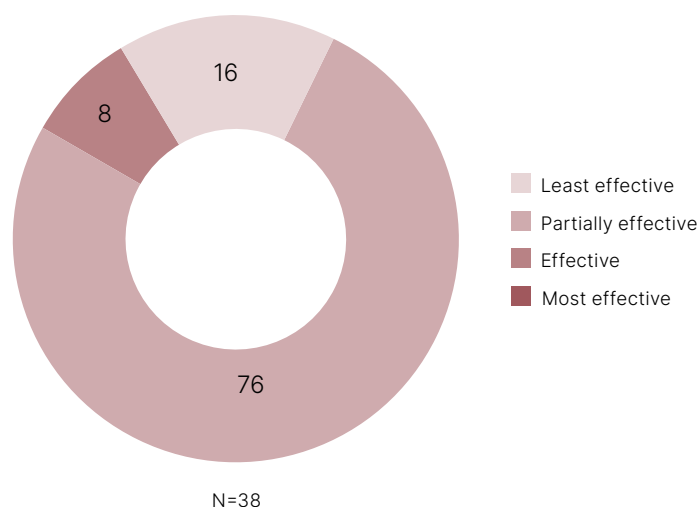
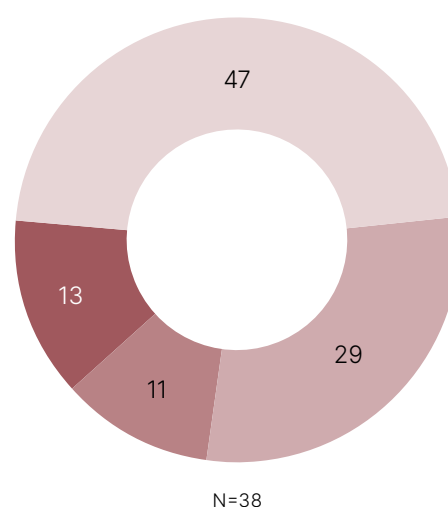


Figure 5.6: Percentage of classrooms where children practised reading independently



In more than half (53%) of the 38 classrooms, teachers provided opportunities for children to read independently. Teachers in 13% classrooms actively supported children with feedback and correction during the reading practice. In almost half of the observed classrooms (47%), children were not given any opportunities for independent reading practice during the observed lesson.

Overall, teachers' read-alouds were focused on modelling of fluent reading or sentence-by-sentence reading followed by choral repetition by the children. There was very limited focus on engaging children in the meaning-making process. Even when teachers attempted to engage children with the text, they mostly relied on factual questions. They rarely used a wider set of comprehension strategies to support collective sense-making, such as activating prior knowledge and setting the context before reading, asking prediction and inferential questions as the text progressed, or posing open-ended questions to encourage children to share their interpretations. The process of reading aloud to children needs to become more interactive, with engaged participation of children and a strong focus on building their listening comprehension and verbal expression.

Equally important, to strengthen reading proficiency, teachers must not only provide regular time for individual, paired, and group reading but also actively support children with feedback and guidance during these sessions.

5.3.4 Teaching of writing

Writing was observed across 28 schools in Assam. Due to the small sample size, the findings given here are indicative rather than statistically representative. However, these findings suggest some general trends in teaching of writing that merit further consideration.

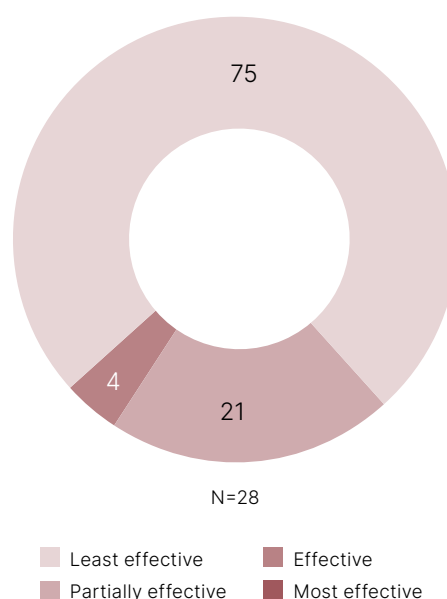
Indicator	1	2	3	4
Specific prompts to children writing in their own words	No writing in own words	A few unplanned prompts	Specific but inconsistent prompts	Clear prompts with examples and feedback

In 21 (75%) of the 28 classrooms observed for writing, children did not receive any prompts for writing in their own words. Copying from blackboard or textbook was the most common form of writing seen in the classrooms. In another six (21%) classrooms, teachers gave a few unplanned prompts, suggesting that writing is an area of early literacy in Assam that requires concerted focus and action.

When writing is largely reduced to copying, it offers children little opportunity to express their own ideas or meanings. This mechanical approach neglects a crucial aspect of early literacy. Children need guided opportunities to think, plan, and put meaning into their writing, not just practise letter shapes and handwriting. To address this, teachers must take an active role in modelling writing processes, sharing examples, discussing tasks, and co-developing ideas and structure with children, along with giving feedback on their written work.

Equally important is recognising that young children progress through phases of writing development, where they use unconventional spellings early on as natural steps towards more conventional writing. When teachers provide meaningful writing tasks and respond to what children are trying to say rather than only how correctly they write, children learn to use writing to communicate and eventually develop into confident, independent writers.

Figure 5.7: Percentage of classrooms where teachers gave specific prompts to children writing in their own words



5.4 Conclusion

The analysis of language teaching practices shows that while a balanced approach, covering oral language development, decoding, reading, and writing, has been introduced in many classrooms, its implementation has scope for improvement. Oral language and reading activities are mostly teacher-led and children tend to be passive. Further, writing to express one's thoughts, ideas and feelings emerged as a high-priority area for improving FLN instruction. Overall, there is a need to strengthen early language teaching practices to enable the shift from teacher-led routines to practices that actively engage children in meaning-making.

Summary and interpretation

Classroom observations were conducted in 100 classrooms, of which mathematics teaching practices were systematically observed in 46 classrooms, including 17 Grade 1 and 29 Grade 2 classrooms.

This chapter presents the Survey findings related to teaching mathematics, drawing on quantitative and qualitative insights gathered primarily through classroom observation and lesson sequence tools. A total of five indicators were observed to generate insights into mathematics teaching practices: use of TLMs by teachers and children, opportunities to practise mathematics tasks independently, use of children's real-life experiences for teaching mathematics concepts, and use of 'why and how' questions by teachers.

The Survey included some of the key teaching practices of mathematics, while constraints such as a single 40-minute observation visit by a field observer with limited training necessitated keeping the indicators to a minimum.

Consolidated summary of findings from the sampled classrooms across five indicators



In **85%** of the classrooms, teachers used TLMs for mathematics instruction during the observation period. TLM use was planned and concept-linked in **27%** of classrooms.



Children had some opportunity to use TLMs in two-thirds (**68%**) of the observed classrooms, though most children engaged with TLMs consistently in four classrooms.



In **11%** classrooms, teachers sometimes used real-life examples to explain mathematical concepts. In **63%** of classrooms, no real-life contextualisation was observed.



In **11%** of classrooms, teachers posed higher order 'why and how' questions while teaching mathematics concepts or processes.



In more than half (**54%**) of classrooms, children had opportunities to work independently on mathematics tasks under teacher observation.

Overall, mathematics teaching in Assam shows an encouraging trend in teachers' use of TLMs and opportunities for children to work independently, as compared to the TLPS 2025 average. However, there is scope for improvement in teachers' use of real-life examples and reasoning-focused questioning while teaching mathematical concepts and processes.

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Mathematics Teaching Practices

6.1 Overview of mathematics teaching practices

In early mathematics teaching, it is important to develop both conceptual understanding and procedural fluency in the foundational skills. NCF-FS 2022 defines the curricular goal for mathematics as enabling children to develop mathematical understanding and to make sense of the world through quantities, shapes, and measures. Specifically, this includes competence in counting, numbers, basic operations, shapes and spatial relations and measurement.

