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Differentiated reading instruction through guided reading : a framework for effective reading instruction in the primary grades

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Differentiated reading instruction through guided reading : a framework for effective reading instruction in the primary grades

Abstract

Effective reading instruction has been an evolution of many different theories and ideas, and best practices are continually changing and being debated. Differentiated instruction has also been a hot topic in the education world recently, but is not a new concept. What evolves when differentiated instruction is teamed with effective reading instruction? When implemented properly, these two concepts can interweave to create a model for reading instruction that delivers a research-based, effective curriculum which meets the needs of all learners.

DIFFERENTIATED READING INSTRUCTION THROUGH GUIDED READING:
A FRAMEWORK FOR EFFECTIVE READING INSTRUCTION IN THE PRIMARY
GRADES

A Graduate Project

Submitted to the

Division of Literacy Education

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By

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ABSTRACT

Effective reading instruction has been an evolution of many different theories and ideas, and best practices are continually changing and being debated. Differentiated instruction has also been a hot topic in the education world recently, but is not a new concept. What evolves when differentiated instruction is teamed with effective reading instruction? When implemented properly, these two concepts can interweave to create a model for reading instruction that delivers a research-based, effective curriculum which meets the needs of all learners.

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INTRODUCTION

Effective reading instruction has been an evolution of many different theories and ideas, and best practices are continually changing and being debated (Artley, 1981; Ford & Opitz, 2011). Differentiated instruction has also been a hot topic in the education world recently, but is not a new concept (Artley, 1981; Watts-Taffe, et.al., 2012). What evolves when differentiated instruction is teamed with effective reading instruction? When implemented properly, these two concepts can interweave to create a model for reading instruction that delivers a research-based, effective curriculum which meets the needs of all learners (Iaquinta, 2006; Ford & Opitz, 2011; Rasinski & Padak, 2004).

The history of reading instruction has been a myriad of different theories, ideas, and instructional approaches. Since the early 1900s, educators have realized that there are individual differences in children and its effects on reading instruction (Artley, 1981). Prior to that, those differences were given very little attention (Artley, 1981). Artley's research on the history of literacy instruction found that, during World War I, educators were forced to respond to the fact that young men wanting to enlist in the armed forces lacked literacy skills necessary to follow simple directions. Smith (1965) describes the scientific movement in education in the 1910s, which led to the design of units of study that each child would work his/her way through at his/her own pace. Once one unit was completed successfully, the student could move on to the next unit.

Rather than requiring that children receive only instruction prescribed for a specific grade, the instructional content in reading and the other 'skill' areas was organized into units of work, assignments, or 'jobs,' each covering a prescribed body of knowledge or skills to be acquired" (Washburne, 1925, as cited in Artley 1981, p. 144).

Basal reading programs began to incorporate suggestions for differentiating instruction into their teachers' manuals (Artley, 1981).

The next major movement in differentiated reading instruction occurred in the 1930s with the Progressive Education Movement (Artley, 1981). This movement adopted a *learning-by-doing* philosophy where children worked together in groups on projects, and therefore acquired the necessary reading skills to complete their projects as needed. There were also movements in the 1950s and 1960s that followed the research of Dr. Willard Olson in child psychology. "Olson's theory of child development began to be applied to reading instruction in the 1950s and 1960s as self-selected reading" (Artley, 1981, p. 145). The late 1960s and 1970s brought about the language-experience approach where a shared writing experience would lead into sight word knowledge and word identification skills (Artley, 1981). Research suggests that the language experience approach was most effective in addressing print concepts and expectations of reading, but that direct approaches showed better results for improving word recognition (Stahl & Miller, 1989).

The 1960s were also the beginning of some major research in emergent literacy (Fisher, 2008).

Over the years, various researchers have looked at children's emergent literacy in a variety of settings and with a variety of children. What has become apparent is that children's exposure to print in the environment

and at home influences what they learn about reading and writing and that we can expect certain behaviors to be apparent as children learn to read” (Fisher, 2008, p. 8).

There has been much research on phonological awareness and phonics.

Phonological awareness refers to a child’s ability to hear and distinguish individual sounds in words, and is often used as a good predictor of future reading skills (Fisher, 2008). Phonics goes a step beyond phonological awareness and assigns a written symbol, or letter, to a sound, often referred to as the letter/sound relationship. In the 1960s and 1970s, there was much disagreement about phonics instruction. According to Fisher (2008), the debate was not about phonics versus no phonics; rather, the debate was about the type of phonics instruction and how much phonics instruction should be taught. Instruction at this time seemed to be so focused on phonics, some researchers felt that little comprehension instruction was happening in schools. This led to research in the late 1970s regarding comprehension, and resulted in theories about metacognition, or thinking about your own thinking. According to Fisher (2008), a 1978 study published by D. Durkin alluded to the understanding that teachers asked students questions about what they were reading, and provided feedback on whether their answers were correct. Instruction was usually not focused on how to get a correct answer, but on answering the question correctly. The reading process then became more apparent and more research was needed. The 1980s brought about research that looked at strategies that good readers use in comprehending. Researchers also examined prior knowledge as an influence on reading comprehension, as well as response to

literature. This has led to more recent research on authentic literacy activities, including writing, as a means for engagement. Current research suggests that an effective reading program must include the following five components: phonemic awareness, phonics, vocabulary, fluency, and comprehension (National Reading Panel, 2000).

METHODOLOGY

Purpose

The purpose of this project was to develop effective and applicable professional development for elementary teachers on differentiated reading instruction. When I began teaching at my current school district, which is a small, rural district in western Iowa, they had spent several years studying differentiated instruction during professional development, and had sent the majority of the staff, K-12, including me, to the national differentiated instruction conference in Las Vegas over the course of several years. They seemed to be fully vested in differentiated instruction, but the elementary staff had not yet embraced guided reading as a method of reading instruction. I found this to be puzzling, as guided reading falls directly in line with differentiated instruction in reading. As I talked with the principal and the curriculum director about this, I discovered that very little was known about guided reading among the veteran staff, and, even though they fully embraced differentiated instruction, many had their doubts about guided reading. In order to help the staff understand the connection between differentiated instruction and guided reading, a thorough, well-thought-out plan was necessary.

Rationale

Because of the lack of understanding about guided reading among veteran staff, and because of this same staff's vested interest in differentiated instruction, it was necessary to create professional development that would link

guided reading with differentiated instruction seamlessly. Building a framework for a curriculum grounded in research, while linking professional development to concepts already studied, will give this learning authenticity for the staff and provide them the ability to implement it with fidelity and understanding.

Methods for Locating Sources

The primary method of locating sources for the literature review was the electronic database through the University of Northern Iowa's Rod Library. Some of the keywords used in searches included: *differentiated instruction; guided reading; effective reading instruction; reading instruction in primary grades; differentiated reading instruction; differentiated literacy instruction; elementary reading instruction; professional development; components of professional development; effective professional development; teacher learning; teacher pedagogy.*

Other methods of locating sources included recommended and required readings from University of Northern Iowa instructors in the division of Literacy Education. These consisted of journal articles, professional books, and selected chapters from professional books. I also utilized resources provided to me through training classes in Reading Recovery and the Comprehensive Intervention Model (CIM).

RESEARCH QUESTIONS ADDRESSING THE LITERATURE REVIEW

The focus of this research project was guided by the need to develop a worthwhile professional development series based on differentiated reading instruction through guided reading. The following questions were addressed in this literature review:

1. What is differentiated instruction?
2. What is guided reading instruction?
3. What are the components of effective professional development?

The culmination of this literature review will answer the project question, How can a district provide an effective professional development program that supports teachers as they implement guided reading as part of differentiated instruction?

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

In order to address the research questions, the literature review has been divided into three sections: differentiated instruction, guided reading, and professional development. Differentiated instruction has been an integral part of education since the turn of the century, and has sparked a renewed interest from educators and researchers in recent years. Guided reading, a method of reading instruction coined by Irene Fountas and Gay Su Pinnell in the mid-1980s, builds on the notion of differentiation to provide a framework for reading instruction in the primary grades. It is crucial for administrators to provide succinct, meaningful professional development for educators so that differentiated reading instruction through guided reading can be embraced and integrated into everyday classroom instruction.

Differentiated Instruction

Success in reading and writing plays a significant role in the development of confident readers. It has been known since the early 1900s that children are different, and that not all children learn the same thing at the same time. Differentiated instruction is a term that was coined many years ago, but only recently has been brought to the attention of mainstream educators. According to Tomlinson (2008), "Differentiated instruction is student-aware teaching. It is guided by the premise that schools should maximize student potential, not simply bring students to an externally established norm on a test" (p. 27). In

other words, it is teaching children how they learn best, and not just skill-and-drill exercises that will lead them to perform well on a standardized test.

Tomlinson (2008) also states,

Differentiated instruction is a way of thinking about teaching. Certainly one of its goals is increased student mastery of essential content and skills. But few students will become dedicated learners because their standardized test scores increase. Differentiation, fully understood, is concerned with developing not only content mastery but also student efficacy and ownership of learning (p. 30).

Differentiation allows all students to access the same classroom curriculum while, at the same time, tailoring the curriculum to individual needs (Watts-Taffe, et.al., 2012). “Differentiated instruction is not a single strategy, but rather an approach to instruction that incorporates a variety of strategies” (Watts-Taffe, et.al., 2012, p. 304). Levy (2008) also states, “Differentiated instruction is a set of strategies that will help teachers meet each child where they are when they enter class and move them forward as far as possible on their educational path” (p. 162). According to Tomlinson (2001), differentiated instruction can occur in content, process, and product and is based on students’ strengths, needs, and learning styles. Content is simply what we teach. All students can receive the same curriculum, but the content can be adjusted to fit the needs and interests of each child. Process is how we teach the content. Different activities can result in the learning of the same material. Not all students learn in the same way, therefore we need to adjust our teaching styles to fit the needs of our students. Product is the students’ demonstrations of what they have learned. Traditionally, this has been an end-of-unit paper-

and-pencil test. Differentiated instruction says that students can show mastery of content in a variety of ways, from verbal to written to aesthetic, as well as others. Assessments are used in different contexts, from pre-assessment to formative assessment and summative assessment. Pre-assessment is assessing a student's knowledge of a subject before any explicit teaching takes place. If a child already knows the content, why teach it to them again? It is used as a starting point on where to begin instruction. Formative assessment is ongoing assessment, checking for understanding during the course of instruction. Summative assessment is used to determine whether or not a child has mastered what was taught. "Because students vary in their ability levels, learning styles, and areas of interest, the ways in which they demonstrate what they know should vary as well" (Levy, 2008, p. 163).

Differentiated instruction can combine with current research on effective reading instruction to create a model for differentiated reading instruction, but it is not always easy to differentiate.

One barrier to teachers' implementing truly differentiated instruction is their lingering fear that it is somehow 'unfair' to give children different types and amounts of instruction. Research says that it is fair, as long as 'fair' is defined as providing an individual child opportunities for maximum growth (Walpole & McKenna, 2007, p. 6).

Ankrum and Bean (2008) suggest that true differentiation in reading occurs today in some classrooms, but reading instruction is still predominantly done whole-class. Exemplary teachers utilize a variety of structures including whole-group, small-group, and individualized instruction, teaching most often in small groups. They use systematic, ongoing assessments to maintain fluidity among

their small groups. “It is only through assessment that teaching decisions can be made as assessment provides the data that informs good instruction” (Ankrum & Bean, 2008, p. 138). Ankrum and Bean (2008) are careful to point out that “assessment tools that are used to inform instruction should be comprehensive, on-going, classroom-based, and easy to administer and interpret” (p. 138).

Why is it important to differentiate literacy instruction? Watts-Taffe, et.al. (2012) point to studies that show “...from kindergarten through third grade, students made greater gains in word reading and reading comprehension when their teachers differentiated instruction, using small, flexible learning groups during a center or station time, than did students whose teachers provided high-quality but primarily whole-class instruction” (p. 304-5). Meeting students where they are, and developing instruction that can help them develop a self-extending system is the goal for all instruction. Students walk into classrooms with a myriad of experiences and knowledge about reading, writing, and the world around them. Teachers must design their instruction to meet the needs of each individual learner.

Effective differentiation is not found in a basal series or even in a particular research-based strategy. Rather, it is found in the decisions teachers make based on their understanding of the reading process, in-depth knowledge of their students, consideration of an array of effective instructional practices supported by research, and ability to select models, materials, and methods to suit particular students as they engage in particular literacy acts (Watts-Taffe, et.al., 2012, p. 306).

Indeed, differentiation is not merely a boxed program with scripted lesson plans. It can only happen through the expertise of highly-trained teachers.

Grouping children appropriately in order to differentiate literacy instruction is often a concern for educators. Teachers must keep in mind that groups are fluid, constantly changing according to the needs of the students demonstrated by assessments. Good teachers utilize a variety of grouping formats, including whole-group, small-group, and individualized instruction. General, curriculum-based concepts can be taught whole-group, while specific skills can be addressed in small-group or individualized instruction. One research-based way to differentiate reading instruction in small groups is guided reading (Fountas and Pinnell, 1996). Guided reading is one piece of a balanced approach to an effective core reading curriculum.

Guided Reading

Guided reading (Fountas & Pinnell, 1996) is a commonly used structure for small-group, differentiated reading instruction.

Guided reading is a teaching approach used with all readers, struggling or independent, that has three fundamental purposes: to meet the varying instructional needs of all the students in the classroom, enabling them to greatly expand their reading powers; to teach students to read increasingly difficult texts with understanding and fluency; to construct meaning while using problem-solving strategies to figure out unfamiliar words that deal with complex sentence structures, and understand concepts or ideas not previously encountered (laquinta, 2006, p. 414).

Guided reading provides a platform for students to practice skills and strategies learned through whole-group instruction and apply them to a book or other continuous text at an instructional, or just-right level (Fountas & Pinnell). In order for students to learn, they must feel confident in what they know, and they must use what they know as a bridge to help themselves solve the unknown.

Small-group guided reading instruction gives every child the opportunity to do just that. “The goal of guided reading is to develop a self-extending system of reading that enables the reader to discover more about the process of reading while reading” (laquinta, 2006, p. 414). Grouping students according to their needs, while maintaining fluidity among those groups, is the essence of true differentiation.

Fountas and Pinnell (1996) provide seven essential components of the process of guided reading. They are:

- A teacher works with a small group.
- Children in the group are similar in their development of a reading process and are able to read about the same level of text.
- Teachers introduce the stories and assist children’s reading in ways that help to develop independent reading strategies.
- Each child reads the whole text.
- The goal is for children to read independently and silently.
- The emphasis is on reading increasingly challenging books over time.
- Children are grouped and regrouped in a dynamic process that involves ongoing observation and assessment. (p. 4)

Fountas and Pinnell argue that the main purpose for reading is making meaning. Within that context, teachers may guide children to take “brief detours to focus...attention on detail” (p. 4).

Guided reading is one piece of a balanced literacy program. According to The Ohio State University Literacy Collaborative Framework as published by Fountas and Pinnell (1996), a balanced and flexible language and literacy framework should include eight instructional components:

1. Reading aloud

2. Shared reading
3. Guided reading
4. Independent reading
5. Shared writing
6. Interactive writing
7. Guided writing or writing workshop
8. Independent writing

It is important to note that these eight components are not independent from each other, but that they are linked together through similar activities, topics, and language (Fountas & Pinnell, 1996).

In order to successfully implement small, guided reading groups in a classroom setting, teachers must plan carefully for authentic literacy activities for their entire class. Often the question arises, What are the rest of the kids doing while I'm teaching in a small group? Tyner (2004), as well as Ankrum and Bean (2008), Walpole and McKenna (2007), and Fountas and Pinnell (1996), suggest the use of literacy centers. Literacy centers are independent, authentic reading and writing activities. Students can utilize this independent time to work on literacy-related activities with little or no support from the teacher.

Independent work during guided reading does not include worksheets, but rather is a time for authentic opportunities to practice literacy skills (Fountas & Pinnell, 1996). When children are given an opportunity to work independently on authentic and engaging activities, teacher concern for students' accountability becomes a non-issue. Research suggests that it is the teacher,

not the programs or materials, that make a difference in how well students learn within differentiated instruction (Ankrum & Bean, 2008). High-quality teacher training is the key to true differentiation.

Ivey (2000) suggests that “differentiated reading instruction can no longer be seen as an intervention or as a remedial measure; it’s the way to teach all students” (p. 42). Her thoughts come through clearly as she maintains the notion that differentiated reading instruction is just plain “common sense” (Ivey, 2000, p. 42). Ivey seems to convey a similar message to that of Ankrum and Bean (2008) in that quality differentiation of reading instruction should be taught within authentic literature, rather than differing the pacing of the same lesson or by skill-and-drill exercises with no real merit. Struggling readers, especially, need opportunities to read and write authentically, and not low-level fragmented skill instruction. Ivey (2000) states that “curriculum driven by grade-level textbooks is the antithesis of differentiation” (p. 43). This is a strong statement, and one that deserves attention - especially when it comes to reading instruction. Ivey (2000) concludes with some suggestions of what schools can do to integrate differentiated reading instruction as a way of instruction, and not just as a lesson here and there. Her suggestions include the following: prioritize time for reading in the school day; allocate more resources for a wide range of reading materials, and let teachers and students decide what to buy; and, develop better reading teachers instead of looking for better reading programs.

Historically, theories and ideas of best practices in reading instruction have fluctuated from the self-paced units of study in the 1910s to the phonics

versus whole language debates of the 1970s and 1980s. Current research recommends the use of differentiation in reading instruction. Differentiating reading instruction begins with quality teacher training (Ankrum & Bean, 2008, p. 143; Artley, 1981, p. 150; Ivey, 2000, p. 44). It is the teacher who can decide what is best for students at a particular time within instruction. There is no prescribed basal or other reading program that can know what each child needs at a particular time in his/her education. Differentiated reading instruction should be a method of instruction, a mindset, a way of thinking, rather than just an occasional lesson written specifically to differentiate. As Artley (1981) revealed, the need to differentiate has been widespread throughout the world of education for decades, but unfortunately, according to Ankrum and Bean (2008), it is not the norm. Educators need to realize the value of differentiating their reading instruction, and understand that, in today's world of high-stakes testing and accountability, our ultimate goal should still be to create readers who can comprehend a variety of texts. School districts, as well as teacher preparation programs across the nation, need to focus on creating highly qualified, knowledgeable reading instructors. This should be a high priority for content area teachers, as well. "Every child deserves the opportunity to receive quality reading instruction - reading instruction that transforms him or her into a competent reader. Reading is the key that unlocks future educational opportunities for all students" (Tyner, 2004, p. 113). Quality reading instruction is the root of all other learning, and should not be taken lightly. Districts, then,

have a priority to provide effective professional development to help ensure effective differentiated instruction.

Professional Development

Since this project is focused on the professional development of teachers to understand differentiated reading instruction through guided reading, it is essential to review the literature on effective professional development. After reviewing the literature, ten components were found to cultivate effective professional development. They include:

- Collective participation
- Administrative support
- A vision
- Teacher learning and ownership
- Pedagogy and content knowledge
- Alignment and relevancy
- Active learning: Collaboration with peers
- On-going support
- Accountability
- Sufficient time

Collective Participation. Effective professional development involves all staff members who work with students. Certified staff members, as well as para-educators and any other staff members who work with students, should be included in school-wide professional development initiatives (Martin et al., 2010; Parker et al., 2010). The more collective participation, the greater the

effectiveness of the professional development (Martin et al., 2010). Martin et al. (2010) suggest that a learning community working toward a common goal creates positive outcomes through collective participation.

Administrative support. It is crucial for administration to not only be supportive of professional development, but to also be participants in it (Adams, 2005; Alexander & Henderson-Rosser, 2010). Understanding the professional development of the staff through attendance at literacy and other trainings helps administrators lead their schools through implementation of new initiatives (Vanderburg & Stephens, 2010). Effective leaders recognize the developmental needs of their staff, allow them to be risk-takers, and believe in teachers' ingenuity. Successful administrators set lofty goals for their staff and hold them accountable for the implementation of cohesive learning.

A vision. Setting a clear vision or goal for professional development is crucial to its effectiveness (Kopcha, 2010; Parker et al., 2010; Martin et al., 2010; Stover et al., 2011). The inclusion of staff, along with administration and professional development leaders, in developing a vision leads to ownership and increased participation (Bertram, 2010).

Teacher learning and ownership. Involving teachers in the planning, development, and implementation of professional learning is critical since it is ultimately about them. Professional development can be successful when teachers are contributing and involved participants in their learning (Adams, 2005; Bertram, 2010; Parsons et al., 2011; Stover et al., 2011). Much like teachers use differentiated instruction to meet the needs of their students,

administrators and professional development leaders can differentiate staff learning to meet the needs of their staff. When the teachers are directly involved in their learning, the outcome is much more positive (Martin et al., 2010).

Pedagogy and content knowledge. One of the most critical factors in promoting the growth of teachers is a focus on content knowledge and pedagogy (Adams, 2015; Alexander & Henderson-Rosser, 2010; Dugger et al., 2003; Kopcha, 2010; Martin et al., 2010; Parker et al., 2010; Parsons et al., 2011; Polly et al., 2009; Vanderburg & Stephens, 2010). Building a theoretical knowledge base through reading research articles and learning research-based literacy strategies through explicit instruction, modeling, and sharing are key to strengthening teachers' pedagogy during professional development (Lomos, Hofman, & Bosker, 2011).

Alignment and relevancy. The alignment of a school's professional development plan to the district's goals, vision, curriculum, instruction, and assessment is essential in teacher buy-in of the learning (Dugger et al., 2003; Parker et al., 2010; Martin et al., 2010; Stover et al., 2011). When teachers are able to understand the relevancy of new pedagogy and given the opportunity to apply it with fidelity in their own classrooms, they are more apt to become motivated to grow in their knowledge and understanding (Kopcha, 2010). Teachers benefit from understanding research-based strategies and witnessing application of these strategies into classroom instruction.

Active learning: Collaboration with peers. To secure retention and learning of content during professional development, research suggests that

participants are actively learning and engaged. Active learning includes collaboration with peers, both face-to-face and online (Alexander & Henderson-Rosser, 2010), observation of classrooms, both physical and virtual (Marin et al., 2010), and designing and sharing lessons (Adams, 2005; Kopcha, 2010; Martin et al., 2010; Parsons et al., 2011; Vanderburg & Stephens, 2010). As teachers collaborate, they can discuss theory and curriculum, analyze data, create lessons plans, determine interventions, and reflect on implementation (Adams, 2005; Kopcha, 2010; Parsons et al., 2011; Vanderburg & Stephens, 2010).

On-going support. Another important aspect of implementing successful professional development is providing an on-going support system. This can include support from a peer who is an expert in a field or trained in a specific area, a specialized coach, or online support (Bertram, 2010; Kopcha, 2010; Stover et al., 2011; Alexander & Henderson-Rosser, 2010). Some schools utilize partnerships with universities, while others employ literacy coaches and other content-area coaches relevant to their professional development. Schools across Iowa can harness the services of experts from Area Education Agencies (AEAs). Online forums can provide endless opportunities for on-going support. It is the responsibility of administrators and professional development coordinators to decipher which support system fits best within their budgets, school structure, and staff needs.

Accountability. Teacher accountability is key to implementing professional development with fidelity (Parker, 2010; Parson et al., 2011; Polly et al., 2009). Implementation can be accounted for by having teachers submit

forms, paperwork, lesson plans, and formative assessments. However, sharing or presenting information learned through professional development with colleagues is more engaging and valuable (Adams, 2005; Kopcha, 2010; Parsons et al., 2011; Vanderburg & Stephens, 2010). Teachers can share information through presentations, they can video-tape lessons and share virtually, and they can open up their classrooms for colleagues to observe model lessons. This type of accountability offers authentic and engaging opportunities for both the presenter and the observer. Many teachers have claimed that they learn tremendously from colleagues who have shared with them (Adams, 2005; Kopcha, 2010; Parsons et.al., 2011; Vanderburg & Stephens, 2010).

Sufficient time. While all of the previous components are essential in implementing successful professional development, none of them will be useful without sufficient time for learning, engagement, implementation, and reflection (Parker et al., 2010). Administrators and professional development coordinators need to understand that learning is a process. It takes time to work through this process (Alexander & Henderson-Rosser, 2010; Martin et al., 2010; Parker et al., 2010; Vanderburg & Stephens, 2010), and providing that time is critical in developing an authentic and meaningful series of professional development.

THE PROJECT

When this professional development series was in its infancy, my school district designated one afternoon each month for professional development. With this in mind, I decided to focus four of these designated afternoons on differentiated reading instruction which left four other days open for other district needs. The main objective of the first two sessions is to recognize the similarities and differences between our current practices of differentiated instruction and guided reading. Teachers will also become familiar with the essential elements of a guided reading lesson through the study of Fountas and Pinnell's book, *Guided Reading: Good First Teaching for All Children*. Professional journal articles will be utilized to support and reiterate the understanding of guided reading, and different resources and websites will also be explored. The second two sessions will continue with the discussion from the first two, and offer opportunities for teachers to share and discuss their successes and concerns about guided reading. Teachers will then dive deeper into understanding the use of running records, and will spend some time practicing and analyzing running records. It is the hope that, at the end of this series of professional development, teachers will walk away with a thorough understanding of guided reading instruction as a piece of a balanced literacy framework, and it will be fully implemented with fidelity within our elementary school. The sessions are designed as follows:

Differentiated Instruction/Guided Reading Study

August & October

- Introductions/Outcomes
 - Recognize similarities and differences between current practices of differentiated instruction and guided reading in our district
 - Recognize essential elements of guided reading lessons
 - Explore guided reading lessons and resources
- What is guided reading?
 - Discuss chapters 1-3 from Fountas & Pinnell's *Guided Reading* book (Appendix A)
 - Read article, Redesigning Reading Instruction by Gay Ivey (Appendix B)
 - View Powerpoint of guided reading (Appendix C)
 - Show video of model guided reading lesson
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=txC-Qo_8GiU
- What does guided reading look like to you?
 - Responses – Google Form (Appendix D)
- Balanced Literacy (Appendix E)
- Essential Elements of Guided Reading (Appendix F)
- Components of a guided reading lesson (suggestion):
 - Familiar reading (3 min)
 - Familiar writing and word building (3-5 min)
 - Before reading (3-5 min)

- During reading (3-5 min)
- After reading (3-5 min)
- Writing (5 min)
- Lesson Plan Templates
 - Emergent Plan (Levels A-I) (Appendix G)
 - Planning support & sample lesson
 - Transitional Plan (Levels J-M) (Appendix H)
 - Planning support & sample lesson
 - Fluent Plan (Levels N-Z) (Appendix I)
 - Planning support & sample lesson
 - Jan Richardson Website
www.janrichardsonguidedreading.com/resources-1
 - Warsaw Community Schools
<http://www.warsaw.k12.in.us/2015-01-30-20-44-20>

February & May

- Introductions/Outcomes
 - Continue discussion of guided reading
 - Share classroom experiences of guided reading
 - Begin to understand running records
- What is guided reading?
 - Discuss chapters 6-7 from Fountas & Pinnell's *Guided Reading* book (Appendix J)

- Read article, Guided Reading: The Romance and the Reality by Irene Fountas & Gay Su Pinnell (Appendix K)
- Running Records (Appendix L)
 - Running record practice video
<http://eworkshop.on.ca/edu/core.cfm?p=main&modColour=1&modID=2&m=121&L=1>
 - Text for practice running record (Appendix M)
 - Running record sheet (Appendix N)
 - Demo for scoring – check your work
<http://eworkshop.on.ca/edu/core.cfm?p=main&modColour=1&modID=2&m=121&L=1>
 - MSV Analysis of text
<http://eworkshop.on.ca/edu/core.cfm?p=main&modColour=1&modID=2&m=121&L=1>
 - Using running records to inform teaching (Appendix O)
 - Book and reader characteristics
<http://readingrecovery.clemson.edu/index.php/reading/guided-reading/levels-1-2/book-reader-characteristics>
- Questions/concerns
- Be ready to fully implement next fall!

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Appendix A

Chapters 1-3 from

Fountas, I.C., & Pinnell, G.S. (1996). *Guided Reading: Good first teaching for all children*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

I CHAPTER ONE I

What Is Guided Reading?

Guided reading enables children to practice strategies with the teacher's support, and leads to independent silent reading. NEW ZEALAND DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

As teachers we provide the range of experiences and the instruction necessary to help children become good readers early in their school careers. All children possess the fundamental attributes they need to become literate, and some may have developed a great deal of expertise in written language by the time they enter first grade. A few children may actually be reading and know how to learn more about reading. Others may know so much about written language that they can make their own way into literacy simply by encountering good texts and receiving encouragement.

But most children need teaching. Before the end of second grade the great majority of children will have become good readers and writers. There will be a range of rates of learning and, just like everything else, some children will like reading more than others and be more skilled at it. Others may need a safety net such as Reading Recovery. Basic reading, though, is within the reach of every child. The key is good first teaching.

Guided Reading Within a Literacy Program

A balanced literacy program regularly provides several kinds of reading and writing.

By reading aloud, teachers help children experience and contemplate literary work they cannot yet read. In shared reading, children participate in reading, learn critical concepts of how print works, and get the feel of reading. Literature circles enable children to think more deeply about text as they talk with one another and co-construct new understanding. It is through guided reading, however, that teachers can show children how to read and can support children as they read. Guided reading leads to the independent reading that builds the process; it is the heart of a balanced literacy program.

- It gives children the opportunity to develop as individual readers while participating in a socially supported activity
- It gives teachers the opportunity to observe individuals as they process new texts.
- It gives individual readers the opportunity to develop reading strategies so that they can read increasingly difficult texts independently.
- It gives children enjoyable, successful experiences in reading for meaning.
- It develops the abilities needed for independent reading.

■ CHAPTER ONE ■

■ It helps children learn how to introduce texts to themselves.

What Is Guided Reading?

Guided reading is a context in which a teacher supports each reader's development of effective strategies for processing novel texts at increasingly challenging levels of difficulty. The teacher works with a small group of children who use similar reading processes and are able to read similar levels of text with support. The teacher introduces a text to this small group, works briefly with individuals in the group as they read it, may select one or two teaching points to present to the group following the reading, and may ask the children to take part in an extension of their reading. The text is one that offers the children a minimum of new things to learn; that is, the children can read it with the strategies they currently have, but it provides opportunity for a small amount of new learning.

The purpose of guided reading is to enable children to use and develop strategies "on the run." They are enjoying the story because they can understand it; it is accessible to them through their own strategies supported by the teacher's introduction. They focus primarily on constructing meaning while using problem-solving strategies to figure out words they don't know, deal with tricky sentence structure, and understand concepts or ideas they have not previously met in print. The idea is for children to take on novel texts, read them at once with a minimum of support, and read many of them again and again for independence and fluency.

The ultimate goal in guided reading is to help children learn how to use independent reading strategies successfully. Teachers, based on their knowledge of children, possible texts, and the processes involved in reading and learning to read, make a series of complex decisions that influence and mediate literacy for the young children in the

group. Guided reading also involves ongoing observation and assessment that inform the teacher's interactions with individuals in the group and help the teacher select appropriate texts.

A sample guided reading lesson

Pat is working with five first graders, all of whom can read texts with natural language patterns and two or three lines of print per page. Each child has a body of "known" words that she recognizes quickly. The words each child knows are not identical, of course, but their repertoires overlap. All five children can write their name and many other words; they can hear sounds in words (most of the beginning and ending consonants) and use their letter-sound knowledge to construct words as they write their own messages.

Pat uses her detailed knowledge of the children to select a new book for today, one that will be easy for the children to read, so that accuracy is not an issue. Instead, Pat wants to focus on building the problem-solving abilities or processing power of each child in the group. She has a large selection of books from which to choose, but she has made it easier for herself by organizing them by level of difficulty. For this group, she selects books from level C. About ten titles are available in her collection of guided reading books. This group may read five or six of the titles on this level or may move to the next level more rapidly. Pat will be thinking about this decision as she works with and observes the group.

Today, she pulls out five copies of *Spider*, *Spider* by Joy Cowley. She calls the group members together, and she gives them a copy of the book. (This time she sits with them on a rug.) First, she introduces the book. For this group, Pat decides to talk about most of the pictures and to use some of the language of the book. This is the group's first book on this level and some of the language patterns and words may be difficult for them. Her introduction is informative but

■ WHAT IS GUIDED READING? ■

brief. She encourages the children to notice aspects of the book by pointing out features of the pictures and print. Several children notice things in the pictures and either ask questions or make comments. For example, David notices the familiar word *no*. Janna says she doesn't like spiders.

As she introduces the book, Pat asks the children to repeat some of the story language. There is conversation as the children notice and point out things in the pictures. She also asks them to locate an important word, *come*, on several pages. Then she tells the children to get started with their reading. Each child reads the whole book softly while Pat observes. She may interact briefly with some of the children to encourage them to think about the story and use strategies to solve difficulties, but she tries not to interrupt. Today, Pat notices that *Spider, Spider* is very easy for David and may not be offering him enough of a challenge; she thinks David may need to work with another group.

All the children are able to read the book, but Pat notices that several of them have had to do some problem solving on the word *not*. Most were successful. For example, on the line "No, no, Spider, not me," Shana read accurately up to the word *not* and then said, "No, no, what's that word?" showing that she recognized something about it. She went on to the word *me*, but then stopped, went back to the beginning of the line and read it accurately. This behavior provides evidence that Shana was able to check on her own reading (self-monitoring), to search for more information, and to self-correct.

After the reading, Pat takes the children back to page 3 in the story. She writes the word *no* on a white board on the easel that is always nearby. She asks the children to read the word. Then she writes *not*, and says, "Some of you noticed that this new word is like *no*." She asks several children to read the words, pointing out the part that is alike and the different ending. When she asks children to read the word *not*, she empha-

sizes the *t* at the end. Then she asks them to locate *not* in the text. She is trying to help them realize that a good reading strategy is to think of a word like the one you are trying to solve and also to notice word endings and beginnings. Finally, Pat asks the children to read, "No, no, Spider, not me" in unison with fluency and phrasing.

Several children say that they like the book and want to read it again, so Pat adds it to the "browsing box" of previously read texts. Pat dismisses the group without extending the text through another activity. Occasionally, the books read by the group lead to additional activities, but Pat places great value on children's having the opportunity to read many new texts and to reread familiar ones. She thinks that extending every book through art, writing, or drama is impractical and could interfere with time needed to read widely, enjoying and practicing the process.

She asks Janna to stay and takes a running record of Janna's reading of the new book the children read the last time they met. This gives her a chance to observe Janna's independent reading of a text that has been read once before. Pat rotates the children and takes a running record on each of the five about every two weeks.

Pat's interactions with the group will change over time. Children take increasing responsibility for the first reading of a text. Conversation between Pat and the children is woven throughout guided reading, before, during, and after, but the main discussion times either precede or follow reading the story.

Essential components

This example illustrates some of the essential components of the process—observation, powerful examples, and support for young readers. We wish to make our definition of guided reading very clear. While there are many adjustments and variations related to the age and level of children, in guided reading:

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- A teacher works with a small group.
- Children in the group are similar in their development of a reading process and are able to read about the same level of text.
- Teachers introduce the stories and assist children's reading in ways that help to develop independent reading strategies.
- Each child reads the whole text.
- The goal is for children to read independently and silently.
- The emphasis is on reading increasingly challenging books over time.
- Children are grouped and regrouped in a dynamic process that involves ongoing observation and assessment.

The overall purpose of guided reading is to enable children to read for meaning at all times. The instruction may involve brief detours to focus children's attention on detail, but the construction of meaning overrides.

The place of guided reading in the child's developing knowledge

Children learn to read by reading, and reading begins long before a teacher uses guided reading in school. Early literacy learning begins almost from the moment children are born. They encounter the symbols of literacy in their world—signs for stores and restaurants, for example—and begin to connect them with their meaning. Children participate in the literacy events they find in their homes, events that are different for different children. For example, Hannah is only two years older than her brother Phillip, but they have had different literacy experiences. Hannah loves hearing books read aloud and has made her own books since she was four. Phillip also likes to be read to but not for nearly as long. Instead, he prefers to play games on the computer. At four, he was an expert at several games and could read difficult words like *shift*, *option*, and *delete*.

By participating in literacy, children

discover written language and what it is for. When they enter kindergarten, children need rich literacy experiences that will help them move from their early approximations to more refined and precise concepts of how print works. They need abundant opportunities to read and write and to connect the two processes. Interactive writing, a group writing process, provides a demonstration of how written language works, how to make links between letters, clusters of letters, and sounds. Through shared reading of their own interactive writing as well as nursery rhymes, poems, and big books, children learn some of the basic early reading behaviors, such as moving from left to right, return sweep, and one-to-one matching with the support of the teacher and peers in a group.

In kindergarten, children also learn to recognize and name the upper- and lower-case letters so that the information letters provide is more available to them. Teachers have found that the most effective way to approach letter learning is to begin with children's own names, used many different ways, and to use interactive writing extensively, being sure to work explicitly on letters. *If children do not know letters, there is no need to delay their reading of text.* They can continue to learn more about letters and words as they encounter them in texts. But teachers will want to be especially vigilant in helping children who have low letter knowledge to build their competence.

As they approach first grade, most children will have a body of knowledge that they can use as resources for reading. They have developed language systems that allow them to think about whether something "makes sense" and "sounds right." They have some knowledge of what print looks like and the kind of information it contains. Usually, they know a few letters and can write and/or read their name and a few other words. This knowledge base is enough to begin reading for the precise message of the text, and that is where guided reading begins.

■ WHAT IS GUIDED READING? ■

A Rationale for Guided Reading

Before children go to school, the process of being able to read text that is more and more decontextualized is guided informally by the responses of caregivers and preschool teachers. Some children focus a great deal of attention on reading and writing and quickly develop deep understanding, seemingly with little effort. Others have some basic knowledge of literacy—familiarity with the language of stories and with particular letters, sounds, and words—but they need help figuring out the complex process of reading text. As they work with text, children develop a network of strategies that allow them to attend to information from different sources. Information from these sources is, for the most part, implicitly or subconsciously held, but it is the foundation for reading text.

Clay (1993a) clusters these sources of information into three categories: meaning, structure, and visual information.

1. *Meaning cues* come from children's life experiences. Meaning is represented in their memories and in the language they use to talk about that meaning. This means that reading has to "make sense." As Holdaway (1979) says, if children have heard stories read aloud, they have formed high expectations of written language. They expect it to make sense and they expect to be intrigued by aspects of the text.
2. *Structure or syntax* comes from knowing how oral language is put together. Language is rule-governed; words are not strung together haphazardly but conform to rules. For example, "She wore a red dress" conforms to the syntactic rules of English. The sentence can be reconfigured in several ways and still "sound right" to an English speaker, but "she a red wore dress" is impossible. It doesn't match the rules we have all assimilated while learning to speak a language.
3. *Visual information* comes from knowing the relationship between oral language and

its graphic symbols—the letters that are formed into words divided by spaces and arranged on the page, and the conventions of print such as punctuation. A child may have learned the distinctive features of a few letters, perhaps those in her name. She may even have developed the ability to produce these letters over and over in writing. The first letters serve as exemplars, helping the child "learn how to learn": she learns what to notice about letters and how to compare letters with each other.