NCF-FS 2022 recommends effective approaches such as developing mathematical abstract ideas through the concrete Experience, Language, Pictorial, and Symbol (ELPS) progression, connecting learning to children's real-life experiences and prior knowledge, promoting mathematical talk and reasoning, and developing a positive attitude towards mathematics.

The ELPS sequence begins with the use of concrete materials, enabling learners to construct deep and robust conceptual understanding. Encouraging children to explain their thinking using mathematical language strengthens reasoning, communication, and procedural fluency. Purposeful questioning, particularly through 'why and how' questions, and meaningful problem-solving tasks further help children see mathematics as relevant and useful, deepening learning and engagement. Children also require ample opportunities to practise numeracy skills, both teacher-supported and independent.

6.2 Effective practices of mathematics teaching and their indicators

The Survey focused on four key teaching practices: the use of TLMs to teach mathematical concepts, such as counting, numbers, basic operations, the use of real-life examples, asking 'why and how' questions, and giving opportunities for independent practice. These components were examined through five indicators of effective practice (see Table 6.1).

Table 6.1: Effective practices of mathematics teaching and their indicators

Practices	Effective Practice Indicators
Use of TLMs	Teacher uses appropriate TLMs/manipulatives to explain mathematical concepts and processes
	Children use TLMs/manipulatives to understand the mathematical concepts and processes
Independent practices by children	Children are given independent mathematics tasks for practise

Practices	Effective Practice Indicators
Use of real-life context	Teacher uses examples from children's life to explain mathematical concepts and processes
Asking 'why and how' questions	Teacher asks 'why and how' questions to deepen mathematical thinking of children while teaching mathematical concepts and processes

6.2.1 Use of teaching learning materials

The use of TLMs is a core pedagogical practice for developing conceptual understanding in early-grade mathematics. In Grades 1 and 2, appropriate TLMs may include objects such as beads, ice-cream sticks, *ganitmala*, counters, bottle caps, dice, place-value cards, number cards, shape cards, etc. Teachers use these materials to demonstrate concepts such as addition with counters, modelling tens and ones with bundled sticks, or illustrating shapes with classroom objects. Children, in turn, use the manipulatives themselves to practise counting, composing and decomposing numbers, solving addition or subtraction tasks, exploring shapes, or representing quantities. Such hands-on engagement helps make abstract ideas concrete, visible, and easier to understand.

NCF-FS 2022 reinforces this through the ELPS approach, which emphasises guiding children from hands-on experiences to pictorial and symbolic representation of numbers and problems. Both teachers and children must actively engage with TLMs—teachers to model concepts and processes, and children to explore and practise. This shared engagement not only strengthens procedural fluency but enables children to internalise mathematical ideas with confidence and clarity.

6.2.2 Use of children's real-life experiences

Real-life examples are the everyday situations, objects, and experiences that children already know and understand. Teachers use them to make mathematical ideas meaningful and connected to children's lives rather than abstract or disconnected. Since solving real-life problems is a core goal of mathematics, this helps children make sense of abstract symbols and develop practical problem-solving skills.

In Grades 1 and 2, such examples may include counting objects in the classroom, comparing the water in two bottles to understand 'more' or 'less', bundling sticks to explore tens and ones, identifying shapes such as plates (circle) or books (rectangle), or using play money for simple transactions. These contexts help children grasp abstract ideas by seeing mathematics at work in everyday situations.

NCF-FS 2022 emphasises the use of real-life examples to deepen understanding and support problem-solving, noting that mathematical symbols become meaningful only when linked to everyday experiences.

6.2.3 Asking 'why and how' questions

Teacher's use of purposeful questioning, especially 'why and how' questions, promotes reasoning, explanation, and deeper understanding of mathematical ideas. In early mathematics, 'why' questions prompt children to justify their answers and strengthen numerical reasoning.

For example, "Why is 8 bigger than 6?" or "Why do we add these numbers?". 'How' questions help children explain the steps they used, such as "How did you get 7?" or "How did you count on from this number?," supporting procedural clarity and communication skills. The use of such questions also encourages children to think about their own reasoning and explore alternative strategies, rather than simply recall and apply procedures.

6.2.4 Providing opportunities for independent practice

Independent and repeated practice is essential for helping children consolidate mathematical learning. Such practice supports the transfer of knowledge from working memory to long-term memory, improving accuracy and automaticity. After demonstration and guided practice, children therefore need adequate time and space to practise on their own for learning to take hold. During this phase, teacher support through observation and timely feedback remains crucial to reinforce correct understanding and address errors.

In Grades 1 and 2, opportunities for independent practice may take different forms. These include answering oral questions individually, completing short written tasks, solving problems from workbooks or textbooks, using worksheets, practising independently with manipulatives such as *ganitmala* (string beads), and engaging in simple real-life tasks, such as counting objects or making amounts with play money. Such activities allow children to apply what they have learnt, build procedural fluency, and gain confidence in solving problems independently, thereby deepening and internalising mathematical understanding through active engagement.

6.3 Findings of mathematics teaching practices

6.3.1 Use of TLMs

Indicator	1	2	3	4
Teacher uses appropriate TLMs/manipulatives to explain mathematical concepts and processes	TLMs are not used	TLMs are used in an unplanned manner	TLMs are used in a planned manner but are not used every time	TLMs are used in a planned way to explain the concept several times
Children use TLMs/manipulatives to understand the mathematical concepts and processes	TLMs are not used by children	A few children use TLMs	Some children use TLMs	Most children get opportunity to practise with TLMs

Figure 6.1: **Percentage of classrooms where teachers used appropriate TLMs/manipulatives to explain mathematical concepts and processes**

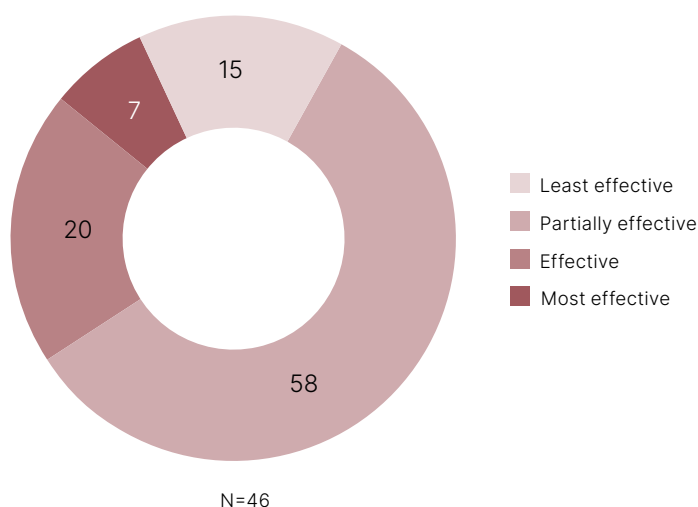
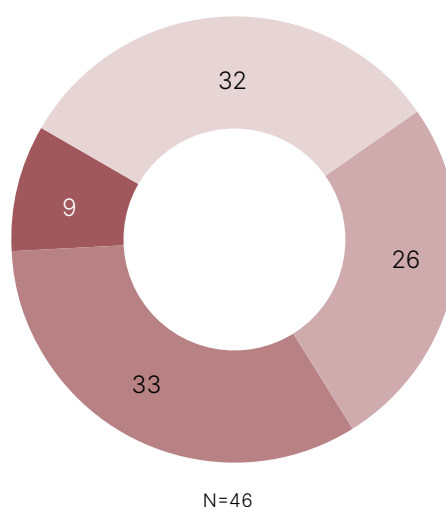


Figure 6.2: **Percentage of classrooms where children used appropriate TLMs/manipulatives to understand mathematical concepts and processes**



Teachers used TLMs during mathematics instruction in 39 (85%) of the 46 observed classrooms, compared to 61% TLPS average across states. In 59% of classrooms this use was unplanned and incidental. Teachers used TLMs in a planned manner (Ratings 3 and 4) in 27% of classrooms, similar to the TLPS average of 28%. The increased use of TLMs by teachers in Assam is encouraging but this increase is driven entirely by more unplanned use, not by deliberate, concept-linked use to explain and reinforce mathematical concepts.

Children had some opportunity to use TLMs in 68% of the observed classrooms, but the depth of engagement varied considerably. In 26% of classrooms, a few children handled materials, and in a further 33%, some children used TLMs but without consistent access for all. This extent of engagement with TLMs is higher than the TLPS 2025 average of 14% (for Rating 3). In the remaining 9% of classrooms, children got meaningful, hands-on practice with TLMs. Since concrete manipulation is foundational to how young children build mathematical understanding, limited engagement with TLMs means that many children are experiencing foundational concepts as abstract ideas and likely not making sense of them.

These findings suggest there is much scope to shift from infrequent or teacher-led use of TLMs towards more consistent, concept-linked and child-centred engagement with manipulatives, for hands-on learning in early grades.

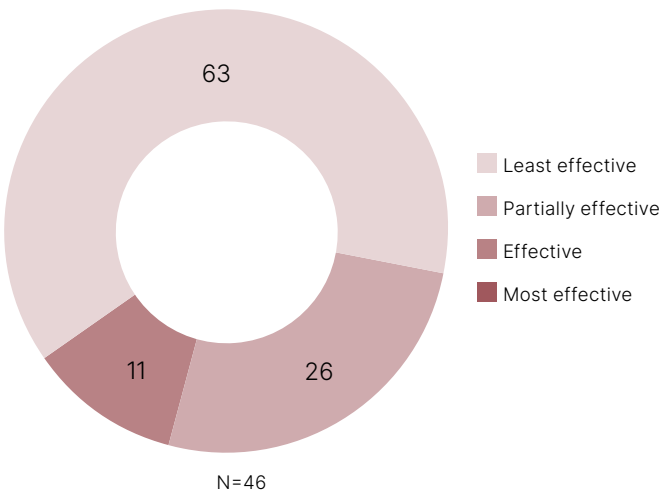
6.3.2 Use of children's real-life experiences

Indicator	1	2	3	4
Teacher uses examples from children's life to explain mathematical concepts and processes	Teacher uses no examples from real life to explain mathematical concepts and processes	Teacher seldom uses examples from real life to explain mathematical concepts and processes	Teacher sometimes uses examples of real life to explain mathematical concepts and processes	Teacher mostly uses examples from real life to explain mathematical concepts and processes

In 11% of the observed classroom, teachers sometimes drew on children’s everyday experiences during mathematics instruction. In another 26% classrooms, real-life examples were used infrequently. In the remaining two-thirds (63%) of classrooms, teachers used no real-life examples to explain mathematical concepts and processes.

Overall, there is much scope to teach mathematical ideas in ways that do not keep them abstract and disconnected from children’s lived experiences. In the absence of familiar contexts, young children in Grades 1 and 2 may struggle to build strong conceptual understanding and to see the relevance of mathematics in their daily lives, limiting the development of practical problem-solving skills and meaningful application.

Figure 6.3: Percentage of classrooms where teachers used examples from children’s life to explain mathematical concepts and processes

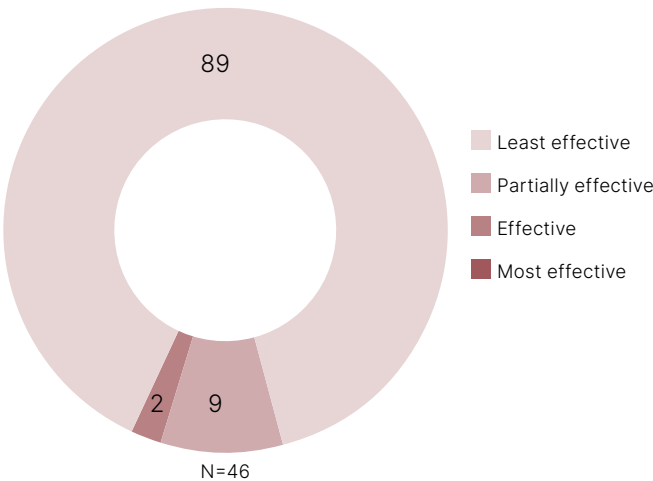


6.3.3 Asking ‘why and how’ questions

Indicator	1	2	3	4
Teacher asks ‘why and how’ questions to deepen mathematical thinking of the children	Teacher does not ask ‘why and how’ questions	The teacher asks ‘why and how’ questions but does not wait for children’s responses	Teacher asks a few ‘why and how’ questions and includes some children’s responses	Teacher asks some ‘why and how’ questions and includes children’s responses to build the discussion

In many (89%) of the observed classrooms, teachers did not ask ‘why’ or ‘how’ question during mathematics instruction. In a further 9% of classrooms, teachers did pose such questions but did not wait for children to respond or did not build on their answers. This makes the process procedural instead of helping to make children’s thinking visible. Only one classroom in the sample demonstrated any meaningful use of ‘why’ and ‘how’ questioning.

Figure 6.4: Percentage of classrooms where teachers asked ‘why and how’ questions to deepen mathematical thinking of the children



Encouraging teachers to use simple probing questions—such as “How did you get this answer?” or “When there are more than nine ones, why do we regroup them into tens?”—could move children’s focus beyond rote procedures towards deeper reasoning and meaningful engagement with mathematical concepts and processes.

6.3.4 Providing opportunities for independent practice

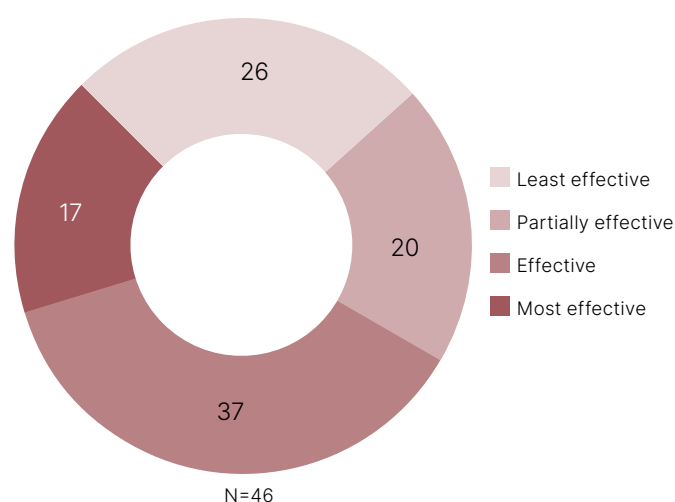
Indicator	1	2	3	4
Children are given independent mathematics tasks for practice	Children are not given any opportunity to practise independent mathematics tasks	Children are doing Independent mathematics tasks, but the teacher does not observe the practice	Children are doing independent mathematics tasks and the teacher observes them without any inputs	Children are given opportunities to practise independent mathematics tasks; and the teacher observes mistakes, corrects and models; and asks the child to solve again

Independent mathematics practice was a relative strength in Assam’s observed classrooms. In more than half (54%) of the observed classrooms, children were given opportunities to work independently on mathematics tasks, under teacher observation. This is higher than the TLPS 2025 average of 37%. Teachers actively guided children in 17% of the classrooms, correcting mistakes and modelling the appropriate processes.

In around 20% of the observed classrooms, children worked on tasks without any teacher observation, allowing misconceptions and errors to go unnoticed. And in the remaining 26% of classrooms, no independent practice was observed.

These findings highlight the need for many teachers to allocate time for independent practice and to observe children’s work during this time. For the other majority of teachers who are already present during independent practice, the next step is to move from observation to actively correcting mistakes, modelling the right approach, and asking children to attempt the problem again. This will ensure that practice moves beyond mechanical repetition and strengthens conceptual understanding, fluency, and confidence.