Children have these sources of information at their disposal but may not know how to access and use them while reading extended text. It is one thing to recognize visual features of a letter or word in isolation. It is another to use visual information that is embedded in text. The teacher mediates the process for the young reader.

It is usually not enough simply to provide children with good reading materials. Teacher guidance is essential. A major decision is selecting the texts that children encounter while they are building their reading systems. First, children must have many opportunities to read all kinds of texts. A balanced program will provide a large variety of texts organized by level of difficulty. Book selection is discussed in depth in Chapter 10, but there are two basic questions teachers should ask themselves about the books their students read every day:

1. Is the text consistently so easy that children have no opportunity to build their problem-solving strategies?
2. Is the text so difficult to process that children get no real opportunity to read?

If the answer to the first question is yes, then children may be reading but not solving the problems a more challenging text would provide. An easy text that nevertheless introduces a few unfamiliar words or language structures allows the child to practice the "in the head" operations that build the system. It is not the words that are important

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but the thought processes required to figure out the new words while maintaining the meaning of the text. In the earlier *Spider*, *Spider* example, the pictures provided clear clues to the meaning, but readers had to look closely at the word *not* in the sentence “No, no, Spider, not me.” They had to examine detail while maintaining the meaning and their own sense of how language was structured. The text provided a context for using word-solving skills and for checking the process by using knowledge of the story and sentence pattern.

A child who can carry out this process on beginning texts is on the way to learning “how to learn” in reading. The process has been described by Clay (1991a) as “learning how to access visual sources of information while reading for meaning with divided attention” (p. 286). The more children use problem solving while reading for meaning, the greater and more flexible their problem-solving repertoires become. It is the responsibility of the teacher, therefore, to be sure that children receive the support and guidance they need to read challenging texts every day. Guided reading is designed to support that process.

More commonly, the second question is answered yes—children are reading texts that are too difficult for them. Our rule of thumb is that if the reader, with an introduction and support, cannot read about 90 percent of the words accurately, the text is too difficult. The accuracy analysis here is not a test of the reader but a test of the teacher’s selection and introduction of the text. A hard text for a reader does not provide an opportunity for smooth problem solving, and for meaning to guide the process. The process may break down into individual word calling (or frantic random guessing) that does not make sense and is not productive.

When children solve words using visual information, they need to be able to verify their success using meaning and structure cues. At the same time, they make predic-

tions from language structure and meaning (what the text is likely to say) while checking their predictions against the makeup of the word, asking implicitly, Does it *look* right? Accuracy of reading is not as important as learning the process of using different sources of information, self-monitoring, and cross-checking; the process is too difficult if the text is hard.

If the texts are extremely difficult, the situation is even more disastrous for the young reader. This can happen when the more inexperienced children are forced into “whole-class” reading or into reading basals that contain almost no texts a given group of children can read. In this case, the process completely breaks down and there may be bizarre responses such as “mumble reading.” Children may also attempt to read along without looking at the print, trying to remember the entire text, or just read along one step behind all the other children with almost no independent processing. The situation for the child would be something like performing in a choir without knowing the music or words.

The answer is not to eliminate whole-class experiences but to use them for activities like shared reading and interactive writing, which are designed for the class community or a small group. Nor is it practical or even desirable to teach each child individually. Guided reading takes advantage of social support and allows the teacher to operate efficiently, to work with the tension between ease and challenge that is necessary to support readers’ moving forward in their learning.

The Essentials of Guided Reading

Figure 1-1 outlines the essential elements of guided reading. It summarizes the teacher’s and children’s actions before, during, and after the reading.

What the teacher does

The teacher’s actions emerge from (1) observing the children as they read and write

■ WHAT IS GUIDED READING? ■

The Essential Elements of Guided Reading

	Before The Reading	During The Reading	After The Reading
Teacher	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • selects an appropriate text, one that will be supportive but with a few problems to solve • prepares an introduction to the story • briefly introduces the story, keeping in mind the meaning, language, and visual information in the text, and the knowledge, experience, and skills of the reader • leaves some questions to be answered through reading 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "listens in" • observes the reader's behaviors for evidence of strategy use • confirms children's problem-solving attempts and successes • interacts with individuals to assist with problem-solving at difficulty (when appropriate) • makes notes about the strategy use of individual readers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • talks about the story with the children • invites personal response • returns to the text for one or two teaching opportunities such as finding evidence or discussing problem-solving • assesses children's understanding of what they read • sometimes engages the children in extending the story through such activities as drama, writing, art, or more reading • sometimes engages the children for a minute or two of word work
Children	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • engage in a conversation about the story • raise questions • build expectations • notice information in the text 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • read the whole text or a unified part to themselves (softly or silently) • request help in problem-solving when needed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • talks about the whole story • check predictions and react personally to the story or information • revisit the text at points of problem-solving as guided by the teacher • may reread the story to a partner or independently • sometimes engage in activities that involve extending and responding to the text (such as drama or journal writing) • sometimes engage in a minute or two of word work

FIGURE 1-1 The essential elements of guided reading

and (2) studying and analyzing the available texts. The teacher's task is complex because he must constantly keep in mind text characteristics, reader characteristics, and a growing knowledge of the reading process and how people build this process in unique ways over time.

Before the reading

Knowing the individuals in the small group, the teacher selects a new text to introduce. He carefully matches the readers to a text that offers an appropriate level of support but also includes some challenges. Each new text provided to the group should have a few

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new things to learn but not so many that children have to struggle. The teacher's goal is children's successful problem solving on an extended piece of text.

Introductions are brief and vary with each book. They also vary according to the readers' interests and needs and the characteristics of the text. The teacher's goal is to interest the children in the story, relate it to their experience, and provide a frame of meaning that will support problem solving. He discusses the title and author and provides an overall sense of what the book is about. Based on his knowledge of the children, the teacher may suggest personal connections to the story. The introduction is conversational rather than a prescribed story review or series of questions. It uses new or important vocabulary and syntactic structures that may be unfamiliar to the group. Even proper names that may be difficult for children can be emphasized in the introduction. It "debugs" the book for the children by directing their attention to new text features they will need to use as readers.

The teacher does not "preteach" words although he may call attention to a word in context, asking children to locate it and notice specific features such as the beginning letter. The teacher guides the readers to look at the pictures and understand the structure of the story and critical aspects of meaning. When working with inexperienced readers, the teacher may go all the way through the story talking about each picture. Sometimes a briefer summary-like overview will provide enough support for children to read the text successfully. The teacher would rarely read the book to the children first; the goal is for them to read it themselves.

During the reading

Children who are just beginning to learn to read are asked to read softly to themselves; soon, they begin to read portions of the text silently. The ultimate goal of guided reading is independent silent reading. The teacher may "listen in" or ask a specific student to

read aloud softly. He looks for evidence of problem solving and intervenes as needed. His observations help him plan quickly what to teach after the first reading. This is a good time to take a few notes on a clipboard.

After the reading

After a brief response to the story, the teacher may decide to do nothing but send the group back to other literacy activities. He may, however, return to a part of the text to bring some example to the children's attention or to support children's growing strategies. He may talk with the children about the ideas in the story or ask them how they liked the story and what it made them think about. For a particular text, the teacher may want to talk about the meaning of the story more extensively. Routinely, some teachers take a running record with one reader after the others have left the area; others establish another time during the day to take several running records. The teacher keeps careful records of guided reading; these include books read, running records, and any notes on specific reading behaviors. Sometimes teachers take a brief time—no more than one or two minutes—right after the group meeting to jot down important observations while they are fresh in the mind.

What the children do

Before the reading

Children talk about the story, ask questions, and build expectations. The teacher's introduction supports their thinking about the story so that comprehension is foregrounded. Each child should be given a copy of the book to view while the teacher introduces it. They may look at the teacher's book during the introduction and then receive the book to begin reading if the teacher has a reason.

During the reading

Each child has a copy of the book and reads the whole text. The reading is usually soft or silent, but all members of the group are operating independently as readers at the same time. This is not "round robin" reading, in

■ WHAT IS GUIDED READING? ■

which children take turns reading aloud. In guided reading each child has the opportunity to solve problems while reading extended text and attending to meaning. They construct meaning throughout the process, from their initial predictions about the story to examining the details of print in the text to their reflections after the story is read. Because their use of reading strategies are similar, the children in the group can read the carefully selected book at about the same rate and level of success, preferably with an accuracy rate above 90 percent. This procedure assures that children can process the words successfully without losing meaning; with a good introduction, they should need very little teacher help. Children sustain attention while problem solving an extended piece of text and, in doing so, build a system of strategies that they can use for reading other texts.

After the reading

Afterward children are invited to talk about the story they have read. Their individual responses are valued by the teacher. They may be guided to revisit portions of the text. The teacher selects one or two teaching points that will help the readers process more effectively, such as self-monitoring or using a source of information. Occasionally, children may be invited to extend the text through further discussion or activities such as writing, art, or drama, or to engage in a minute or two of word work.

Evaluating Guided Reading

As with any instructional approach, a teacher will ask herself, How do I know when I am using guided reading successfully? Ultimately, the test is whether the approach responds to the children's learning needs and helps them develop a self-extending reading system, one that fuels its own learning and enables the reader to continue to learn through the act of reading. Good readers have self-extending systems; they are independent. A teacher of guided reading does not have to wait for the results of end-of-year testing to know that

the instruction is successful. She will know that guided reading is effective if moment-to-moment observations and running records show that children are using effective reading strategies. She will also note that children are able to demonstrate effective reading behavior and read progressively more difficult texts accurately and fluently.

Children who are learning to read need to:

- Enjoy reading even when texts are challenging.
- Be successful even when texts are challenging.
- Have opportunities to problem-solve while reading.
- Read for meaning even when they must do some problem solving.
- Learn strategies they can apply to their reading of other texts.
- Use their strengths.
- Have their active problem solving confirmed.
- Use what they know to get to what they do not yet know.
- Talk about and respond to what they read.
- Expand their knowledge and understanding through reading.
- Make connections between texts they have read and between their own world knowledge and reading.

We sometimes mistakenly assume that these needs can be met just by providing good books and encouraging children to explore them. In fact, what most young readers need cannot be found in books alone. The process of reading must be dynamically supported by an interaction of text reading and good teaching. Guided reading serves this important goal.

Suggestions for Professional Development

1. Over a period of two weeks analyze your daily schedule. Ask yourself:

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- How much time do I spend on reading instruction?
 - Where does reading instruction appear in my schedule?
 - How much reading instruction does each child receive each week?
 - How much time do children spend reading extended text at an appropriate level?
 - How much time do I spend in individual conferences? in whole-class instruction?
 - How many books does each child read each week? (You may want to count or estimate the number of words [in text] each child reads independently each week.)
2. After answering these questions, you will have a greater awareness of how much supported reading children do and a good idea of the amount of time you need to allocate for guided reading. You will also know where reading instruction fits into your schedule. Ask yourself:
- Are my students doing enough reading?
 - What kinds of texts are they reading? Are they too easy? too hard?
 - Do I have at least an uninterrupted hour for working with small groups in guided reading?
3. Rearrange your schedule so that you have at least one hour per day for guided reading. Then begin setting up your management system (see Chapter 5).

I CHAPTER TWO I

Building on Early Learning

Helping greater numbers of children find meaning and success in school requires first that teachers understand how meanings are formed, why they sometimes are so difficult to communicate, and the crucial role language plays in both the formation and the sharing of meaning. MARTHA L. KING

Children vary widely in the amount and type of literacy experiences they have had, but because they live in our print-rich world, all have some awareness of the function of written language. Encounters with literacy in school have meaning because children use their previously acquired knowledge of language and the world to make sense of printed symbols. Children who have had limited experiences do not need to wait to participate fully in classroom literacy; they will acquire knowledge quickly as they use reading and writing in functional ways. If literacy is personal, functional, and enjoyable, the young child will simultaneously learn what written language is, how it works, and how to use it for many purposes.

Language Is a Self-Extending System

It is sometimes said that no one has to “teach” children to talk; yet they master the huge and complex body of knowledge needed to use language by about age five. The young child’s accomplishments are amazing. Every language has an infinite number of sentences, each with its own meaning, that are put together according to

rules. By encountering and using language in the environment, children learn the rules they can then use to generate this infinite number of sentences. Even typical early statements by children (*More juice* or *More cookie*) are not random utterances to “practice words.” They are highly organized and meaningful statements that get results from the adults with whom the children interact. A language is redundant and highly predictable. For example, we know that in the English sentence “I can see three _____,” the word to be filled in is probably a noun and it may be preceded by an adjective. Plurality is signaled both by the word *three* and the *s*, *es*, or other noun form that will follow.

As children use language, they reveal their working hypotheses about the rules and how to use them to put words and parts of words together in meaningful ways. A child who says *I named here* shows she has a developing understanding of how to signal the past tense. Right now she is using the rule in a regular way by applying it to all examples, but later she will refine that use. All languages and dialects have these rules, which all children learn as they encounter and use them at home. Language is a self-extending system; that is, it allows the learner to keep on learning by using it.

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There is no formal curriculum for teaching children language; they enter into conversation with other children and with adults, and through many examples derive the underlying rules. But the process is not random, and it is highly supported by adults. Everyone in the culture knows the special ways adults talk to babies. We know from language research that unconsciously, adults tailor their language interactions to support young children's ability to use language. By repeating words and phrases, altering sentence structure, and responding to what children say, they make language available and easy.

Parents seldom correct their children. Instead, they encourage children to produce whatever they can—*one-, two-, and three-*word utterances. Adults listen and respond as if the child has produced a fully constructed sentence; and indeed, it is constructed, even in those early attempts. At every level of language learning, children construct rule-consistent utterances, using adults as conversational partners to help them make sense of language.

As children produce more, caregivers produce less of the conversation, but at the same time expand children's speech as to both syntax and meaning. For example, caregivers accept what the child produces and repeat it, but as a fully grammatical utterance. Thus children learn the rules that their parents and community use in home dialect. Through learning language, children learn how to negotiate meaning. They also learn how to form hypotheses, test them, use feedback from interactions with others, search for more information, revise concepts, and connect sets of understanding.

A characteristic of language is that it varies by individual, family, neighborhood, region, and cultural group; there is infinite variety. Our first language is always that of the home and community in which we live as young children, but the learning opportunities—words, rules for generating meaningful statements and sentences, ways of

pronouncing words and clusters of sounds—are there in every version of every language. Once children have learned to use any language, they have acquired a powerful self-extending system. Of the child entering school, Clay says,

He has learned how to learn language.

It is important for teachers to remind themselves of this when they seem to hear differences in a particular child's speech. The child may not know as much about language as some of his peers, or he may find the rules for talking in school are different from those in his culture or ethnic group, or he may see little similarity between talking in his family and the more formal teacher-pupil talk of the classroom, or he may even speak a different language from the teacher's. Yet in all these cases the child has already learned how to learn language. (1991a, 26–27)

Learning About Print Is a Highly Personal Experience

Children's experiences and interactions with a world of written language are infused with personal meaning. Shopping lists, telephone numbers, notes, and letters are written and then read. Just about everyone orders from restaurant menus, searches for items on grocery-store shelves, reads prices on sale items, uses recipes (or at least directions on the carton) for cooking, or fills out forms. Literacy is a tool for daily use.

The most important word a child learns is likely to be her name (Adams 1990; Clay 1991a). Children quickly make connections between their names and other words. Five-year-old Madeleine, for example, has just started kindergarten. She can write her first, middle, and last name (Madeleine Wayson Gifford). Recently, she told a friend on the phone about her new baby sister, Margaret. The friend said, "Oh, you two are the M and M's—Madeleine and Margaret!"

"And, Mommy!" Madeleine immediately said. Playing on the computer later, she

■ BUILDING ON EARLY LEARNING ■

noticed the M and made a lot of them. Then she said, "M is part of Daddy's phone number." The adults were puzzled until she explained, "When you call Daddy, you push men one on the phone."

Madeleine writes *Mommy* as *ME*, noticing that it begins like her name; she hears the *e*. She can read very little, but she is beginning to match word by word on one line of print. In reading page 8 of the text in Figure 2-1, she can locate *my* by first thinking about what it would start with and then searching for the *m*.

The second time she read this little *Keep Book* (see Chapter 3), she read "I see a," then stopped, looked carefully at the word *my*, and returned to the beginning of the line, this time self-correcting her reading. On this simple text, Madeleine revealed that she could use visual information to check her reading, could search for more information by returning to the beginning of the line, and could make the whole meaningful message sound right and look right. She was using both her knowledge of meaningful language structure and her beginning and highly personal knowledge of visual signs.

Madeleine knows more letters and sounds, but her name has been a powerful exemplar in learning the process. Further learning is evidenced as she writes *BERB* and *KN* (*Bobbie* and *Ken*) by saying the names slowly and thinking about the sounds. And in another small book, she was able again to locate and use the word *my* as an "island of certainty" to guide her reading (Clay 1991a).

The world is full of print. Even very young children will learn to recognize the symbols for their favorite fast-food restaurants or cereals. The context is powerful in helping children bring meaning to symbols, but they are also beginning to recognize features of the signs in their environment even though they do not yet know letter names.

In the classroom, a print-rich environment takes advantage of children's natural

tendency to search for things that are meaningful to them. Thus, kindergarten and first-grade teachers can call children's attention to print in more deliberate ways, building from what is known to what is yet unknown. Working from children's names and words frequently used in interactive writing, teachers can help children recognize letters and sounds as they appear within words and alone. The process is systematic in that the teacher has in his mind the network of knowledge to be acquired and keeps careful records of children's progress. An important point is that children not only learn particular letters and words, they learn how to learn about and use these written symbols. Once a small repertoire of information is acquired, it is easier to learn a great deal more.

Writing and Reading Are Complementary Processes

Reading and writing are interrelated: what is learned in one area makes it easier to learn in the other. Children are quite willing to take small detours—learning words and how they work, hearing and recording sounds while constructing messages, or analyzing words while reading—if these activities are in the service of real reading and writing.

Processes are built up and broken down in both reading and writing, but the concept may be easier for children to understand in writing. During early writing experiences, children naturally and purposefully attend to the details of print.

Early attempts to approximate writing are valuable experiences for young children. At first, they scribble, produce letterlike forms, strings of letters, or their names and a few other words. As their knowledge increases, children gain full control of some words and construct others through their knowledge of letters and sounds as well as visual details (Bissex 1980; Dyson 1982).

Writing involves a complex series of actions. Children have to think of a message and hold it in the mind. Then they have to

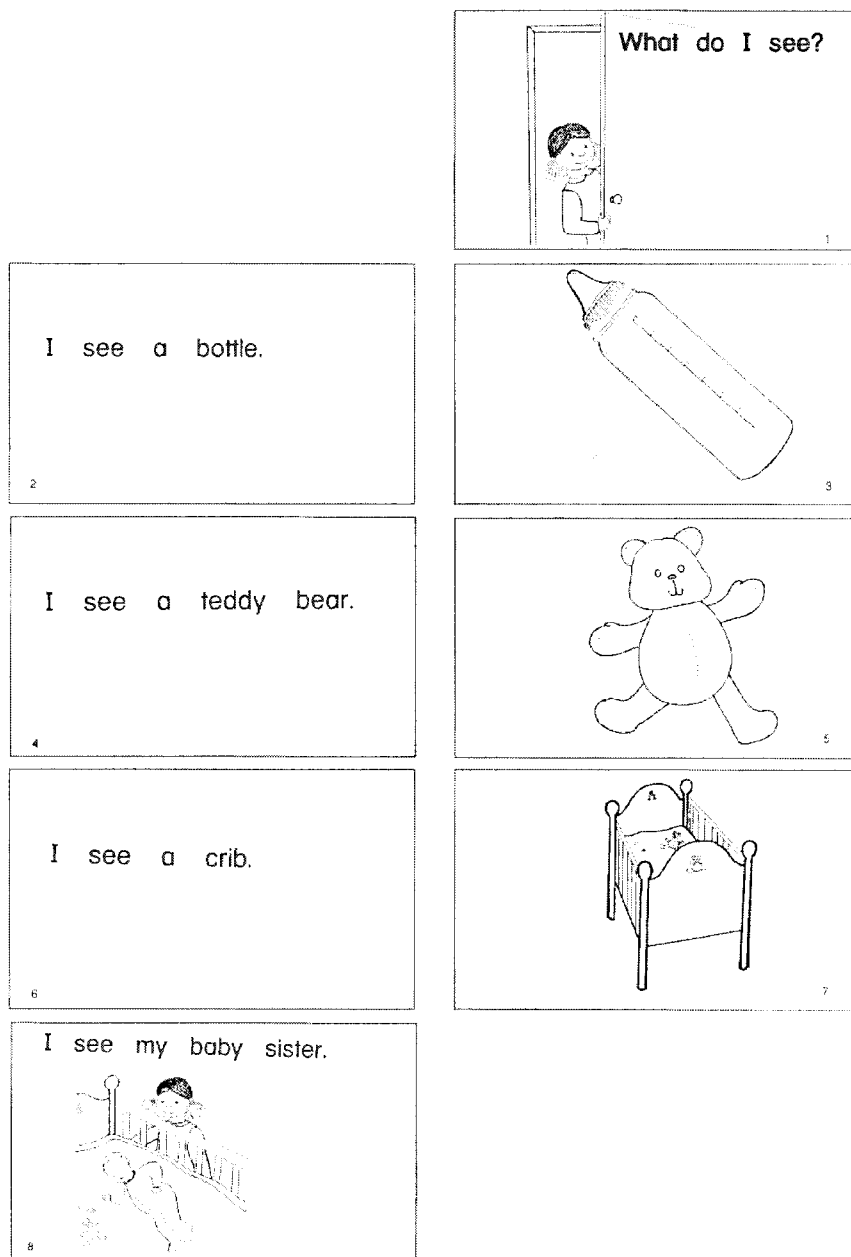


FIGURE 2-1 The layout of a typical Keep Book

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tion) unless they have particular meaning (such as enlarged letters or a big exclamation point). They are expanding and using two important systems of information that will help them become good readers—meaning and language structure.

Later in the day, Kyeera engages in a much more focused look at print as she rereads material that the group has produced through interactive writing, a retelling of *The Three Little Pigs* that includes the line, “The first little pig built his house of straw.” On this simple text that the children composed, produced, and have read many times, Kyeera can point and match words, practicing early strategies such as word-by-word matching and moving left to right. She knows the words *the* and *pig*, and that knowledge helps her check and confirm her attempts. She can also read simple books with one line of print per page and will soon be able to track print while reading two or three lines of print per page, as in the Keep Book based on *The Three Little Pigs* shown in Figure 2-2.

Simple books like this one allow children to anticipate and look at each word, checking their predictions with the print. The topic is familiar; they already know just about what the book is going to say, so early literacy behavior is fully supported. Even in the early phases of learning to read, children can use a known word to act as a kind of anchor in reading, helping them to match their spoken words with the print appropriately or to realize when they are not reading the precise message of the print. Words are learned because children have had many opportunities to see and use words embedded in meaningful print. As they reread known texts many times and begin to write their own texts, beginning readers build up a repertoire of known words that are useful in strategic ways. Self-monitoring using these words is an early goal.

Rather than immediately moving to correct readers, an action that will foster dependence, teachers help young readers learn

how to use their knowledge to check on their own reading. Later, children will be able to use all systems together—meaning, knowledge of language structure, and the visual details of the print—as they read fluently.

Independent, Fluent, Strategic Reading

Good readers focus on meaning but use a range of information in balanced ways. When necessary, they can analyze an unfamiliar word, using visual detail and letter-sound correspondence, and they can then check that word with their own sense of language to be sure it makes sense in the story. This kind of cross-referencing or “cross-checking” is seen in the problem solving behavior of beginning readers; it is evidence that strategic work is going on “in the head.”

Although it is not always an explicit or even a conscious process, good readers use powerful, in-the-head strategies such as (Clay 1991a):

- Searching for and using meaning, language structure, and visual information.
- Self-monitoring (checking on their own reading using meaning, syntax, or visual information).
- Cross-checking one source of information against another.
- Self-correcting through predicting, monitoring, and searching for additional information.

As teachers, we want to direct children's attention to using multiple sources of information in a skilled way. We can do this by giving children the opportunity to read many texts that offer just the right amount of challenge (not too hard and not too easy).

Children's use of cues and strategies becomes integrated as they read easy texts fluently. The processes are not used consciously but are more automatic, allowing the reader to give more attention to new information.

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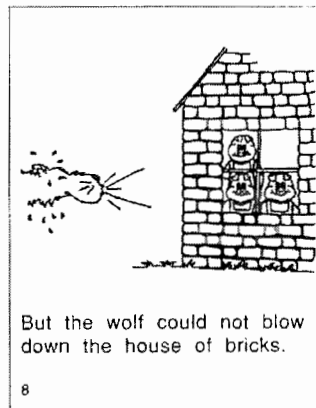
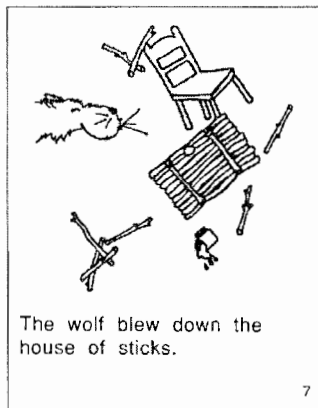
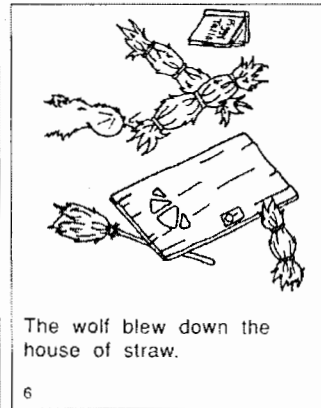
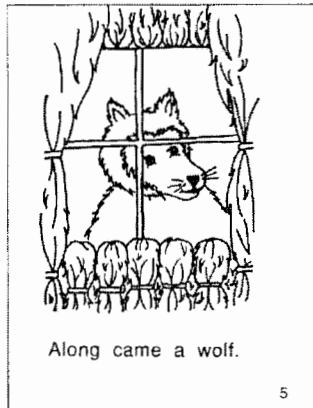
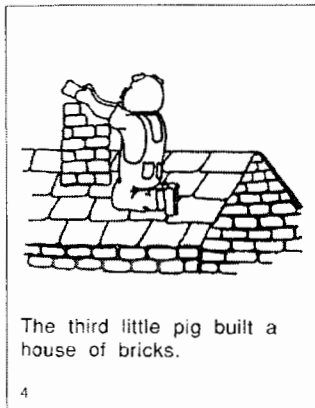
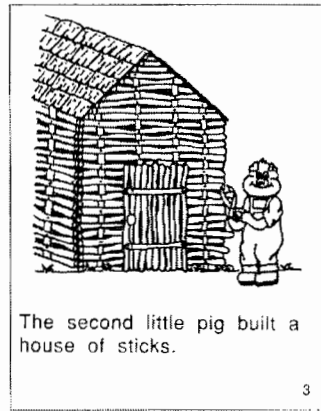
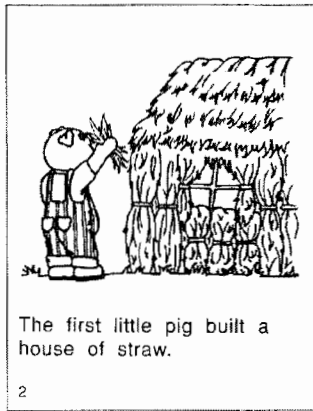
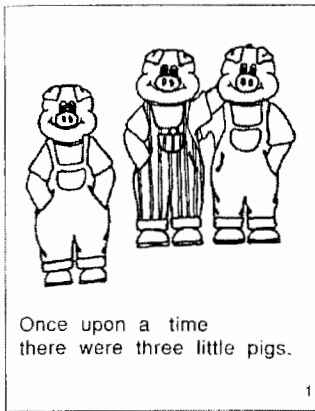


FIGURE 2-2 The Three Little Pigs Keep Book

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Fluency plays an important role in becoming a good reader. Good readers are fast, efficient problem solvers who use meaning and syntax as they quickly and efficiently decode unfamiliar words. Every day teachers make time in the schedule for children to engage in fluent, independent reading of familiar or easy texts.

Ultimately, children who are learning to read must construct the complex, in-the-head problem-solving processes that are characteristic of good readers and develop self-extending systems that enable them to keep on learning independently. As they read, they further their own learning, not only acquiring new words but making their reading more efficient and absorbing knowledge about the way different kinds of texts (such as narratives and informational books) are organized. As good readers read, they extend their own cognitive abilities.

Teaching Is Critical

Literacy is constructed by each child individually but this does not mean he does it alone. Literacy learning is facilitated by interactions with other, more knowledgeable readers. The role of caregivers and teachers is critical in children's opportunities to become literate. Adults demonstrate reading and writing and support children as they begin to participate in literacy events. Sometimes, they explain important concepts about written language; often, they encourage children by noticing evidence of effective processing. Parents and teachers demonstrate, explain, and support. They help children attend efficiently and meaningfully to visual information in print and to use that information in a dynamic way in connection with their knowledge about language. Through these assisted experiences, children construct internal control of the operations they need to match their thinking with the written words. The goal of all literacy teaching is independence and ongoing learning.

Suggestions for Professional Development

1. Even if you teach first, second, or third grade, make time to observe one kindergarten child closely as she pursues reading and writing activities. Find a child who does not yet know how to read. Identify behaviors that provide evidence of what the child knows about reading or writing.
2. You may also want to take a closer and more systematic look at some aspect of emergent literacy, such as the development of "book language." Select a text that is simple but interesting to children, such as *The Chick and the Duckling* or *Where's Spot?*
 - Over a period of time, read the book to the child, inviting her to join in.
 - After the second reading, ask the child to "read" the book. (Children sometimes say that they cannot read. If that is the case, invite the child to "tell the story" while looking at the pictures.)
 - Take notes on the child's "reading" of the text. (Some teachers tape-record the reading and take notes immediately afterward. Others have created simple forms for themselves by placing the text and a small photocopy of the picture on one side of the page, leaving the other blank for the child's version of the story.)
 - Repeat the above process twice each week for two or three weeks. Each time, read the book aloud to the child before asking her to read it.
 - Examine several versions of the child's "reading" of the story.
 - How does the child's language change over time as she becomes more familiar with the text? Consider specific words, syntax, and the structure of the story.
 - What evidence is there that the child is noticing visual aspects of print? Consider specific letters or words,

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following the layout of print, noticing punctuation, putting fingers on the print, etc.

3. Share descriptions of children's behaviors with your colleagues, noting changes over

time in response to familiar text and finding similarities and differences. These comparisons will help to build a picture of the way children construct meaning from text and will also illustrate the value of rereading.

I CHAPTER THREE I

Guided Reading Within a Balanced Literacy Program

*When teachers, librarians, and parents concentrate on plans to foster a love of reading
in each child, communities become caring, literate places to live.* CHARLOTTE HUCK

Guided reading is only one component of a balanced literacy program. A child might spend between ten to thirty minutes a day in a focused reading group that is organized, structured, planned, and supported by the teacher. During the rest of the day, that same student will participate in whole-group, small-group, and individual activities related to a wide range of reading and writing, almost all of which involve children of varying experience and abilities.

A Framework for Literacy Learning

A flexible framework is useful in conceptualizing the curriculum for teaching language and literacy in the primary grades. It is a way of thinking about the range of reading and writing activities that are essential for promoting early literacy; it also guides teachers in integrating instructional processes and the content of math, literature, science, and other areas.

The language and literacy framework presented here is useful throughout the first three or four grades of school. In its present form (see Figure 3-1) it has eight instructional components and emphasizes oral language across the curriculum, working with

letters and words, the unifying aspect of integrated themes, observation, assessment, and the role of a home-school partnership. Flexibility is the key to implementing this literacy framework. *It is important to recognize that components are not separate elements but are linked together in two powerful ways: (1) through the oral language that surrounds, supports, and extends all activities and (2) by the content or topic of focus.*

Oral language across the curriculum

Oral language is the foundation of the primary curriculum. Throughout the day, children explore concepts and construct meaning by talking among themselves and with the teacher. As discussed in Chapter 2, language is a powerful system that children bring with them to their first school experiences. In both whole- and small-group activities, teachers encourage children to offer their ideas and comments. A basic assumption is that classroom talk for both teacher and children should have the quality of conversation, including:

- Making statements and asking questions.
- Elaborating and explaining.
- Listening.
- Responding.
- Expanding others' ideas.

CHAPTER THREE

The Ohio State University Literacy Collaborative Framework

The framework for early literacy lessons was developed by surveying the research and descriptive literature, examining research on language and literacy learning, and involving classroom teachers and Reading Recovery teachers in action research since 1984. The framework outlined below is a flexible organizational tool for classroom and reading teachers who want to engage children in a variety of literacy experiences and refine their teaching. The value of each component depends on the organization and the effectiveness of teaching within it. In each component, teachers observe children's responses carefully and draw their attention to powerful examples that illustrate critical processes.

Element	Values	Supportive Research & Descriptive Literature
<p>1. Reading Aloud The teacher reads aloud to the whole class or small groups. A carefully selected body of children's literature is used; the collection contains a variety of genres and represents our diverse society. Favorite texts, selected for special features, are reread many times.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Involves children in reading for enjoyment • Demonstrates reading for a purpose • Provides an adult demonstration of phrased, fluent reading • Develops a sense of story • Develops knowledge of written language syntax • Develops knowledge of how texts are structured • Increases vocabulary • Expands linguistic repertoire • Supports intertextual ties • Creates community of readers through enjoyment and shared knowledge • Makes complex ideas available to children • Promotes oral language development • Establishes known texts to use as a basis for writing and other activities through rereading 	<p>Adams (1990) Clark (1976) Cochran-Smith (1994) Cohen (1968) Durkin (1966) Goodman, Y. (1984) Green & Harker (1952) Hiebert (1988) Huck, Hickman, Hepler (1993) Ninio (1980) Pappas & Brown (1987) Schickedanz (1978) Wells (1985)</p>
<p>2. Shared Reading Using an enlarged text that all children can see, the teacher involves children in reading together following a pointer. The process includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rereading big books, poems, songs • Rereading retellings • Rereading alternative texts • Rereading the products of interactive writing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explicitly demonstrates early strategies, such as word-by-word matching • Builds sense of story and ability to predict • Demonstrates the processes of reading extended text • Like reading aloud, involves children in an enjoyable and purposeful way • Provides social support from the group • Provides opportunity to participate and behave like a reader • Creates body of known texts that children can use for independent reading and as resources for writing and word study 	<p>Holdaway (1979) Martinez & Roser (1985) Pappas & Brown (1987) Rowe (1987) Snow (1983) Sulby (1985) Tad & Sulby (1986)</p>
<p>3. Guided Reading The teacher works with a small group of children who have similar reading processes. The teacher selects and introduces new books and supports children reading the whole text to themselves, making teaching points during and after the reading. Sometimes the teacher engages the children in an extension to further their understanding in a minute or two of letter or word work.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides the opportunity to read many texts and a wide variety of texts • Provides opportunity to problem-solve while reading for meaning ("reading work") • Provides opportunity to use strategies on extended text • Challenges the reader and creates context for successful processing on novel texts • Provides opportunity to attend to words in text • Teacher selection of text, guidance, demonstration, and explanation is available to the reader 	<p>Clay (1991a & 1991b) Fountas & Pinnell (1996, 1999a) Holdaway (1979) Lyons, Pinnell, & DeFord (1993) McKenzie (1986) Maek (1988) Pinnell & Fountas (1998) Routman (1991) Wong, Guth, & O'Flahavan (1994)</p>

FIGURE 3-1 The Ohio State University Literacy Collaborative framework

■ GUIDED READING WITHIN A BALANCED LITERACY PROGRAM ■

Element	Values	Supportive Research & Descriptive Literature
<p>4. Independent Reading Children read on their own or with partners from a wide range of materials. Some reading is from a special collection at their reading level.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides opportunity to apply reading strategies independently • Provides time to sustain reading behavior • Challenges the reader to work on his/her own and to use strategies on a variety of texts • Challenges the reader to solve words independently while reading texts well within his/her control • Promotes fluency through rereading • Builds confidence through sustained, successful reading • Provides the opportunity for children to support each other while reading 	<p>Clay (1991a) Holdaway (1979) McKenzie (1986) Meek (1988) Taylor (1993)</p>
<p>5. Shared Writing Teacher and children work together to compose messages and stories; teacher supports process as scribe.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates how writing works • Provides opportunities to draw attention to letters, words, and sounds • Enables children's ideas to be recorded • Creates written language resources for the classroom 	<p>Goodman, Y. (1984) Holdaway (1979) McKenzie (1986) Sulzby (1985)</p>
<p>6. Interactive Writing As in shared writing, teacher and children compose messages and stories that are written using a "shared pen" technique that involves children in the writing.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates concepts of print, early strategies, and how words work • Provides opportunities to hear sounds in words and connect with letters • Helps children understand "building up" and "breaking down" processes in reading and writing • Provides opportunities to plan and construct texts • Increases spelling knowledge • Provides texts that children can read independently • Provides written language resources in the classroom 	<p>Burton, Johnson, & Ferguson (1996) McCarrie & Pinnell (1994) Pinnell & McCarrie (1994) McCarrie, Pinnell & Pearson (2000)</p>
<p>7. Guided Writing or Writing Workshop Children engage in writing a variety of texts. Teacher guides the process and provides instruction through minilessons and conferences.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Helps writers develop their voice • Provides opportunities for children to learn to be writers • Provides chance to use writing for different purposes across the curriculum • Increases writers' abilities to use different forms • Builds ability to write words and use punctuation • Fosters creativity and the ability to compose 	<p>Atwell (1987) Burton (1985) Calkins (1983; 1986) Guenette (1981) Graves (1983) Graves & Hansen (1983)</p>
<p>8. Independent Writing Children write their own pieces, including (in addition to stories and informational pieces) retellings, labeling, speech balloons, lists, etc.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides opportunity for the independent production of written text • Provides chance to use writing for different purposes across the curriculum • Increases writers' abilities to use different forms • Builds ability to write words and use punctuation • Fosters creativity and the ability to compose 	<p>Bissex (1980) Clay (1975) Dyson (1982) Ehren & Tolsonky (1987) Goodman, Y. (1984) Haste, Woodward, & Burke (1984)</p>

FIGURE 3-1 continued

CHAPTER THREE

Letter and Word Study	Values	Supporting Research
<p>Teachers provide minilessons to help children learn more about how letters and words work. Children work with letters and words at a letter/word study center and share their learning. Teachers help children notice letters and words throughout the language and literacy framework.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Helps children become familiar with letter forms • Helps children develop phonological awareness. • Helps children learn to use visual aspects of print • Provides opportunities to notice and use letters and words that are embedded in text • Provides opportunities to manipulate letters and make words • Provides a growing inventory of known letters and words • Helps children link sounds with letters and letter clusters • Helps children use what they know about words to solve new words 	<p>Adams (1990) Cunningham (1995) Fountas & Pinnell (1999a) Pinnell & Fountas (1998) Read (1970, 1975) Schickedanz (1980)</p>
<p>Achieving Coherence Through Extensions and Themes</p>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Elements of the framework are integrated through the content of the curriculum. Teachers extend stories and link them together through art, drama, music, experiments, and mathematics activities. For example, children might make story maps, create a restaurant for daily dramatic play, make innovations on texts, plan their work with lists, write observations of change in nature, compare several versions of a text, engage in an in-depth study on a particular subject, or take surveys and analyze the results. Literature is an integral part of the process. • Provides opportunities to interpret texts in different ways • Provides a way of revisiting a story • Fosters collaboration and enjoyment • Creates a community of readers • Provides efficient instruction through integration of content areas • Enables children to express and extend their understanding using the processes of various disciplines 		
<p>Documenting Children's Progress</p>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teachers systematically gather observational data over time to document the progress of individual children. Some formal assessments are used; data are aggregated to assess overall effects of the program. • Provides information to guide daily teaching • Provides a way to track the progress of individual children • Provides a basis for reporting to parents • Helps a school staff to assess the effectiveness of the instructional program • Provides children with evidence of their growth 		
<p>Home and Community Involvement</p>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parents participate in the school curriculum through receiving information, being welcomed in the school, participating in book-making workshops, and receiving Keep Books for children to read at home. • Brings reading and writing materials and new learning into children's homes • Gives children more opportunities to show their families what they are learning • Increases reading and writing opportunities for children • Demonstrates value and respect for children's homes 		

FIGURE 3-1 continued

■ GUIDED READING WITHIN A BALANCED LITERACY PROGRAM ■

- Taking turns.
- Thinking about and respecting alternative meanings.
- Repeating and restating ideas.
- Using language to investigate and wonder.
- Enjoying and sharing the play of language through poetry, rhyme, and humor.