Figure 6.5: Percentage of classrooms where children were given independent mathematics tasks for practice



6.4 Conclusion

Overall, classroom practices in the sampled classrooms in Assam show some positive trends in teachers' use of TLMs and opportunities for children's independent practice during mathematics instruction in early grades. However, there is much scope for improvement: TLM use is largely unplanned, children's hands-on engagement with TLMs remains limited, and independent practice is not always accompanied by active teacher feedback and correction. The more fundamental gaps lie in how mathematical thinking is being supported. Real-life contextualisation and reasoning-focused questioning were not observed in many classrooms, meaning that mathematics instruction remains largely procedural in nature. Strengthening early mathematics instruction will require sustained support to help teachers further connect concepts to children's lives and contexts, encourage reasoning, and design consistent opportunities for children to explore and practise independently, making learning more meaningful and grounded in their lived experiences.



7.1 Overview of time-on-task and instructional time

ToT is the proportion of instructional time during which the teacher and children are actively engaged in meaningful activities related to teaching and learning. It was observed that instructional activities constituted significantly less proportion of time than the allocated teaching time. To ensure quality learning, teachers should plan and structure lesson routine to maximise children's 'time-on-task'. A high ToT does not by itself ensure that learning will occur, but it is a basic condition for effective teaching and learning. Children's time on learning can be enhanced by better classroom management as well as by including activities that increase children's active engagement.

7.2 Nature of teacher and children's activities

The ToT analysis presented below has two main strands related to observations of a 40-minute class, viz. (a) Time distribution of teachers' activities and (b) Time distribution of children's activities.

The Survey observed classroom activities of every teacher and five children in each classroom by recording "snapshots" every third minute, e.g., at the 0, 3rd, 6th minute and so on in each classroom over a 40-minute period of observation.

A set of 21 teaching activities were identified through analysis of other ToT studies and modified for an FLN focus through several rounds of field work by LLF and partner organisations. A list of 18 such activities, arrived at by combining a few activities can be seen in Table 7.1. These have been further clubbed into four major categories, viz. 'teacher-centred', 'learner-centred', 'classroom management', 'non-teaching' or 'off-task'. Classroom activities were classified into 'on-task' (teacher/child was "on some task") and 'off-task' (teacher/child was "not engaged in any teaching/learning tasks") activities.

A set of 21 children's classroom activities were identified through a similar process. A truncated list of nine activities, by combining a few similar activities can be seen in Table 7.2. The 'on-task' list included both 'mechanical' type activities like copying from the blackboard, choral repetition and some clearly more 'learning' type activities like working in small groups, and doing a class assignment.

7.3 Findings of time distribution of activities

7.3.1 Time distribution of teachers' activities

Teachers' activities were observed 13 times in each classroom at intervals of three minutes (each period of observation was 40 minutes). A total of 1300 teachers' activities were observed across 100 schools.

Table 7.1 Percentage of time distribution of teachers' activities

TEACHER-CENTRIC ACTIVITIES	%
Teaching a topic by writing on blackboard	11%
Explaining the concept/topic to children orally or by using TLMs	13%
Instructing children to engage in the classroom activities	4%
Giving homework/assignment/test/dictation or any other tasks	5%
Correcting homework or test papers or class work	4%
Teacher asking questions to whole class or individual child(ren)	14%
Reading from a textbook or workbook or other material	5%
Total	56%
STUDENT-CENTRIC ACTIVITIES	
Supervising group work or children's individual work	10%
Replying to questions/providing clarifications and giving feedback	2%
Conversation with children without lesson's context	1%
Encouraging and motivating students to become involved learner	0%
Total	13%
CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT	
Teacher scolding/reprimanding child/children	1%
Class management for teaching-learning, dividing groups, giving instructions like forming queue, take a break, helping students in transition activity	4%
Teacher is looking at the planning for the next topic	1%
Total	6%
NON-TEACHING TASK	
Teacher is not in the class	5%
In classroom, but no activity	10%
In other class (multigrade) or with another levelled group	9%
Using mobile during teaching time or talking with parents/school staff/PRI members	1%
Total	25%

Teachers spent most of their time (56%) on teacher-centred activities. Of these, the most prevalent were:

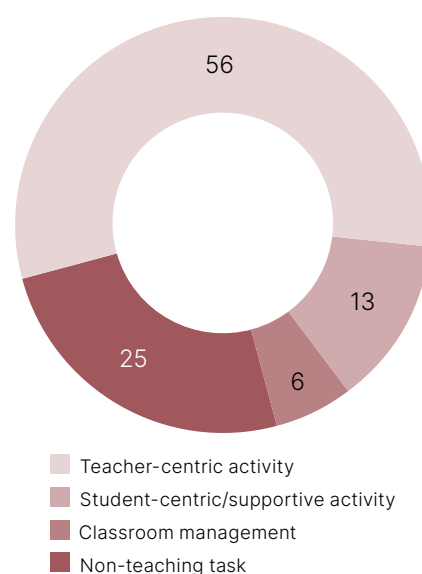
- > Teacher asking questions to whole class or individual children (14% of time)
- > Explaining the concept/topic to children orally or by using TLMs (13% of time)
- > Teaching a topic by writing on the blackboard (11% of time)

These findings indicate that when teachers explain concepts to children, they are also making an effort to engage children by asking questions. However, the questions mostly tend to be of literal or factual type that elicit a choral yes/no or one-word response from the children (see Chapter 5-Language Teaching Practices). Overall, the ToT analysis generally corroborates the findings from the 'classroom observation tool' for language and mathematics, which showed that much of the classroom process is teacher-led.

Analysis of the learner-centred activities conducted by the teachers (13% of the teaching time) shows that the most prominent activity in this category is supervising group work or children's individual work (10% of the class time).

Teachers engaged in 'non-teaching' tasks or 'off-task' activities for 25% of the observed class time. A major activity in this category was teachers attending to another group in the multigrade classroom (9%), which is not an ineffective practice by itself but it meant that the teacher was not attending to the observed group for this proportion of time.

Figure 7.1: Percentage of time spent by teachers on an average in different classroom activities



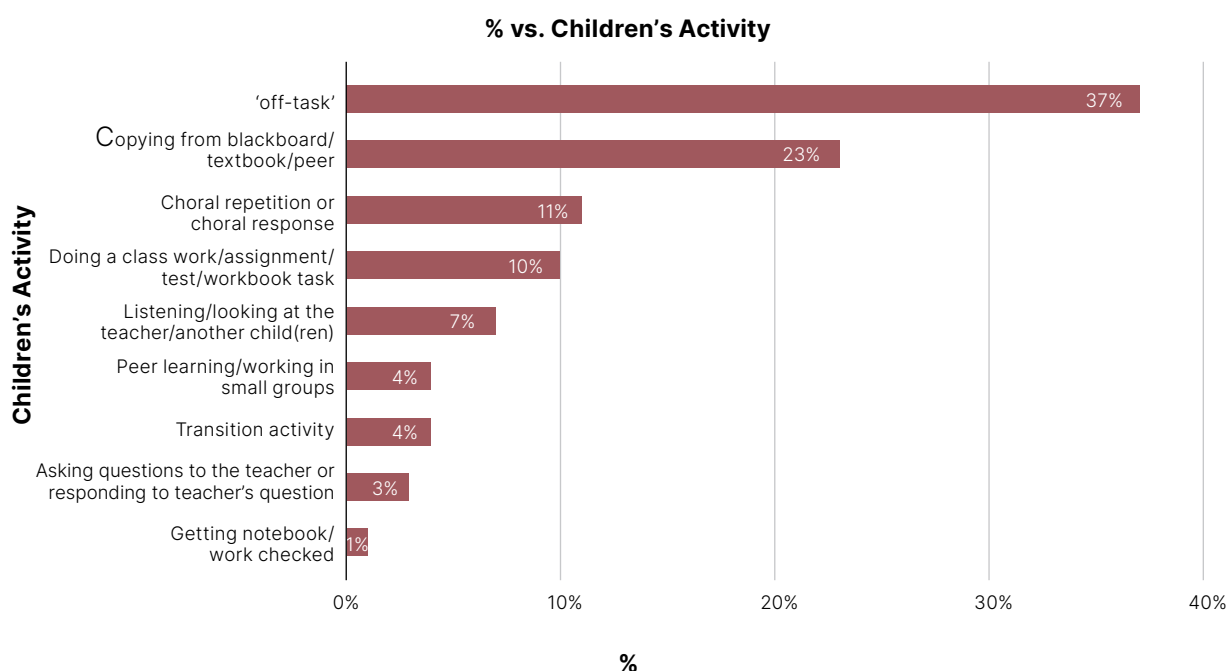
7.3.2 Time distribution of children's activities

Five children were observed in each classroom 13 times each, every three minutes during the 40-minute observation period. A total of 6,499 children's observations were made.

Table 7.2: Percentage of time distribution of children's activities

CHILDREN'S ACTIVITIES	%
'off-task'	37%
Copying from blackboard/textbook/peer	23%
Choral repetition or choral response	11%
Doing a class work/assignment/test/workbook task	10%
Listening/looking at the teacher/other child(ren)	7%
Peer learning/working in small groups	4%
Transition activity	4%
Asking questions to the teacher or responding to teacher's question.	3%
Getting notebook/work checked	1%

Figure 7.2: **Percentage of time spent by children on an average in different classroom activities**



The analysis of children's activities revealed that they remained 'off-task' for 37% of the class time, higher than the TLPS 2025 average of 28%. This is important because it indicates that an average child might not be engaged in learning for over a third of the class time in the observed classrooms on a regular basis.

When children were 'on-task', they spent nearly a third of the class time in activities like copying from blackboard (23% of class time) and giving choral responses (11% of class time) which require minimal engagement in learning.

Less than 10% of class time was spent asking questions, responding to the teacher individually or in peer learning or small group work, reinforcing the pattern of passive participation noted in the classroom observation findings.

7.4 Conclusion

When children remain 'off-task' for a considerable part of the teaching-learning time or spend time on activities that are not learning-centred, their active learning time gets reduced. There is much scope to organise and enhance classroom activities that are more 'learner-centred' as well as 'learning-centred.' Children's active learning time can also be enhanced through clear guidance to teachers on strategies of multigrade teaching which is a structural reality in many classrooms.

This chapter presents findings from the Survey related to teachers' perceptions of FLN. The analysis draws on quantitative and qualitative insights gathered primarily through structured teacher interviews in all 100 schools. Classrooms of all interviewed teachers were also observed using the classroom observation tool, allowing teacher reported perceptions to be examined alongside classroom practices.

Teachers' perceptions offer valuable insights into teachers' awareness of grade-appropriate FLN learning outcomes for language and mathematics, their experiences and perceived usefulness of in-person FLN training, the nature of regular academic support they receive at the cluster and block level to improve teaching practices and assessment methods teachers use to track children's learning.

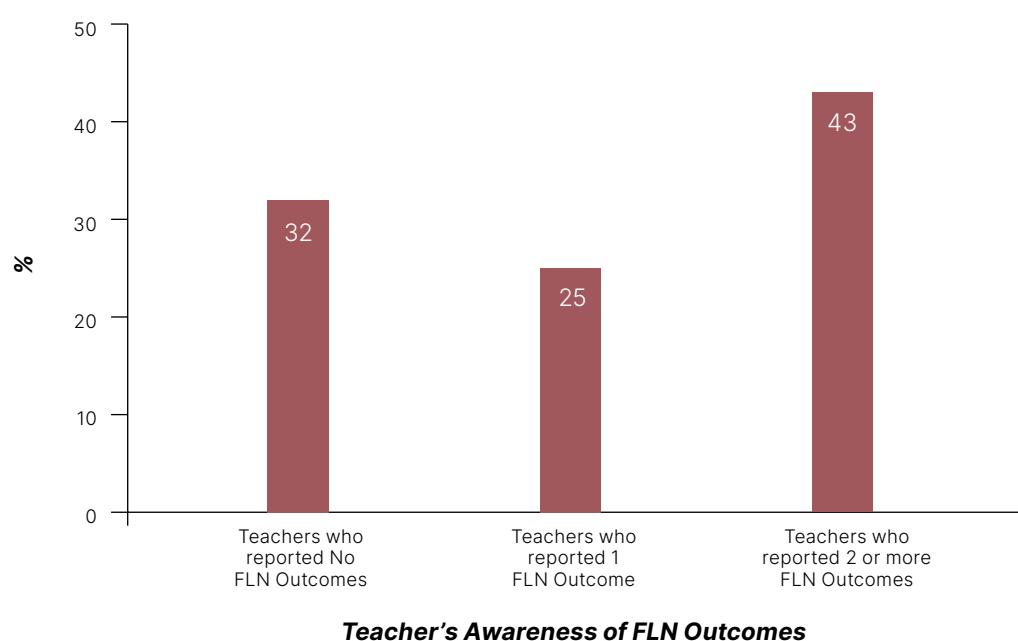
Teacher perceptions were explored on four key dimensions:

- > Teacher awareness of FLN learning outcomes for language and mathematics
- > Reported effectiveness of FLN training
- > Academic support received by teachers from cluster and block personnel
- > Assessment methods followed and maintenance of record by teachers

Findings from teacher interviews

8.1 Teachers' awareness of FLN

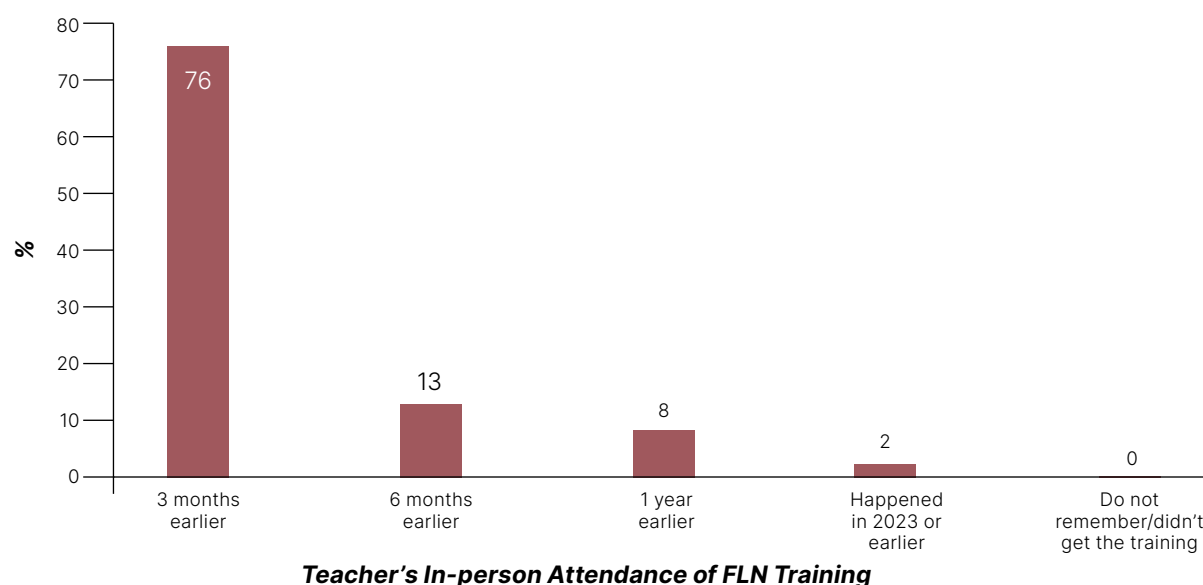
Figure 8.1: **Percentage of teachers aware of FLN learning outcomes for language and mathematics**



- > 68% of the interviewed Grade 1 and 2 teachers were able to recall and articulate at least one grade-appropriate FLN learning outcome.
- > Almost all teachers believe that the NIPUN/FLN Mission has had at least some positive impact.