In every component of the framework, children use language to learn and teachers use language to extend children's language and demonstrate new ways of using it. Reading aloud provides new models and meaning that can be applied in group and independent writing. Composing written text from a rich oral backdrop is demonstrated through interactive writing. In guided reading, teachers frame the selection orally before reading; ongoing conversation directs children's attention to examples that will move them forward. In literature circles, children learn how to listen to and extend each other's understanding. Writing workshop or guided writing provides a context for using oral language to support specific writing strategies and skills. In independent reading and writing and in center activities, children's conversations with each other support the process. With a balanced literacy approach, the classroom is orderly and quiet enough to work without distraction, but it is by no means silent. Oral language is the constant vehicle and support for learning.

Integrated themes

The talk varies as children focus on a topic of interest such as butterflies, folktales, or friendship. Integrated themes serve a larger purpose by creating an overarching web of meaning that helps children connect the various reading and writing activities in a purposeful way. Not all components of the framework are required to be part of an integrated theme. For example, guided reading is seldom connected to a theme. But where connections are possible, implementing a theme adds interest to the curriculum and helps children create meaning across reading and writing.

A piece of literature is sometimes the

impetus for thematic learning that reaches across the curriculum. For example, *Peanut Butter and Jelly*, by Nadine Bernard Westcott, was the source of some limited but authentic connections in Ida Patacca's kindergarten class. Children enjoyed hearing their teacher read this fanciful rhyming song and joined in. They created a shopping list and made their own peanut butter and jelly sandwiches, an activity that involved mathematical reasoning as well as many aspects of literacy. A broader theme was sparked by reading several versions of *The Three Little Pigs*. Children compared versions, dramatized and wrote their own adaptation of the story, created a story map, and read it several times. They explored facts about real pigs and wrote an informational big book. Purposeful reading and writing permeated the thematic study.

Elements of the framework

The elements are not fixed and separate, and activity in the classroom moves smoothly around them. However, discussing them separately is a tool for planning how to use them. Each element requires a different level of support from the teacher and respects the level of control or independence of the children (see Figure 3-2). For example, the teacher is in full control of reading aloud, although the children are actually listening, commenting, and joining in on familiar parts. In shared reading the child shares the control with the teacher. In guided reading, the child is mostly in control, but the teacher provides a small amount of support. In independent reading, the child is in full control of the process, with little or no teacher support. The same applies to the different contexts for writing.

Figures 3-2, 3-3, and 3-4 summarize the four kinds of reading and writing, the level of support provided by the teacher, and the materials used.

Reading aloud

Reading aloud is the foundation of the early literacy framework. By being immersed in a

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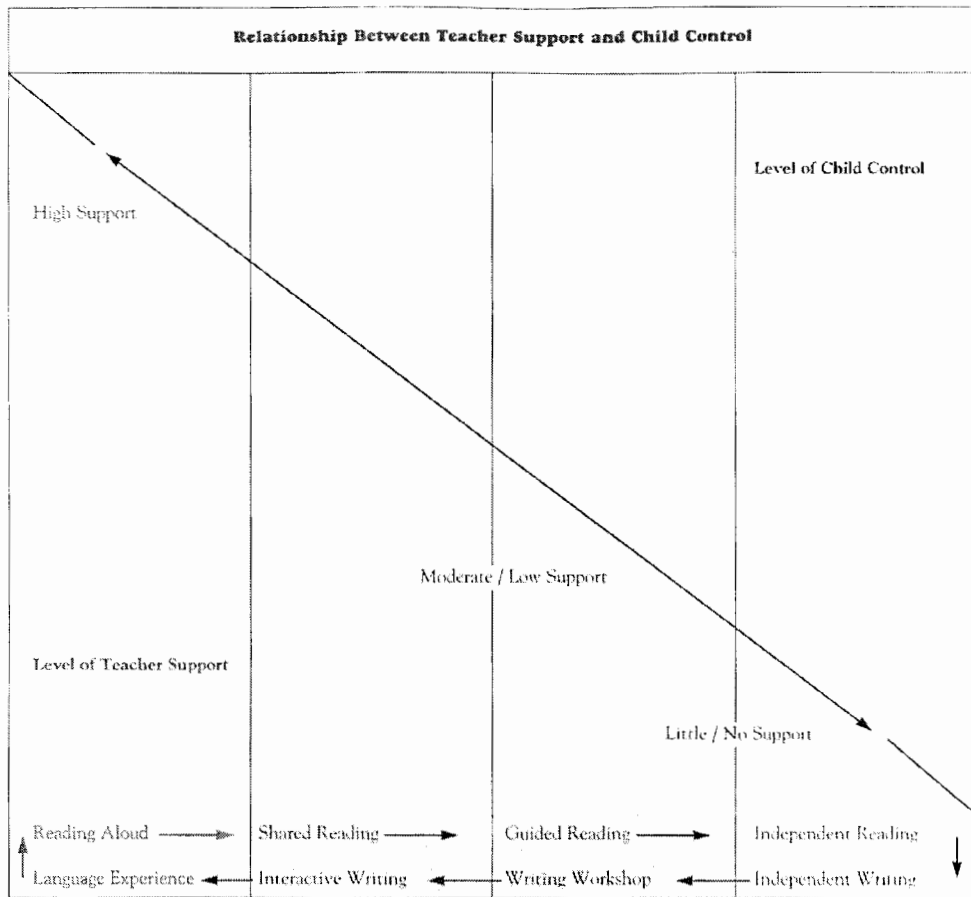


FIGURE 3-2 Relationship between teacher support and child control

variety of well-chosen texts children not only learn to love stories and reading but they also learn about written language. Teachers in kindergarten and first and second grade often read the same story—a favorite that is rich in language opportunities—many times. Children assimilate a sense of the structure of written language and can produce it in a way that sounds like reading and approximates text. Just as

important, they learn how texts are put together—how stories work or how you look for the information in expository texts. They build up a repertoire of text structures and literary language structures that will support them in their independent reading.

Reading aloud begins the first day of school and continues throughout a child's school career. From hearing a text read,

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Four Kinds of Reading / Four Levels of Support

	Four Kinds of Reading	Levels of Support	Materials
Reading Aloud	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The teacher selects and reads a book or other text to the children. Texts rich in meaning or language and class favorites are read again and again, and are used as a base for other activities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teacher provides full support for children to access the text. Children respond to pictures, meaning, and language. They may join in but usually do not focus on features of print. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Individual book for teacher.
Shared Reading	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The teacher introduces and reads an enlarged text or a small text of which each child has a copy. On refrains and in multiple readings, children join in, reading in unison. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teacher provides high level of support. There is some group problem-solving and a lot of conversation about the meaning of the story. Readers support each other. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Large-print charts. Big books. Individual copies. Easel. Pointers.
Guided Reading	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The teacher selects and introduces a new text. Children read the whole text to themselves. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some teacher support is needed. Reader problem-solves a new text in a way that is mostly independent. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Individual books. Easel and chart paper. Whiteboard. Magnetic letters
Independent Reading	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The children read to themselves or with partners. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Little or no teacher support is needed. The reader independently solves problems while reading for meaning. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Big and little books. Large-print charts. Writing displayed in the room. Classroom library. Pointers.

FIGURE 3-3 Four kinds of reading/four levels of support

older children develop in-depth knowledge of characterization and complex plots. Reading aloud makes available rich content so that children can analyze texts and compare them. It allows the teacher to demonstrate ways to make personal connections and comparisons with books that children use for interactions in literature circles and forms a foundation for other reading and writing activities.

Shared reading

In shared reading, students join the teacher to read aloud in unison from an enlarged text—a

big book, a poem, or any enlarged message or story. Texts enlarged on an overhead projector can also be used. The children must be able to see the print clearly so they can engage in the group reading process.

During the reading, the teacher or another student guides the readers by pointing to (or sliding below) each word of the text with a dowel rod or other long slender object. The technique was originally developed in New Zealand (Holdaway 1979) as a way to involve young children intensively in a story while inviting them to attend to print. As in the lap story, the text is initially read

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Four Kinds of Writing / Four Levels of Support

	Four Kinds of Writing	Levels of Support	Materials
Shared Writing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The teacher guides children to compose messages and acts as their scribe. The message is reread many times. Teachers may use a combination of writing for children and interactive writing, being aware of time and pacing. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The teacher provides full support. The teacher models and demonstrates the process of putting children's ideas into written language. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Large charts and markers. Materials for making big books. Individual slates (optional). Magnadoodle or slate for the teacher. White tape for making corrections. Pointers for rereading. Letter chart or letters for use as a model for formation.
Interactive Writing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The teacher guides group writing of a large-print piece, which can be a list, a chart, pages of a book, or another form of writing. All children participate in composing and constructing various aspects of the writing. The piece of writing is read many times by the group during the process and as shared reading. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is a high level of teacher support. The teacher models and demonstrates writing processes but also involves individual children. The teacher selects letters, words, or other writing actions for individual children to do; the pen or marker is shared. The message or story is composed by the group and then constructed word by word. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Large charts and markers. Materials for making big books. Individual slates (optional). Magnadoodle or slate for the teacher. Whiteboard. White tape for making corrections. Pointers for rereading. Letter chart or letters for use as a model for formation.
Guided Writing or Writing Workshop	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The teacher has individual conferences with writers, giving selected feedback. The teacher may work with the whole class or a small group to provide general guidance and minilessons on any aspect of writing. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some teacher support is needed. Children generally select their own topics and pieces but the teacher sets the scene and gives specific guidance and/or feedback as needed. Children solve their own problems in writing with teacher assistance and/or feedback. The teacher provides specific instruction in minilessons and conferences. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Word wall, dictionaries, or other resources. Paper, pencils, markers, staples, premade plain books, and art materials, including multicolored crayons, markers, and pencils. Writing folders. Hanging files for finished work.
Independent Writing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Children write their own messages and stories, sometimes helping each other. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Little or no teacher support is needed. The reader independently composes and writes, using known words and constructing the spelling of unknown words. Children know how to use the resources in the room to get words they cannot write independently. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Paper, pencils, markers, staples, premade plain books, and art materials. Resources children use on their own such as the word wall or dictionaries. Print-rich environment as a resource.

FIGURE 3-4 Four kinds of writing/four levels of support

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by the teacher but the print is large enough that children can attend to it in incidental ways. Unlike home reading, however, teachers deliberately draw attention to the print and model early reading behaviors such as moving from left to right and word-by-word matching. Many texts used for shared reading in the early stages have a repeating refrain or rhyme to increase the enjoyment of reading them over and over.

Designed to be used with the whole class or a small group, this activity provides many opportunities for incidental learning about the way written language works. The context created by shared reading is totally supportive of young readers as they begin to attend to the details of print while still focusing on meaning and enjoyment. Shared reading:

- Builds on previous experiences with books.
- Provides language models.
- Expands vocabulary.
- Lays a foundation for guided and independent reading.
- Supports children who are on the verge of reading so that they can enjoy participating in reading whole stories.
- Provides an opportunity for the teacher to demonstrate phrased, fluent reading and to draw attention to critical concepts about print.
- Provides a context for learning specific words and features of words.
- Helps children become familiar with texts that they can use independently as resources for writing and reading.

Shared reading is highly complementary to the instructional goals of guided reading. It begins very early in the kindergarten year before children can read even a little. In shared reading, emerging readers get a chance to behave like readers and learn the

process. After children begin participating in guided reading groups, however, shared reading does not stop. Many of the strategies needed for independent reading of a text can be taught during shared reading, especially when it is used with a small group rather than the whole class. For example, after several readings, when children are familiar with the text, the teacher can draw children's attention to various aspects of the text, such as letter-sound relationships, visual information, predicting and checking, or using illustrations. He can cover up a word with a stick-on note, for example, letting children predict the word and the first letter, and then uncover the word to confirm.

The approach can be varied by giving children small copies of the book and letting them follow along, reading their own copies. Books made through interactive writing can be reproduced in small sizes and photocopied so that everyone can take home a copy. Children can also do shared reading on their own (in small groups or with partners). Observation of children's use of reading strategies in one setting, shared or guided, informs the teaching decisions in the other.

Although there is some overlap, book selection is generally different for shared and guided reading. (Books introduced in both settings may be used for independent reading.) For shared reading, teachers can use a commercial big book, or a book, story map, or chart that the children have produced through interactive writing. Books children write in groups have many advantages. Children have attended closely to the print while producing the writing, and they have a strong feeling of ownership for the text. They go back again and again to the books they have made together.

The book selected should be one that children enjoy and will request again. Children's responses will indicate whether a particular book is a good choice. The print must be clearly seen by all children in the group, even those in the back. Some books may be appropriate for shared reading with a small

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group; others may have print that can be seen by a large group. Some books may have a refrain; the structure of repetitive texts helps children readily join in and supports their ability to use language pattern and syntax. Books with rhyme help children build an internal sense of the sounds of language.

A big book should have just a few lines of print on each page. For children just beginning to engage with print, one line on a page, with clearly defined spaces between words, is best. It is difficult for children to follow a text with many lines of print. The print should be clear and readable and there should be an easy-to-see but not exaggerated space between words.

Aside from the literacy learning involved, another value of shared reading is the role it can play in creating a community of readers who enjoy participating together in literacy events. Later on in school, shared reading becomes choral reading and readers theater. Over time the nature of the activity shifts and changes, but the shared experience still has much value.

Guided reading

Guided reading places the child in a more formal instructional reading situation. In kindergarten there is a smooth transition from shared to guided reading as children reveal that they are on the verge of reading. Teachers make the decision to move some children into guided reading by observing children's behaviors as they explore books independently and participate in shared reading. After hearing books read aloud, many children will begin to try to figure them out for themselves. Approximations come closer and closer to the actual text and they notice particular words or details of print. Shared reading demonstrates word-by-word matching, and children will begin to emulate this behavior as they read very simple books with natural language and only one or two lines of text per page.

In first grade, guided reading is a foundation of the literacy curriculum. To sustain

forward progress, children need to take part in a guided reading group between three and five days per week in the early stages, reading a new book every time the group meets. Beginning books are relatively short (between eight and sixteen pages) so it is possible to build a large collection of books that children have read before, which can be placed in "browsing boxes" for independent reading. As children grow in their ability to read longer and more difficult texts, they may have to spend more than one day on a selection. There will also be shifts over time in the focus of guided reading. Throughout the grades guided reading takes on a variety of other purposes and forms: analyzing texts for character development and structure, comparing texts by theme, learning to read a variety of genres, or learning how to get information from texts.

Collections of books—leveled according to their support and challenge—are often shared by kindergarten and first- and second-grade teachers; collections may also be developed for intermediate teachers to share. Children do not read the same sequence of books; there are enough selections to meet the needs and interests of all. At all grade levels, teachers use dynamic, flexible, grouping rather than fixed reading groups.

Independent reading

Independent reading involves children not only in reading books but in using all the written materials in the classroom. A favorite activity is to "read the room," which means walking around with a pointer and reading everything that is displayed on the walls or on hanging charts. Poems, songs, pieces composed through interactive and shared writing, and big books are all grist for the mill.

Reading and rereading familiar texts has been shown to support young children's learning to read. Every child in every classroom, every day, deserves the chance to behave like and enjoy the pleasure of being a good reader. Achieving this goal requires us as

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teachers to be superb choosers of books for children and eventually to teach them to choose books for themselves. It also requires a large classroom library as well as well-stocked school libraries. Possibilities for independent reading are displayed in the chart shown in Figure 3-5, which is by no means exhaustive.

Further reading experiences

There are also other important structures or contexts that extend readers. Children need many opportunities to discuss books they have read or may not yet be able to read.

Literature circles. Literature circles are a means for more intensive talking or thinking

about books, or "book talk." When children share their personal responses and interpretations of a book with one another, they are able to gain a deeper understanding of themselves and their world.

Book talks or literature circles can follow a read-aloud, as the children respond to story elements such as character, setting, plot, language, or illustrations. As partners, as a small group, or as a class, the children can make connections between one book and another, compare works by an author or illustrator, contrast versions of a story, or relate a story to their own lives. These same contemplations of a text can follow shared

Possibilities for Independent Reading

Variety of Texts to Read

Location in Classroom

Walls	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • name chart • nursery rhymes on large charts • alphabet charts • number charts • songs (e.g., "Happy Birthday to You") • labels or lists • posters • helpers chart and other management charts with names • word wall • interactive writing: story retellings, story maps with labels, alternative texts • poster or poem charts • pocket charts
Centers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • directions • menus or recipes (restaurant or house corner) • reference materials: encyclopedias, dictionaries, thesauruses • informational books • manuals • reference charts, diagrams, maps
Classroom Library	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • big books • baskets of books sorted author, illustrator, theme, series, or other genres • books arranged by level • browsing boxes • poem box • class-published books • paperbacks (novels)

FIGURE 3-5 Possibilities for independent reading

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reading of a poem or story, listening to a story at the listening center, or guided reading of a book with many layers of meaning.

A common approach to literature circles is for partners or clusters of students to talk about their books. They may discuss the same title or different books they have read on a theme, by an author or illustrator, or of a particular genre. The teacher sets up a system for choosing books and schedules time for the students to meet. Partners or groups read their books, often noting parts they want to discuss, and gather to talk about them. This intensive, open-ended literature discussion provides the richness of literature experiences to all students regardless of current instructional reading level.

Reading workshop. The goal of any reading program is a child's ability to select, read independently, and think deeply about books. Reading workshop is similar to writing workshop: the teacher presents a short, focused lesson to support the effective use of reading strategies or to promote and broaden students' knowledge about books. Children generally choose their own books, confer with peers or the teacher, and share their reading with the group (there may be a designated reader's chair, for example). This structure is very powerful in developing readers who love books and who can choose, read, and discuss books in authentic ways.

Shared writing

For many years, language experience has been a useful technique in kindergarten and first-grade classrooms. Essentially, the teacher invites a child or group of children to compose aloud a written message. The message is usually related to some individual or group experience. The children talk and the teacher acts as scribe. The children are able to turn their ideas into written language, and the teacher can demonstrate the writing process. The stories are much richer than children can write themselves and are good material for children to read. Products

are usually displayed in the room as resources.

Interactive writing

Building on Holdaway's (1979) work in shared reading, Moira McKenzie, Warden of the Inner London Education Authority, created an approach that she called *shared writing* (now called *interactive writing*). The process drew from language experience but differed in several important ways. Instead of scribing verbatim exactly what children say, the teacher and children jointly compose a text, often modeling the structure of a piece of literature. For example, after hearing Bill Martin's *Brown Bear, Brown Bear* several times, a teacher and a group of children might create a text like: "White dog, white dog, what can you see?" The text is then written word by word, with the teacher demonstrating the process and the children participating in specific aspects of its construction.

1. Shared writing is especially useful in helping beginners make connections between oral and written language.
2. It involves more intensive attention to hearing the sounds in words and to spelling patterns.
3. It is one of the most powerful elements in the early literacy framework because the teacher is helping children develop the skills they need to become more proficient writers within a meaningful context.

Gradually, the teachers in the study groups we worked with began to involve children more, asking them to come up to the easel and fill in a letter or known word. Accordingly, they renamed the process *interactive writing* to denote the shared-pen characteristic.

First, the teacher and students work together to discover a reason for writing. Once the purpose is established, the teacher helps students gain control over the conventions of print that writers need in order to be able

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to communicate their messages in written language.

Sharing the pen begins in kindergarten with children filling in just a few letters, perhaps those that can be linked with the names of members of the class. They may also supply a few known words (*the* or *is*, for example). The technique gives teachers a chance to demonstrate saying words slowly and connecting the sounds that are embedded in words to the letters and clusters of letters that represent them.

Interactive writing provides an authentic setting within which the teacher can explicitly demonstrate how written language works. In kindergarten and first grade this approach eases the transition to literacy by engaging children in:

- Cooperatively composing and negotiating a text.
- Using literature as a basis for writing.
- Constructing words through connecting letters (and clusters of letters) and sounds.
- Learning how written language works.
- Connecting writing and reading.
- Producing a text that will serve as a continuing resource for reading and writing, particularly when children are working independently.

The subject of interactive writing may be anything—recounting a group experience; recording ideas from or about individuals; writing lists, letters, or messages; retelling stories; labeling; writing recipes; expanding on or developing a piece of literature; or creating a group story. The writing is based on the children's experiences, interests, strengths, and needs.

As children grow more knowledgeable about writing, teachers make different decisions about sharing the pen. For example, children who know the alphabet letters and many sounds will not need to link letters to their names but will be exploring more com-

plex notions about the ways words work. There will be many words that all children know how to write quickly and automatically, so teachers will not take the time to share the pen in those instances but will write for the children. It is the teacher's responsibility to draw children's attention to elements of written language that challenge children and offer the examples that promote new learning.

There is no one way to conduct interactive writing, but the following procedures have proved effective with beginning writers:

1. The teacher and children negotiate a text, which the teacher helps the children remember as the writing proceeds. In the early stages of interactive writing, the negotiated message is repeated several times by the group. Additionally, it is reread from the beginning each time a new word is completed.
2. The teacher and children share the pen at various points in the writing. The message is written word by word, as the children reread up to the word for each new word attempted. Sometimes the teacher writes the word; often, different children contribute a letter, several letters, or a whole word.
3. Where appropriate, the teacher invites the children to say the word slowly (emphasizing but not segmenting sounds), predicting the letter by analyzing sounds. Children may come up with any letter in any order; the teacher fills in the rest.
4. Some words are known words that are written in quickly. Others are almost under control for most of the children in the class and can be called attention to as a "word we almost know." Still others can be analyzed later to help children learn how words work. Different kinds of words can be placed on a "word wall" to be used a resource for further learning.
5. As the teacher and children write the message, the teacher may help children

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attend to important concepts about print such as spaces, punctuation, capitalization, or the features of a type of writing, such as a list or set of directions.

An important part of interactive writing is the way it makes visible to children how written language works. A neat, totally accurate product is not the goal, although the writing should be very readable, since it will be the basis of future shared or independent reading.

An interactive writing session will typically last from five to thirty minutes depending on the age, experience, and interests of the children involved as well as the purpose and topic.

Interactive writing can demonstrate the value of a continuing piece of work. Producing a piece of interactive writing may take days or even weeks. Conceptualizing, talking, and planning are part of the process. Not only do children like doing it over time, but they experience coming back to a project day after day, thinking about where they left off and where they will resume. An example is Ida Patacca's story map and retelling of the story of *The Three Little Pigs*. Ida read the Galdone version of the story many times to the children and they enjoyed joining in. Most children could approximate the text while "reading" it alone.

When they decided to make their wall mural, they first used interactive writing to list things they wanted to make and place on the map. Then, sentence by sentence, they created a text. Each word was written on individual cards and placed across the bottom of the mural to form a story of about ten lines, which would be read again and again as children chose to "read around the room." All children in the class could read the story, which had been reread many times during its construction, and they often used it as a resource for their own writing. The whole process took about three weeks and was the inspiration for other writing such as the

book about real pigs previously mentioned. At the end, children had a beautiful and constantly useful product of which they could feel proud.

The important thing, however, is the process. Many decisions are involved, and persistence and thought are required. Here is a timetable for a piece of interactive writing based on literature that might be used in kindergarten or first grade (other kinds of interactive writing may take much less time and follow different schedules):

- *Days 1–4.* Read the selected piece of literature aloud each day.
- *Day 5.* Read the selected text again. Negotiate the type of writing to be created (retell the story, create an alternative text, make a story map, etc.).
- *Day 6.* Read the selected text again. Make a list related to the writing to be done.
- *Day 7.* Read the text again. Write the first sentence on chart paper. Read the sentence together.
- *Days 8–9.* Read a new story that is related to the interactive writing. Review the sentence written yesterday, and write several more sentences. Read together all sentences.
- *Day 10.* Read a new story that is related to the interactive writing. Read together all sentences. Plan and begin art work.
- *Days 11 & 12.* Read a new story. Complete art work and place in book (or on wall mural, etc.).
- *Days 13 & 14.* Read a new story and begin to think about other kinds of interactive writing. Read together the previous book or wall mural created through interactive writing. Add details (such as labels or speech bubbles created by individual children). Read a "take home" book if the teacher has created one based on the interactive writing.

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■ *Days 15 & 16.* Reread a selected story and begin to work on a new piece of interactive writing. Read together the previously completed piece of interactive writing. Encourage children to do independent writing based on the completed piece of interactive writing.

Interactive writing is a setting in which children become apprentices working alongside the more expert writer, the teacher. Everyone in the group gets a chance to contribute something, and everyone can see how it all fits together. Oral language is the foundation of the process. Children can participate in the complicated task of considering a range of language and ideas and shaping them into a piece of language that can be easily represented in written form.

It is very powerful for beginners to be able to put together skills to express a message. Even children who can read and write very little independently have a chance to participate in the process of making a book or other piece of functional writing. They can be authors and illustrators right away. By demonstrating and inviting children to participate, the teacher makes explicit the conventions of print—spacing, punctuation, organization of the page, beginning on the left.

Children can more easily see the purpose of these conventions because they are using them to produce their own text. Children begin to sense the relationships between the type of text being created and the form the writer selects. Often, the interactive writing is linked to other texts, giving children a chance to make meaningful connections between their own writing and other pieces of written language they have heard read or have produced themselves. Finally, interactive writing gives children a chance to create decontextualized language. The language they produce can be read and understood by others or, later, by themselves. They are assuming power over written language.

As children develop sophistication,

interactive writing can still be used to illustrate more complex skills such as paragraphing. More accomplished writers explore different ways of structuring text for various genres. Teachers can illustrate the use of word analysis and teach spelling or complex forms of punctuation. Interactive writing can lead to group authorship. Group research projects, stories, and plays require interaction and cooperation.

Guided writing or writing workshop

Guided writing or writing workshop (Giacobbe 1981; Graves 1983; Atwell 1987) is another way for teachers to help children learn to write, but in this case the children are constructing their individual pieces of writing with teacher (and eventually peer) guidance, assistance, and feedback. The teacher may have individual conferences with children or call them together first for a minilesson on an aspect of writing from topic selection to composition to punctuation to letter formation.

To participate effectively in writers workshop, students need a simple, predictable structure that frees them to concentrate on their writing.

Minilessons (5–10 minutes). With students gathered on the carpet or in a circle of chairs, the teacher provides a short, focused lesson that provides assistance to the writers. These topics almost always emerge from what the teacher notices the students need to learn from observing their writing, conferring with them, and reviewing their writing folders. Topics for minilessons may be selected because they are fine examples of something writers do that will enable the students to develop their craft. When the minilesson is about something all writers need to do that day, the teacher may remind the students to attend to that particular topic in their own work. Mary Ellen Jacobbe, an expert in writing development, has categorized minilessons as *procedural, strategy/skill, or craft*.

A procedural lesson is a brief instruction on routines or materials that will enable

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writers to carry on independently. These minilessons are important early in the year because they show students how to manage their writing time. They might include such topics as organizing and using the writing folder, choosing paper and a cover, using the stapler, or conferring with a partner.

Strategy/skill lessons address the skills of a writer. These include saying words slowly and recording their sounds, leaving space between words, learning about word construction, and using capital letters for names or at the beginning of a sentence.

Craft lessons address what writers and illustrators do to communicate their message to readers. They include instruction on such topics as eliminating unnecessary information, adding information, providing detail, choosing a title, writing a good lead or ending, providing illustrations that enhance the story, and writing in a particular genre.

Writing and conferring time (30–40 minutes). During this time, all students are writing. One student may be composing, another revising by rereading and crossing out unnecessary information, another proofreading for spelling errors in a completed draft, another copying a story to make a published book. While students write, the teacher circulates, interacting with them in brief conferences or conversations that enable the writer to move the writing forward. For example, the teacher may first ask the student to read the piece, then tell the student what she understood or ask a question or two about something she didn't understand. Or the teacher may show a child how to say words slowly, write a simple frequently used word, or leave spaces between words. For a child who had trouble getting something down on paper, the teacher may simply listen to the child read what he has written. The teacher's focus is developing the writer, not simply improving the piece the child is writing.

Sharing session (10–15 minutes). The class gathers on the carpet or sits in a circle of chairs to share and support work in progress

or to hear a writer read a finished piece. The teacher selects students to come to the author's chair, offering yet another opportunity for students to get response to their writing and to observe how to confer with peers. When a finished piece is being shared, no further suggestions are given, for the purpose is a celebration of the author's finished work.

The goal of writing workshop is continuous growth in the writers as they learn more about the writing process. They experiment with different styles, with editing and revising, with constructing both stories and informational pieces. They receive editorial feedback and guidance from the teacher and eventually from their peers. Teacher demonstration and articulation of the process of reading and writing is critical to children's understanding.

Independent writing

Independent writing is generated by the child and requires very little teacher support. Children have resources in the classroom, and they know how to use them. The walls are filled with writing that the children have produced and know how to read; pieces of art are annotated, and there are charts with familiar poems and songs. Particular words can be found in these known pieces. There are dictionaries, both personal and commercial. Younger children find the "word wall" particularly helpful. This wall is constantly being constructed and reconstructed by the group. Generally, it contains very useful words that children need to use in writing and also words that they have found to be alike in various ways (words that begin alike or have similar endings, for example).

Ideas for independent writing come out of the group sessions. Independent writing gives children an opportunity to write in various genres for various purposes across the curriculum: survey questions; letters to a friend; stories; informational pieces. Children may also have personal journals in which they write regularly. The literacy framework ensures that the teacher is con-

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stantly aware of the need for variety. Another way the teacher uses the framework is to help children see the relationship between what they are learning in interactive writing and how they encode messages in independent writing. Teachers show children how they can use their new learning independently and then observe to see whether the transfer takes place. Observing independent writing helps the teacher plan for guided writing minilessons and suggests teaching points to raise during interactive writing.

Classroom Snapshot:
Use of the Language and Literacy Framework in Kindergarten

Kyeera is a typical kindergarten student in a culturally diverse urban school where 95 percent of the students receive free or reduced-price lunches. Ida Patacca is the teacher and for several years she has utilized the framework to conceptualize her teaching. The children in Ida's classroom spend their year together immersed in books and stories, firsthand experiences, and language. Every day they learn about how reading and writing works. By the time they leave this classroom, they are literate; they can read simple texts and write their own messages and stories.

Throughout their learning day, the children will engage in activities carefully designed and offered by their teacher to help them build and use their individual knowledge and strengths. Enabling children to use what they know to get to what they do not yet know is a basic principle of this education.

It is January in this kindergarten classroom. In the morning, children come in and begin their "reading time." Although a few students have chosen other projects, most are using the extensive classroom library. Kyeera and two of her friends, Sierra and Lindsay, read *The Three Little Pigs* together, laughing at the funny parts, knocking on the floor to represent the wolf, and saying to-

gether in fierce voices, "Little Pig, little pig, let me come in!" This could be called a "reenactment," for they are not matching print. However, their language is very close to the text. They have an internal sense of the syntax, the meaning, and the way the text is put together.

After the children spend some time in independent reading, Ida calls everyone together and selects a book to read aloud. While Ida reads *The Three Little Pigs*, she holds the book at the eye level of the children, who are seated close. As they listen, the children also discuss the story, making connections to other books and real life experiences. Without losing the momentum of the story, Ida judiciously pauses to give attention to children's observations and questions. Because this is the fifth time they have heard *The Three Little Pigs* read aloud, the children know the story so well they are able to ask in-depth questions. For example, one child points out the pig's snout and the concept—different kinds of noses—is discussed. This kind of attention to vocabulary would not be possible during the first reading.

Interactive writing

Often, children's literature is used as a base for interactive writing. Today, the children have decided that they want to retell *The Three Little Pigs* on a story map. After Ida suggests that they might want to make a list of what they will need to illustrate their map, the group agrees and children begin to suggest ideas. Kyeera says that they will need three houses, one of sticks.

This is one of the times when Ida helps children attend to the conventions of print. She asks the group to say the words slowly as they write them down. She finds this to be an extremely effective way of teaching sound/symbol relationships. By this time of the year, children are able to hear and record many sounds in words. They know that pigs begins with the letter P and ends with S. Figure 3-6 shows Kyeera reading the story map of *The Three Little Pigs*. Because she has had

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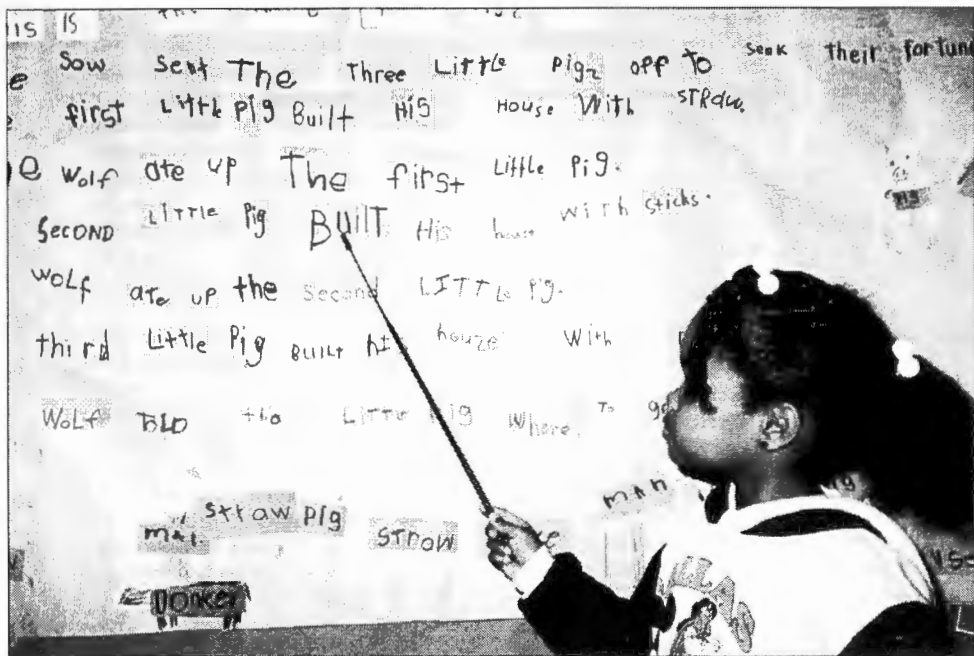


FIGURE 3-6 Kyera reading a story map

many experiences reading the first part of the map, she can read the story independently with ease.

At the beginning of the year, when children know less about sound/symbol relationships, one way that Ida helps them develop these relationships is by using a chart with everyone's name on it. She then links unknown words to known words—the names of students in the class. For example, had they been writing this list in the early part of the year, she would have linked the *P* in *pigs* to the *P* in *Patacca* saying, "Pigs, Patacca. Pigs starts just like Patacca, with a *P*." Now, later in the school year, the children don't need to refer to the chart for initial or final sounds, but they still notice things about their first and last names when analyzing more difficult parts of words. The

powerful demonstrations in interactive writing help children begin to write on their own.

Journal writing

Some mornings, Ida models the process of beginning a journal entry for her kindergarten students. She talks about and shows the supplies she needs. Then she says that first, she has to think of something to write: "If you are real quiet for a minute, I'll think of something I want to write." As the students look on, she demonstrates composing a sentence and beginning to write. She emphasizes thinking about the first word and saying the sentence out loud so that she can remember it.

Then, students begin to write for themselves. When Kyera and her friends are writ-

■ GUIDED READING WITHIN A BALANCED LITERACY PROGRAM ■

ing in their journals, they can choose their own topics. Their teacher observes them closely to see who needs extra help. They write about what is happening in their daily lives and topics that are being studied in the classroom. Kyeara writes *I Like The house. I Like My MoM*. She draws a beautiful picture of her house, a rainbow, and the sun, which she labels *sun*. She reads it to Ida, who notices how she is saying the words slowly, really thinking about the sounds in *my*. Then, Ida works with her to say *sun* again and think about the last sound. Kyeara is well able to analyze words for the final consonant sound. She says words slowly, linking sounds and letters.

Moving to guided reading

On other mornings, Ida and her class read a few favorite poems that are printed on large chart paper. These poems are laminated for durability, and children often return to them during their independent reading time. After reading one particular poem, Kyeara locates the word *the*. Then Ida reads the big book *I Went Walking*. She has chosen this book in order to demonstrate checking the print with the illustration, but the children's attention was also drawn to other things in the text. For example, Kyeara notices that the punctuation was different on these two pages—one had a question mark and one a period. Ida and the children talk about statements and questions.

By January in kindergarten, Ida has begun to gather two or three children together for guided reading lessons. At that time she focuses on the particular instructional needs of that group of children. Today, guided reading for Kyeara is planned for the afternoon when children are working in the various centers in the room.

This classroom snapshot provides one example of literacy learning in a kindergarten in which the goal is providing every child with numerous opportunities organized around a flexible literacy framework.

Documentation of Progress

Assessment is an integral part of the framework. Chapter 6 outlines a variety of ways to assess and document children's reading behavior. The assessment system, however, encompasses the range of achievement across the curriculum. Teachers gather data that (1) track the progress of individual children and (2) assess the impact of instruction on the group. Marie Clay's *Observation Survey* (1993a) includes informative measurement instruments that when administered to individuals at systematically spaced intervals provide patterns of progress and also guide instruction. Running records are a powerful tool not only for assessing reading levels and matching children with texts but for analyzing reading behaviors for evidence of the development of independent reading strategies.

Home and Family Involvement

Home and family involvement enhances the work in the classroom and helps children use their literacy learning in different contexts. Teachers have found many ways to involve parents and family members in the life of the school, from visiting their homes to having parents work in the classroom to conducting workshops on children's learning. Three ideas that teachers in the literacy project have found helpful are described below.

Writing briefcase

The writing briefcase is a plastic carrying case that contains all kinds of writing materials—tablets, markers, pencils, crayons, loose paper, stapled books, note pads, envelopes, Post-its, scissors, etc. Many of these materials can be acquired free or at low cost. Children rotate taking the briefcase home, each time sharing what they produced at home when they bring the briefcase back to school the next day. Often, parents and siblings write notes or draw pictures for children to share. The briefcase has several positive outcomes. First, it helps children

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take their literacy learning into their homes and be recognized for their growing competence. Second, it helps parents give their children more opportunities to write and may suggest uses for printed material that might otherwise be thrown away. Finally, it communicates the value of writing to children and their families.

Keep Books

Inexpensive take-home books offer a way to expand children's opportunities to read at home. Teachers in the literacy project make sure that children have the chance to borrow books from the school—those for parents to read to them and those they can read themselves. It is widely known that school efforts are greatly enhanced when children have books in their homes. But because books are expensive and many parents don't know how to select and use them, it's difficult for many parents to provide home literacy. Children in lower economic areas, in particular, are at a disadvantage.

The Ohio State University staff has designed a home book program that simultaneously addresses the need for more books and creates positive communication with parents. These books do not take the place of the children's literature in the library, but they are an inexpensive way to increase the reading children do at home.

Keep Books are simple texts (although they will increase in complexity during first grade), inexpensively published, that sometimes have an interactive element. The books are simple, with black-and-white line drawings. Directions to children (and the front cover design) indicate that this is a different kind of book, one in which drawings can be colored with markers or crayons and in which their names (and sometimes some text) can be written. These books, in general, are intended to be read and reread by the children, although they are equally suitable for reading aloud by parents and siblings. Children are encouraged to put their names in these books and to keep them as a

collection. They fit in a shoe box, and teachers ask parents to make sure each child has a special place to keep her box of books.

The Keep Book program encompasses a wide range of books, including Spanish texts and books based on mathematical concepts, and a review process has been established to assess books for their text quality and potential for supporting beginning reading strategies. There is an accompanying teacher's guide provided with each book order and a videotape that may be ordered separately from Ohio State University. The guide provides step-by-step help for teachers in introducing and maintaining the program. Sample letters to parents are included, as well as a survey to assess the impact of books on the home. The videotape explains the purpose of Keep Books and shows their introduction and use; it is designed to be used at parent workshops. An initial order form is included in Appendix A. Additional order forms will be available as more books are developed.

Eventually we envision the collection including fifty preschool books, one hundred kindergarten books, and one hundred first-grade books. (Obviously, these can be used flexibly to fit different reading levels.) Presently, the books are available for \$.25 per book. Thus, in the first three years of school a young child could conceivably read and own 250 books for an average per-year cost of about \$20.00, just about the least expensive educational innovation we can think of.

Bookmaking workshops

Bookmaking workshops for parents are successful and popular. After only a few demonstrations, parents can easily write books for or with their children using plain sheets of paper and pictures from the Sunday paper or mail-order catalogs. These homemade books increase the variety of reading material for young children and create shared literacy for caregivers and children. They can be kept in the shoe box along with the Keep Books.

The Language and Literacy Framework

Development of the framework

We have organized this framework as eight major clusters of activity, all relying on oral language as a base and all focusing on building bridges between oral and written language. The components are not new; all have a long tradition and a research base. This particular organization grew out of our work with classroom teachers who had been involved in the Reading Recovery project in Columbus, Ohio. Reading Recovery was initiated in 1984 within a context that had fostered many years of informal collaboration between the university and the city school system. Reading Recovery training had a powerful impact on everyone involved in the project for several reasons:

1. Reading Recovery offered a convincing demonstration that even those children who appear to be struggling in classroom work could make accelerated progress and become good readers and writers with individual help of a particular kind.
2. The program confirmed the value of systematic and detailed observation as a basis of decision making.
3. The Reading Recovery procedures demonstrated the process of using a routine framework of activities within which observation and interactions could be tailored to the individual, enabling the teacher to work from the child's own knowledge base and strengths.
4. Reading Recovery lessons illustrated the powerful learning conversations that accompany reading and writing and are the heart of teaching.
5. Professionals involved in the program experienced colleague support during a long-term professional development program that involved observation, analysis, inquiry, demonstration, and self-reflection.

Beginning in 1987 and continuing to the present, study groups of Columbus area teachers and Ohio State University faculty met weekly to share and analyze their work. During the first years, professional development was mainly organized around sharing observations of children's behavior and products of their work. Teachers talked together to analyze and reflect on the process of teaching and they found observing each others' teaching to be productive. They also began to make use of videotaped examples of teaching. Ohio State University personnel worked in classrooms, teaching small groups and observing the process in order to continue the development of the framework. As they worked in first-grade classrooms, the need for an explicit focus on guided reading emerged and was confirmed. The framework was substantially revised, and selected videotaped examples were used as protocols for a training program. Since that time, Ohio State University's Literacy Collaborative has involved over five hundred additional schools in many different states. This initiative is further described in Chapter 15.

Using the language and literacy framework

The language and literacy framework is a conceptual tool for planning and organizing teaching. It includes four kinds of reading and four kinds of writing, connected through extensions and themes and applied through the teacher's observed evidence of children's progress. In using the framework, teachers consider a variety of factors:

- The strength, needs, and experiences of the children they are teaching.
- The nature of materials they have and can acquire.
- The requirements of the curriculum.
- Their own experience, background, and level of confidence.

The last factor—the teacher's own learning—is one of the most important. Each educator has to find his own point of entry to the framework. If teachers already

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use thematic teaching and a great deal of children's literature, they can immediately create a schedule that includes the four kinds of reading and writing. Usually, this would mean adding one or more elements and taking the time away from less productive activities. Teachers who are unfamiliar with using themes can start by selecting literature related to a theme and using interactive writing as an extension. Others might like to try each element separately before trying to implement everything at once. Adding any one of the literacy framework elements will increase instructional opportunities for children.

Each element is worth studying, trying with children, and reflecting on the results. Depth of understanding is more important than perfect implementation. The goal of such study is to increase the power of teaching and the literacy opportunities for children. The elements in the framework are flexible and are meant to provide opportunities to learn and teach. The quality and effectiveness of the interactions between teacher and children (and between children) within the framework are most important. It is not the elements themselves but

the teaching decisions within them that lead to new learning.

Suggestions for Professional Development

1. Form a study group of grade-level or primary-level colleagues to discuss the "balance" in your literacy program.
2. At each meeting, focus on one of the four kinds of reading or writing. Bring samples of work by your students and issues or questions you want to discuss. As preparation, everyone can read the same article or book that relates to that meeting's topic.
3. Bring a week's literacy plan or the record of a week's work in literacy. Discuss the different kinds of reading and writing as presented in the literacy framework.
 - What elements received the most attention? The least attention?
 - How can you eliminate or combine experiences to make your schedule more effective for the children?
 - How did one element of the framework lead to another?

Appendix B

Journal Article

Ivey, G. (2000). Redesigning reading instruction. *Educational Leadership*, 58, 42-45.

Gay Ivey

Redesigning Reading Instruction

How can schools help teachers better meet the needs of individual students as readers? Simply apply some common sense.

Children differ as readers. This is not new information, and neither is the idea of differentiating reading instruction. Everyone remembers either teaching or being a member of a low, middle, or high reading group. Likewise, educators created special education, Title I, English as a second language, gifted education, and reading intervention programs to meet children's differing needs.

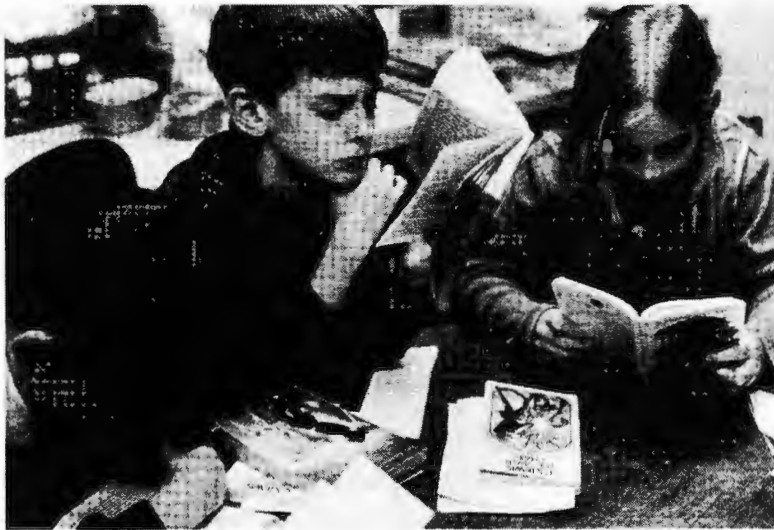
Classrooms are more diverse than ever, but teachers may be less able to rely on special programs for students that they feel least prepared to teach (Walmsley & Allington, 1995). Consequently, differentiated reading instruction can no longer be seen as an intervention or as a remedial measure; it's the way to teach all students. One-size instruction never fit anyone, but it is time to discard the old patterns and redesign reading instruction with diverse students in mind.

What Differs But Shouldn't

All students need opportunities to sit in the driver's seat, to navigate, and to make choices in their reading. Unfortunately, we may be differentiating reading instruction in ways that have severe consequences for students. We know that the amount of time spent reading separates successful from unsuccessful readers (Anderson, Wilson, & Fielding, 1988; Stanovich, 1986) and that allowing students to just read is the only way for them to become truly engaged in reading (Neill, 1988; Csikszentmihalyi, 1990). In many cases, however, only good readers—who are likely to read outside of school anyway—get opportunities to read in school for any worthwhile periods of time. Struggling readers, especially those in special programs, typically get low-level, fragmented skill instruction rather than opportunities to actually read and write (Johnston & Allington, 1991). Even in regular classrooms, teachers may vary instruction for students in ways that hurt rather than help struggling readers, for instance, by slowing the pace of instruction so that students have fewer overall experiences with print (Allington, 1994). By differentiating opportunities to read, schools may actually widen and increase reading differences among students.

Many popular school reading activities, such as oral round-robin reading, masquerade as common reading experiences but do little to develop reading skills and engage individual students. Many teachers use round-robin reading as a crowd control measure to "make sure everybody gets it." But the value of this unrehearsed oral reading is lost on students, many of whom share the sentiments of one 6th grader who confessed, "I just volunteer to read because it takes the slow people forever to get it done."

Extensive studies of class novels—everyone reading the same book at the same time regardless of individual



abilities or interests—which pervade the reading curriculum in the upper elementary grades and beyond, may also fail to give children reading opportunities. Although a unit on a novel may consume weeks of instructional time, students spend little time actually reading. When they do read, teachers control what and how much. Teachers may spend inordinate amounts of time on related bells-and-whistle activities to make the book seem more interesting, to make students experts on that particular book, or to test their knowledge of the book's content. Ironically, the 6th grade students that my colleague Karen Broaddus and I surveyed and interviewed (1999) explained that it was getting time alone with a book that actually helped them develop interest in reading further and make sense of what they read.

What Is the Same, But Should Differ

Like the whole-class novel, curriculum driven by grade-level textbooks is the antithesis of differentiation. We know that students will get better at reading and learn more through their reading when they are provided with reading materials that they can negotiate nearly effortlessly. That means books that students can read with approximately 98 percent accuracy in word identification and that include mostly familiar concepts and vocabulary (Betts, 1954). Generally speaking, when students are missing more than 10 words out of 100 in a passage (less than 90 percent accuracy), the material is too difficult and the reading experience unproductive and frustrating for students. But finding good materials for a particular student



there is nothing magical about any single book. Different students need different books, and all students need many books.

What Schools Can Do

We do not need new methods for differentiating reading instruction. For teachers to make good decisions about students in the classroom, we first need some fundamental changes in policies made outside the classroom.

Prioritize time for reading in the school day. Although teachers see the value of independent reading, they often let it fall by the wayside because they feel that they need to spend time on basic skills and preparation for high-stakes tests, especially for their most struggling students (Worthy, Turner, & Mooman, 1998). Giving all students, especially those

experiencing difficulty, more time to read in school is the most certain way to help all students become more skilled and engaged and even to be more prepared to achieve on standardized tests.

Educators have implemented voluntary free-reading programs, such as Drop Everything and Read, with the intent to give all children time to read what they want to read, but these activities may send the wrong message to students and teachers about the place and purpose of sustained independent reading. If engaged reading is so important to students' reading development and to their learning of new concepts, then it should figure most prominently where it counts the most—during the most critical instructional times and across the content areas. If students are to learn from their reading, they need time to read—and not just in reading class but in science, math, and social studies. Students need time to explore

All students need opportunities to sit in the driver's seat, to navigate, and to make choices in their reading.

means more than looking at numbers; students also need books that address their personal interests.

How often do children in schools, particularly those who struggle with grade-level texts, get to work with books that they can actually read and want to read? Probably seldom. Teachers use the materials they have or the grade-level books sanctioned by the district or designated for their curriculum (Worthy, Mooman, & Turner, 1999). When learning to read,



their personal reading interests by listening to teachers read aloud from a range of materials and by spending time with teachers to try out different books and topics. Administrators and instructional leaders need to reassure teachers that independent student reading and time spent helping students find materials they want to and can read are valuable.

But quality time for reading in any subject area cannot happen in fragmented school days (Allington, 1994). Uninterrupted instructional periods and block scheduling that allow for integrated and interdisciplinary learning will more likely ensure that children get to read during critical instructional times. Perhaps most important, children who need the most time to read need to do so in the classroom instead of leaving the room for instruction that might have a negative impact on their reading development.

Allocate more resources for a wide range of reading materials, and let teachers and students decide what to buy. When asked where the novels in his room come from, Randy, a 4th grader, replied tenuously, "Someone in the other building, like the supervisor of

the school, supervisor of something. . . Someone picks them out and it's not anyone in this school, I don't think." Randy had problems with reading the novels, which were above his reading ability and didn't match his interests. Those who decided what Randy's class would read did not know anything about Randy, his reading abilities, or his interests.

No one knows more about what students can and want to read better than the students themselves and the classroom teachers who observe, support, and evaluate their reading on a day-to-day basis. I have learned that teachers who feel the least equipped to meet individual needs in reading are those employed by school districts in which someone outside the classroom makes decisions about which books to buy and which books children will read.

The mandating of particular reading materials by districts or schools and limiting the volume and diversity of materials available in classrooms have far-reaching implications for students. Access to books makes a big difference in children's early literacy development (Neuman, 1999), but children from low-income families, in particular, have

fewer books available to them in schools in comparison to students who attend schools in higher-income neighborhoods (McGill-Franzen & Allington, 1993). Also, if students read only those texts mandated by schools and districts for whole-class study, students would come away with a narrow range of reading experiences.

Duke (2000) found informational texts almost nonexistent in 1st grade classrooms, and in my own research in middle schools (1999), 6th graders reported a similar lack of nonfiction in their classrooms. To give students the variation and quantity of books that they need to become proficient readers, schools must put significantly more money into buying a wide range of books for classrooms and allow teachers, who are in the best position to identify individual student needs, to make decisions about the materials that they will use for instruction.

Develop better reading teachers instead of looking for better reading programs. Allington and Walmsley (1995) argue that there is no quick fix for reading difficulties, and Duffy and Hoffman (1999) refer to educators' search for a perfect method for reading difficulties as the pursuit of an illusion. No single method, program, or book will help accelerate the needs of all children or any subset of children. Only knowledgeable, reflective teachers can respond to the diverse and ever-changing needs of individual students. As Duffy and Hoffman (1999) put it, teachers

impose harmony on inherently uncertain and ambiguous classroom environments by cutting across philosophical lines, combining methodological techniques, and adapting programs and materials to the particular needs of students (p. 11)

Investing in teachers rather than programs may be a difficult challenge for many schools and districts to accept, given the current state of policy throughout the country, with many state legislatures requiring schools to

It is time for schools to take what seems like the hard road and implement a range of reading strategies.

use a specific reading program or to choose from a limited number of approved methods. Ironically, any reading program may not make much of a difference for students in classrooms in which teachers are not prepared. Further, knowledgeable, reflective teachers adapt these programs to meet the needs of their students (Duffy-Hester, 1999).

Without a doubt, establishing a balanced reading program that responds to individual students is complicated (Ivey, Baumann, & Jarrard, in press), and helping teachers become flexible and reflective in their teaching may seem difficult and time-consuming when compared with implementing a packaged reading program. But it is time for schools to take what seems like the hard road. Instead of professional development in which teachers learn how to implement particular reading methods or programs, teachers should try out a range of practices or conduct self-initiated research in their classrooms (Duffy-Hester, 1999). In the school where Broaddus and Bloodgood (1999) conducted research, teachers were given time in the school day to serve as reading tutors in their own building. Teachers reported that the greatest benefit from this experience was their own professional development. Making decisions about one child's learning helped them make better decisions about all students in the regular classroom.

School policy, whether it originates at the building, the district, or the state level, needs to support teachers in ways that allow them to meet individual needs. As Duffy and Hoffman (1999) argue, "policy should be less restrictive, not more restrictive; it should give

teachers room to move, not limit them to one method or one way of thinking; and it should encourage flexibility, not compliance" (p. 14). In the abstract, this sounds like a significant shift in thinking, particularly in this age of high-stakes testing and accountability. But when applied to what teachers need to help individual students—more time, more materials, and more opportunities to develop their expertise—it does not sound risky at all. It sounds like common sense. ■

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Appendix C

Differentiated Reading Instruction: What and How Powerpoint

4/27/16


Differentiated Reading Instruction: What and How



Presented by Kara Neville
University of Northern Iowa
Odeboe-Arthur Elementary School

What is Differentiated Reading Instruction?

Why Differentiate?




What is Differentiated Instruction?

Matching instruction to meet the different needs of learners

Differentiated Instruction

- Not new
- Realized in 1900s
- Phases
- "Hot topic"




What is Effective Reading Instruction?

- Five Reading Components (National Reading Panel)
 - Phonemic Awareness
 - Phonics
 - Fluency
 - Vocabulary
 - Comprehension

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What is Differentiated Reading Instruction?

- Variety of structure
 - Whole-group
 - Small-group
 - Individualized



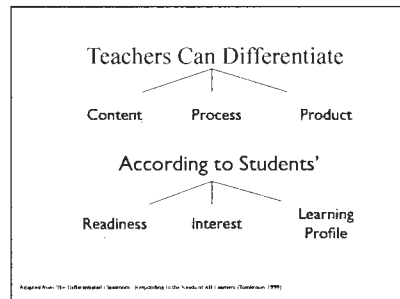
What is Differentiated Reading Instruction?

- Organized into reading centers
 - Small, teacher-led center
 - Ample student practice opportunities

What is Differentiated Reading Instruction?

- Lesson Structure
 - Guided Reading (Fountas & Pinnell)
 - Skills-focused lessons
 - Letter-sound knowledge
 - Phonemic decoding strategies
 - Vocabulary
 - Reading comprehension strategies




What is Differentiated Reading Instruction?

- [Differentiated Reading Instruction in action](#)

Source: <http://www.illustrativemathematics.org/HS/index.html>

Differentiation Quotes



- "Curriculum driven by grade-level textbooks is the antithesis of differentiation." Ivey (2000)
- "Differentiation can no longer be seen as an intervention or as a remedial measure; it's the way to teach all students." Ivey (2000)
- "[Differentiation] sounds like common sense." Ivey (2000).

4/27/16

What Can Schools Do?

- Prioritize time for reading in the school day
- Allocate more resources for a wide range of reading materials
- Develop better reading teachers instead of looking for better reading programs

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Appendix D
Google Form Responses

Guided Reading

What does guided reading look like to you?

Your answer

What do you currently do in small reading groups?

Your answer

What does differentiated instruction mean to you?

Your answer

SUBMIT

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Appendix E
Balanced Literacy Handout

WHAT IS BALANCED LITERACY?

<p>Read Aloud/Modeled Reading:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates proficient reading • Expands access to text beyond child's abilities • Exposes children to a variety of genres 	<p>Write Aloud/Modeled Writing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates proficient writing • Expands access to writing beyond child's abilities • Exposes children to a variety of genres
<p>Shared Reading:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Models reading strategies • Teaches reading strategies • Extends understanding of the reading process • Teacher reads 	<p>Shared Writing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Models writing strategies • Teaches writing strategies • Extends understanding of the writing process • Teacher scribes
<p>Interactive Reading:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teacher & child choose text • Teacher & child share reading • Teacher encourages child to read when able 	<p>Interactive Writing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teacher & child choose topic • Teacher & child share pen • Teacher & child compose together
<p>Guided Reading:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teacher reinforces skills • Teacher engages child in questioning & discussion • Teacher acts as a guide • Child does the reading • Child practices strategies • Child builds independence 	<p>Guided Writing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teacher reinforces skills • Teacher engages child in questioning & discussion • Teacher acts as a guide • Child does the writing • Child practices strategies • Child builds independence
<p>Independent Reading:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child chooses the text • Child practices at his or her independent level • Time to practice demonstrates the value of reading 	<p>Independent Writing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child chooses topic • Child practices at his independent level • Time to practice demonstrates the value of writing



Appendix F

Essential Elements of Guided Reading Handout

The Essential Elements of Guided Reading		
	Teacher Role	Student Role
Before Reading	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Select text that will provide opportunities for students to expand their processing strategies. ❖ Prepare an introduction to the text that will help readers access and use all sources of information in a fluent processing system. ❖ Introduce the whole text or unified sections of the text, keeping in mind the demands of the text and the knowledge, experience, and skills of the readers. ❖ Leave some opportunities for students to independently solve problems while reading (moderate amount of challenge). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Engage in a conversation about the text. ❖ Understand the purpose for reading the text. ❖ Access background knowledge (personal, literary, world) as they prepare to read a new text. ❖ Raise questions about the text. ❖ Build expectations for the text. ❖ Notice information in the text. ❖ Make connections between the new text and others they have read.
During Reading	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ May listen to individuals read a segment orally. ❖ Interact with individuals to assist with problem solving difficulty. ❖ Interact with individuals to reinforce ongoing construction of meaning. ❖ Observe reading behaviors and make notes about the strategy use of individual readers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Read the whole text or a unified part to themselves (silently). ❖ Use background knowledge and strategies effectively to construct meaning. ❖ Think about what they understand and questions that they have about the text.
After Reading	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Talk about the text with the students and encourage them to talk with/to each other. ❖ Invite personal response. ❖ Return to the text for one or two teaching opportunities such as finding evidence or problem-solving. ❖ Assess students' understanding of what they read. ❖ Invite students to ask questions to expand their understanding. ❖ Sometimes engage the students in writing – personal responses, comments, questions or other forms to extend understanding. ❖ Sometimes engage students in two minutes of isolated work with words to increase flexibility and speed in word solving. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Talk with each other and the teacher about the text. ❖ Think about what they understand and questions the text raises. ❖ Check predictions and react personally to the text. ❖ Raise questions or make comments to clarify confusion and expand understanding. ❖ Express personal, text-related, and world-related connections. ❖ Revisit the text at points of problem solving as guided by the teacher. ❖ Sometimes engage in revisiting or responding to the text through talk, writing, or visual arts. ❖ Sometimes engage in taking words apart and discovering how words work.

Appendix G

Emergent Guided Reading Lesson Plan And Planning Support

Emergent Guided Reading Lesson Plan

Title: _____ Level: _____ Lesson # _____

Day 1 Date: _____	Day 2 Date: _____
Sight Word Review–Writing	Sight Word Review–Writing
<p>Introduce New Book: This book is called _____ and it's about _____</p> <p>New vocabulary:</p> <p>Text Reading With Prompting:</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Check the picture. What would make sense? <input type="checkbox"/> Get your mouth ready for the first sound. <input type="checkbox"/> Get your mouth ready and check the picture. <input type="checkbox"/> Could it be _____ or _____? <input type="checkbox"/> Show me the word _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Check the word with your finger. Are you right? <input type="checkbox"/> Try reading without pointing. <input type="checkbox"/> How would the character say that? (show expression)</p>	<p>Rereading of Yesterday's Book (and other familiar books) Observations:</p>
<p>Teaching Points After Reading (choose one or two each day):</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> One-to-one matching (at level C, discourage pointing) <input type="checkbox"/> Use picture clues (meaning) <input type="checkbox"/> Monitor with known words <input type="checkbox"/> Get mouth ready for initial sound <input type="checkbox"/> Cross-check picture and first letter <input type="checkbox"/> Visual scanning (check the word left to right) <input type="checkbox"/> Fluency and expression</p>	
Discussion Prompt (if appropriate):	Discussion Prompt (if appropriate):
<p>Teach One Sight Word: _____</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What's missing? • Table Writing • Mix & Fix • Writing on a whiteboard 	<p>Teach Same Sight Word: _____</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What's missing? • Table Writing • Mix & Fix • Writing on a whiteboard
<p>Word Study (Choose just one):</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Picture sorts: _____</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Making words: _____</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Sound boxes: _____</p>	<p>Guided Writing: Dictated or open-ended sentence</p>

PLANNING SUPPORT & SAMPLE LESSON

TIP

The Early Guided Reading Lesson Plan found on page 190 in the Appendix is a template you can use to plan your lessons. Each component of the lesson is described in detail here and appears in brief on the template.

	Day 1	Day 2
Sight Word Review	Review sight words from the previous lesson.	Review sight words from the previous lesson.
Shared Reading	Read the text aloud to the students.	Read the text aloud to the students.
Independent Reading	Students read the text independently.	Students read the text independently.
Assessment	Assess student understanding of the text.	Assess student understanding of the text.

Early Guided Reading Lesson Plan

In this section, we'll walk through the Early Guided Reading Lesson Plan; it's a two-day plan. We recommend copying a set of these templates (making a double-sided copy with the Early Guided Reading Anecdotal Notes sheet on the back) to have on hand while working with your early readers. You'll use the same text for both days; students will finish the text on the second day, rereading if they complete it early. Keep in mind that while you've pinpointed an instructional focus in your planning, you'll also want to take into account what happens during the lesson when choosing your teaching point after reading.

DAY 1 LESSON COMPONENTS

Before Reading

Sight Word Review (1 minute)

[This review is optional after Level E.]

Select from the High-Frequency Word Chart (see Appendix pages 184-185) three sight words that you have already taught. Begin by asking learners, *Are you ready for the sight word challenge for the day?* Then, dictate the words one at a time as students write them on a whiteboard. Say, *Write the word* want. *Think about what it looks like.* Support and scaffold writers as soon as they need help and before they write the word incorrectly, giving prompts and visual links like:

- Want is *almost like* went *but has an a in it.*
- *The word where has the little word here in it.*
The word they has the little word the in it.

Place a check on the High-Frequency Word Chart for each word students wrote correctly *without any prompts or help.* Students should have at least six check marks for each word before it is considered a known word.

PLANNING SUPPORT & SAMPLE LESSON • GRADES K–2

Book Introduction (3–4 minutes)

- **Gist Statement:** Begin your book introduction with a focused gist statement. For early readers, name the characters in the book and briefly describe the problem. In an informational text, state the main idea and what children might learn from reading the book.
- **Picture Walk and Introduce New Vocabulary:** Before students read the text, it is essential that you provide time for them to “walk” through the text using the illustrations to construct meaning and discuss what is going to happen in the book. As children are doing this, help them notice and discuss the following:
 - » **Unfamiliar vocabulary and concepts.** Use pictures and kid-friendly definitions to explain what the word or concept means. To help children remember, invite them to repeat the word.
 - » **New words that may be difficult to decode.** As students are “walking” through the text, point out any unfamiliar words. For example, the word *special* might appear in the text. Simply say, *I see a tricky word on this page. Point to this word [show children in their book]. This is the word special. Read it with me [invite children to read the word aloud].*

During Reading

Text Reading With Prompting (5–8 minutes)

Invite early readers to read independently (and softly) while you prompt and observe individual students. It is helpful for early readers to read softly rather than silently. Reading softly enables them to monitor and recall what they’ve read. Remember that they are reading the book independently, **not chorally or as a round-robin**. As you coach individual students, remind them of the instructional focus for the lesson. Use the prompts on the lesson plan to encourage students to monitor for meaning, decode unfamiliar words, and improve fluency and comprehension. Also make note of strategies you need to bring to their attention after reading. The goal during reading is to support students as they read and to identify what they need to learn next.

After Reading

Teaching Points (1–2 minutes)

Once all the students have read the text at least one time, invite them to close their books. Use your observations and notes to select a teaching point for the group from the Early Guided Reading Prompts and Teaching Points Chart found in the Appendix on pages 192–193.

CCSS Standards for Retelling

RL.K.2 With prompting and support, retell familiar stories, including key details

RI.1.2 Retell stories, including key details, and demonstrate understanding of their central message or lesson

RI.2.2 Recount stories, including fables and folktales from diverse cultures, and determine their central message, lesson, or moral

RI.K.2 With prompting and support, identify the main topic and retell key details of a text

RI.1.2 Identify the main topic and retell key details of a text

RI.2.2 Identify the main topic of a multiparagraph text as well as the focus of specific paragraphs within the text.

Example of a Sound Box

l	a	m	p
---	---	---	---

Retelling or Comprehension Conversation (1–2 minutes)

For early readers, you have two choices for your after-reading conversations. You will find both of these on the Early Guided Reading Prompts and Teaching Points Chart. (See Appendix, pages 192–193.) The first is to focus on retelling. Per the CCSS, retelling is an essential skill for students in grades K–2. Thus, you will want to provide time for students to practice with the different types of retelling scaffolds provided in the lesson plan. If students are adept at retelling, or if you want to dig a little deeper, you may wish to use the comprehension conversation questions provided here, which are also tied to the standards. These questions will spark conversations about readers' opinions and ask readers to compare and contrast texts, think about characters, and infer the theme or central message of a text.

Teach One Sight Word (1–2 minutes)

Note: This activity is optional after Level E. See pages 135–136 for details.

Word Study (5–7 minutes)

Early readers who are reading texts at Levels D–I are still learning how to apply phonics skills. Therefore, it is important that you spend the last 5–7 minutes of the Day 1 guided reading lesson doing *one* word study activity. The four options for word study at this level are as follows:

- **Picture Sorts:** Readers sort pictures according to their initial consonants, medial vowels, initial digraphs, or initial consonant blends.
- **Making Words:** Students use magnetic letters or letter tiles to make words that you dictate.
- **Sound Boxes:** Students who have difficulty hearing and encoding or writing short-vowel sounds, digraphs, or blends may still have poor phonemic awareness skills. Slowly articulating a word, letter by letter, while writing each letter in a box, helps children hear sounds in sequence. Use a Sound Box (see example at left) and dictate three or four phonetically regular words for students to write. Target words with short vowels, blends, and digraphs. After you dictate the word, prompt learners to say the sounds as they write the letters in the boxes. Select words that are not already memorized, so the students have to rely on hearing the sounds.
- **Analogy Charts:** Students use a T-chart or two columns to write and sort dictated words according to their respective spelling patterns. You can use this activity to teach the silent-c rule, vowel patterns, and word endings.

DAY 2 LESSON COMPONENTS**Before Reading**

Sight Word Review (1 minute)

This review is optional after Level E.

Book Introduction (1 minute)

Briefly reintroduce the text. *Today you will read to find out more about _____.* Introduce any new vocabulary readers might find challenging.

During Reading

Text Reading With Prompting (5–8 minutes)

Briefly review the text that students read on Day 1, and introduce any new vocabulary they will encounter in the next section of the text. Children continue reading from where they left off on Day 1, as you confer with and prompt individual students based on your observations and focus strategy. Fast finishers can reread the book (or other books they have read in previous guided reading lessons).

After Reading

Teaching Points (1–2 minutes)

See pages 192–193 for suggestions.

Retelling or Comprehension Conversation (1–2 minutes)

Use the retelling prompts or comprehension conversation questions to strengthen students' ability to summarize a story, recount facts they have learned, and/or converse about the text they have just finished reading.

Teach Sight Word

See pages 135–136.

Guided Writing (5–7 minutes)

During guided writing, learners will write a short response to the book they have read. Next Step guided writing helps students apply the phonetic features you have taught during the word-study portion of the guided reading lesson. Guided writing occurs at the guided reading table so you can support and prompt individual students, coaching them to apply the skills and strategies you have taught. You'll be amazed at the amount of teaching that you can squeeze into one guided writing session. Depending on the ability of your students, you may choose to dictate a few sentences about the text or let students craft their own response to the reading. See Early Guided Writing Procedures on page 150.

Early Guided Writing Procedures

Dictate one or two sentences about the text, or provide students the opportunity to retell or summarize their reading. If you choose to dictate a few sentences about the text, you will want to include the following:

- New sight word taught with the book
- Other familiar sight words

If your students are reading at Levels F–I and need support in summarizing a story, teach them one of these two options. Have them practice that one before introducing the other.

Early Guided Writing Response Options
<p>Retelling: Beginning-Middle-End – B-M-E (fiction) Invite learners to write on separate sticky notes, three to five key words from the story. Assist students as they group the words in sequential order under the headings B-M-E. To write their retelling response, children use the key words from the sticky notes.</p>
<p>Retelling: Somebody-Wanted-But-So Students write a summary of the story using the following framework: Somebody—Who is the story about? Wanted—What did this character want? But—But, what happened? So—So, what happened next? How did the story end? (Adapted from Macon, Bewell, and Vogt, 1991)</p>

As students are writing, support them in the following ways:

- *If a student forgets a word*, prompt the writer to reread silently what he or she has written so far to see if he or she can remember the next word. If the student still can't remember, dictate the entire sentence and have the child repeat it. Avoid dictating the sentence word by word for students.
- *After a student has finished writing his or her own response*, prompt the child to reread for meaning. The more students get in the habit of rereading their writing, the better.
- *If a writer misspells a sight word*, erase the wrong letters and ask, *What's missing?* Provide a visual scaffold by giving a clue such as, *The word where has the word here in it.* If these prompts are not successful, write the word at the top of the page and ask the child to copy it a few times.
- *If a writer asks how to spell a word*, remind him or her that when writers want to spell a word they say it slowly, sound by sound, or "stretch out" the word and write the sounds they know. This practice encourages risk taking and independence. Again, you're promoting the "I am a writer; I can do this myself" mind-set.
- *If the writer forgets conventions such as correct letter formation, capitals, and end punctuation*, prompt the child to reread and edit his or her writing. If needed, model correct letter formation at the top of the student's guided writing booklet.

PLANNING SUPPORT & SAMPLE LESSON • GRADES K-2

Making the Most of the Early Guided Reading Lesson Plan Template and Anecdotal Notes Sheet

To help you make the most of these two reproducible teacher resources, follow these tips for planning activities and recording students' performance over the course of two days:

- Make two-sided copies, with the Lesson Plan template on one side and Anecdotal Notes sheet on the other.
- Jot down your plan notes before meeting with your early guided reading group as follows:
 - » **Title:** Write the title and level of the book you'll be using.
 - » **Instructional Focus:** After pinpointing your instructional focus, write it on the top of the Lesson Plan sheet, along with the date.

Before Reading

- » **Sight Word Review:** Select three previously taught sight words from the High-Frequency Word Chart (found in the Appendix on pages 184–185). Remember that this part of the lesson is optional after Level E.
- » **Book Introduction:** Create a gist statement to introduce the book and preview any new vocabulary.

After Reading

- » **Teaching Point:** Choose a strategy to model based on your observations during the reading. Consult the Early Guided Reading Prompts and Teaching Points Chart on pages 192–193 for ideas.
 - » **Retelling or Comprehension Conversation:** Select a retelling option or comprehension conversation question to spark a discussion.
 - » **Teach One Sight Word:** Choose the new sight word to teach. If possible, select a sight word that appears in the text you are reading. Remember that this portion of the lesson is optional after Level E.
 - » **Word Study:** Select one activity and note the phonetic element(s) you will be targeting.
- Write the names of the group members on the Anecdotal Notes sheet. Record your observations during the lesson here, noting with a plus (+), check (✓), or minus (–) how well students self-monitor, use decoding strategies, read fluently, retell, and comprehend. There's also space for you to record any observations that will help you make instructional decisions for your students.

Now let's take a look at a sample Lesson Plan template, which Maria has annotated with her thinking about the group based on her assessment data. Evan's assessment data is shown below; he is part of this early guided reading group. You can see his complete Reading Record on page 106.

<p>5 Here is a larva. The larva is black and orange. It is also very hungry. It eats a lot of tiny insects.</p>	1	5	✓	<p>6 The larva eats and eats and eats. The more the larva eats, the more it grows.</p>
<p>Word Count: 108 Total Time: 6:30</p>	<p>Have the students read the rest of the text silently. Begin analyzing the students' errors and strategy use while in the final text. Evan continued to make mainly visual errors as he kept reading. Had difficulty with: surprise, hours, spread.</p>			

3 FLUENCY RUBRIC

- 1 = word-by-word reading
- 2 = no expression
- 3 = occasionally slow reading at two- or three-word phrases
- 4 = some expression
- 5 = phrased but some multi-words
- 6 = appropriate expression most of the time
- 7 = smoothly reads with a few phrases
- 8 = consistent appropriate expression

Evan's assessment data from the Planning Workbook (see page 106)

Assess–Decide–Guide: Putting the Three-Part Framework Into Action

Page 106 shows Maria's analysis of Evan's Reading Record; she transferred his data to the Reading Assessment Conference Class Profile. Then, she grouped him with other readers who were at a similar level and had similar needs. Now it is time to use all of the data to plan an early guided reading lesson for Evan and his groupmates. Take a peek at Maria's thinking as she prepares to teach Evan's group.



- 1 Since Evan and the other members of his group need work on fluency, I chose the Level I book *Animal Snackers* by Betsy Lewin because the book contains rhyming four-line poems that I knew the children would enjoy reading, rereading, and possibly sharing in a readers theater style with the class.
- 2 Some of the poems in this book had challenging vocabulary for a Level I text. Since I previewed the book before reading it with the group, I knew I would have to introduce and discuss the words *carnivorous*, from the poem "Gorilla," and *indigestion*, found in the poem "Ostrich."
- 3 Knowing that Evan is relying mainly on visual cues, I know that the prompt I will be using the most often is, "Does that make sense and look right?"
- 4 One of the CCSS standards for first grade is that children should be able to explain the differences between books that tell stories and books that give information (RI.1.5). We've been having these discussions throughout the year, but I chose this discussion question for Evan's group about this particular text because it is not as easy to categorize as some. The book has cartoon-like illustrations and includes rhyming poems. I thought this would give students an opportunity to share their opinions and give evidence from the text to support those opinions.
- 5 I chose to use the Analogy Chart with Evan and his group because although Evan was relying on visual cues to figure out words, his miscues indicated that he was mainly using the beginning sounds of the words and not looking through words to the end. The Analogy Chart would encourage the children to look at the end of the word to determine whether it is a short- or long-vowel/silent-e word. Also, I know from the Word Knowledge Inventory that Evan and the other members of his group still need a little extra practice with consonant blends, so when I was thinking of words to dictate for the Analogy Chart, I included words with consonant blends to reinforce that skill.