8.2 Trainings of FLN

Figure 8.2: **Percentage of teachers that attended in-person training on FLN**

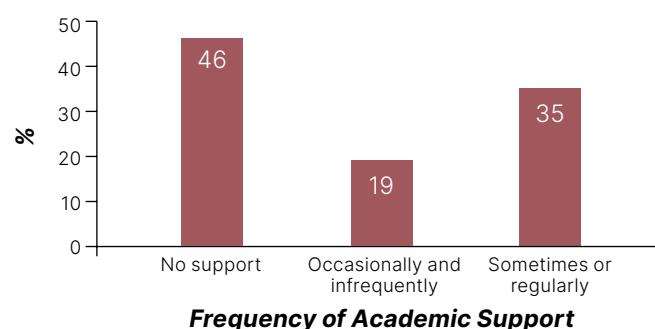


- > Almost nine in ten (89%) interviewed teachers reported attending in-person training in the past six months, of whom three-fourths (76%) had attended the FLN training within the three months preceding data collection.
- > Almost all (98%) teachers attended FLN training of at least three days' duration. Of these, the majority (65%) attended a 3-day training and around a third (32%) attended a training of five days or more.
- > When training was received, most teachers (63%) found it very useful and a third (36%) reported it to be occasionally-to-moderately useful.

8.3 Academic support

- > In Assam, over half (54%) of the surveyed teachers reported receiving some academic support, lower than the overall TLPS 2025 average of 83%.
- > Of those receiving support, 35% received it somewhat regularly, while 19% reported they received it occasionally or infrequently.

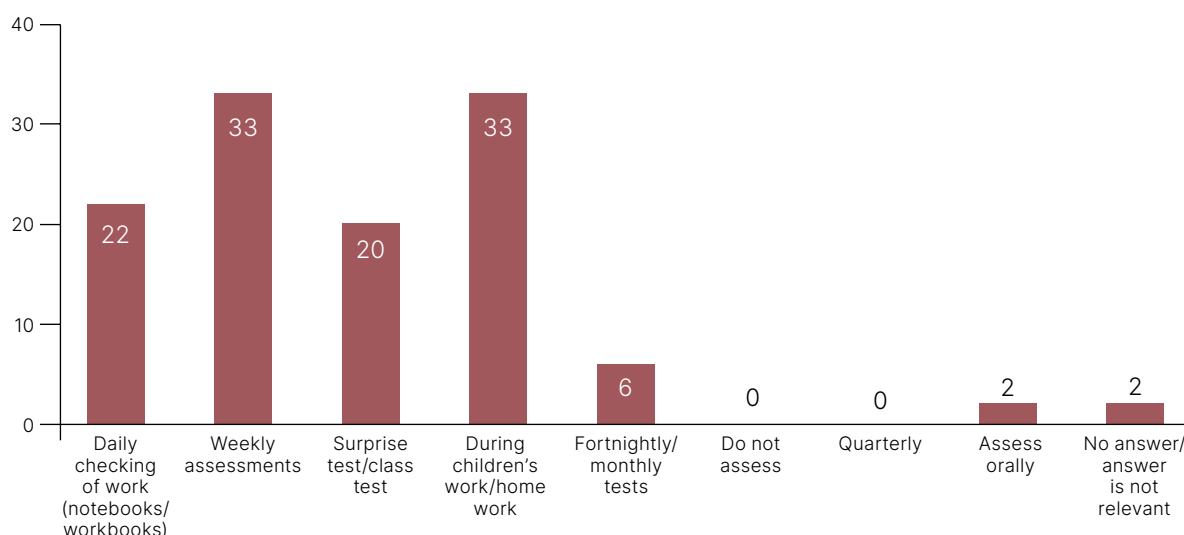
Figure 8.3: **Percentage of teachers who received academic support**



- > Cluster Resource Coordinators (CRCs) were the predominant source of academic support (49%), with negligible support reported from Block Resource Persons (0%), DIET mentors (1%), or BEOs (5%).

8.4 Assessment of children's learning

Figure 8.4: **Percentage of teachers who followed different assessment methods**



Percentage of teachers who followed different assessment methods

- > Almost three-fourths of interviewed teachers (74%) reported that they did not maintain records of children's assessment to track their learning. Amongst those who did maintain records, 8% used a register and 5% used the teacher's guide.
- > Almost all (96%) of the sampled teachers followed written methods of assessment to track children's learning, including weekly assessment, checking of home or class work, notebooks and workbooks, fortnightly or monthly tests, and class tests. Oral assessments, which are more developmentally appropriate for young children, were reported by only 2% of teachers.

8.5 Conclusion

Overall, teacher perception findings indicate a strong awareness of FLN learning outcomes and exposure to trainings. There is scope for improvement in academic support and maintaining records of children's assessments. Bridging this gap might perhaps be the most important system-level challenge for the sampled districts.

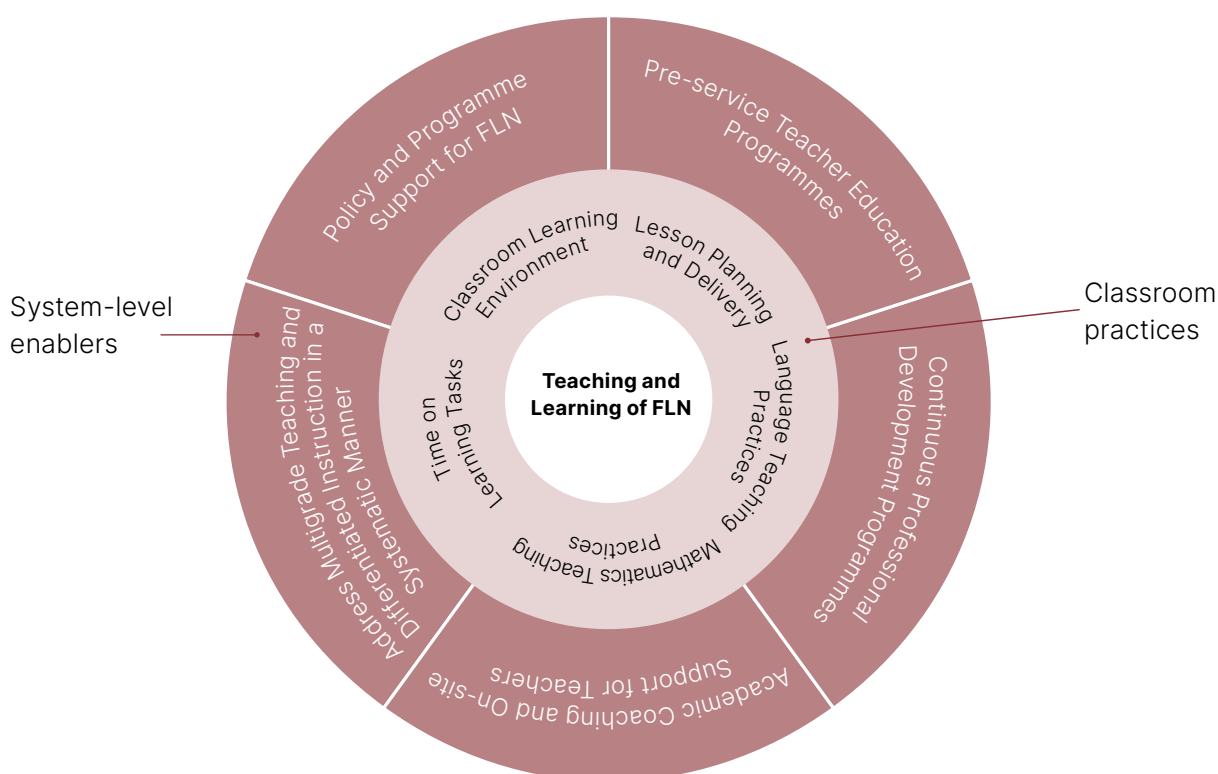


9.1 Introduction

The Survey was conceptualised to provide systematic evidence on teaching practices for language and mathematics in Grades 1 and 2 for the sampled schools in the state of Assam. Beyond documenting existing practices, the Survey identifies critical gaps and areas for strengthening the instructional core of FLN. The recommendations of the Survey are divided into two main sections:

- > Section 9.2 presents key recommendations for strengthening classroom teaching practices, drawing directly on the Survey's main findings.
- > Section 9.3 outlines recommendations for system-level changes that will enable and sustain the actions proposed in the first section.