PLANNING SUPPORT & SAMPLE LESSON • GRADES K-2

Sample Early Lesson Plan

Early Guided Reading Lesson Plan (Levels D-I)

Title: Animal Snackers Level: I

Instructional Focus: strantering for meaning

	Day 1	Date: _____	Day 2	Date: _____
1	Sight Word Review (optional after Level E) (1 minute)		Sight Word Review (optional after Level E) (1 minute)	
	Book Introduction (3-4 minutes) This book is about <u>a book of poems about different foods animals eat</u>		Book Introduction (1 minute) Briefly review reading from Day 1 and invite students to continue reading the text from Day 1.	
2	New vocabulary: <u>carnivorous, indigestion</u>			
	Text Reading With Prompting (5-8 minutes) Prompt: for self-monitoring, decoding, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension as needed.			
3	Self-Monitoring		Decoding	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Something didn't make sense, did it? What can you do? • Are you right? Does that make sense and look right? • Read that sentence again, thinking about the story and what would make sense. • I noticed that you self-corrected. That's what readers do! • Think about the story and try something that looks right. • You figured out that tricky word by yourself. How did you figure that out? 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cover the ending. Is there a part you know? Try that again and think, "What would make sense?" • Do you know another word that looks like this one? • Break the word into parts and think about what would make sense. • Think about the two words that make up that contraction. • Can you think of a word that has the same part in it? 	
4	Vocabulary		Fluency	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Look at the picture/text feature to help you understand that word. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reread that sentence the way the character might say it. • Put these words together so your reading sounds smooth. 	
5	Comprehension		Retell or Comprehension Conversation (1-2 minutes) <u>Do you think this text is fiction or nonfiction?</u>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tell me about what you just read. What happened at the beginning? • How does the character feel now? • Why do you think that character did that? • What might the character do next? 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are you thinking? What did you notice? Do you have any questions about what you've read? • What was your opinion of that book? Does anyone have a different opinion? • What kind of text is this? Have you read any other texts like this? • How are ___ books different from ___ books? • How do you think [character] feels about that? • What was the big idea/central message/lesson/moral? Why do you think that? 	
4	Teaching Points (1-2 minutes) From your quick observations, select a decoding, self-monitoring, fluency, vocabulary, or comprehension strategy to quickly demonstrate and teach. See Early Guided Reading Prompts and Teaching Points Chart on page 192		Retell	
	Retell		Comprehension Conversation	
5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can you retell the story or recount important facts that you learned? • Beginning-Middle-End (B-M-E) • Somebody-Wanted-But-So-Finally (S-W-B-S) • Five-Finger Retell 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are you thinking? What did you notice? Do you have any questions about what you've read? • What was your opinion of that book? Does anyone have a different opinion? • What kind of text is this? Have you read any other texts like this? • How are ___ books different from ___ books? • How do you think [character] feels about that? • What was the big idea/central message/lesson/moral? Why do you think that? 	
	Teach Sight Word (1-2 minutes) (optional after Level E)		Teach Sight Word (1-2 minutes) (optional after Level E)	
5	Word Study (choose one, 5-7 minutes)		Guided Writing (8-10 minutes)	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Picture sorts • Sound boxes • Making words • Analogy charts 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Levels D & E: Dictated or open-ended sentence • Levels F-I: Beginning-Middle-End, of <u>Somebody-Wanted-But-So</u> 	

Tracking Progress of Evan's Group of Early Readers

Each time this group reads and rereads the guided reading book, Maria observes and records (with a +, ✓, or –) whether each child is self-monitoring, decoding, and reading with fluency and expression. After reading, she notes in the same fashion whether each child is able to retell and participate in the comprehension conversation. Then, she jots down any other observations and her next steps on the Early Guided Reading Anecdotal Notes sheet found in Appendix on page 191. She keeps track of their known sight words on the High-Frequency Word Chart found in Appendix on pages 184–185. After two or three weeks, she looks over her notes to determine whether or not the group, or a child in the group, is ready to move to the next level of books. She considers whether or not they are consistent (receiving a lot of plus marks) on the focus strategies she's taught and prompted. If she's unsure whether or not they are ready to move on to the next level, she can do a quick reading record before moving them to that level.



When Do You Take Early Readers to the Next Step—Transitional Guided Reading?

You can consider moving students to the Transitional Guided Reading Lesson Plan when they can:

- Achieve an instructional reading level of J or above
- Read and write a large bank of sight words
- Monitor by using meaning and visual cues
- Decode new words by *integrating* a variety of strategies
- Reread at point of difficulty to access meaning and structure
- Reread for fluency, phrasing, and expression
- Remember and retell what they have read
- Apply phonic elements such as blends, vowel combinations, silent-*e* rule, and endings to both reading and writing

Appendix H

Transitional Guided Reading Plan And Planning Support

Transitional Guided Reading Lesson Plan

Title: _____ Level: _____ Strategy Focus: _____ Lesson # _____

<p>Day 1 Date _____ Pages _____</p> <p>Introduce New Book: This book is about _____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>New vocabulary:</p> <p>_____</p>	<p>Day 2 Date _____ Pages _____</p> <p>Continue reading the book. You will read about _____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>New vocabulary:</p> <p>_____</p>
<p>Text Reading With Prompting (use prompts that target each student's needs).</p>	
<p>Teaching Points: Choose one or two each day (decoding, vocabulary, fluency, and/or comprehension).</p>	
<p>Decoding Strategies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Reread & think what would make sense <input type="checkbox"/> Cover (or attend to) the ending <input type="checkbox"/> Use analogies <input type="checkbox"/> Chunk big words 	<p>Fluency & Phrasing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Phrasing <input type="checkbox"/> Attend to bold words <input type="checkbox"/> Attend to punctuation <input type="checkbox"/> Dialogue, intonation & expression
<p>Vocabulary Strategies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Reread the sentence and look for clues <input type="checkbox"/> Check the picture <input type="checkbox"/> Use a known part <input type="checkbox"/> Make a connection <input type="checkbox"/> Use the glossary 	<p>Comprehension (oral):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> B-M-E <input type="checkbox"/> Five-Finger Retell <input type="checkbox"/> S-W-B-S <input type="checkbox"/> Describe a character's feelings <input type="checkbox"/> Who & What <input type="checkbox"/> STP (Stop Think Paraphrase) <input type="checkbox"/> Problem & Solution <input type="checkbox"/> VIP (very important part) <p>Other: _____</p>
<p>Discussion Prompt:</p> <p>_____</p>	<p>Discussion Prompt:</p> <p>_____</p>
<p>Word Study (if appropriate):</p> <p>Sound boxes—Analogy chart—Make a big word</p>	<p>Word Study (if appropriate):</p> <p>Sound boxes—Analogy chart—Make a big word</p>
<p>Day 3 Date _____ Reread the book for fluency (5 min.) and/or engage in Guided Writing</p> <p>Options for Guided Writing</p> <p>Beginning-Middle-End Five-Finger Retell Somebody-Wanted-But-So (SWBS) Character Analysis</p> <p>Problem/Solution Compare or Contrast Other: _____</p>	

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Introduction

I'm delighted you have chosen to view *The Next Step Guided Reading in Action*. As I travel throughout America, I meet so many people who have purchased my book, *The Next Step in Guided Reading*, and want to know more about guided reading and what it can do for their students. They want to see an actual guided reading lesson and learn for themselves how this approach can transform their reading instruction. Well, I am extremely pleased to present these lessons to you so you can see how I personally plan and teach my guided reading lessons.

An effective guided reading lesson begins with knowing the readers. These videos will show you how I use assessments to determine students' strengths and needs, and how I select a focus for the group. With the focus in mind, I choose the text, plan my introduction, and prompt each student while he or she reads. For me, prompting individual students is the best part of guided reading. Making on-the-spot decisions in a side-by-side conversation with an individual student really takes reading instruction to the next level. I can differentiate my prompting and give each student just enough support to meet the challenge in the text.

I especially hope you will enjoy the narration. We included it so you can know what I was thinking when I planned and taught each lesson. After the lesson is over, I share what my next steps would be for the students in the group.

I love to teach guided reading . . . and I trust that comes through loud and clear in these videos. My hope is that you, too, will experience the joy of teaching students how to be better readers. Through guided reading you can help your students establish a strong literacy foundation that will sustain them in school and throughout their lives. Come alongside me as together we experience the *Next Step Guided Reading in Action*.

THE GUIDED READING STAGES IN THE VIDEO

The following guided reading stages are featured in the video and this guide:

- ▶ Transitional Readers
- ▶ Fluent Readers

You can view the video segments sequentially or watch them strategically. For example, if you have Transitional readers in your classroom, you can concentrate on that section, and then move to the Fluent section as your students progress.

The DVD contains high-definition (HD) QuickTime videos, playable only on a computer. To watch the videos in a larger format, hook up computer to a large monitor or an interactive whiteboard. For Macintosh computers, set the default Web browser to Safari if possible; Firefox is not recommended.

To begin viewing the video, open the "NSGRA 3UP_HTML-files" folder. Open "Read Me" for special instructions. Open "start-here" to watch the videos.

How to Use This Guide

This guide gives you the opportunity to reflect and act upon what you observe in the video. Each guided reading stage on the DVD and in this guide is divided into five sections:

- ▶ Profile of a reader at that stage
- ▶ A step-by-step lesson plan
- ▶ Model lessons in action
- ▶ An individual conference
- ▶ Key teaching points

PROFILE This section provides an overview of the skills readers are developing at each stage. You'll also find information on appropriate texts to use with each stage. After viewing the video, you'll have a chance to think about and assess the readers in your classroom.

LESSON PLAN: STEP BY STEP In the guide, you'll see the framework of a lesson, with management tips about various aspects of guided reading, including group size and the amount of time recommended for each lesson component. After viewing the video, you'll have the tools to group your readers according to their needs and complete your own lesson plan for a group. Closing out this section is a list of the materials you'll need for your groups along with answers to common questions that teachers have asked me over the years.

MODEL LESSON IN ACTION This section of the guide shows the completed lesson plan I used to teach the model lesson in the video, including the observations I note about the students' performance. Keep this completed plan handy as you watch me teach the lesson. Additional details about each lesson component appear in the guide. After watching the lesson, you'll use a rubric to evaluate my lesson, and then you'll have a chance to review and refine your own lesson plan. (A printable version of each lesson plan is in this guide and also on the CD.)

NAVIGATING THROUGH THE MODEL LESSON For the best understanding of how a guided reading lesson works, I recommend watching the Model Lesson videos from start to finish. Should you wish to focus on just one section of a lesson, you can navigate to the Before Reading, Read & Respond, or After Reading sections.

INDIVIDUAL CONFERENCE My observations and anecdotal notes during the small-group work alert me about students who are struggling with some aspect of the lesson. I then work one-on-one with these students to strengthen their use of the strategies and/or skills they are having difficulty with.

LESSON FRAMEWORK AND THE CCSS CHART Each guided reading stage in this guide concludes with a chart correlating the lesson components to the Common Core State Standards (CCSS).

Transitional Readers

Average second-grade readers are at the transitional stage, but you will likely find readers at this level in any grade. Transitional readers have a large bank of sight words, but they are still learning to self-monitor, decode big words, increase fluency, expand vocabulary, and improve literal comprehension. The lessons in the video are appropriate for intermediate students who read between Levels J and P.

Instruction for Transitional Students

Text Levels

J-P

Instructional Needs

- Self-monitoring
- Decode multisyllabic words
- Increase fluency
- Expand vocabulary
- Improve comprehension
- Phonics: complex vowels, silent-e feature, words with more than two syllables

In this section, I'll demonstrate how to:

- ▶ Identify transitional readers
- ▶ Create a lesson plan for small groups of transitional readers
- ▶ Teach a small-group transitional lesson at Level M based on the lesson plan
- ▶ Teach a small-group transitional lesson at Level O based on the lesson plan
- ▶ Give a struggling reader more support in an individual conference
- ▶ Target key teaching points in the lesson



Profile of a Transitional Reader

Video Running Time: 2:32

VIEW NOW

Take a moment to look at the overview below and then view "Profile of a Transitional Reader."

Who is a transitional reader? Transitional readers are able to read at Levels J–P. Intermediate students who lag behind their peers are often transitional readers who need to improve decoding skills, vocabulary strategies, and comprehension. Once students are able to read and comprehend text at Level Q, they rarely have decoding and fluency issues, so they can advance to the fluent stage.

Text Reading at the Transitional Level

Transitional students will read texts at Levels J–P. Texts at the lower end are often short books with simple plots while higher level texts may be longer with more elaborate themes and content. Be sure to include informational texts about topics of interest to your students.

My model transitional lesson plans on pages 16–19 and 20–23 use the following books:

Henry's Freedom Box
by Ellen Levine (Level M)



Chomp! A Book About Sharks
by Melvin Berger (Level O)



TEACHING TIP!

SUPPORT YOUR FOCUS STRATEGY Your primary goal in choosing a text for readers at any stage is finding one that supports your focus strategy.

REFLECTION

After you view the video, reflect on the students in your classroom who may be at the transitional stage.

ACTION

- ▶ First, assess your students. To analyze the strengths and needs of transitional readers, I have found the following types of assessments most useful:
 - Running record with comprehension questions: A running record will help you select a text and focus strategy for your lesson. Administer it individually to identify each student's instructional reading level, reading strategies, and comprehension abilities. Have the student read aloud so you can record reading behaviors. Then ask the student to retell the text and answer comprehension questions.

Transitional Lesson Plan: Step by Step

Video Running Time: 8:14

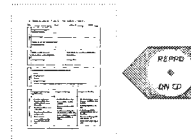
In this video, I explain how to plan and teach a transitional guided reading lesson. Before you view it, take a moment to look at the Transitional Lesson Framework below. The chart shows the components of a transitional guided reading lesson like the ones I teach in the video.

Transitional Lesson Framework	
DAY 1: Lesson Component	DAY 2: Lesson Component
<p>Before Reading Gist statement introducing new book Preview text Teach new vocabulary Introduce and model strategy focus (3–4 minutes)</p>	<p>Before Reading Preview next section Teach new vocabulary (2–3 minutes)</p>
<p>Read & Respond Text Reading With Prompting (10–12 minutes)</p> <p>Teaching Points (1–2 min)</p> <p>Discussion Prompt (1–2 min)</p> <p>Word Study (3–5 min)</p>	<p>Read & Respond Continue Reading With Prompting (10–12 minutes)</p> <p>Teaching Points (1–2 min)</p> <p>Discussion Prompt (1–2 min)</p> <p>Word Study (3–5 min)</p>
<p>DAY 3: After Reading Rereading for Fluency (optional: 5 minutes) Guided Writing (15–20 minutes)</p>	

For an in-depth explanation of the procedures for a transitional guided reading lesson, see pages 157–172 of *The Next Step in Guided Reading*.

MANAGEMENT TIPS!

TEACHING AN INDIVIDUAL TRANSITIONAL READER If you have a transitional reader who does not fit into any of your guided reading groups, teach him or her individually for ten minutes each day until the student accelerates and is able to join a group. You may also use the ten-minute lesson for a struggling reader who needs more scaffolding than you could provide in a small-group setting. For information on teaching an individual transitional lesson, see the Ten-Minute Lesson for Transitional Readers (Individual Instruction) on the CD.



TIME FRAME FOR A TRANSITIONAL GUIDED READING LESSON Allot about 20 minutes for a lesson. Using a timer and limiting teacher talk will help you pace your lesson and keep your students engaged and focused. It usually takes two or three days for transitional readers to finish a book.

Fluent Readers

By the end of the third grade, most intermediate students reading on grade level are fluent readers. The lesson plans I teach in the video are appropriate for students who read text at Levels Q and above.

Instruction for Fluent Students

Text Levels

Q and above

Instructional Needs

- increasing vocabulary
- Using a variety of comprehension strategies

In this section, I'll demonstrate how to:

- ▶ Identify fluent readers
- ▶ Create a lesson plan for small groups of fluent readers
- ▶ Teach two small-group fluent lessons at Level S based on lesson plans
- ▶ Teach a small-group fluent lesson at Level U based on the lesson plan (lesson highlights only)
- ▶ Give a struggling student more support in an individual conference
- ▶ Target key teaching points in a lesson



Profile of a Fluent Reader

Video Running Time: 2:05

VIEW
NOW

Take a moment to look at the overview below and then view "Profile of a Fluent Reader."

Who is a fluent reader? Fluent readers are good decoders who are able to explore the deeper levels of comprehension by reading challenging texts. Aided by teacher scaffolding, fluent readers learn a variety of comprehension strategies to understand complex texts. Scaffolding should decrease as they begin to independently apply the strategies.

Text Reading at the Fluent Level

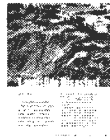
Fluent students will read texts at Level Q and above. Use a variety of texts including poetry, short stories, short chapter books, newspaper and magazine articles, and other informational texts about topics of interest to students. The key is to offer a text with the right amount of challenge.

My model fluent lesson plans on pages 41–52 focus on the following books:

The Lobster and the Crab
a fable by Arnold Lobel

Landslide Disaster!
a nonfiction article
by Bob Woods

Thank You, Ma'm
a short story
by Langston Hughes



TEACHING
TIP!

SUPPORT YOUR FOCUS STRATEGY Your primary goal in choosing a text for readers at any stage is finding one that supports your focus strategy.

REFLECTION

After you view the video, reflect on the students in your classroom who may be at the fluent stage.

Fluent Lesson Plan: Step by Step

Video Running Time: 6:15

In this video, I explain how to plan and teach a fluent guided reading lesson. The chart below shows the components of a lesson like the ones I teach in the video.

Fluent Lesson Framework		
Before Reading	Read & Respond	After Reading
Introduction	Model Strategy (1 minute) Day 1 Only	Discussion
Preview & Predict (3–4 minutes) Day 1 Only	Conference with students as they read and respond (10 minutes)	Teaching Points <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Decoding • Vocabulary • Comprehension (5 minutes)
New Vocabulary (1–2 minutes)		Words for New Word List (1 minute)
After Reading Entire Text		
Guided Writing (optional: 20 minutes)		

For an in-depth explanation of the procedures for a fluent guided reading lesson, see pages 189–198 of *The Next Step in Guided Reading*.

MANAGEMENT TIP!

THE FLUENT GUIDED READING GROUP The Assessment Summary Chart for Fluent Readers makes it easy to group students, based on the strategy focus. The bottom line is this: Know your students and teach them what they need to learn to become better readers. About once a month, re-evaluate your groups by reviewing the anecdotal notes you've taken during guided reading lessons. I recommend no more than six students in a group so you have time to confer with each one.

VIEW NOW

REFLECTION

View "Fluent Lesson Plan: Step by Step" and reflect on the needs of the fluent readers in your classroom. Consider how you will group them, then think about the lesson for each group:

- ▶ Which fluent readers need to work on the same skill and/or strategy?
- ▶ Which focus strategy will you use with each group?
- ▶ What genre would best support the focus strategy?
- ▶ Which text in that genre would provide enough challenge and support the focus strategy?
- ▶ How many days will it take for the group to read the entire text?

Appendix I

Fluent Guided Reading Lesson Plan And Planning Support

Fluent Guided Reading Lesson Plan (Day 1)

Title: _____ Level: _____ Strategy Focus: _____

Date: _____ Pages: _____

Before Reading (5 minutes)	Read & Respond (10 minutes)	After Reading (5 minutes)
Introduction <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> Preview & Predict New Vocabulary for Day 1 <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	Model Strategy <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> Observations <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	Discussion and teaching points <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> Words for the New Word List 1. _____ 2. _____

Possible Teaching Points for Fluent Guided Reading

Decoding	Comprehension-fiction	Comprehension-nonfiction	Comprehension-poetry
<input type="checkbox"/> Reread & think <input type="checkbox"/> Cover the ending <input type="checkbox"/> Use known parts <input type="checkbox"/> Chunk big words <input type="checkbox"/> Connect	<input type="checkbox"/> Retell-STP, VIP <input type="checkbox"/> Visualize <input type="checkbox"/> Predict & support <input type="checkbox"/> Make connections <input type="checkbox"/> Character traits <input type="checkbox"/> Ask questions <input type="checkbox"/> Determine importance <input type="checkbox"/> Summarize by chapter <input type="checkbox"/> Cause and effect <input type="checkbox"/> Character analysis <input type="checkbox"/> Make inferences- (from dialogue, action, or physical description)	<input type="checkbox"/> Retell-STP <input type="checkbox"/> Ask questions <input type="checkbox"/> Summarize with key words <input type="checkbox"/> Main Idea/Details <input type="checkbox"/> Important/Interesting <input type="checkbox"/> Interpreting visual information (maps, charts) <input type="checkbox"/> Contrast or Compare <input type="checkbox"/> Cause/Effect <input type="checkbox"/> Evaluate-fact/opinion, author's point of view <input type="checkbox"/> Reciprocal teaching <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Clarify <input type="checkbox"/> Visualize <input type="checkbox"/> Make connections <input type="checkbox"/> Ask literal questions <input type="checkbox"/> Summarize <input type="checkbox"/> Ask inferential questions <input type="checkbox"/> Make inferences <input type="checkbox"/> Draw conclusions <input type="checkbox"/> Interpret author's purpose <input type="checkbox"/> Figurative language (simile, metaphor, personification, etc.) <input type="checkbox"/> Reciprocal teaching
Vocabulary <input type="checkbox"/> Use context clues <input type="checkbox"/> Use pictures or visualize <input type="checkbox"/> Use a known part <input type="checkbox"/> Make a connection <input type="checkbox"/> Use the glossary			

Fluent Guided Reading Lesson Plan (Continued)

Date: _____ Pages: _____ Strategy Focus: _____

Before Reading (5 minutes)	Read & Respond (10 minutes)	After Reading (5 minutes)
Introduction _____ _____ _____	Observations _____ _____ _____	Discussion and teaching points _____ _____ _____
New Vocabulary _____ _____ _____ _____ _____	_____ _____ _____ _____ _____	Words for the New Word List 1. _____ 2. _____

Date: _____ Pages: _____ Strategy Focus: _____

Before Reading (5 minutes)	Read & Respond (10 minutes)	After Reading (5 minutes)
Introduction _____ _____ _____	Observations _____ _____ _____	Discussion and teaching points _____ _____ _____
New Vocabulary _____ _____ _____ _____ _____	_____ _____ _____ _____ _____	Words for the New Word List 1. _____ 2. _____

PLANNING SUPPORT & SAMPLE LESSON

Fluent Guided Reading Lessons (Levels N–Z)

Comprehension is the ultimate goal of every guided reading lesson, but it plays an especially important role with fluent readers. Now that decoding has become automatic, the fluent reader has more cognitive capacity to devote to deeper thinking and reflection. The focus for your lesson will likely be a specific comprehension strategy; however, the ultimate goal is for students to use a combination of many strategies so they can independently read and understand complex texts.

Fluent Guided Reading Framework		
Day 1	Day 2	Day 3
Text Introduction	Briefly review Day 1's work.	Guided Writing
Read and Respond	Read and Respond	
Conferences	Conferences	
Share and Teach	Share and Teach	
Discussion Questions	Discussion Questions	
Word Study	Word Study	

Preparing to Teach a Fluent Guided Reading Lesson

As with any guided reading lesson you teach, you want to select the text and the lesson components that match your students' needs and interests. Depending on what you've learned about your readers from analyzing your assessment data, the focus for your lesson might be on decoding, vocabulary, or comprehension. The section that follows will help you make this instructional decision.

Pinpoint an Instructional Focus

To select the focus for your lesson, use the data from the Whole-Class Comprehension Assessment Class Profile, the Reading Assessment Conference Class Profile, and what you've learned from observing your readers. With fluent readers, we usually spend one or two weeks on the same focus, but you may need to adjust your groups sooner if you notice students making accelerated progress.

Proficient readers use many strategies to comprehend text. We have included a few basic ones to get you started. As you gain expertise in teaching guided reading, you'll be able to design lessons around other important reading behaviors. See the Fluent Guided Reading Prompts and Teaching Points Chart (pages 146–147) for more ideas.

If readers have difficulty . . .	Then prompt and teach . . .
Self-monitoring and decoding big words (e.g., they skip or mumble through words and continue reading even when a miscue doesn't make sense).	Self-monitoring and decoding
Determining the meaning of words in text, including figurative language	Vocabulary strategies
Recounting stories	Retelling
Answering literal questions to demonstrate understanding of a text	Asking questions
Determining the main idea and recounting supporting details	Main idea/key details
Analyzing relationships between characters and their actions	Character analysis
Making an inference or drawing a conclusion about characters or ideas	Inferring
Distinguishing fact/opinion, point of view, and theme	Evaluating
Summarizing the important parts of a text	Summarizing
Interpreting information from text features such as charts, graphs, maps, and diagrams	Text features and creating graphic organizers

During the guided reading lesson, state the instructional focus for your students; we recommend doing this after the book introduction and just before students begin reading independently. This will set a purpose for reading and help guide your during-reading prompts, observations, and after-reading teaching points.

Select a Text

Select any short text that provides a slight challenge for the group and fits your focus. Look beyond the leveled book room; you can choose any short text (poem, magazine article, short story, or a chapter from a novel). Read a few pages and ask yourself, "Does this text contain some challenging vocabulary? Will it give students a chance to practice the focus strategy?" If so, then it is a good text for your guided reading lesson.

The CCSS for English Language Arts state, "To build a foundation for college and career readiness, students must read widely and deeply from among a broad range of high-quality, increasingly challenging literary and informational texts" (<http://corestandards.org/the-standards>, p. 10). Guided reading is a perfect format for exposing students to complex texts. See the chart below to help select texts for fluent guided reading.



PLANNING SUPPORT & SAMPLE LESSON • GRADES 3–6

Focus Strategy	Genre	Look for texts with . . .
Self-Monitor and Decode*	Short stories Magazine articles	Multisyllabic words with prefixes and suffixes that students can problem solve because they are in their listening vocabulary.
Vocabulary Strategies	Short stories Informational books Poetry	Some unfamiliar concepts that are supported with context clues, illustrations, or a glossary. Select poems with figurative language including similes and metaphors.
Retell	Short stories Fables	A straightforward plot with a clear problem and solution.
Ask Questions	Any short text	Interesting topics so students have questions to ask and share.
Main Idea/Key Details	Informational texts	Chapter titles, headings, and picture captions.
Character analysis	Short stories Fables Myths	Dynamic, multifaceted characters whose actions illustrate character traits.
Infer	Short stories Poems Biographies Fables Myths Informational texts	Characters that have depth and complexity. Texts should require the reader to draw inferences from dialogue, character actions, and thoughts. Text structure that invites the reader to make inferences and draw conclusions.
Evaluate	Persuasive texts Newspaper or magazine articles	An author's bias so students can evaluate the point of view.
Summarize	Any text	Short chapters or sections students can summarize.
Text features Creating graphic organizers	Informational books Magazine articles	Text features such as graphs, charts, diagram, maps, and so on.

* You won't have many fluent readers who will need this focus, but we included it just in case. We have had fluent readers who skip tricky words or mumble them instead of using strategies to decode the words.

Once you've selected the texts, you are ready to gather the other materials you will need to teach a fluent guided reading lesson.



Gather Materials

We find it is more efficient to place all the materials for each group in a separate basket. That way, when it's time to meet with a group, you can grab the group's basket and you are ready to read!

- Set of short texts (stories, poems, magazine articles, short books, etc.)
- Dry-erase board and marker (for teacher use only)
- Copy of Fluent Guided Reading Lesson Plan template (see Appendix, page 144)
- Copy of Fluent Guided Reading Anecdotal Notes sheet (see Appendix, page 145)
- Fluent Guided Reading Prompts and Teaching Points Chart (see Appendix, pages 146–148)
- Student reading notebooks (one per student) for recording responses and new vocabulary (see page 123)
- Sticky notes and flags

TIP

It is helpful to make a stack of two-sided copies, with the Lesson Plan template on one side and the Anecdotal Notes sheet on the other, to keep on a clipboard for this group.



Fluent Guided Reading Lesson Plan

In this section, we'll walk through the Fluent Guided Reading Lesson Plan; it's a three-day plan. Students read a text on the first two days; you confer with each student individually. If desired, students can complete Guided Writing when they complete a text.

We recommend copying a set of lesson plan templates, with the Fluent Guided Reading Anecdotal Notes sheet on the back, to have on hand while working with your fluent readers. Keep in mind that while you've pinpointed an instructional focus in your planning, you'll also want to consider students' written responses when you make your teaching point after reading.

TIP

The Fluent Guided Reading Lesson Plan, found on page 144 in the Appendix, is a template you can use to plan your lessons. Each component of the lesson is described in detail here and appears in brief on the template.

Fluent Guided Reading Lesson Plan (Levels K-2)	
Title _____	
Date _____	
Day 1	Day 2
<p>Text Description: (1 = shared, 2 = read aloud)</p> <p>Text Title: _____</p> <p>Author: _____</p> <p>Genre: _____</p> <p>Number of Pages: _____</p>	<p>Skills: (Circle all that apply)</p> <p>Fluency: (Circle all that apply)</p> <p>Comprehension: (Circle all that apply)</p> <p>Word Recognition: (Circle all that apply)</p>
<p>Instructional Focus: (1 = shared, 2 = read aloud, 3 = independent)</p> <p>Instructional Focus: (1 = shared, 2 = read aloud, 3 = independent)</p>	<p>Instructional Focus: (1 = shared, 2 = read aloud, 3 = independent)</p> <p>Instructional Focus: (1 = shared, 2 = read aloud, 3 = independent)</p>
<p>Fluency and Comprehension: (1 = shared, 2 = read aloud, 3 = independent)</p> <p>Fluency and Comprehension: (1 = shared, 2 = read aloud, 3 = independent)</p>	<p>Fluency and Comprehension: (1 = shared, 2 = read aloud, 3 = independent)</p> <p>Fluency and Comprehension: (1 = shared, 2 = read aloud, 3 = independent)</p>
<p>Word Recognition: (1 = shared, 2 = read aloud, 3 = independent)</p> <p>Word Recognition: (1 = shared, 2 = read aloud, 3 = independent)</p>	<p>Word Recognition: (1 = shared, 2 = read aloud, 3 = independent)</p> <p>Word Recognition: (1 = shared, 2 = read aloud, 3 = independent)</p>
<p>Day 3: _____</p> <p>Guided Writing Prompt: (1 = shared, 2 = read aloud, 3 = independent)</p>	<p>Day 3: _____</p> <p>Guided Writing Prompt: (1 = shared, 2 = read aloud, 3 = independent)</p>

DAY 1 LESSON COMPONENTS**Before Reading (3–4 minutes)****Text Introduction**

Introduce the text with a one- or two-sentence gist statement that piques student interest. Think of this as an advertisement that entices students to want to read this text. Record it on the Lesson Plan template after the sentence stem: *This text is about.*

Then invite students to scan the text, including the table of contents and index, to do the following:

- Activate background knowledge/connect to schema.
- Share what they notice about the illustrations and other text features.
- Make predictions.
- Discuss the organization of the text.

New Vocabulary

Discuss unfamiliar words students will encounter during today's guided reading lesson:

- Say the word and give a kid-friendly definition.
- Connect the new word to the students' background knowledge.
- Relate the new word to the text.
- Invite students to "turn and talk" and explain the meaning of the word to a classmate.

Model Focus Strategy

Clearly state and model the focus comprehension strategy for students. Think aloud and show them how you do the strategy. Say, "This is how I draw an inference from the character's actions." Ask them to take notes in their reading notebook to show how they use the strategy during the day's reading.

During Reading (10–17 minutes)**Read and Respond**

Students read the text silently and independently for 10 to 12 minutes and write short responses that match the comprehension focus in their reading notebooks or on sticky notes. Writing during reading helps the students organize their thoughts so they are able to describe or explain complex elements in the text. They can also jot down any puzzling words and concepts that confuse them or ideas that they want to share and discuss.



Do not pre-teach new words if there is support in the text for determining its meaning. You want to empower students to figure out new words.



It will save time if students have seen you model the strategy during your whole-class mini-lessons with either a read-aloud or shared text.

Conferences

Move around the group to read their responses and have short conversations with each student. Prompt them to use strategies such as retelling, asking themselves a question, or using context clues if they encounter a confusing part. Students may need some coaching and scaffolding to read these slightly challenging, complex texts. That's perfectly normal in a guided reading lesson. Use the Fluent Guided Reading Anecdotal Notes sheet on page 145 to rate the students' independence with the strategy and record your notes.

After Reading (6–10 minutes)

Share and Teach (1–2 minutes)

After students read for about 10–12 minutes, invite students to share the notes they took during reading. Use your observations and notes to select a teaching point for the group from the Fluent Guided Reading Prompts and Teaching Points Chart found in the Appendix on pages 146–148.

Discussion Questions (3–5 minutes)

Prepare a few thought-provoking questions aimed at challenging students to think about and beyond the text. Expect students to refer to the text to support their thinking.

Word Study (2–3 minutes)

Fluent readers are usually in the Advanced Stage of spelling, so your word study will likely focus on the spelling/meaning connection and Greek or Latin word roots.

- **Spelling/meaning connection:** Select a word from the text that can be connected to other words in meaningful ways. For example, you might show students the word *exhibit* and ask them to think of other words that are similar (*exhibitor*, *exhibition*). Discuss how the meaning and spelling of these words are connected.
- **Greek and Latin word roots:** Select a word from the text that has a common Greek or Latin root or prefix and ask students to think of other words that are similar. For example, you can point out that *intercontinental* has the prefix *inter*, which means “between.” Ask students to think of other words that begin with the prefix *inter* (*interception*, *intercom*, *intercede*, *interchange*, *intermediate*, and so on).

TIP

Close each lesson by having students add one or two of the words you discussed to their New Word List in their reading notebooks.

PLANNING SUPPORT & SAMPLE LESSON • GRADES 3–6

DAY 2 LESSON COMPONENTS

Before Reading (1–2 minutes)

Briefly review the portion of the text that students read on Day 1 and introduce any new vocabulary students will encounter on the next section of the text. Remind students of the focus strategy.

During Reading (12–14 minutes)

Students continue reading from where they left off on Day 1, taking notes as they read, while you confer with and prompt individual students according to your observations and focus strategy.

After Reading (6–10 minutes)

Share and Teach (1–2 minutes)

Invite students to share the notes they took during reading. Use your observations and notes to select a teaching point for the group from the Fluent Guided Reading Prompts and Teaching Points Chart found on pages 146–148.

Discussion Questions (3–5 minutes)

Prepare a few thought-provoking questions that challenge students to think beyond the text. Ask students to refer to the text to support their thinking.

Word Study (2–3 minutes)

See page 124 for word-study ideas for fluent readers.

DAY 3 LESSON COMPONENTS

Guided Writing (10–20 minutes)

Guided Writing is optional at the fluent level. If you notice your students need some extra support with writing, or if you want to challenge them to probe a text more deeply in writing, plan a guided writing session after the group finishes reading the text.

Fluent Guided Writing Procedures

Give students a prompt that challenges their thinking and requires them to return to the text. Consider using ideas from the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) that match the text and the strategy focus. For example, you might ask students to do one of the writing responses listed in the following chart:

Fluent Guided Writing Response Options

Writing Prompt	CCSS Link
Compare and contrast the most important points and key details presented in two texts on the same topic.	Reading Standard for Informational Text: Grade 3, Standard 9
Select a chart, diagram, or graph from the text and explain how the information contributes to the understanding of the text.	Reading Standard for Informational Text: Grade 4, Standard 7
Describe how the narrator's point of view influences how events are described in the story.	Reading Standard for Literature: Grade 5, Standard 6
Describe one character in the story (e.g., traits, motivations, or feelings) and explain how his or her actions contribute to the sequence of events.	Reading Standard for Literature: Grade 3, Standard 3

As the students write, circulate among the group and have a two- or three-minute conference with each student. Think of these interactions as mini writing conferences. Attend to some errors and let others go, depending on the individual needs of the students. You will have greater success if you select one teaching point for each student. The goal is not to perfect a piece of writing, but rather to develop a better writer.

As students are writing, offer support in the following ways:

- *If the writer struggles with organization*, help the student write a simple key-word plan before writing.
- *If the writer gets off-topic*, tell the student to refer to the plan and check off the key word once it is used.
- *If the writer relies on common vocabulary*, ask him or her to use interesting words that grab the reader's attention. Assign a monetary value of 5 cents to common adjectives and verbs such as *good*, *nice*, *fun*, *said*, and 25 or 50 cents to more descriptive vocabulary. As a teaching point after writing, ask students to star the most interesting sentence in their piece and share it with the group.
- *If the writer doesn't understand paragraphing*, prompt the student to indent if the time or setting changes. Tell the students how many paragraphs they should write and then distribute one sticker for each paragraph. They will place the sticker at the beginning of each paragraph to remind them to indent.

Making the Most of the Fluent Guided Reading Lesson Plan Template and Anecdotal Notes Sheet

To help you make the most of these two reproducible teacher resources, follow these tips for planning activities and recording students' performance over the course of two days.

- Make two-sided copies with the Lesson Plan template on one side and Anecdotal Notes sheet on the other.
- Jot down your planning notes before meeting with your fluent guided reading group:
 - » **Title:** Write the title and level of the book you'll be using.
 - » **Instructional Focus:** After pinpointing your instructional focus, write it on the top of the Lesson Plan sheet.

Before Reading

- » **Text Introduction:** Create a gist statement to introduce the text.
- » **New Vocabulary:** Note the words you'll introduce using the four steps outlined on page 123.
- » **Model Focus Strategy:** Briefly note how you will introduce and/or model your instructional focus.

After Reading

- » **Discussion Questions:** Prepare one or two thought-provoking questions to spark discussion of the text.
- » **Word Study:** Decide whether to work on spelling-meaning connections or Greek and Latin word roots; jot down which words you will explore.

Day 3

- » If you choose to do Guided Writing, record the prompt you will use.
- Write the names of the group members on the Anecdotal Notes sheet. Circle or write in your focus comprehension strategy; then assess each student's strategy use during the lesson and circle a comprehension rating. There's also space for you to record any observations that will help you make instructional decisions for your students.

Now let's take a look at a sample lesson plan, which Jan has annotated with her thinking about the group based on her assessment data. Lily's assessment data is shown on page 90; she is part of this fluent guided reading group.

Assess–Decide–Guide: Putting the Three-Part Framework Into Action

On pages 90–91, Jan analyzed Lily's reading record and transferred that data to the Reading Assessment Conference Class Profile. Then, Jan grouped her with other above-grade-level readers who also needed to work on evaluative comprehension. Now it is time to use all of the data to plan a fluent guided reading lesson for Lily and her groupmates. Notice how Jan prepares to teach Lily's group.

- 1** From analyzing the assessments, I learned that Lily and the other members of her group were having difficulty with evaluative comprehension. I selected an article from *Scholastic News* that presented arguments for and against cloning the Woolly Mammoth. Although the text is not formally leveled, I know the content and the strategy focus will be slightly challenging for this group.
- 2** I've jotted a quick book introduction and three words that I want to introduce. We'll use the map to identify Siberia, and then follow these steps to introduce "cloning" and "desolate":

 - Say the word and give a kid-friendly definition.
 - Connect the new word to students' background knowledge.
 - Relate the new word to the text.
 - Invite students to "turn and talk" and to explain the meaning of the word to a neighbor.
- 3** Since the strategy focus is evaluative comprehension, each student will create a T-chart labeled "support" and "opposition." As they read the article over the next two days, they will record reasons the author gives for and against cloning the mammoth.
- 4** Knowing Lily will find this task challenging, I want to confer with her while she reads to notice if she understands how to evaluate both sides of the argument. Once I confer with Lily, I'll meet with the rest of her groupmates.
- 5** Once students finish the article, they will share the information they jotted down and decide which side—pro or con—is better supported by evidence.
- 6** On the third day of this series of lessons, students will write an opinion piece about cloning the Woolly Mammoth, citing evidence from the text to support their viewpoint.



PLANNING SUPPORT & SAMPLE LESSON • GRADES 3-4

Sample Fluent Lesson Plan

Fluent Guided Reading Lesson Plan (Levels N-Z)																							
1	Title: <u>A Mammal's Notebook by N. Saville</u> Level: <u>R</u> Instructional Focus: <u>Expository Comprehension</u>																						
2	<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <thead> <tr> <th style="width: 50%; text-align: center;">Day 1</th> <th style="width: 50%; text-align: center;">Date: <u>3/1/12</u></th> <th style="width: 50%; text-align: center;">Day 2</th> <th style="width: 50%; text-align: center;">Date: <u>3/2/12</u></th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td style="vertical-align: top;"> Before Reading Text Introduction: (3-4 minutes) This text is about <u>the life of a mammal that lives in a cave and how it survives. The author uses a diary format to describe the mammal's life.</u> New Vocabulary: <u>Subsist (use map)</u> <u>creativity, plastic</u> Model Focus Strategy: <u>Read and respond to the text by taking notes on the author's use of evidence to support a claim.</u> </td> <td></td> <td style="vertical-align: top;"> Briefly review Day 1's work. (1-2 minutes) Restate the strategy and introduce any new vocabulary. 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Tracking the Progress of Lily's Group of Fluent Readers

Each time Jan meets with this group, she observes and rates each student's level of independence with the focus strategy. If she needs to provide a great deal of support, she gives the student a one (1), indicating the student is not independent and needs teacher scaffolding. As students develop proficiency with the strategy, Jan may give the student a comprehension rating of a two (2) or three (3). If the student completely understands the text, applies the focus strategy without any scaffolding, and participates in the comprehension conversation after reading, Jan circles a four (4) on the Anecdotal Notes sheet. This indicates the student is ready for more challenging text or a different focus strategy.

After two or three weeks, Jan looks over her notes to determine whether or not the group, or a student in the group, is ready to try a different strategy or maybe a more challenging text. If she's unsure whether or not they are ready to move to the next level, she can do a quick reading record before she moves them to that level.

When Do You Take Fluent Readers to the Next Step?

As you meet with your fluent readers, you will gradually increase the complexity of the texts they are reading and change your focus strategy to address the needs of the students in the group. Fluent readers will demonstrate a range of abilities in the level of text they can read and in their depth of understanding. You will know it is time to increase the text level when the student is able to:

- Read fluently with at least 96 percent accuracy
- Retell with little teacher support
- Make logical inferences from the text
- Determine the main idea or theme
- Summarize using supporting details

As you move students up in text levels, you may return to a focus strategy you had previously taught. Even though you already taught students how to draw inferences, they will need to practice the same strategy on more complex texts. Remember to use a variety of texts, including myths, legends, poems, newspaper and magazine articles, and short informational books. Your goal is that students are able to "read and comprehend complex literary and informational texts independently and proficiently" (CCSS, page 10).

Appendix J

Chapters 6-7 from

Fountas, I.C., & Pinnell, G.S. (1996). *Guided Reading: Good first teaching for all children*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

I CHAPTER SIX I

Using Assessment to Inform Teaching

The logic by which we teach is not always the logic by which children learn. GLENDA BISSEX

Rationale for Systematic Assessment

Assessment has a number of general purposes, moving from the kind of informal assessment that occurs in the classroom every day to the more formal reporting system that is required in the school arena:

- Continually informing teaching decisions.
- Systematically assessing the child's strengths and knowledge.
- Finding out what the child can do, both independently and with teacher support.
- Documenting progress for parents and students.
- Summarizing achievement and learning over a given period—six weeks, a year, or longer.
- Reporting to administrators, school board, and various stakeholders in the community.

Assessment begins with what children know; the evidence for what they know is in what they can do. For the teacher of reading,

assessment is an essential daily activity. The general purposes listed above apply to the assessments used in guided reading, but there are also a number of specific purposes related to literacy. The primary purpose of assessment is to gather data to inform teaching. If assessment does not result in improved teaching, then its value in school diminishes greatly. Assessment allows us to see the results of our teaching and allows us to make valid judgments about students' literacy.

Assessment is research. A researcher gathers evidence in ways that are reliable and valid and then uses this evidence to build a pattern of knowledge about the phenomenon being observed. Evidence (which we will sometimes refer to as data) is organized and categorized by the researcher in ways that reveal principles. Constructing these principles and testing them over time builds theory.

As teachers we have theories about learning and teaching that we refine and revise every day in our work with children. Our theories are incomplete in that we are continually testing them against our observations of

This chapter outlines what a teacher of reading needs to know about students in order to support their development of strategies. For a broader examination of assessment, see Johnston 1992; Anthony et al. 1991; Holdaway 1979; Rhodes & Shanklin 1993; Rhodes 1993; and Griffin, Smith & Burrill 1995.

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and interactions with individual children. Every child adds to learning and enriches the theory. This theory is the base for our moment-to-moment decisions. As we experience more and learn more from teaching, our repertoires expand and the base is strengthened.

All of us have internal systems or sets of understanding that allow us to make decisions "on the run." Some of our instructional decisions seem automatic and we may not even be consciously aware of the process. We just know what to do because we have built our repertoire of responses over time and connected it with our observations and interpretations of behavior.

Yet we have to look closely at the strengths particular children bring to their literacy learning. There are many surprises in teaching; there is always some response we did not predict. Children make us revise our theories. Being a teacher is like being a scientist: we are obligated not to hold theory as static and unchangeable—a model into which all children must fit—when there is evidence to the contrary. One of the most important purposes of an assessment system, then, is helping us continually build theory that is the foundation of our instructional decisions.

Assessment has several essential attributes:

■ *It uses accessible information, most of which can be collected as an integral part of teaching.* The system must be practical and usable. It is not a separate and burdensome curriculum but is woven into daily practice. Of course, teachers may do some initial assessment of children and may have regular, focused assessment periods; however, the most powerful kind of documentation is that collected as a daily routine. As teachers, we have to make practical decisions about how we use our time. It is better to gather and record good information regularly than to have an elaborate and time-consuming assessment system that is so demanding and

impractical that one simply cannot find time for it.

■ *It includes systematic observations that will provide a continually updated profile of the child's current ways of responding.* A highly organized system ensures the information is handy for teachers to use. Clay (1991a) admits that it asks too much of a teacher with a full class of children to carry in her head the particular learning history of each child for the past two or three weeks: "It is helpful for the teacher to have some systematic observations to refer to. . . . She needs to be on the same track as the child and systematic observations of how the child is working with texts from time to time provide the teacher with necessary information" (p. 233). Sometimes we think about systematic assessment as a series of tests—the "unit tests" provided by basal systems and/or standardized tests that are a regular part of the district's reporting procedures. Observation that focuses on children's behavior can also be systematic and can provide more valuable information. Final assessment scores offer little to the teacher that can be put to practical use, because young children learn so rapidly. Systematic observation captures the shifts in responding that indicate instruction is working.

■ *It provides reliable information about the progress of children.* The system must be designed to yield consistent information. In other words, each time the assessment procedures are used they build a data base on an individual child, one that allows you to ascertain the results of teaching. According to Smith & Elley (1994), "Reliability means the consistency of the measures. If the same or a similar testing procedure is given after an extended period of time, or by another person, we would expect the results to be similar if the procedure is reliable. The results should be accurate" (p. 98). A reliable procedure is applied in a standard way so that it yields

■ USING ASSESSMENT TO INFORM TEACHING ■

consistent results across items and with different children.

■ *It provides valid information about what children know and can do.* When inquiring about validity, we are asking, Does this test really measure what we are trying to assess? Many writers have referred to this as *authenticity*. It is impossible for all assessment tasks to be completely authentic in the sense that the task is one that the child has chosen for his own purposes and implements in an idiosyncratic way. Introducing a reliable and systematic approach inevitably leads to some contrived procedures. But assessment approaches must be as close as possible to the task being assessed. Children learn to read by reading; we must assess their reading progress by observing their reading. For children in the initial phases of learning to become literate we recommend some consistently applied measures that capture the child's beginning knowledge about literacy—the names of the letters of the alphabet or concepts about print (Clay 1991a, 1993a), for example. These assessments do not capture the process but do provide information on the child's knowledge about the items that support the process. The most powerful tool, however, is to observe and record reading behaviors on continuous text.

■ *It is multidimensional.* A multidimensional system provides the best chance to collect reliable and valid information on children's progress. The system should include both formal and informal measures; for example, a teacher might combine anecdotal records, lists of books read, running records taken every two or three weeks, a writing sample, and a criterion-referenced standardized test. A multidimensional system also allows the teacher to look across curriculum areas to find and use valuable information. For example, the assessment of a child's growth in writing can provide valuable information for helping him learn to read and vice versa.

■ *It provides feedback to improve the instructional program and the curriculum.* A feedback loop sounds complicated but it simply means looking at the combined results of assessment of student progress in a way that leads to improved instruction. The first part of the loop happens when a teacher works with an individual child. Behavioral evidence, as Clay (1991a) has said, "might cause a teacher to question her own assumptions and check them thoughtfully against what her children are actually doing, and to hold a watchful brief for when the child's processing behavior requires her to change her approach" (p. 344). This questioning and reflective process can occur whatever the teacher's philosophy or instructional approach, because children's responses rather than a prescriptive model directs the teaching. The second part of the loop takes place at the classroom level. In midyear, a teacher might assess all children using Clay's Observation Survey or a randomly selected sample of children on one or two similar measures. Or she might simply take a look at the last two weeks' collected observations in order to make some decisions about her program. If children are reading every day and yet there is little progress in the level of text they can read, something might be wrong with the way texts are selected for children in the group or stronger teaching with more explicit demonstrations might be required. A third and final part of the loop takes place at the school level. The primary team could, for example, conduct a study of their results, using the information to make decisions about further training they might need, materials they want to purchase, or new instructional emphases for the next year.

■ *It identifies and directs steps to meet the needs of students who do not achieve despite excellent classroom instruction.* Assessment is critical in identifying students who are not benefiting from the classroom program. Since intervention will be necessary for

■ CHAPTER SIX ■

these students, assessment must occur early and be ongoing, so that no student moves on through the system without the level of support he needs to succeed. Clay (1991a) strongly recommends extra, individual, short-lived, high-quality help such as Reading Recovery for young students having difficulty in the initial phases of learning to read and write: "My special plea would be that we recognize that *some children need extra resources and many more supportive interactions with teachers* to get them through the necessary transitions of reading acquisition to the stage where they can pick up most of the different kinds of information in print" (p. 345, italics in original).

■ *It involves children and parents in the process.* Assessment is most powerful as a learning experience when the learner is involved. Even assessment systems for young children can provide the opportunity for them to reflect on their own strengths and goals for further learning. Involving the parents lets them learn more about their children's strengths and provides additional reliable, valid information for the teacher.

Guided Reading Assessment Procedures

Systematic observations—at the beginning of the year and at periodic intervals—give the teacher something to refer to when planning a guided reading program. Marie Clay's *An Observation Survey of Early Literacy Achievement* (1993a) provides the most practical procedures and the richest source of information currently available. Valuable information can also be obtained from the *Primary Language Record* used in England (see Barrs 1989). Many teachers use observation checklists. Word reading tests are another source of information, although the results should be considered in conjunction with other measures. Anecdotal records, when systematized and regularly used, are a final valuable resource.

Observation Survey of Early Literacy Achievement

The Observation Survey was created to help teachers observe young children just as they began to read and write. The survey has been reconstructed in Spanish (Escamilla et al. 1996) and is widely used by classroom and Reading Recovery teachers in daily teaching and as a tool for research. These measures are systematic, rigorous, reliable, and valid. How to administer and use the procedures is well detailed in Clay's book and will not be repeated here. We strongly recommend that you read the complete text and obtain the professional training that will let you use this comprehensive set of measures at their full potential.

The Observation Survey includes six measures. The first five will be described here, along with other procedures. The sixth, the running record, will be discussed in Chapter 7.

Letter identification

The child is asked to identify, by name, sound, or as the first letter of a word, the printed upper- and lowercase letters, as well as the typeset versions of *a* and *g*. The inventory of known letters is important as the child begins to take on reading and writing. Letter knowledge indicates that the child is familiar with some aspects of the visual details of print. Any knowledge of these details can be useful when the child begins to read simple texts. Children do not need to know all or even most of their letters before they begin to read texts for meaning; however, they need to learn more letters as they progress and use this visual information to monitor and check on their own reading. Even children who enter first grade knowing just one or two letters can begin reading, enjoying, and using early behaviors such as matching and moving left to right with simple caption books (see Chapter 9). Very often we find that when children confuse letters, their substitutions are visually similar. For example, if a child substitutes *h* for *n*, the error is a signal that the child per-

■ USING ASSESSMENT TO INFORM TEACHING ■

ceives the distinctive features of the letter but has not yet refined his skills to the point that every detail is used in discriminating one from another.

Word Test

The child is asked to read a list of words in isolation. In the United States version of the Observation Survey, these words were drawn from a list of frequently used words. Recognizing words quickly makes it easier for children to move through text. It is useful for children to develop at least a small core of words they can use strategically while reading and problem solving. At first, when the child knows very few words, it helps the teacher to know precisely which words the child can read. The teacher might even use this knowledge when selecting the very earliest texts for individual children. When working with groups at the earliest stages, the teacher may look through the assessments to find the words that many children hold in common (there will almost always be some after children have been at school a few weeks). For example, the class might know *the, I, a, can, me, we, or to*. Children develop words in common through shared reading and interactive writing.

Children's attempts at words on the Word Test provide additional interesting information. By examining how they approach words in isolation, without the support of meaning or predictability in the text, teachers can learn more about children's ability to recognize features of words and also to take words apart. Often children will make an attempt that begins with the same letter as the word on the list or substitute a word that contains similar parts. For example, when Phillip substituted *love* for *over*, he showed his attention to a visual pattern and his search to link it with a word he knew.

Concepts about print (CAP)

In this assessment the teacher reads a small book while working with a child. The teacher says, "I'll read this book. You help me," and proceeds to read through the book,

asking the child questions that require him to act on critical concepts about print, such as which way to go, where to start reading, and where to go next. The measure is particularly valuable for assessing the literacy knowledge of kindergarten children and early first graders because it gives the teacher an idea of what children know about reading before many of them can actually read. It also assesses word-by-word matching in reading, book handling skills, locating words in print, distinguishing between the idea of letter and word, the meaning of punctuation, and other details of print. Information from the CAP assessment helps teachers decide when children have enough of an orientation to books and print to move into guided reading. CAP also helps teachers understand specifically what children know about print so that they can establish priorities in the early stages of guided reading.

Writing vocabulary

The child is asked to write all of the words he knows how to write, beginning with his name. The assessor may use a list of categories to prompt the child to think of words that he might know. The activity is not like a spelling test. Prompts are used as a support but the child writes the words independently. An inventory of words and parts of words that children know how to write is an indication of what the child controls. A word that the child can write easily (his name, for example) represents a "program of action" that can be performed again and again and becomes part of a network of information (words that start the same or sound like his name, for example). These networks form the basis for noticing more and more about the features of words. Of course, a child may write a word and not be able to recognize it when he encounters it embedded in text; but every word he can write has potential for later use.

Hearing and recording sounds in words

The child is read a short message of two sentences and is told that she should try to write

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it. Then the message is reread slowly while the child is given a chance to write the words, representing as many of the sounds as she can. Like the writing vocabulary, the assessment is not a spelling test but is a measure of the child's ability to hear and record sounds in words. (There are thirty-seven phonemes to represent in the short message.)

The value of this information lies in the teacher's knowledge of children's phonological awareness. The task requires children to move from sounds to letters; in reading, the child must coordinate two complex operations. In a first attempt at an unfamiliar word, she might think about what would make sense, look at the letters, and make the beginning sounds as a cue to give her an idea of what the word might be. Once she solves the word, she quickly confirms her response by checking the rest of the visual information. On the other hand, when stopped at an unfamiliar word, a child might make a prediction of what the word could be, given the meaning and the language of the story. Then she might confirm or reject her prediction by saying it (either aloud or to herself) and thinking what she might expect to see in terms of letters. Looking at the visual information in the word is a way to check. The process is complex and flexible, and the reader moves back and forth between sources of information, checking, checking further, and confirming. Even for young readers, this happens quickly and largely unconsciously. At the very beginnings of learning to read, the process will be overtly signaled by behavior. It is helpful to know the sounds that children can hear and link with a visual symbol.

Running record of text reading

A running record is a documentation of a child's actual reading of text, providing both quantitative and qualitative information. Running records are discussed in more detail in Chapter 7, since they are the most important tool in guided reading. Running records have a variety of uses:

- Finding the appropriate level of text for children to read.
- Grouping students for reading instruction.
- Checking on text selection and on teaching.
- Documenting progress in reading.
- Adding to the teacher's knowledge of the reading process.
- Suggesting ways to teach children who are having difficulty reading.
- Determining whether children are making satisfactory progress.
- Summarizing results of the guided reading program in the classroom or the school.
- Providing insights as to the child's use of meaning to guide his reading.

Comprehension

When we read, we construct meaning from written language. Comprehension is a recursive process in which the reader may construct new understanding cumulatively while reading or even later when reflecting on the text or connecting it to other texts. Comprehension is difficult to assess formally, yet teachers know every day whether or not children are understanding what they read. Some informal ways of knowing whether comprehension is taking place are:

- Asking children if they understand a story or an informational piece.
- Having conversations with the children about the material read.
- Observing children as they respond to the text both verbally and nonverbally.
- Observing children's behavior for evidence of using cues while reading.
- Observing children's responses to the text in art and writing.

Because comprehension is a complex and invisible process, it is easy to confuse methods designed to get evidence of comprehension with comprehension itself. Having a child retell a story or asking "comprehension questions" does not teach comprehension. It is only a fairly primitive way of gathering evidence of comprehension.

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There are several ways to assess comprehension in a more formal and systematic way. We describe several approaches here, but we caution that no single assessment can fully inform the teacher of the child's understanding. We encourage you to make liberal use of the informal methods listed above. Anecdotal records can document information gained through observation and conversation that is often more powerful than the limited information one gains from artificial measures.

Retelling

After the student has read the story, the teacher asks him to reconstruct or "retell" the whole story in sequence. Sometimes, the retelling is tape-recorded, transcribed, and analyzed for:

- Knowledge of the gist of the story and main idea.
- Events accurately reported.
- Degree to which the sequence matches the text.
- Degree to which the reader uses phrases or words from the text.
- Degree to which the reader uses his own words and phrases.
- Ability to relate the information to personal knowledge.
- Presence of structures such as beginning, middle, and end.
- Use of precise vocabulary.
- Presence of elements such as characters and setting.
- Use of detail.

Retelling may be unaided or be done with teacher support. Sometimes the teacher uses questions to probe the reader's understanding. The information gained from a retelling is controversial. For one thing, it is an artificial task. The reader is asked to retell a story for someone the reader knows who has already read or heard the story. A natural tendency would be to leave out details, assuming that the listener knows the story. In addition, transcribing retellings is time-consuming and the

time spent may not be worth the information received. When children have been taught about story structure and have practiced retellings, their scores generally go up. They learn how to "perform" by providing more accurate detail. Instead of reflecting comprehension, retelling may be a learned skill. However, as long as teachers keep the approach in perspective, it can provide information about how the reader approaches a text.

Questioning following reading

Asking "comprehension questions" following reading has limited value in helping teachers learn about children's understanding or in developing children's ability to comprehend. If questions are used, we recommend that:

- The questioning period be brief.
- The questions be more like discussion and conversation than like a test.
- The questions require children to make inferences rather than simply recall the text.
- The questions invite personal response to the material.
- The questions extend children's ability to make connections between the text and other experiences or texts they have read.

It may be helpful to think of this process not as asking questions but as demonstrating how to reflect on and explore text and inviting children to participate in the process. Lists of preplanned questions may turn into a ritualized quiz and lose their effectiveness. Instead, model the process. Make a few notes of the important ideas in the text or connections that you have made and share one or two of these with your students. Invite them to talk about what the text made them think about and encourage them to ask questions themselves about anything they did not understand.

Examining oral and written responses

Throughout a reading lesson, comprehension is the central and guiding focus.

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Comprehension is foregrounded through the introduction to the story. Supporting prompts during reading keep children centered on the meaning of the story. After reading, discussion and personal responses not only help the teacher gather information about how children have understood the story but also extend their understanding. Readers bring different experiences and understanding to the reading and they take away different meanings. Interacting with one another and the expert adult can help them bring their understanding to conscious attention so that they can use it in many ways. When we see children writing their own stories modeled on favorite books or drawing pictures and talking about events in a story, we can get a much better idea of their interpretations and understanding. They might talk about their personal responses in a literature circle or record reflections in their journals. Looking across a range of responses is the best way to be sure that understanding is central in the whole process of reading.

Fluency, rate, and phrasing

It is easy to assess fluency, rate, and phrasing informally through observation and anecdotal notes. You will also be able to get important information from your systematic use of running records. At the end of each running record, make a few notes about how the reading sounds—whether it is smooth and phrased and whether the reader uses punctuation to aid the construction of meaning.

Assessing fluency, rate, and phrasing formally is time-consuming but does provide valuable documentation. Teachers might consider a formal assessment of these areas of reading once or twice a year for each child. These formal assessments will make informal assessments more reliable in that they force us to focus on and evaluate reading.

Here is a suggested formal technique that you can adapt for your own use. Ask chil-

dren to read aloud a selection they have read twice before and can read with above 90 percent accuracy. (The entire class can read the same selection if you like, one that is very easy for all.) Tape-record the readings. Later, calculate the number of words read per minute. Then, preferably with a group of colleagues, listen to the tapes again, evaluating the readings according to the rubric in Figure 6-1. After ranking all tapes against the rubric, with all members of your team scoring each tape and discussing the results, you can reach a shared definition of reading fluency.

Fluency, phrasing, and rate of reading are related to performance on tests of reading comprehension. Some students make low scores on formal comprehension tests because they read slowly, attending too much to working out words and taking long pauses. Students who read accurately, quickly, and in phrased units usually do better on all assessments of reading. Moreover, their attitudes toward reading are more positive and they are more likely to read for pleasure (NAEP 1993). Those who read slowly, treating each word as a separate item to figure out, tend to have difficulty understanding what they are reading. Reading is not pleasurable for them; it is an activity to avoid.

You can pay attention to rate, fluency, and phrasing without a formal assessment. These characteristics of reading are particularly important in guided reading. You can observe, prompt, demonstrate, and teach for fluency during lessons. Another way to collect data on fluency and phrasing is to give each child an audiotape with his or her name on it. Audiotapes for an entire class can be kept in a labeled shoebox. On his "recording day," perhaps when he is reading from the browsing boxes (see Chapter 5), the child selects a book he has read before and reads it into the tape recorder. Teach the children the following procedures, and they will be able to do it independently:

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Rubric for Fluency Evaluation

-
1. Very little fluency; all word-by-word reading with some long pauses between words; almost no recognition of syntax or phrasing (expressive interpretation); very little evidence of awareness of punctuation; perhaps a couple of two-word phrases but generally disfluent; some word groupings awkward.
-
2. Mostly word-by-word reading but with some two-word phrasing and even a couple of three- or four-word phrases (expressive interpretation); evidence of syntactic awareness of syntax and punctuation; although not consistently so; rereading for problem-solving may be present.
-
3. A *mixture* of word-by-word reading and fluent, phrased reading (expressive interpretation); there is evidence of attention to punctuation and syntax; rereading for problem-solving may be present.
-
4. Reads *primarily* in larger meaningful phrases; fluent, phrased reading with a few word-by-word slow downs for problem-solving; expressive interpretation is evident at places throughout the reading; attention to punctuation and syntax; rereading for problem-solving may be present but is generally fluent.
-

FIGURE 6-1 Rubric for fluency evaluation

1. Select a book.
2. Put your tape in the recorder and turn it on. Do not rewind; begin where your last reading left off.
3. Say the date and the name of the book.
4. Read the book.

When children first begin to use their tapes, check to be sure they understand how to start the tape in the right place so that previously recorded material is not erased. Taped readings are an excellent source of information for documenting reading over time. They are also useful for sharing in parent conferences. Sometimes parents will want a copy of the tape to keep.

Primary Language Record

A rich source of information on assessment may be obtained from the *Primary Language Record* (Barrs 1989). It is a comprehensive planning and record-keeping document based on the principle that records are needed to support and inform day-to-day teaching. It includes the involvement of parents and children, attempts to take account of bilingual development, and provides teachers with a framework for teaching language and literacy.

Observation checklists and anecdotal records

Checklists are useful for observing specific behaviors the teacher values. There are very few checklists in this book, because these tools are most valuable when they are a product of thinking about reading for your own students. Constructing the instruments yourself is a way to organize your teaching. The most useful checklist itemizes behaviors for teachers to notice and support, thus allowing them to focus on teaching, and has open-ended spaces in which to make notes on children's behaviors. Figures 6-2 and 6-3 are checklists that can be used while observing the reading of text by a guided reading group, the first with children who are just beginning, the second with children who already have control of early reading concepts.

The forms in Figures 6-2 and 6-3 combine anecdotal records and checklists of behavior. Checklists alone seldom provide enough information. A check is made at one point in time, as if a skill has been mastered; but strategic behavior changes over time and across more or less difficult levels of text. On the other hand, while anecdotal records are

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Guide for Observing Early Reading Behavior					
Behaviors to Notice	Children				
	Sara	Jessica	Jeff	Jeremy	Kayla
<p>Behaviors indicating attention to features of print:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is developing a core of known words • Can locate known and unknown words • Notices words and letters • Moves left to right across the line of print • Returns to the left for a new line • Matches word by word while reading a line or more of print <p>Behaviors indicating early processing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uses information from pictures • Uses the meaning of the story to predict • Uses knowledge of oral language to predict • Checks one information source with another • Uses visual information (words and letters) to check on reading • Uses visual information to predict words • Notices mismatches • Actively works to solve mismatches • Uses knowledge of some frequently encountered words in checking and problem solving • Self-corrects some of the time <p>Behaviors indicating independence and enjoyment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uses all sources of information flexibly • Actively searches to solve problems • Self-corrects most of the time • Shows enjoyment of books through talk or extension • Can sustain reading behavior alone 					

FIGURE 6-2 Guide for observing early reading behavior

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Guide for Observing Reading Behavior					
Children					
Behaviors to Notice	Sara	Jessica	Jeff	Jeremy	Kayla
<p>Behaviors indicating independence:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gets started quickly • Works continuously • Makes attempts before requesting help • Actively searches to solve problems <p>Behaviors indicating processing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rereads to confirm • Rereads to search and self-correct • Makes several attempts • Uses information from pictures • Uses language structure to predict and check • Uses visual information • Checks one cue against another • Self-corrects most errors • Notices mismatches • Recognizes many frequently encountered words quickly • Makes predictions using more than one cue • Reads with phrasing and fluency <p>Behaviors indicating a positive response to reading:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participates actively during story introduction and discussion • Discovers connections between personal experience and story • Participates with confidence and enthusiasm 					

FIGURE 6-3 Guide for observing reading behavior

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full of rich observations, it is easy to make them superficial and to neglect important behavior. These forms remind the teacher of priorities in the left-hand column but leave open space for teacher comments.

Other examples are a class list with days of the week across the top (Appendix E) or wide-open spaces for continuous notes (Appendix F). These forms enable the teacher to make notes as he observes children reading and also gives him a quick way to be sure he observes each child regularly. Appendix G is an even simpler form for keeping ongoing anecdotal notes.

Teachers successfully use a wide variety of forms, and each teacher finds his own efficient ways to keep records. The important thing is to find a way that is convenient and informative for you. Beginning, testing, and revising your record-keeping system over time will produce the best results.

Word tests

There are a number of standardized tests of word reading (*e.g.*, the Burt, the Slosson, and the Botel). These tests assess decoding ability and word recognition, and are graded and normed. They offer an approximate indication of the child's ability to recognize isolated words quickly, provide basic information about attempts at unknown words, and give us a sampling of the child's reading vocabulary. This kind of test does not provide information about how children use other aspects of the reading process (meaning and structure) as sources of information to solve or confirm words.

If a word test is to be used, we recommend the Ohio Word Test included in Clay's Observation Survey. Three forms of the test are provided and they are easy to use. Most children will probably make perfect scores at about the middle or end of first grade. If word tests are needed for levels beyond that, other standardized lists may be useful.

Attitude and interests

Assessment is a difficult organizational task and teachers should be careful not to load

themselves down with too many forms or formal procedures. We believe that conversation and ongoing observation are equal to the task of assessing children's attitudes and interests. Some teachers find a set of simple interview questions, used several times during the year, to be helpful. The value of the activity is that it requires systemization. With a class of thirty children, it is easy not to notice that some children are reluctant to read or have little interest in it. Setting aside a time to look at affective factors may provide useful information on all children.

On your own or with your colleagues, develop a set of three questions (four at most) that you think your students can answer. Be careful interpreting the results, since children often say what they think adults want to hear. The goal is to find out as much as possible about what interests your students and how they perceive themselves as developing readers.

Record of text level progress

Marie Clay (1991a) and other New Zealand teachers have used simple charts to graph reading progress over time along a gradient of text difficulty. Appendix H can be used to record individual progress (a completed form can be seen in Figure 14-2); Figure 6-4 (Appendix I) is a composite form on which to monitor the text level progress of an entire class (you'll need two or three sheets).

Summarizing and Reporting Children's Progress in Reading

Assessment is the ongoing process of observing and recording children's behavior. *Evaluation*, on the other hand, involves summarizing and reporting on children's progress. Evaluation ultimately requires teacher judgment; but it is also true that teachers make judgments—better termed decisions—almost every moment of the day. We could also talk about *formative* evaluation (data gathered for the purpose of adjusting a process for better outcomes) and *summative* evaluation (undertaken in order to report the outcomes to an-

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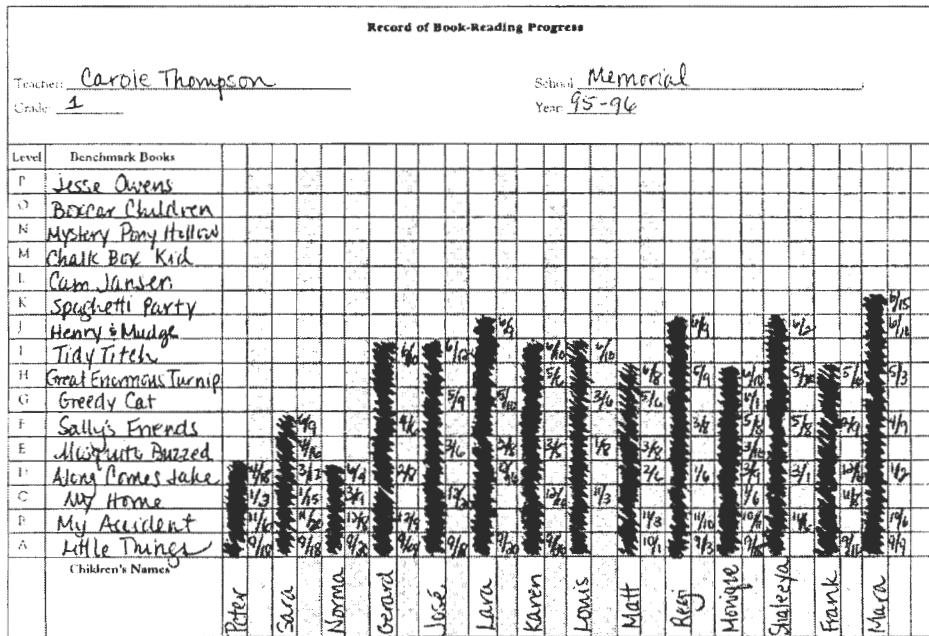


FIGURE 6-4 Sample of a completed group chart

other entity). Whatever the distinctions, there will always come a time when teachers must summarize their research findings and report them to others—parents, the school administration, the community, and the students. This summing up can be constructive for both teachers and their audiences.

For guided reading, the summing up includes:

- The level of text the child can read at the time of the reporting period.
- A description of the strategies the child shows evidence of in his behavior.
- A description of the child's reading behavior in terms of fluency, rate, and phrasing.
- Evidence of the child's understanding of the texts read.

- An inventory of "item" knowledge—number of letters the child can name, sounds she can represent with letters, and words she can associate.

- Level of development of the child's reading vocabulary.

- An inventory of the conventions of print under the child's control.

- A description of the child's personal interests in and attitudes toward reading.

- A measure of the volume of reading completed by the child (e.g., a list of books read during both guided and independent reading).

- A description of the range of reading, both in level and in breadth, undertaken by the child during the current assessment period.

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- An individual book-reading graph showing the child's progress.
- A description of the degree to which the child can maintain his own behavior in independent activities.

Using a Literacy Folder

It is a good idea to have a literacy folder for each child that contains the following items, along with any district- or school-required tests:

- Observation Survey. Observation Survey test forms and summary of information
- Running record forms. A sampling of running records taken for each child over time with complete information as to accuracy, self-correction, and analysis of cue use.
- Anecdotal records. If you use group forms, make a copy for each child on them, or cut them into strips and glue the information for one child onto individual cards or paper.
- Record of fluency assessment. A summary sheet that describes the assessment, shows the rubric, and records the child's score along with any observations. Also include the audiotape on which the child has periodically recorded her reading.
- Individual book list. A list of books read independently (this is most appropriate after the child is reading longer books and can keep this list independently).
- Book graph. A book graph that shows progress over time (see Appendix H).
- Other assessments of literacy. Informal writing and spelling assessments, and similar items.

This folder is meant as a teacher record, although some of the items (the book list, for example) would also be appropriate for the child's literacy portfolio. The literacy folder

is a source of organized information that can be used in a variety of ways:

- To make decisions about grouping and placement.
- To prepare for parent conferences.
- To analyze the strength and needs of particular students.
- As a basis for formal reporting.
- As a basis for assigning grades if required by the district.
- As a basis for letters on progress, which are required by some districts.

Suggestions for Professional Development

1. After working with the concepts in this chapter and designing and testing some of your own procedures, arrange a meeting of your grade-level team. Have each teacher bring one child's folder (selected at random or according to a predetermined criterion—high-achieving or low-achieving, for example) and share the assessments.
2. Build a shared definition of fluency among your primary literacy team by investigating the fluency of children in an age cohort.
 - a) Select three benchmark texts as well as a sample of children who can read each text with an accuracy level of at least 90 percent. You now have three groups of children. (At this point, do not try to assess every child in the class. It is useless to observe for fluency if texts are too difficult for children. For those who cannot read the benchmark texts, work later to find a level at which they can read fluently.)
 - b) Assign appropriate texts to children and tape-record their reading of the text. If the benchmark text is too easy or too hard, try another.
 - c) With your team, listen to five tapes, individually using the rubric and then discussing your ratings. Add detail to

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- each rating if needed to assure that members of your team are looking at the reading in the same way. When you are confident that you are using the ratings with reliability, score five more tapes independently.
- d) Compare your results on the next five tapes. Repeat the process until you are achieving reliable results, with about 80 percent to 90 percent agreement.
3. Use this activity to prompt an in-depth discussion of fluency and the strategies that contribute to fluent reading. Your team will become more aware of fluency and be able to use the rubric reliably as part of the assessment portfolio.
 4. Calculate the words read per minute for each reader of the benchmark books.

I CHAPTER SEVEN I

Using Running Records

Authentic assessment practices . . . hold enormous potential for changing what and how we teach and how children come to be readers and writers.

RICHARD ALLINGTON AND PATRICIA CUNNINGHAM

A running record is a tool for coding, scoring, and analyzing a child's precise reading behaviors. Marie Clay's book *An Observation Survey of Early Literacy Achievement* contains a complete and thorough description of this technique and provides a running record form to be used for this purpose. We recommend that you purchase Clay's book as a companion to this one, as we give only an introduction to the basic principles.

Taking running records of children's reading behavior requires time and practice, but the results are well worth the effort. Once learned, the running record is a quick, practical, and highly informative tool. It becomes an integral part of teaching, not only for documenting children's reading behaviors for later analysis and reflection but sharpening the teacher's observational power and understanding of the reading process.

Taking a Running Record

Taking a running record involves sitting beside the child while he reads a text, usually one he has read once or twice before. (Occasionally a teacher will take a running record

on text the child has not seen before. In Reading Recovery [see Chapter 15], for example, releasing children from the program is partly based on their performance on a running record taken on text not seen before.) The text is one the teacher has predicted will offer a bit of challenge but not be so difficult that the child's processing will break down.

Both teacher and child are looking at the same text. (The teacher does not need a separate copy of the text; that would take too much time to type, duplicate, file, and retrieve the needed forms. Typing out texts would also get in the way of the teacher's flexibility in selecting texts and in recording complex behavior.) The process is quite simple. The teacher watches the child closely as he reads, coding behaviors on a separate form or a blank piece of paper. The teacher does not intervene; her role is that of a neutral observer. When the child needs help to move on, the most neutral thing to do is to tell him the word. This process offers an opportunity to observe what the child can do on his own without adult support.

The teacher records all the accurate reading with a check for each word read accurately. Mismatches are recorded with a

1. Marie Clay is credited with creating the concept of running records.

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line, children's behavior above the line, and text information and all teacher actions below the line. This principle will become evident as the coding system is explained. The codes for significant behaviors are shown in Figure 7-1. When the teacher has coded all the behaviors, he makes a short note about how the reading sounds.

Scoring and Analyzing Running Records

Quantitative analysis

In scoring the running record quantitatively:

- A substitution counts as one error.
- If there are multiple attempts at a word, only one error is counted.
- Omissions, insertions, and "tolds" count as one error. Repetitions are not considered errors and are not counted in the scoring.
- Self-corrections are not errors.
- Running words includes all the words in the book or passage, not counting the title.