Priorities for classroom practices and system-level enablers



9.2 Recommendations for classroom practices

This section presents theme-wise actions to strengthen teaching and learning of FLN, based on the Survey's findings in the observed schools. These actions are not meant to be uniform prescriptions; their effective use requires decentralised and context-sensitive approaches that respond to local linguistic, cultural, and institutional realities.

9.2.1 Classroom learning environment

Classrooms can become places where every child feels seen, heard, and confident to participate by changing how classrooms are organised, building stronger relationships with children.

- > Assam has made commendable progress in establishing functional blackboards but is yet to ensure that appropriate print materials are available in classrooms. Examples of useful print materials in early grades include poem and story posters, children's books, number and *akshara* charts, labels for things, word cards and place-value cards. It is recommended that the State takes steps to ensure that these print-rich materials are available in classrooms and actively and meaningfully used during instruction to support learning.
- > There is a pressing need to strengthen teacher-child relationships in early-grade classrooms in the State so that children feel comfortable and confident, participate in discussions, and engage meaningfully in learning. Simple practices such as calling children by name, acknowledging their responses, and creating regular opportunities for every child to speak, can make a significant difference.
- > Teachers should be encouraged to adopt flexible seating and grouping arrangements to foster more interaction, collaboration, and alignment between classroom activities and learning goals.
- > Teachers need to actively engage individual learners during instruction and discussions. They should routinely direct questions to specific children, use think-pair-share routines, and allow enough time for children to formulate and share their responses. This helps children participate in shared meaning-making and helps teachers get a sense of children's understanding.

9.2.2 Lesson planning and delivery

While many teachers recognise the importance of planning and supporting children's learning, there is significant scope for improving the quality of lesson planning and delivery practices.

- > Teachers can be supported to maintain simple written plans that identify learning goals, activity sequences, and materials needed. Even a brief daily plan aligned to children's current learning levels can improve preparation, instructional focus and continuity.
- > Teachers need to give clear, step-by-step instructions for activities, model expected responses, and crucially, verify that children have understood so that they can participate meaningfully and learn successfully.
- > Through regular and purposeful observation, teachers need to identify gaps in learning, adjust instruction, and provide timely support to children individually and in group settings.
- > Feedback practices need strengthening through regular checking of children's work, clear explanations of errors, and simple steps for improvement. Encouraging children to reflect on and revise their work helps them apply the feedback and see their own progress.
- > During lessons, teachers need to use simple and varied checks for understanding, such as asking individual children to explain their thinking or giving children a quick task to demonstrate their learning. This helps teachers notice and respond to misunderstandings early.

- > To support all learners, teachers will need support with understanding children's learning levels and use simple differentiated instruction strategies such as flexible grouping, guided practice in level-based groups, and scaffolded tasks during regular lessons.

9.2.3 Language teaching practices

The following recommendations are based on indicative trends from a small sample of classrooms. Still, the patterns observed are consistent enough to suggest important areas for strengthening. Overall, in most early-grade classrooms, there is a need to shift away from mainly teacher-dominated routines to practices that actively engage children in meaning-making.

- > Oral language activities need to encourage active engagement by connecting content and discussions to familiar contexts and experiences (like home, community, seasons, culture) and by asking open-ended questions that encourage children to think, predict, infer and explain instead of giving one-word answers.
- > Decoding instruction needs to be more systematic and include multiple activities that reinforce sound-symbol associations in different ways. The more commonly-used practice of copying letters and words from the board does not build sound-symbol knowledge or blending skills required for learning to read.
- > While read-alouds are being conducted in Assam's classrooms, most teachers rely on asking factual questions or sentence repetition to build children's understanding of the text. Instead, teachers need to make read-alouds more interactive by building context before reading, asking prediction questions during reading, and use open-ended questions afterwards to deepen children's engagement with and comprehension of the text.
- > Children also need adequate time to practise reading in small groups or pairs, as well as independently, with active observation and guidance from the teacher.
- > Supporting writing for expression should be a clear priority area for early-grade classrooms in Assam. Writing activities should move beyond copying exercises to include meaningful opportunities for children to compose their own texts and express ideas and emotions. Teachers can introduce guided writing tasks—starting with sentence completion, picture-prompted writing, or collaborative composition—to gradually build the skills needed for independent writing.

9.2.4 Mathematics teaching practices

Strengthening early mathematics teaching requires moving towards practices that support conceptual understanding and reasoning. When such practices are used consistently, they can support stronger number sense and more confident engagement with mathematics.

- > While TLMs are being used in many early-grade classrooms, teachers should be encouraged to plan TLM use more consistently and in learner-centred ways. This includes both teacher demonstration and children's use of TLMs. This will ensure that children have regular opportunities to explore concepts hands-on and build conceptual understanding, rather than only observing demonstrations.

- > During independent practice, teachers need to actively monitor children's work and provide timely guidance and feedback so that practice goes beyond mechanical repetition and strengthens conceptual understanding and skill building.
- > Integrating familiar, everyday contexts when introducing and practising mathematical ideas can help children see the relevance of mathematics in their daily lives and develop practical problem-solving skills.
- > In the observed schools in Assam, there is a lot of scope for improvement in the use of reasoning-focused questioning in early mathematics classrooms. Teachers should be encouraged to ask 'why and how' questions that prompt children to explain their thinking, justify their answers, and reflect on strategies (e.g., "How did you get that answer?" or "Why do we regroup?"). This helps transition learning from rote procedures to deeper reasoning and conceptual understanding.

9.2.5 Time on learning tasks

The ToT analyses from the Survey highlight important opportunities to strengthen how classroom time is used to support children's learning. A better use of instructional time can help make classroom processes more interactive, responsive, and learning-focused.

- > Teachers need to create a better balance between teacher-centred instruction and learner-centred practices to enhance children's engagement with learning. This includes strengthening active monitoring of children's work, providing timely clarification and feedback, and moving beyond questions that elicit factual responses towards approaches that make children's thinking visible.
- > There is a need for teachers to move towards better lesson planning and a more efficient utilisation of classroom time to reduce 'off-task' time for themselves as well as the children.
- > Multigrade classrooms need structured independent tasks that are planned and managed more deliberately, so that one group can engage meaningfully with learning while the teacher works with another.
- > Teachers need to design more interactive learning opportunities to increase children's active engagement during classroom time. This includes creating regular opportunities for children to ask and respond to questions, work in small groups, engage with learning materials, and receive feedback from the teacher.

9.3 Recommendations for system-level enablers

Teachers play a critical role in shaping classroom processes. However, their ability to adopt and sustain effective practices depends on several system-level enablers, such as supportive programmatic interventions, strong pre-service teacher preparation, ongoing professional development and robust academic support structures. This section outlines key systemic levers that need to be strengthened to enable and sustain the classroom-level actions described in the previous section.

Recommendations for system-level changes

- > Continue and extend policy support to FLN
- > Integrate FLN focus within pre-service teacher education programmes
- > Strengthen academic coaching and on-site support for teachers
- > Build a coherent and practice-focused system of continuous professional development
- > Address multigrade teaching and differentiated instruction in a specific and systematic manner.

9.3.1 Continue and extend policy support to FLN

The Survey findings indicate that although the State has taken important steps to prioritise FLN, there is scope to improve classroom practices at scale. This suggests that the current policy momentum around FLN needs to be sustained over a longer period to allow meaningful pedagogical change to stabilise in classrooms. From this perspective, it is vital that policy support for FLN must continue beyond the current NIPUN Axom Mission. While Grades 1 and 2 must remain the primary focus, the consolidation of foundational skills through Grades 3 to 5 (the Preparatory Stage in NEP 2020) deserves equal policy and programme attention to prevent learning gaps from widening over time.