To determine the accuracy rate, subtract the number of errors from running words, divide by the number of running words, and multiply it by 100. As a short cut, you can divide the number of running words by errors, achieve a ratio, and refer to Clay's Calculation and Conversion Table in *An Observation Survey of Early Literacy Achievement*; this chart can be photocopied and taped to the bottom of the clipboard you use to take running records.

To determine the self-correction rate, add the number of errors and self-corrections and divide by the number of self-corrections to calculate a ratio.

You should also indicate whether the text is easy, instructional, or hard, according to the following criteria:

- Below 90% = hard
- 90% - 94% = instructional
- 95% - 100% = easy

Reading at 90 percent or above provides good opportunities to observe reading work.

Figure 7-2 is a running record of Sara's reading of *My Dog Willy*. Sara read seventy-one words with five errors: her accuracy rate is 71 minus 5 divided by 71 multiplied by 100, or 93 percent. Her self-correction rate—5 errors plus 2 self-corrections divided by 2 self-corrections—gives a ratio of 1 to 4 (3.5 was rounded up to the closest whole number). The running record of Peter's reading of the same text in Figure 7-3 also shows five errors and two self-corrections, resulting in the same accuracy rate, 93 percent, and the same self-correction ratio, 1 to 4. Their use of sources of information is also quite similar.

The accuracy rate lets the teacher know whether she is selecting the right books. The text should be neither too easy nor too hard. A good guideline is that the children should be reading with more than 90 percent accuracy. The point is not accuracy per se but whether the teacher has selected a text in a range that provides opportunities for effective processing. Stretches of accurate reading mean there are appropriate cues that allow the child to problem-solve unfamiliar aspects of the text.

When the text is too hard, children cannot use what they know; the process becomes a struggle and may break down to using only one source of information. The child may stop attending to visual features of print and invent text, or the child may rely on labored sounding that makes it difficult to read for meaning. We have all observed children produce nonsense words when struggling with hard text.

When text is too hard, it is nonproductive in helping the child become a strategic reader. To become a good reader, the child must sustain effective behavior over long stretches of meaningful text.

The accuracy rate also helps the teacher group children effectively. For example, if a particular level of text is "right" for six to eight children, they can work effectively together even though they have differences in the ways they process text.

Coding a Running Record		
Behavior	Code	Description
Accurate Reading	√ √ √ √ √	Record a check for each word read accurately. The line of checks matches the layout of print.
Substitution	<p>attempt text</p> <p>attempt attempt attempt text</p>	The reader's attempt is placed over the accurate word on a line. When the child makes multiple attempts, each is recorded above the line with a vertical line in between.
Told	<p>— text T</p>	When the reader makes no attempt, he is instructed to try it. If there is no attempt, the word is told and a T is written below the line.
Appeal and Told	<p>— A √ text — </p> <p>√ √ √ √</p> <p>√ — A text — T</p>	The reader's appeal, either verbal or nonverbal, is recorded with an A above the line. If the child reads correctly, a check is made. If the child makes an attempt it is recorded above the line; if he doesn't or it is incorrect a "told" is recorded.
Omission	<p>— text</p>	A dash is placed on a line above the word in the text.
Insertion	<p>word —</p>	The word inserted by the reader is placed above the line and a dash is placed below.
Repetition	<p>√ √ √ √ R √ √</p> <p>√ R</p> <p>√ √ √ √ R2</p>	Place an R after a single word repeated; for a phrase or more of text repeated draw a line to the point to which the child returned. The number indicates number of repetitions.
Self-Correction	<p>√ √ attempt SC √ √ R text</p>	The symbol SC following the child's corrected attempt indicates SC at point of error. A small arrow can be used to indicate that the SC was made on the repetition.

FIGURE 7-1 Coding a running record

CHAPTER SEVEN

Pg.	MY DOG WILLY Level C
1	My dog Willy likes to wake me up in the morning.
3	My dog Willy likes to eat breakfast.
5	My dog Willy likes to say hello to our neighbors.
7	My dog Willy likes to ride in the car.
9	My dog Willy likes to go shopping at the store.
11	My dog Willy likes to play ball.
13	My dog Willy likes to take a bath.
15	And my dog Willy loves to make new friends.

RUNNING RECORD SHEET

Name: Sara Date: 10/25/08 D of B: 11/23/88 Age: 6 yrs 6 mo
 School: Memorial Recorder: Jessie Davis

Text Title: _____

Running words	Error	Error rate	Accuracy	Self-correction rate
1. Easy		1: _____	%: _____	1: _____
2. Instructional <u>My Dog Willy</u>	<u>3</u>	1: <u>10</u>	%: <u>93</u>	1: <u>4</u>
3. Hard		1: _____	%: _____	1: _____

Directional movement: Centrals left to right movement and return Always

Analysis of Errors and Self-corrections
 Information used or neglected (Meaning (M), Structure or Syntax (S), Visual (V))

Easy: _____

Instructional: Substitutions consistently reflect use of meaning and structural cues. Self-correction results when attention is directed to visual cues.

Hard: _____

Cross-checking on information (Note that the behavior changes over time):
no self-correction results from cross-checking a visual cue with meaning and structure.

Analysis of Errors and Self-corrections (see Observation Survey pages 20-22)

Page	E	SC	Information used
			M MSV BC MSV
1	✓✓✓✓✓	get ✓ R	MSV
3	✓✓✓✓✓		
5	✓✓✓✓✓		
7	✓✓✓✓✓	the ✓	MSV
9	✓✓✓✓✓	shop ✓ R	MSV
11	✓✓✓✓✓		
13	✓✓✓✓✓	have ✓ R	MSV
15	✓✓✓✓✓	likes ✓ R	MSV

FIGURE 7-2 Running record of Sara's reading

Finally, the accuracy rate lets the teacher know whether his book introduction and other kinds of support he offered during the first reading were effective. The introduction is especially important in helping children read text independently. High accuracy and self-correction rates indicate that the teaching was helpful to the child's developing independence in reading.

Qualitative analysis
 Qualitative analysis involves looking at reading behavior and thinking about how the reading sounds. The teacher looks for evidence of cue use and of the use of strategies such as cross-checking information and searching for cues. She examines each incor-

rect attempt and self-correction and hypothesizes about the cues or information sources the child might have been using. In Clay's analysis, cues refer to the sources of information. There are three major categories:

- **Meaning.** The teacher thinks about whether the child's attempt makes sense up to the point of error. She might think about the story background, information from the picture, and meaning in the sentence in deciding whether the child was probably using meaning as a source.
- **Structure.** Structure refers to the way language works. Some refer to this information source as syntax because unconscious knowledge of the rules of the

■ USING RUNNING RECORDS ■

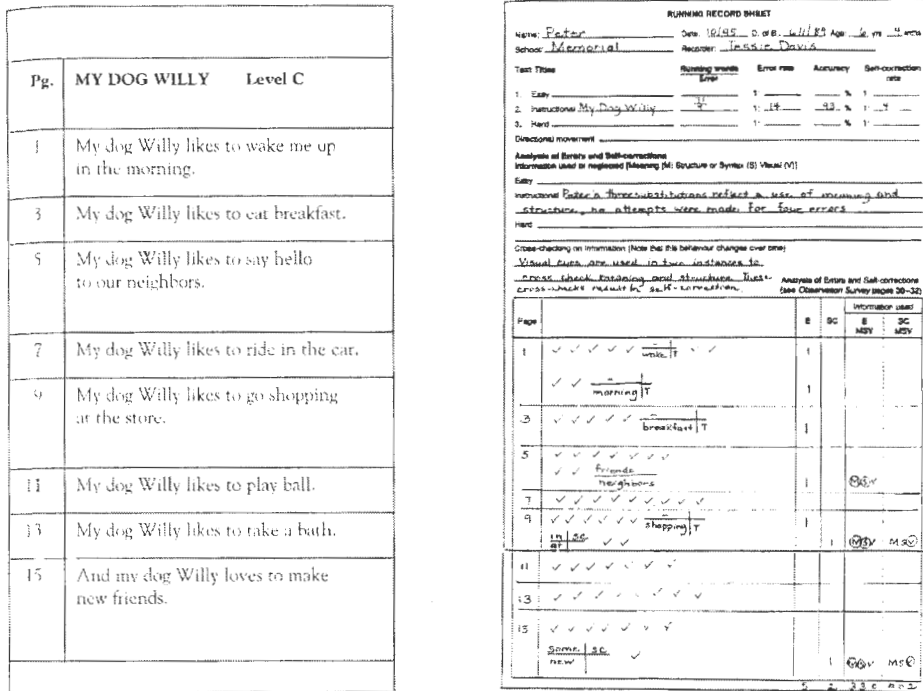


FIGURE 7-3 Running record of Peter's reading

grammar of the language the reader speaks allows him to eliminate alternatives. Using this implicit knowledge, the reader checks whether the sentence "sounds right."

■ **Visual information.** Visual information includes the way the letters and words look. Readers use their knowledge of visual features of words and letters and connect these features to their knowledge of the way words and letters sound when spoken. If the letters in the child's attempt are visually similar to the letters in the word in the text (for example, if it begins with the same letter or has a similar cluster of letters), it is likely that the reader has used visual information.

Readers use all these information sources in an integrated way while reading

for meaning. For example a reader might look at a word, make the sound of the first letter, search for a word that would make sense and sound right in the sentence, and check this prediction against other visual features of the word. In this case, the reader has initially used visual information, searched for and used meaning and structure, and then checked against visual information. Of course, all of this happens very quickly and most readers are not aware of the process. The result is accurate reading, but the operations reflect a complex integration of ways to use information. The reader's focus remains on the meaning or message involved.

The running records of Sara's and Peter's readings in Figures 7-2 and 7-3 demonstrate

■ CHAPTER SEVEN ■

how a teacher codes errors and self-corrections as he thinks about the sources of information the child was probably using at that point in reading. For each incorrect attempt and self-corrected error, the letters M S V are indicated in the Error column and the SC column, as appropriate. If the child probably used meaning, M is circled; if structure (syntax), S is circled; if visual information, V is circled. A complete running record includes these analyses of each error and self-correction.

The value of this activity is to look for patterns in the child's responses. You should not spend a great deal of time trying to figure out each miscue, searching for the "right" analysis. The idea is to reflect on the child's behavior, make your best hypothesis, and then look at data through the whole reading and over time.

What you are really looking for is an indication of the kinds of strategies the child is using. An important thing to remember about errors is that they are partially correct. They indicate strategic action and provide a window through which the teacher can observe successful use of information while reading. The teacher can observe whether the child is actively relating one source of information to another, a behavior that Clay (1991a) calls *cross-checking*, because the child is checking one cue against another. At the top of the form, the teacher notes cues used, cues neglected, and evidence of cross-checking behavior. She summarizes how the child used cues and the pattern of behavior that is evident.

Once cues are analyzed, the teacher might think about questions like these:

- Does the reader use cues in relation to each other?
 - Does the reader check information sources against one another?
 - Does the reader use several sources of cues in an integrated way or rely on only one kind of information?
 - Does the reader repeat what he has read as if to confirm his reading thus far?
 - Does the reader reread to search for more information from the sentence or text?
 - Does the reader reread or use additional information to self-correct?
 - Does the reader make meaningful attempts before appealing to the teacher for help?
 - Does the reader request help after making an attempt or several attempts?
 - Does the reader notice when cues do not match?
 - Does the reader stop at unknown words without actively searching?
 - Does the reader appeal to the teacher in a dependent way or appeal when appropriate (that is, when the reader has done what he can)?
 - Does the reader read with phrasing and fluency? Does he use punctuation?
 - Does the reader make comments or respond in ways that indicate comprehension of the story?
- These kinds of behavior (the list above is not exhaustive) provide a description of the child's reading processing system. They will reveal whether the child is using internal strategies, which include:
- *Self-monitoring.* These strategies allow the reader to confirm whether he is reading the story accurately. Readers who are reading accurately are consistently using meaning, structure, and visual information to confirm their reading. This is not a conscious process, but the internal system tells them whether the reading makes sense, sounds right, and looks right.
 - *Searching.* Searching is an active process in which the reader looks for information that will assist problem solving in some way. Readers search for and use all kinds of

■ USING RUNNING RECORDS ■

information sources, including meaning, visual information, and their knowledge of the syntax of language.

■ *Self-correcting.* This is the reader's ability to notice mismatches, search for further information, and make another attempt that accomplishes a precise fit with the information already known.

Let's now look at Sara and Peter as readers, noting behaviors that provide evidence of the way they are processing print (see Figures 7-2 and 7-3). Although the quantitative analyses of their reading records were quite similar, each is building a reading process in a different way.

Both Peter and Sara use meaning and structure cues most of the time and cross-check with visual information, which leads to some self-correction. However, Peter's running record shows that he often stops when he is unsure and most of the time does not make an attempt. Twice in the text he made an incorrect attempt and fixed it, and later he tried something that made sense and sounded right, though it didn't look right. When Peter is unsure, he usually waits for adult assistance and does not reread to search further. He does not initiate much problem solving when he runs into difficulty.

In contrast, Sara consistently rereads, makes several attempts and tries everything she knows how to do. When she has made her best effort to puzzle it out, she asks for help, and then rereads to confirm and put the whole text together. Her errors show that she is attempting to use more visual information along with meaning and structure to solve unfamiliar words. She demonstrates active monitoring, searching, and cross-checking, and is very successful at self-correction.

Developing a Self-Extending System

Sara and Peter are beginning readers. As shown in our analysis, they are beginning

to use cues in integrated ways. The goal of reading (and what we want for Sara and Peter) is to develop a self-extending system. As described in Chapters 12 and 14, a self-extending system is an integrated network of understanding that allows the reader to discover more about the process while reading. As teachers observe children's behavior, they will be looking for evidence that shows children are on their way to a self-extending system and are able to apply the strategies of self-monitoring, searching, using multiple information sources, and self-correction on more difficult texts and for longer and longer stretches of print.

Suggestions for Professional Development

1. Instead of beginning with Clay's standard coding system, you would benefit from making your own *grounding observation* by observing several readers closely, noting behaviors that you think are important. For each reader, select the text that you are currently using for reading instruction, but also have the reader try an easier text and one that is just a little harder. If you can work with two or three colleagues, all observing the same child, you will collect a great deal of significant behavior in just two or three readings. Try to be detailed in your observation, noting and describing behavior rather than making any judgments about it at the time. Write down only what children do, not what you think the behavior means.

2. Make a rough inventory of behavior, categorizing the ones that are similar. If you are working in a small group, use chart paper. Once you have completed your list of observations, have a discussion in which you hypothesize about what is going on in the child's head. Ask:

- What kind of information does the child seem to be using at the point of error?

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- Is the child actively sorting and relating cues?
 - What led to this error?
 - Is there evidence that the child made an attempt using a cue source and then checked it against another cue?
 - What might the child have noticed?
 - What led to self-correction of an error?
 - Is self-correction at the point of error or does the child go back in the text and repeat?
 - What evidence is there that the child is searching for information?
 - Does the child stop and wait for help or try something?
 - Is there evidence of repetition to search, self-correct, or confirm?
 - How accurate is the reading? Is the text easy? hard? about right?
 - How phrased and fluent is the reading?
3. At this point, you will have a good idea of what to look for, so the coding system you eventually use will have meaning. After completing your grounding observation, compare your list of behaviors with the coding system we have presented here. Chances are, you will have already recorded every behavior we suggest. Taking running records of many readings over time will build up a large body of data on each child. Behaviors that seldom occur may be recorded with a brief note right on the record. The main goal is to develop a system that teachers on your team can share and understand and that can be part of children's long-term records.
4. Purchase Marie Clay's *An Observation Survey of Early Literacy Achievement* and read the chapter on running records. Find a local source for training in how to use running records and build your skill so you can use them efficiently and easily to capture the changing reading process of each child you teach.

Appendix K
Journal Article

GUIDED READING

The Romance and the Reality

Irene C. Fountas ■ Gay Su Pinnell

In thousands of classrooms around the world, you will see teachers working with small groups of children using leveled books in guided reading lessons. The teachers are enthusiastic about providing instruction to the students in ways that allow them to observe their individual strengths while working toward further learning goals. Books are selected with specific students in mind so that with strong teaching, readers can meet the demands of more challenging texts over time.

Readers are actively engaged in the lesson as they learn how to take words apart, flexibly and efficiently, while attending to the meaning of a text. They begin thinking about the text before reading, attend to the meaning while reading, and are invited to share their thinking after reading. They deepen their understanding of a variety of texts through thoughtful conversation. The teachers have embraced guided reading, “an instructional context for supporting each reader’s development of effective strategies for processing novel texts at increasingly challenging levels of difficulty” (Fountas & Pinnell, 1996, p. 25).

As we look back over the decades since we wrote our first publication about guided reading, we recognize that there has been a large shift in schools to include guided reading as an essential element of high-quality literacy education. With its roots in New Zealand classrooms (Clay, 1991; Holdaway, 1979), guided reading has shifted the lens in the teaching of

reading to a focus on a deeper understanding of how readers build effective processing systems over time and an examination of the critical role of texts and expert teaching in the process (see Figure 1).

We realize that there is always more to be accomplished to ensure that every child is successfully literate, and that is our thesis in this article—the exciting romance with guided reading is well underway, *and* the reality is that continuous professional learning is needed to ensure that this instructional approach is powerful.

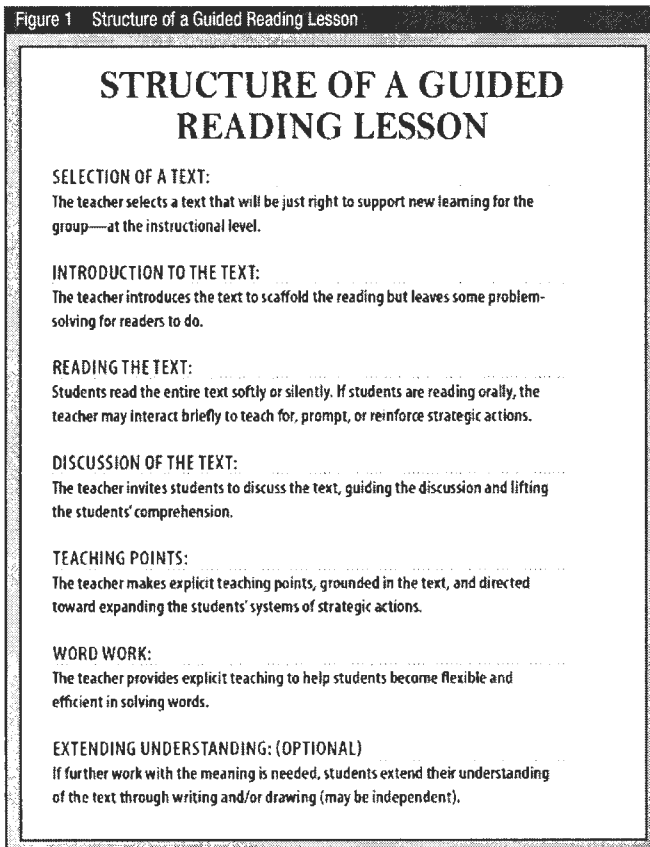
There is an important difference between implementing parts of a guided reading lesson and using guided reading to bring readers from where they are to as far as the teaching can take them in a given school year. If you are a teacher using guided reading with your students, we hope that, as you read this article, your effective practice will be confirmed while you also find resonance with some of the points of challenge that will expand your professional expertise. If you are a system leader, we hope you will find new ways to support

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GUIDED READING: THE ROMANCE AND THE REALITY

Figure 1 Structure of a Guided Reading Lesson



the educators on your team as they continue to refine and expand the power of their professional practice.

The Romance

As an instructional practice, guided reading is flourishing. As teachers move to a guided reading approach, the most frequent question they ask is: What are the rest of the students doing? The first agenda for the teacher is to build a

community of readers and writers in the classroom so the students are engaged and independent in meaningful and productive language and literacy opportunities while the teacher meets with small groups (Fountas & Pinnell, 1996, 2001). The teaching decisions within guided reading lessons become the next horizon. Next we discuss some of the changes that have taken place with the infusion of guided reading.

Providing Differentiated Instruction

Classrooms are full of a wonderful diversity of children; differentiated instruction is needed to reach all of them. Many teachers have embraced small-group teaching as a way of effectively teaching the broad range of learners in their classrooms. Because readers engage with texts within their control (with supportive teaching), teachers have the opportunity to see students reading books with proficient processing every day. In addition, it is vital to support students in taking on more challenging texts so that they can grow as readers, using the text gradient as a “ladder of progress” (Clay, 1991, p. 215). Inherent in the concept of guided reading is the idea that students learn best when they are provided strong instructional support to extend themselves by reading texts that are on the edge of their learning—not too easy but not too hard (Vygotsky, 1978).

Using Leveled Books

One of the most important changes related to guided reading is in the type of books used and the way they are used. Teachers have learned to collect short texts at the levels they need and to use the levels as a guide for putting the right book in the hands of students (Fountas & Pinnell, 1996). The term *level* has become a household word; teachers use the

“The teaching decisions within guided reading become the next horizon.”

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gradient of texts to organize collections of books for instruction. They collaborate to create beautiful book rooms that bring teachers across the grade levels to select books from Fountas and Pinnell (1996, 2001, 2011) levels A through Z.

In many schools, neatly organized boxes, shelves, or baskets make it possible for teachers to “shop” in the common book room. They can access a wide variety of genres and topics and make careful text selections. Book rooms often have special sections for books that are *not* leveled—enlarged texts (“big books”) and tubs of books organized by topic, author, or genre for interactive read-aloud or book club discussions.

Publishers have responded to teachers’ “love affair” with leveled books by issuing thousands of new fiction and nonfiction titles each year. Most of these texts are short enough to be read in one sitting so readers can learn something new about the reading process—strategic actions that they can apply to the longer texts that they read independently. The individual titles enable teachers to choose different books for different groups so that they can design a student’s literacy program and students can take “different paths to common outcomes” (Clay, 1998).

Conducting Benchmark Assessment Conferences

Because they need to learn students’ instructional and independent reading

levels, teachers engage in authentic, text-based assessment conferences that involve students in reading real books as a measure of how they read, a process that 20 years ago was new to many. Administered during the first weeks of school, an assessment conference with a set of carefully leveled texts yields reliable data to guide teaching (e.g., Fountas and Pinnell, 2012). The information gained from systematic assessment of the way a reader works through text provides teachers with new understandings of the reading process. Teachers are learning that accurate word reading is not the only goal; efficient, independent self-monitoring behavior and the ability to search for and use a variety of sources of information in the text are key to proficiency.

Using Running Records to Determine Reading Levels

A large number of teachers have learned to use the standardized procedure of running records (Clay, 1993) to make assessment more robust. They can code the students’ reading behaviors and score the records, noting accuracy levels. From that information, they make decisions about the level that is appropriate for students to read independently (independent level) and the level at which it would be productive to begin instruction (instructional level). Sound assessment changes teachers’ thinking about

“Efficient, independent self-monitoring behavior and the ability to search for and use a variety of sources of information in the text are key to proficiency.”

the reading process and is integral to teaching.

Using a Gradient of Text to Select Books

The A to Z text level gradient (Fountas & Pinnell, 1996) has become a teacher’s tool for selecting different texts for different groups of children. Teachers have learned to avoid the daily struggle with very difficult material that will not permit smooth, proficient processing—no matter how expert the teaching. Instead, they strive for text selection that will help students read proficiently and learn more as readers every day, always with the goal of reading at grade level or above. Teachers look to the gradient as a series of goals represented as sets of reading competencies to reach across the school years.

Attending to Elements of Proficient Reading: Decoding, Comprehension, and Fluency

Assessment of students’ reading levels and the teaching that grows out of it go beyond accurate word reading. In addition to the goal of effective word solving, teachers are concerned about comprehension of texts. Many students

“Sound assessment changes teachers’ thinking about the reading process and is integral to teaching.”

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learn to decode very well and can read words with high accuracy. Their thinking, though, remains superficial, sometimes limited to retelling or remembering details or facts.

Comprehension is assessed in different ways, usually after reading. Attention is increasingly focused on comprehension as the central factor in determining a student's ability to read at a level. Fluency, too, has gained importance in teaching, especially because it figures so strongly in effective reading. Teachers are concerned about students' ability to process texts smoothly and efficiently, and specific instruction is dedicated to the development of reading fluency.

Using the Elements of a Guided Reading Lesson

Teachers have learned the parts of the guided reading lesson—internalized the elements, in fact, so that they consistently provide an introduction to a text, interact with students briefly as appropriate while reading, guide the discussion, make teaching points after reading, and engage students in targeted word work to help them learn more about how words work. They have learned ways of extending comprehension through writing, drawing, or further discussion. Even students know the parts of the lesson in a way that promotes efficient work.

Building Classroom Libraries for Choice Reading

Teachers have realized the importance of a wide inventory of choice reading in building students' processing systems. They have created beautifully organized classroom libraries filled with a range of fiction and nonfiction texts that encourage students' independent reading. You can notice books with

their covers faced front, arranged by author, topic, or genre, as well as books organized by series or by special award recognition. Students choose books according to their interests and spend large amounts of time engaged with texts of their choice that do not require teacher support for independent reading.

The End of the Beginning

All these developments have been accomplished with tremendous effort and vision on the part of teachers, administrators, and others in the schools or district. It takes great effort, leadership, teamwork, and resources to turn a school or district in the direction of rich, rigorous, differentiated instruction. Creating a schedule, learning about effective management, collecting and organizing leveled books, providing an authentic assessment system and preparing teachers to use it, and providing the basic professional development to get guided reading underway—all are challenging tasks. Having an efficiently running guided reading program is an accomplishment, and educators are justifiably proud of it. However, as Winston Churchill said, "Now this is not the end. It is not even the beginning of the end. But it is, perhaps, the end of the beginning."

Many have experienced the romance in the journey, and the reality is that there will be more for everyone to learn as we move forward. We have

summarized our general observations of the accomplishments of decades of guided reading and the challenges ahead in Figure 2.

Of course, our descriptions will not fit any one teacher or group of teachers, but along with relevant challenges, we hope they provoke thinking by raising some issues related to growth and change. The compelling benefits of guided reading for students may elude us unless we attend to the teaching decisions that assure that every student in our care climbs the ladder of success. Let's think about some of the areas of refinement that lie ahead in our journey of developing expertise.

The Reality

The deep change we strive for begins with the why, not the how, so our practices can grow from our coherent theory. Our theory can also grow from our practice as we use the analysis of reading behaviors to build our shared understandings and vision. To change our practices in an enduring way, we need to change our understandings. If we bring our old thinking to a new practice, the rationales may not fit (Wollman, 2007). Teaching practice may often be enacted in a way that is inconsistent with or even contrary to the underlying theory that led to its development (Brown & Campione, 1996; Sperling & Freedman, 2001).

The practice of guided reading may appear simple, yet it is not simply

"It takes great effort, leadership, teamwork, and resources to turn a school or district in the direction of rich, rigorous, differentiated instruction."

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Figure 2 Decades of Guided Reading

DECADES OF GUIDED READING	
The Romance	The Reality
1. Teachers provide differentiated instruction in the form of small group instruction.	Behavioral evidence is needed to inform grouping and regrouping so that the danger of static groups can be avoided. Reading instruction takes place across a variety of instructional contexts; guided reading is not the whole-literacy program.
2. Teachers embrace the use of short, leveled texts as powerful resources. In many schools, teachers have worked together to create a common bookroom that houses leveled books.	The analysis of levels helps teachers go beyond the "level" to knowledge of the specific demands of the text on readers. A book room is more than a storage facility; as teachers analyze texts across a broad range of levels, they develop a common vision of the development of the reading process over time. Students always expand their reading power by engaging with more challenging texts across time.
3. Publishers respond to the demand by producing a large quantity of fiction and nonfiction leveled books from which teachers can choose.	The most important characteristic of a book is not its level, but its quality and appeal to readers. Teachers and publishers can work together to improve quality so that students are assured the opportunity to process books that are interesting, age appropriate, well written, and accurately leveled.
4. Teachers use benchmark assessment conferences to determine students' reading levels; teachers know what level their students can read and use that information to select texts.	The level from a benchmark assessment provides an excellent starting point for grouping. Teachers need to go beyond the level to analyze the reading behaviors that will provide the specific teaching goals of the level.
5. Teachers code and score running records as a way to make systematic observation rigorous and informative.	Beyond coding and scoring, teacher expertise is needed in the analysis and use of the information: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - knowing what proficient processing looks like (strategic actions) and sounds like (fluency); - analyzing reading behaviors and noting how students' behaviors change over time, as evidence of learning; - analyzing talk as evidence of comprehension.
6. Teachers use a gradient of text to select books and to monitor student progress in reading.	Beyond the levels, a conceptual picture of proficiency that includes the full range of strategic actions required to process a text at each level is needed. Selecting books to create a "superb language" requires matching evidence from student reading behavior with analysis of the demands of the text on readers; selection goes beyond knowing the level of the text to noting the quality and learning opportunities.
7. Schools expect students to comprehend the text rather than expecting accuracy alone.	Colleagues can work together to use a shared vision of proficiency that involves the complex network of strategic actions that are built at any time.
8. Fluency is valued and expected.	Fluency has many dimensions; teachers need more specific ways of teaching for more than rate, for example, pausing, phrasing, word stress, and intonation.
9. The structure of the guided reading lesson framework is raised and teachers have internalized its use.	Beyond the lesson framework, teachers make decisions within each lesson component and that is how powerful learning takes place. Attention to teacher's language interactions that help readers become self-initiating and self-regulating is essential.
10. Classrooms are filled with a variety of books so that students can have choice from among books they can read independently.	Leveled books are only one component of a high-quality literary effort; with the knowledge of genre, teachers can scaffold the reading of leveled books in guided reading and also work with students in other contexts such as in area the read aloud, book clubs and reading conferences to develop deeper comprehension.

another word for the small-group instruction of the past. We address three big areas that offer new learning in the refinement of teaching in guided reading lessons, bringing together the romance in guided reading with the reality of its depth. These areas can be summarized as readers and the reading process, texts, and teaching. As we discuss each area, notice the aspects that reflect your growing edge as a reading teacher.

A Shared Understanding of the Process of Reading

Some teachers have learned to be satisfied with their students simply reading accurately. This practice has led to pushing students up levels without evidence of their control of the competencies that enable them to think within, beyond, and about texts at each level. The goal of the guided reading lesson for students is not just to read "this book" or even

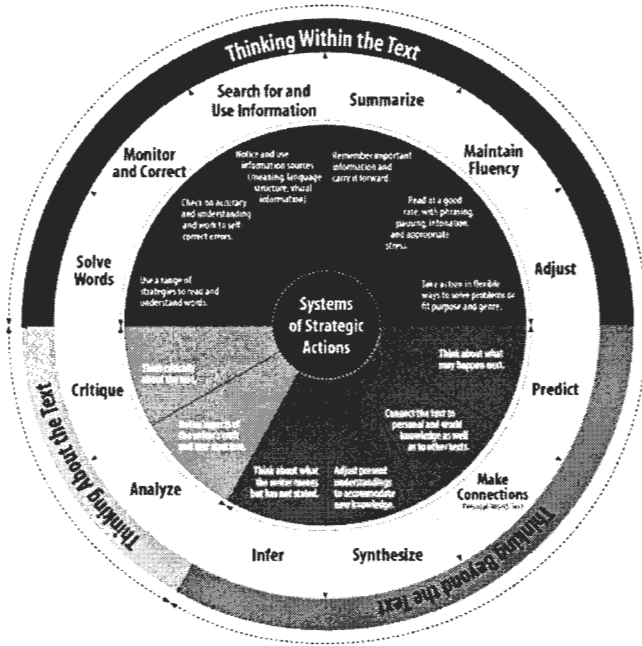
to understand a single text. The goal of guided reading is to help students build their reading power—to build a network of strategic actions for processing texts. We have described 12 systems of strategic activities, all operating simultaneously in the reader's head (see Figure 3).

Thinking Within the Text. The first six systems we categorize as "thinking within the text." These activities are *solving words, monitoring and correcting, searching for and using information, summarizing information in a way that the reader can remember it, adjusting reading for different purposes and genres, and sustaining fluency.* All these actions work together as the reader moves through the text. It is essential to solve words; after all, reading must be accurate. It is just as important to engage the other systems. Readers constantly search for information in the print, in the pictures; they know when they are making errors, and if necessary, they correct them. They reconstruct the important information and use it to interpret the next part of the text. Kaye's (2006) study of the word solving of proficient second-grade readers showed the following:

When students are efficiently processing text, they flexibly draw from a vast response repertoire. They use their expertise in language and their knowledge of print, stories, and the world to problem solve as they read. Supported by mostly correct responding, readers are able to momentarily direct their attention to the detail of letters and sounds as needed. When they need to problem solve words in greater detail, second graders can draw upon their orthographic and phonological knowledge with incredible flexibility and efficiency, usually using the larger subword units. Then they are free to get back to the message of the text. (p. 71)

GUIDED READING: THE ROMANCE AND THE REALITY

Figure 3 A Network of Processing Systems for Reading
A NETWORK OF PROCESSING SYSTEMS FOR READING



Thinking About the Text. The last two systems represent how the proficient reader *analyzes* and *critiques* the text. Readers hold up the text as an object that they can look back at and analyze. They notice aspects of the writer's craft—appreciate language, literary devices such as use of symbolism, how characters and their development are revealed, beginnings and endings. They critique texts: Are they accurate? Objective? Interesting? Well written?

A Complex Theory. Reading is far more than looking at individual words and saying them. Readers are in the fortunate position of encountering language that is created mostly by unknown individuals who may be distant in space and time. The systems of strategic actions take place simultaneously in the brain during the complex process of reading. The proficient reader develops a network like a computer, only thousands of times faster and more complex. The brain *learns*, making new connections constantly and expanding the system. Clay (1991) described the process:

This reading work clocks up more experience for the network with each of the features of print attended to. *It allows the partially familiar to become familiar and the new to become familiar in an ever-changing sequence.* Meaning is checked against letter sequence or vice versa, phonological recoding is checked against speech vocabulary, new meanings are checked against the grammatical and semantic contexts of the sentence and

Thinking Beyond the Text. The next four systems call for "thinking beyond the text." They are *inferring*, *synthesizing*, *making connections*, and *predicting*. Reading is a *transaction* between the text and the reader (Rosenblatt, 1994); that is, the reader constructs unique meanings through integrating background knowledge, emotions, attitudes, and expectations with the meaning the writer expresses.

When several of us read the same text, we do try to understand the writer's message and share much with each other. At the same time, each reader's interpretation is unique.

Readers infer what the writer means but does not say; they make connections with their personal experiences and other texts. They bring content knowledge to the text and synthesize new ideas. They make predictions before, during, and after reading.

"The reader constructs unique meanings through integrating background knowledge, emotions, attitudes, and expectations with the meaning the writer expresses."

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“When students engage in smooth, efficient processing of text with deep understanding, they can steadily increase their abilities.”

the story, and so on. Because one route to a response confirms an approach from another direction this may allow the network to become a more effective network. However the generative process only operates when the reading is ‘good,’ that is, successful enough to free attention to pick up new information at the point of problem-solving. An interlocking network of appropriate strategies which include monitoring and evaluation of consonance or dissonance among messages that ought to agree is central to this model of a system which extends itself. (pp. 328–329)

The amazing thing is that all of this complex cognitive activity is accomplished simultaneously and at lightning speed; proficient readers are largely unconscious of it (Clay, 1991). We are writing here about the efficient, effective, fluent processing that allows readers to keep the greater part of attention on the meaning of the text. Teachers cannot see into the brains of effective readers, and the process breaks down the moment you make readers try to describe their processing (much like watching your fingers while playing the piano).

However, skillful teachers have a sharp observing eye, with the ability to notice and understand the *evidence* of processing shown in the behaviors of students—how they read and what they reveal through conversation about what they read. Understanding the reading behaviors that are evident in a student who is processing well helps the teacher detect inefficient or ineffective reading and take steps to offer support. You can

also notice the way proficient readers change over time; sometimes progress is detectable every day!

When students engage in smooth, efficient processing of text with deep understanding, they can steadily increase their abilities. That means much more than just moving up levels; the goal is to build effective processing systems. It isn't easy, but guided reading offers that opportunity.

Fluent Processing: An Essential Element of Effective Reading. Deep comprehension is not synonymous with speed, nor, surprisingly, is reading fluency. Some in the educational community seem to have become obsessed with speed. However, measuring fluency only as words per minute is a simplistic view and a procedure that may do harm. In our work, we emphasize pausing, phrasing, word stress, and intonation far more than rate.

Rasinski and Hamman (2010) reviewed the research and found that the norms for reading speed have gone up, but these increases have not been matched by improvement in comprehension. They believe that the way reading fluency has been measured has influenced practice and in some places had a devastating effect on reading itself. We now see students who read rapidly and robotically, often skipping without problem solving every word not instantly recognized. The result is a loss of comprehension and

confusion for the student about what it means to read.

We recognize that proficient readers do move along at a satisfying rate, but fluency can't be measured by rate alone—certainly not by measuring the rate of reading word lists. Reading fluency means the efficient and effective processing of meaningful, connected, communicative language. According to Newkirk (2011), “the fluent reader is demonstrating comprehension, taking cues from the text, and taking pleasure in finding the right tempo for the text” (p. 1). He hastens to explain that he does not mean the laborious, word-to-word struggle to read something that is clearly too hard for the reader. And he says there is no *ideal* speed. The speed has to do with the relationship we have with what we read. He describes his own entry to a book:

I enter a book carefully, trying to get a feel for this writer/narrator/teller that I will spend time with. I hear the language, feel the movement of sentences, pay attention to punctuation, sense pauses, feel the writer's energy (or lack of it), construct the voice and temperament of the writer. (p. 1)

Oral Language: An Essential Element of Effective Reading. Reading is language and language is thinking. One of the purposes of guided reading is to bring the control of oral language to the processing of a text. Of course, oral and written language have important and subtle differences, but oral language is the most powerful system the young child brings to initial experiences with the reading process. As readers grow more proficient, language still plays a strong role. The most obvious is the role of the oral vocabulary, which is extremely important. However, teachers also consider the reader's grasp of sentence complexity and the speaker's understanding of metaphor, simile,

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“Teachers need to become expert in forming and reforming groups to allow for the differences in learning that are evident in students.”

expression, idioms, and other nuances of speech.

Students’ language development is important, and there is no better way to expand it than to engage them in lively conversation (not just questions and answers) about any exciting subject as well as about books. When students talk about their reading, they tend to use the language of texts, which is usually more complex than their own. Guided reading includes such discussion every day, and teachers are working toward richer conversations that will extend students’ language far beyond a dry recounting of the story.

Using Systematic Assessment

The assessment system needs to provide the behavioral evidence that is consistent with a shared understanding of the reading process. It should link directly to our teaching. Good assessment is the foundation for effective teaching. Assessment in its simplest form means gaining information about the learners you will teach. The “noticing” teacher tunes in to the individual reader and observes how the reader works through a text and thinks about how the reading sounds. For some teachers, assessment stops at finding levels because they have not had the opportunity to develop further understandings of the value of specific behaviors to inform teaching. The assessment may be used to report levels, and then the data are filed without the benefit of their richness.