As this support is extended, there is also a need to broaden the vision of foundational learning itself to include critical thinking, strong oral expression and independent writing for language, as well as problem-solving and reasoning for mathematics. Such a shift helps move classroom practice beyond mechanical skill acquisition towards meaningful application to real-life situations.

9.3.2 Integrate FLN focus within pre-service teacher education programmes

Despite the emphasis on FLN in NEP 2020, NCF-FS 2022 and the NIPUN Axom Mission, there is scope to strengthen its integration in pre-service teacher education. Pre-service teacher education requires curricular revision to include a clear focus on early language and numeracy learning, play-based pedagogy, teaching in linguistically and culturally diverse situations and practical classroom strategies for multigrade and multilevel teaching. The Survey findings show that basic pedagogical practices—such as building respectful teacher-child relationships, encouraging children’s participation, giving clear instructions and monitoring learning to provide feedback—are inconsistently applied and therefore need explicit emphasis in teacher education. There is a strong need to move from lecture-based instruction towards practice-oriented and experience-based teacher preparation. Teacher education institutions should model effective FLN pedagogy through activity-based learning, demonstrations of effective teaching practices and reflective practice. Strengthening internships through structured mentoring, classroom observation and feedback can help ensure that teachers are better prepared to support foundational learning from the start.

9.3.3 Build a coherent and practice-focused system of continuous teacher professional development

The Survey findings suggest that the current once-a-year, presentation- or talk-dominated trainings—often focused on textbook coverage or teacher guide orientation—are insufficient to support sustained improvement in teaching practices. There is a need to reimagine in-service teacher training as Continuous Professional Development (CPD) rather than as isolated events. Effective CPD should offer multiple pathways for learning, including structured courses, blended and online programmes, in-person workshops and simple digital support such as WhatsApp nudges and short, on-demand learning resources. These pathways should allow flexibility for districts to adapt content to local institutional and socio-linguistic realities, rather than relying on uniform, topdown designs. State-led training programmes also need significant improvements to reduce loss of quality during cascade implementation. This includes better preparation of facilitators, shorter gaps between cascade levels and mechanisms for monitoring and feedback to ensure that the intent of training is retained. At the session level, greater emphasis should be placed on practice-oriented designs—prioritising demonstrations, guided practice, collaboration among teachers and reflection—so that teachers can apply new strategies confidently in their classrooms. Finally, peer learning and communities of practice should be strengthened as a core CPD strategy. Creating opportunities for teachers to learn from one another through learning circles, peer observations, joint planning and sharing of effective practices can help reinforce training messages and support sustained change in classroom practice.

9.3.4 Strengthen academic coaching and on-site support for teachers

Effective classroom change requires regular, supportive academic guidance. Teacher interviews reveal that academic support for teachers has scope to be more regular and instructionally strong. On-site academic coaching can be strengthened through regular classroom visits by ARPs, CRCs or equivalent roles. These visits should focus on observing classroom practice, demonstrating effective strategies and providing concrete, actionable feedback tailored to each teacher's context. Such support is vital for helping teachers translate training inputs into day-to-day practice. For this to be effective, significant system-level investment is required. Mid-tier academic functionaries need to be relieved of excessive non-academic responsibilities so they can focus on instructional support. They also require targeted technical training to develop a strong understanding of FLN concepts, pedagogy that supports effective learning and principles of supportive supervision. Data collected by mid-tier academic staff should be available to them in a simple, analysed form to help them take follow-up action to support teachers more effectively. In addition, cluster-level meetings should be reoriented as structured academic forums rather than administrative gatherings. With clear agendas centred on FLN pedagogy, classroom challenges and shared problem-solving, these meetings can become an important platform for collective professional learning.

9.3.5 Address multigrade teaching and differentiated instruction in a systematic manner

The Survey findings show that two important classroom challenges need special and sustained attention: teaching in multigrade classrooms and responding to different learning levels. These challenges require specific and systematic programme support, not just general suggestions or brief training efforts alone.

9.3.6 Multigrade teaching

Multigrade teaching and multigrade classrooms are a widespread reality in Assam's government schools, with about half of the surveyed classrooms in the Survey sample falling into this category. Teachers working in multigrade settings need specific curricular guidance and pedagogical tools to manage multiple groups effectively. This includes support for planning parallel activities, organising independent work, using flexible grouping and managing time across grades. Addressing multigrade teaching systematically—rather than treating it as an exception—can help teachers use these classrooms more productively, even in less-than-ideal conditions.

9.3.7 Differentiated instruction

The Survey findings show low use of differentiated instruction, despite teachers' awareness that children in their classrooms have different learning levels and home backgrounds. Many teachers lack clarity about what differentiation looks like in practice and how to implement it in regular lessons. System-level efforts are needed to help teachers understand children's learning levels, recognise the value of targeted support and use simple differentiation strategies—such as flexible grouping, scaffolded tasks and guided practice for small groups, especially for the children who are struggling to learn. Providing extra attention and support to such children is key to reducing learning gaps within the classroom. Teacher guides, training modules and academic support systems should explicitly model how differentiation can be planned and implemented within everyday classroom routines.









"I am happy to see the release of this Survey, the Teaching and Learning Practices Survey (TLPS). The findings provide a strong evidence base. Given the scale of the sample, the insights emerging from this can be seen as reflective of teaching and learning practices across the country. Classrooms must move beyond one-way teaching. Education thrives when children are encouraged to question, explore and keep their curiosity alive."

**- Shri Sanjay Kumar, IAS, Secretary,
Department of School Education
and Literacy, Ministry of Education,
Government of India**



"Children learn best when learning is joyful and rooted in their real experiences. As the National Curriculum Framework reminds us, play must remain at the core of early learning. When children learn in familiar languages and meaningfully use teaching-learning materials, classrooms become spaces where every child can truly engage. My best wishes to LLF for the study, we will take inputs from it."

**- Smt. Archana Sharma Awasthi,
Additional Secretary, Department of
School Education and Literacy, Ministry
of Education, Government of India**



"TLPS is a significant study for its sharp focus on understanding teaching-learning practices of language and mathematics in Grades 1 and 2. The findings provide vital pointers for improving instruction in early grades by keeping meaning-making at the centre. It is time for us to join hands to support teachers in bringing about the much-needed shifts in classroom practices."

**- Ms. Amrita Patwardhan, Head,
Education, Tata Trusts**



"We are really happy to have completed India's first large-scale survey of teaching and learning practices for foundational learning in partnership with several other organisations. Student learning can improve only when children are actively engaged in learning. We hope this report can trigger a nation-wide discourse on the need for transforming teaching and learning for young children in early grades in primary schools in India."

**- Dhir Jhingran, Founder & Executive
Director, Language and Learning
Foundation**

About TLPS 2025

The Teaching and Learning Practices Survey (TLPS) 2025 provides systematic, large-scale evidence on teaching practices for language and mathematics in Grades 1 and 2. The Survey was conducted between November 2024 and March 2025 in nine states—Assam, Chhattisgarh, Haryana, Jharkhand, Maharashtra, Meghalaya, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu, and Uttar Pradesh—covering 21 districts and 1,050 classrooms. By capturing a wide range of contexts, TLPS provides a rich snapshot of the current teaching and learning practices for foundational literacy and numeracy (FLN).

Anchored by Language and Learning Foundation (LLF) and supported by Tata Trusts, the Survey has been implemented in collaboration with a consortium of organisations: Centre for microFinance, Educational Initiatives, Madhi Foundation, QUEST, and Vikramshila Education Resource Society.

The TLPS 2025 Report presents findings that describe and analyse the classroom learning environment, lesson planning and delivery, selected teaching practices for language and mathematics, and time on learning tasks for both teachers and children. It also explores teachers' perceptions of some aspects of FLN and their professional development. The recommendations of TLPS suggest how classroom teaching practices can be improved and the system-level changes that can enable and sustain this change in FLN teaching and learning practices.



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Tools for TLPS 2025 and grade-wise data-tables can be accessed from the QR Code above