Using Assessment to Group and Regroup Readers. In a comprehensive approach to literacy education, small-group teaching is needed for the careful observation and specific teaching of individuals that it allows, as well as for efficiency in teaching and the social learning that benefits each student. For some teachers, guided reading groups may have become the fixed-ability groups of the past. Teachers need to become expert in forming and reforming groups to allow for the differences in learning that are evident in students. Some students may not develop the same reading behaviors in the same order and at the same pace as others. The key to effective teaching is your ability to make different decisions for different students at different points in time, honoring the complexity of development.

A key concept related to guided reading is that grouping is *dynamic*—temporary, not static. Teachers group and regroup students as they gain behavioral evidence of their progress. In our experience, the reason groups don’t change enough is that no systematic ongoing assessment system is in place for teachers to use to check their informal observations with what students demonstrate when asked to read a text without teacher support. When teachers use ongoing running records in a systematic way (more frequently with lower achieving students and less frequently with higher achieving students), the data are used to

make ongoing adjustments to groups. Often the only assessment in place is beginning, middle, and end of year assessment, and nothing systematic happens in between.

Often teachers have a history of using prescriptive programs in which students are expected to pass through the same books or materials so groups may remain the same for a long period of time. In guided reading, text selection does not follow a fixed sequence that students must progress through; there are no workbooks or worksheets that must be completed before moving forward. Teachers are expected to select different books for the groups and to move students more quickly or slowly forward as informed by their expert analysis.

Using Assessment to Guide Teaching

All Year. A system for *interval* assessment such as a benchmark assessment conference using running records even two or three times a year is not enough. The benchmark information is old news in a few weeks. To make effective decisions for readers, you also need an efficient system for *ongoing* assessment using running records. A running record using yesterday’s instructional book takes the place of benchmark assessment with “unseen text.” The running record becomes a useful tool for assessing the effects of yesterday’s teaching on the reader.

“Good assessment is the foundation for effective teaching.”

GUIDED READING: THE ROMANCE AND THE REALITY

“Successful processing of the more challenging text is made possible by an expert teacher’s careful text selection and strong teaching.”

Your professional development may have stopped with coding and scoring reading behaviors; you may not have had the opportunity to become expert at their analysis and use in informing your teaching. When you go beyond coding and scoring, you make a big shift in the way you think about your teaching decisions in the lesson. Rather than teaching the level or the book, you notice and are able to use the behavioral evidence to guide your next teaching moves. We see this kind of teaching as the “precision teaching” that makes guided reading lessons powerful. Reading teachers are like scientists gathering precise data and using it to form hypotheses. For example, you can use running records or benchmark assessments to:

- Assess the accuracy level
- Assess fluency
- Observe and code oral reading behaviors systematically to note what students do at difficulty or at error and learn how students are solving problems with text
- Engage the student in conversation to assess comprehension at several levels

From Assessment to Teaching: Using a Continuum of Literacy Learning. When you understand the complexity of the reading process, you are able to teach toward the competencies of proficient readers. A precise description of the behaviors of proficient readers

from levels A to Z constitutes the curriculum for teaching reading. A level is not a score; it stands for a set of behaviors and understandings that you can observe for evidence of, teach for, and reinforce at every level.

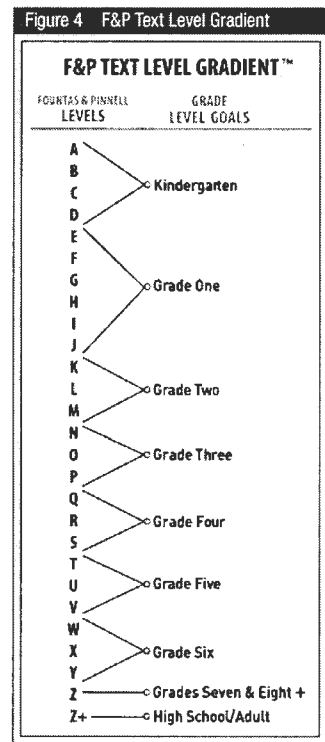
Think about all the behaviors that are observable in readers who process a text well. Of course the behaviors of effective processing at level A will look very different from those at level C or M or S. To support your ability to teach for changes in reading behaviors over time, we developed *The Continuum of Literacy Learning Grades PreK-8: A Guide to Teaching* (Pinnell & Fountas, 2011). The Continuum provides a detailed description of the behaviors of proficient readers that are evident in oral reading, in talk, and in writing about reading so that you can teach for change in reading behaviors over time.

Understanding Leveled Texts and Their Demands on Readers

The Fountas & Pinnell A–Z text gradient and high-quality leveled books are powerful tools in the teaching of reading (see Figure 4). The appropriate text allows the reader to expand her reading powers. To become proficient readers, students must experience successful processing daily. Not only should they be able to read books independently, building interest, stamina, and fluency; they also need to tackle harder books that provide the opportunity to grow more skillful as a reader.

Successful processing of the more challenging text is made possible by an expert teacher’s careful text selection and strong teaching. If the book is too difficult, then the processing will not be proficient, no matter how much teaching you do.

Consider the situation when every student in the room (and sometimes in the grade level) is reading the same book. *Most of the readers will not be encountering text*



The grade level goals on the F&P Text Level Gradient™ are intended to provide general guidelines, which should be adjusted based on school/district requirements and professional teacher judgement.

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that, with teacher support, causes them to expand their reading powers. For some, the books are too easy; for many, much too hard. There are many reasons for whole-group instruction, and we recommend that it take place every day in interactive read-aloud or reading minilessons. However, ensuring that all students develop an effective reading process requires *differentiated* instruction. One-size-fits-all or single-text teaching does not meet the varied needs of diverse students.

Many teachers use levels to select the books for students, but that raises several more questions. First, not all leveled books are equal. Just because a book has a level does not mean it is a high-quality selection. Some leveled books are formulaic or not accurately leveled. Teachers need to look carefully at books in the purchasing process to assure they are well written and illustrated. They also need to check to be sure that the Fountas and Pinnell level has been accurately determined. It will be frustrating to select a book and begin to use it with a group, only to find it is too easy or too difficult to support learning. Second, when teachers understand the 10 text characteristics that are used to determine the level, they understand its demands on the reader and can use it in a more powerful way in teaching.

Understanding a text is far more than noticing hard words and coming up with information or a “main idea.” Skilled teachers of guided reading understand how a text requires a reader to think—the demands that every text makes on the reader. We consider an understanding of text characteristics an extremely important area of teacher expertise.

Teachers do more than apply mechanical formulas by looking at sentence and word length (although those are important); we recommend an analysis that takes into account text complexity. We have described 10 characteristics of text difficulty (see Figure 5).

Teachers consider the characteristics of genres and special forms; some genres and forms are more difficult than others, with simpler and more complex texts

of every type. Teachers notice and understand the text structure—the way it is organized—as well as underlying structures such as compare and contrast. They assess the level of content (what background knowledge will be required) and the themes and ideas. Highly abstract themes and ideas make a text more challenging. Many texts have complex language and literary features such as elaborate plots, hard-to-read dialogue, or figurative language that make the

Figure 5 Ten Characteristics Related to Text Difficulty

TEN CHARACTERISTICS RELATED TO TEXT DIFFICULTY	
Characteristics	Definition
1 Genres/Forms	The type or kind of fiction or nonfiction text (e.g., biography, informational, historical fiction, folk tale, realistic fiction, fantasy). Also, the particular form (mystery, oral stories, picture book, graphic text, short story).
2 Text Structure	The way the text is organized.
3 Content	The subject matter of the text—what it is about, the topic or ideas.
4 Themes and Ideas	The big ideas in the text, the overall purpose, the messages.
5 Language and Literary Features	The literary features (such as plot, characters, figurative language, literary devices such as flashbacks).
6 Sentence Complexity	The structure of sentences includes the number of phrases and clauses.
7 Vocabulary	The meaning of the words in the text.
8 Words	The length and complexity of the words (syllables, tense, etc.).
9 Illustrations	The photographs or art in fiction texts; the graphic features of informational texts.
10 Book and Print Features	The number of pages, print font, length, punctuation, and variety of readers' tools (e.g., table of contents, glossary).

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texts more interesting and at the same time more challenging.

Sentence complexity, too, is a factor, one that is usually measured by mechanical readability formulas. Works with many embedded clauses and long sentences are harder. Teachers also consider the number of long, multisyllabic, or hard to decode words in a text and the complexity of the vocabulary. Illustrations in fiction can add meaning or mood to the text, and graphics in nonfiction offer additional complex information. Book and print features play a role as well. The size of print, layout, punctuation, and other text features such as charts, diagrams or sidebars—all go into the analysis of text difficulty.

Using these characteristics, we created the A to Z text gradient to give teachers a useful tool for guided reading instruction and a picture of student progress over time (see Figure 6). Notice how Ronald has progressed from kindergarten through grade 8 in a high-quality instructional program.

The gradient offers guidance in selecting texts, but it's important to remember that levels are not written in stone. Background experience and unique characteristics of readers figure into their processing of texts so that most students read along a fairly narrow range of levels, depending on interest and whether they are working independently or with strong support. We would not situate a reader at a single level and insist that all reading be there.

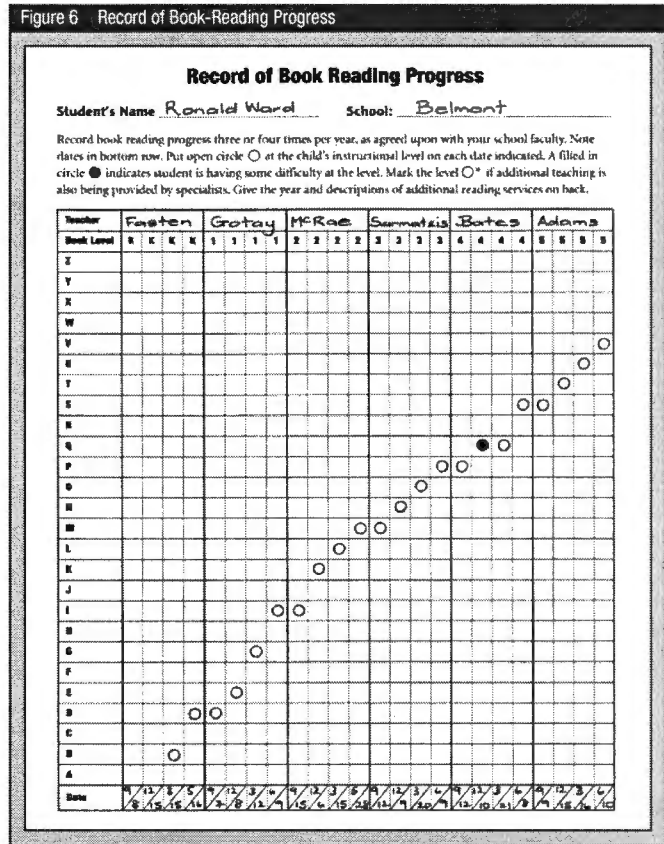
The ability to analyze texts represents important teacher knowledge that takes time to develop. Many teachers of guided reading have spent a great deal of time analyzing and comparing texts using the 10 characteristics and have become

“quick” analyzers of texts. They match up their understandings with their knowledge of the students in the group. When they teach a guided reading lesson, they can plan quickly what they need to say in the introduction and anticipate key understandings to talk about in the discussion. When you understand the inner workings of a text, you can

introduce it well and guide a powerful discussion.

Teaching for a Processing System: The Role of Facilitative Talk in Expanding Reading Power

At first, guided reading may be perceived only as a process of convening small groups, using



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“The ability to analyze texts represents important teacher knowledge that takes time to develop.”

leveled books, and following a lesson framework. Often, teachers use the small-group format, the steps of the lesson, and a set of leveled books but bring their old theory to this new practice. Professional development support does not go far enough to enable them to do powerful teaching beyond these initial steps. Guided reading is much more. It is an instructional context within which the precise teaching moves and language choices are related to the behaviors observed, moment by moment, and which guide the reader to engage in problem solving that expands his or her reading power.

The skilled teacher of guided reading makes decisions throughout the lesson that are responsive to the learners. Each element supports readers in a different way, with the goal of helping them think and act for themselves. You expertly shape the introduction to support readers’ ability to successfully process the text. The introduction sets the stage for effective reading of the text. During reading, you can use language to demonstrate, prompt, and support the reader in efficient processing.

Your language is also a critical area of your expertise. Through precise language, you facilitate readers’ problem-solving power and their ability to initiate effective actions as they become self-regulating readers (Clay, 2001). Use language in specific ways

to demonstrate, show or teach, prompt for, and reinforce strategic actions. With brief yet powerful facilitative language, you can scaffold students during the time you sample oral reading. Short, focused interactions with individuals allow readers to learn how to problem solve for themselves (Fountas & Pinnell,

2009). Some examples of precise language that helps students build a processing system are presented in Figure 7.

As your students discuss the text, you can use facilitative language that promotes dialogue. Get readers thinking and using what they know. Through the discussion, they expand comprehension. Your teaching points address the precise needs of the learners you teach. They involve *responsive teaching* based on your observation of the readers and the opportunities offered by the text. Notice the examples of specific language to support analytic thinking in the discussion of a text (see Figure 8).

Figure 7 Facilitative Talk

FACILITATIVE TALK			
	Teach	Prompt	Reinforce
SEARCHING FOR AND USING MEANING INFORMATION	You can try that again and think what would make sense.	Try that again and think what would make sense.	You tried that again and now it makes sense.
SEARCH FOR AND USING VISUAL INFORMATION	It has to make sense and look right, too. Let me show you how to check.	Does that make sense and look right?	That makes sense and looks right.
FLUENCY	You need to put your words together so it sounds like talking. Listen to how I read this.	Put your words together so it sounds like talking.	You put your words together and it sounds like talking.
SELF-MONITORING	You can look for a part you know. (Use finger to cover last part.)	Look for a part you know.	You looked for a part you knew and it helped you.

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Through word work, you help readers develop flexibility with words and word parts, noticing syllables, working with letters and sounds, and understanding the morphemic structure of words. The option to extend the understanding of a text involves more than just an assignment. Many teachers of guided reading have students use their readers' notebooks to write about their reading in a way that supports and expands their comprehension.

Using Self-Reflection to Grow in Teaching Guided Reading

High-quality, highly effective implementation of guided reading involves a process of self-reflection. You are very fortunate if you have a colleague with whom you can talk analytically about lessons. Each time you work with a small group of students, you can learn a little more and hone your teaching skills. (We believe that students who have teachers who also are learning are equally fortunate. That makes

the whole experience a lot more exciting!) In Figures 9 and 10, we offer some guidance for you to pause and ponder. Ask yourself some critical questions about the guided reading lesson. You'll find that you become more aware of the skillful teaching moves you have made, as well as

Figure 8 Examples of Language to Support Analytic Thinking About Text

EXAMPLES OF LANGUAGE TO SUPPORT ANALYTIC THINKING ABOUT TEXTS

ANALYZING: Use language that helps the reader notice aspects of the writer's craft and text structure.

- * What did you notice about how the writer told the story?
- * How did the writer organize the information (by time or logic)?
- * What did you notice about the way the writer used language (words)?
- * What did the writer do to interest you in the story (topic)?
- * What was the writer's purpose in writing the book?
- * How would the story (realistic fiction) be different if it were historical fiction?
- * Who are the important characters (least important)?
- * What is the problem and how is it solved?
- * What do you notice the writer doing? Why? Have you noticed another writer doing the same thing?
- * What did the writer do to make (character, topic, plot, setting) interesting?
- * How did the writer make the information interesting?
- * What parts of the story are probably fact and what parts are imagined?
- * What do you know about the type of book (genre) that helps you know what to expect?
- * How is the genre helping you think about what to expect in the book?
- * What do you notice about the genre?
- * Why do you think the writer chose this genre?
- * What were three of the most important ideas in this informational text?
- * What does the author want you to know about [topic]?
- * Why do you think the author chose this organization for the ideas he tells about in this informational text?

Note: From Fountas & Pinnell (2012).

Figure 9 Pause and Ponder: Teaching the Reader

PAUSE & PONDER

In guided reading lessons the goal is to teach the reader, not the text. Think about how your language interactions with readers support the ability of each reader to initiate problem-solving actions.

Ask yourself:

- * *What does the reader do at a difficulty or after an error?*
- * *How does your language support pass control to the reader?*

Figure 10 Pause and Ponder: Results of the Lesson

PAUSE & PONDER

Think about your guided reading lesson and ask yourself:

- * *What have I taught the readers how to do today that they will be able to do with other texts?*

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the thought that “I might have...” or “tomorrow I will...”. Reflective teaching is rewarding because you are *learning from teaching*.

Providing Variety and Choice in the Reading Program

Educators have sometimes made the mistake of thinking that guided reading is *the reading program* or that all of the books students read should be leveled. We have argued against the overuse of levels. We have never recommended that the school library or classroom libraries be leveled or that levels be reported to parents.

We want students to learn to select books the way experienced readers do—according to their own interests, by trying a bit of the book, by noticing the topic or the author. Teachers can help students learn how to choose books that are right for them to read independently. This is a life skill. The text gradient and leveled books are a teacher’s tool, not a child’s label, and should be deemphasized in the classroom. Levels are for books, not children.

Guided reading provides the small-group instruction that allows for a closer tailoring to individual strengths and needs; however, students also need age-appropriate, grade-appropriate texts. Therefore, guided reading must be *only one* component of a comprehensive, high-quality literacy effort that includes interactive read-aloud, literature discussion in small groups, readers’ workshop with whole-group minilessons, independent reading and individual conferences, and the use of mentor texts for writing workshop. Students learn in whole group, small group, and individual settings.

Guided reading instruction takes place within a larger framework that brings coherence to the students’ school experience. It does not stand alone. The expert teacher is able to draw students’ attention to important concepts *across* instructional contexts. For example, a teacher may help students attend to how readers need to think about not only what the writer says (states), but also what he or she means (implies) in contexts such as these:

- Guided reading (small group, leveled books)
- Literature discussion (small-group book clubs or whole class, *not* leveled books)
- Interactive read-aloud (whole class, *not* leveled books)
- Independent reading with conferences (individual, *not* leveled books, self-selected)
- Reading minilessons (whole class, *not* leveled books)

In guided reading and interactive read-aloud, the teacher selects the book; in other contexts, students have choice. They are taught ways to assess a text to determine whether it will be interesting and readable. Whole-class minilessons often involve using a whole range of books as mentor texts. The entire literacy/language program represents a smooth, coherent whole

in which students engage a variety of strategic actions to process a wide variety of texts.

Growth Over Time

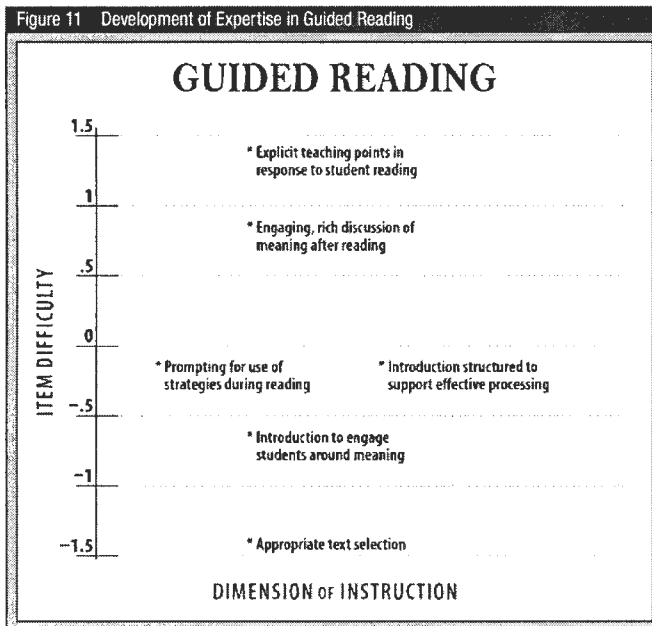
The lesson of guided reading development over the years is that it cannot be described as a series of mechanical steps or “parts” of a lesson. The lesson structure is only the beginning of providing effective small-group instruction for students of all ages. Powerful teaching within the lesson requires much more.

It is interesting to reflect on what aspects of guided reading tend to be easiest or hardest for teachers to take on. Bryk et al. (2007) found empirical evidence for teacher development of some of the complexities of guided reading. He and his colleagues constructed an instrument called the Developing Language and Literacy Teaching rubrics and tested it for reliability. A series of controlled, systematic observations indicated that the instrument distinguished between “novices” and “experts” in several contexts for literacy teaching.

A very helpful result of the study was that the analysis of items revealed a “scale” that provided evidence of the dimensions of instruction from less to more frequently observed (item difficulty), and this item map was consistent across teachers. The researchers were able to demonstrate increasing levels of sophistication. In Figure 11, you see the chart for

“The lesson structure is only the beginning of providing effective small-group instruction... Powerful teaching within the lesson requires much more.”

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Note: From Bryk et al. (2007).

development of levels of expertise in guided reading.

On the horizontal axis, you see dimensions of instruction, and on the vertical axis, you see the level of item difficulty, meaning that it seemed to take longer for teachers to develop this area of expertise in guided reading, and these items tended to separate novices from more expert teachers. It seems that early on, teachers take on tasks such as book selection (aided by the levels and the bookroom) and parts of the lesson such as text introduction. We would argue that even these components require complex thinking and can be improved once acquired. Effective prompting for use of strategies also

raises the sophistication, and, finally, acting “in the moment” to engage students in a rich discussion and make teaching points based on observation are the most challenging on this scale. In addition, when we consider that this study was completed before a great deal of new research on comprehension was

accomplished, the need for ongoing professional development is compelling indeed.

We realize that achieving a high level of expertise in guided reading is not easy. It takes time and usually the support of a coach or staff developer. Research indicates that it is fairly easy to take on the basic structure of guided reading, for example, the steps of the lesson. However, that is only the beginning of teacher expertise. Teaching for strategic actions and “on your feet” interaction with students is much more challenging.

You bring an enormous and complex body of understandings to the teaching of guided reading. Yet, with appropriate high-quality professional development and ongoing support, it is possible for every teacher to implement guided reading more powerfully in every classroom. Skilled teachers of guided reading have the pleasure of seeing shifts in their students’ reading ability every week—sometimes every day. Through guided reading, students can learn to deeply comprehend texts. And perhaps most importantly, they experience the pleasure of reading well every day.

To make the guided reading journey successful, we call for resources in the form of excellently written, attractive, and engaging leveled books and for access to high-quality professional development for teachers. Our own experience

“Teaching for strategic actions and ‘on your feet’ interaction with students is much more challenging.”

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“Achieving substantial schoolwide growth is possible if a community of educators are willing to undertake the journey.”

indicates that one-to-one literacy coaching with a highly trained and knowledgeable professional developer is very effective. An important federally funded study supports the use of coaches (Biancarosa, Hough, Dexter & Bryk, 2008; see www.literacycollaborative.org for a summary). Teachers had professional development and coaching over four years to implement all elements of a literacy framework. The research team gathered data on 8,500 children who had passed through grades K–3 in 17 schools; they collected fall and spring Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS) and Terra Nova data from these students as well as observational data on 240 teachers. The primary findings showed that:

- The average rate of student learning increased by 16% in the first implementation year, 28% in the second year, and 32% in the third year—very substantial increases.
- Teacher expertise increased substantially, and the rate of improvement coincided with the extent of coaching teachers received.
- Professional communication among teachers in the schools increased over the three-year implementation, and the literacy coordinator (coach) became more central in the schools’ communication networks.

Guided reading was only one component of the literacy framework implemented in the schools researched in the preceding study, but it was an important one. The importance of the literacy coach, who conducts professional development sessions, models good teaching, and most importantly observes teachers in the classroom and dialogues with them to collegially mentor their growth in understanding and implementation of effective teaching, appeared to be paramount in the process. And even these schools were only at the beginning of the journey. However, the study shows that achieving substantial schoolwide growth is possible if a community of educators are willing to undertake the journey.

The Beginning

In this article, we have described some wonderful changes that have brought teaching closer to students. If we take a romantic view, we could say that once we have the book room, small-group lessons, and leveled books and things are running smoothly, we have arrived in the implementation of guided reading. However, the heart of this article is what we have *learned* from many years of engaging teachers and students in guided reading—what its true potential is, and what it takes to realize it. That’s the reality.

In the case of guided reading, facing reality reaps endlessly positive

rewards. Facing reality means that there is more exciting learning to do. Teaching and managing educational systems is energizing when we are working collaboratively toward new goals. The accomplishments we have already made simply give way to new insights.

You may have made a very good beginning in using guided reading to develop your students’ reading power, and that is a satisfying accomplishment. It is also a development that enables you to have important insights that you can build upon. As you look at your educational program, you may be noticing some of the issues we have described here. That can put you on the path to work toward even higher goals on behalf of your students. We hope you are excited to know that more challenges lie ahead in your growing professional expertise and that there are tools to help you meet those challenges.

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Appendix L

How to Take Running Records

Running Records are taken to:

- guide teaching
- match readers to appropriate texts
- document growth overtime
- note strategies used
- group and regroup children for instruction

How to Take Running Records

(adapted from *Alphakids Assessment Kit Teacher's Guide*)

Running Records capture what children know and understand about the reading process. They capture children's thinking. Running Records provide you with an opportunity to analyze what happened and plan appropriate instruction. From Running Records, you have evidence of what the child is able to do, ready to learn, and learning over a period of time. Noted researcher Marie Clay designed this very effective and widely used tool.

A Running Record is not just the recording of right and wrong words. It requires observing all behaviours to help determine the "thinking process" children are using as they read the text. A correct response does not necessarily reveal the thinking a child is using unless they have verbalized or shown through body language (e.g., eyes go to the picture, finger moves back across the text) their mental processing. A Running Record provides you with a playback of an entire oral reading conference, including the smallest details on the reader's attitude, demeanour, accuracy, and understanding. With this information, you can analyze behaviours, responses, competencies, initiatives taken, and in turn, determine instructional needs. You are therefore encouraged to record all behaviours children display during reading conferences. Running Records are also a critical piece of assessment for the formation of dynamic (changing regularly) guided reading groups, and allow for the selection of "just right" texts and the teaching of appropriate strategies. Running Records allow you to document progress over time when an initial or baseline record is compared to a more recent one.

Taking a Running Record

To take a Running Record, sit beside a child as he or she reads a selected portion of the text aloud in a natural and relaxed environment. It is necessary to select a time when you can hear the child read without interruptions, such as when children are engaged in quiet reading or on independent literacy activities. Observe and record everything the child says and does during the reading. You will find yourself noticing more and more about children's reading behaviours each time you take a Running Record. Because there is a set code for recording, all teachers can understand and then discuss, analyze, and plan teaching strategies for the child or small groups of children.

Recording

The following conventions provide a consistent approach to recording reading behaviours. (Based on Clay 1993, Kemp 1987, and Goodman & Burke 1972) With these notations, every effort the child makes is recorded in detail. For a readily available recording sheet, see page 12.

Behaviour	Notation	Example
Correct response	Mark every word read correctly with a check mark.	✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ Can you see my eyes?
Substitution	Write the spoken word above the word in the text.	✓ ✓ ✓ the ✓ Can you see my eyes?
Omission	Place a dash above the word left out.	✓ ✓ ✓ _ ✓ Can you see my eyes?
Insertion	Insert the added word and place a dash below it (or use a caret).	✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ big ✓ Can you see my _ eyes?
Attempt	Write each attempt above the word in the text.	✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ e-ey Can you see my eyes?
Repetition	Write R after the repeated word/phrase and draw an arrow back to the beginning of the repetition.	↓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ R ✓ Can you see my eyes?
Appeal* (asks for help)	Write A above the appealed word.	✓ ✓ ✓ A ✓ Can you see my eyes?
Told word	Write T beside the word supplied for the reader.	✓ ✓ ✓ T ✓ Can you see my T eyes?
Self-correction	Write SC after the corrected word.	✓ ✓ ✓ the/SC ✓ Can you see my eyes?

*An appeal for help from the child is turned back to the child for further effort (e.g., Say: *You try it*. If the child is unsuccessful, the word is teacher-given (told word).

Note

Insertions add errors. A reader could have more errors than there are words on a line. However, a reader cannot have more errors than words on a page.

Scoring a Running Record

You can use the following scoring to assess a child's performance.

- Count only the running words in a text. Running words do not include titles, subtitles, captions, and so on.
- Count as one error:**
 - a substitution
 - an omission
 - an incorrect attempt
 - an unsuccessful appeal
 - a told word
 - an insertion
- Do not count:**
 - self-corrections
 - repetitions
 - a correct attempt
 - a successful appeal
 - words pronounced differently in a child's dialect or accent
- Count each word in a skipped line as an error.

4. Count a skipped page as one error and subtract the word count for that page from the total word count.
5. Count proper nouns read inaccurately only once. Count other words read inaccurately each time.
6. Calculate the Percent of Accuracy for a record by subtracting the total number of errors made from the number of running words in the text. The answer will then be divided by the number of running words.

Calculating Percent of Accuracy

1. Running Words - Total Errors = Score

$$\square - \square = \square$$

2. Score \div Running Words \times 100 = % Accuracy

$$\square \div \square \times 100 = \square \%$$

7. Determine the Self-Correction Rate for a record. The Self-Correction Rate indicates how well a child self-monitors his or her reading. Calculate this rate by adding the total number of errors to the total number of self-corrections and dividing this sum total by the total number of self-corrections. For example, six total errors plus two self-corrections equals eight. If you divide eight by the total number of self-corrections, the answer is four. The self-correction rate is then recorded as 1:4, which shows the child self-corrected one time for every four words misread. A Self-Correction Rate of up to 1:5 shows the child is self-monitoring and using decoding strategies.

Calculating Self-Correction Rate

1. Total Errors + Total Self-Corrections = Sum Total

$$\square + \square = \square$$

2. Sum Total \div Total Self-Corrections = Rate

$$\square \div \square = 1: \square$$

8. Once you have calculated the Percent of Accuracy and the Self-Correction Rate, you can determine whether the reading level for that book is easy, instructional, or hard for a particular reader.

Understanding Percentages

Easy Text (96-100%)	Appropriate Instructional Text (93-95%)	Challenging Instructional Text (90-92%)	Hard Text (Below 90%)
Move child to higher text level.	A comfortable instructional text level.	Child may require more direct support.	Move child to lower level.

Easy Texts (96-100%)

When children read an easy text, they are able to read for enjoyment and meaning. There are no decoding challenges. Easy texts are appropriate for independent reading.

Appropriate Instructional Texts (93-95%)

These texts are selected by you, and have many supports and very few challenges for the reader. They are at the higher-end of what Clay has identified as Instructional Texts (90-95%). Because you are usually working with a group of children and not individuals, it is difficult to match texts appropriately to the background knowledge and instructional strategies of an entire group. These texts are appropriate for guided reading.

Challenging Instructional Texts (90-92%)

These texts can be more challenging for a child or group of children. A text at this percentage may require too much work. A guided reading text should provide only one or two challenges and be a supported, comfortable read.

Hard Texts (Below 90%)




These texts have too many challenges for children to read.

Analyzing Reading Behaviours

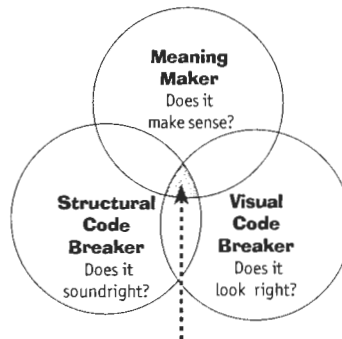
Once a record of a child's reading has been taken, it is necessary to analyze the strategies, cues, and behaviours he or she is using (or not using).

When analyzing a child's reading performance, it is your "best guess" (using all the knowledge gathered about the child) of the process or "reading thinking" that is happening. To acquire a useful analysis, it is important to determine whether readers are using meaning cues, structural cues, or visual cues.

Self-Monitoring Strategies

- ignored obvious errors
- paused/stopped
- repeated word(s)
- tried something else
- self-corrected
- self-corrected and re-read to confirm
- integrated cueing systems
(, , )

Integrating the Cueing Systems



M

Meaning Cues

Meaning cues relate to a reader's ability to gather a book's basic message by making meaning of it at the text, content, and word level. If readers are using meaning cues, they think and evaluate what they read. They check whether the sentence "makes sense." Meaning-appropriate errors (miscues) do not interrupt the general comprehension of the sentence or paragraph. A meaning miscue may be syntactically appropriate, but may not have a letter-sound correlation.

When analyzing a Running Record or Record of Reading Behaviours, it is important to look at all the errors the child makes. For each error, answer the following question: *Does the child's attempt make sense considering the story background, information from pictures, and meaning in the sentence?* If the answer is yes, the child has used meaning cues, and is (M) circled in the error column.

Note

The same cue can be used while making and self-correcting an error.

When dealing with self-corrections, consider what caused the child to make the error in the first place. If meaning cues were being used while the error was made, (M) is circled in the error column. Then consider what cues the child used to self-correct. If meaning cues were used for the self-correction, (M) is circled in the self-correction column.

✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ woods There are many trees in the forest.	Cues Used (M) (S) V
--	-------------------------------

In this example, the reader substituted *woods* for *forest*. With this substitution, the sentence still makes sense and sounds right. Therefore, the reader used both meaning (M) cues and structural (S) cues. However, the reader did not use visual cues since the words do not resemble each other in any way.

S Structural Cues

Readers who use structural cues are relying on their knowledge of the grammar and structure of the English language to make the text sound right. Using this knowledge, readers check whether or not the word or sentence sounds right.

When analyzing a Running Record or Record of Reading Behaviours, it is important to look at all the errors the child makes. For each error, answer the following question: *Does the child's attempt sound right considering the structure and syntax of the English language?* If the answer is yes, the child has used structural cues, and (S) is circled in the error column.

When dealing with self-corrections, consider what caused the child to make the error in the first place. If structural cues were being used while the error was made, (S) is circled in the error column. Then consider what cues the child used to self-correct. If structural cues were used for self-correction, (S) is circled in the self-correction column.

V Visual Cues

Visual information includes the way letters and words "look." Readers use their knowledge of the visual features of words and letters and then connect these features to their knowledge of the way words and letters sound when spoken.

When analyzing a Running Record or Record of Reading Behaviours, it is important to look at all the errors the child makes. For each error, answer the following question: *Does the child's attempt visually resemble in any way the word in the text (e.g., begins and/or ends in the same letter)?* If the answer is yes, the child has used visual cues, and (V) is circled in the error column.

When dealing with self-corrections, consider what caused the child to make the error in the first place. If meaning cues were being used while the error was made, (V) is circled in the error column. Then consider what cues the child used to self-correct. If visual cues were used for self-correction, (V) is circled in the self-correction column.

	Cues Used
<p>poor I swim in a pool.</p>	<p>M S (V)</p>

In this example, the reader substituted *poor* for *pool*. With this substitution, the sentence does not make sense nor does it sound right based on the grammar and syntax of the English language. However, the two words resemble one another visually, so the reader used visual (V) cues.

Note

Readers should be using more than one cueing system at a time.

Strategies To Look for While Children Are Reading:

- Looking at the pictures.
- Questioning whether it makes sense, sounds right, and looks right.
- Finding little words in big words.
- Reading to the end of the sentence.
- Looking at the punctuation marks.

The goal for readers is to integrate the cueing systems while reading for meaning. For example, a child might look at a word, make the sound of the first letter, think of a word that would make sense, sound right, and match the visual features of the word. This child has initially used visual information, thought about meaning and structure, and then checked the prediction against visual information. This happens quickly, and the child's focus remains on meaning.

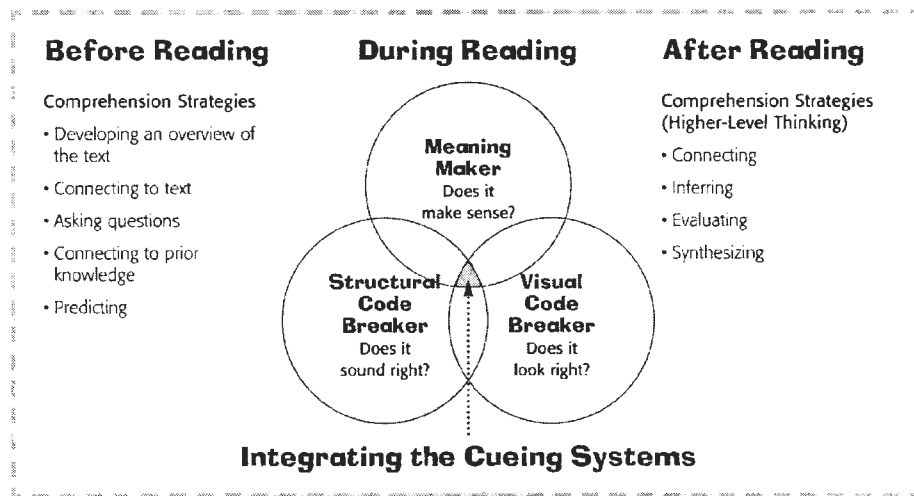
Self-Monitoring Strategies

After all errors and self-corrections are analyzed, you should also reflect on the following to help assess a reader's self-monitoring strategies to guide further instruction:

- ▶ Does the reader repeat what he or she has read as if to confirm the reading so far?
- ▶ Does the reader notice when cues do not match?
- ▶ Does the reader pause as if he or she knows something does not match but seems to not know what to try?
- ▶ Does the reader request help (appeal) frequently? after several attempts?
- ▶ Does the reader rely on only one cue, or does the reader integrate cues?
- ▶ Does the reader check one cue against another?
- ▶ Does the reader read with phrasing and fluency?

Diagnostic Reading Conferences

Diagnostic Reading Conferences allow you to determine the cues children are using to read, the appropriate text level for them, their interests and understanding of a text, and their ability to make inferences. This information is gathered before, during, and after a child's reading.



Conducting a Diagnostic Reading Conference

- ▶ **Select the text.** First, select a text from an appropriate level for a child by looking at the concepts or strategies the text assesses. If a child does not use most of these concepts or strategies to read, the text level will be too hard. If the child uses some of these concepts or strategies, the text level may be “just right.” If the child uses and integrates these concepts or strategies consistently, the text level may be too easy.
- ▶ **Introduce the text.** The introduction is important for developing the background information each child needs to read the text. The text introduction is brief and natural. After introducing the text, let the child preview the book. (To ensure consistency of assessment, it is important that each child is introduced to the text in the same way).
- ▶ **Take a Running Record.** Indicate where the child should begin reading aloud. If the text is a short one, the child should read the whole selection (even if the recording is not done on the last few pages) and complete the conference right after. For a longer text, pre-select a logical starting and stopping place of at least 150 words. The child then goes off to complete the reading on his or her

Retelling details*Fiction:*

- characters
- plot and setting
- problem/solution
- vocabulary from text

Non-fiction:

- main ideas
- important facts
- supporting details
- specialized vocabulary

Comprehension Strategies

- making personal connections
- making inferences
- being a text critic
- understanding author's purpose
- gaining information and details from non-fiction texts

own and later returns to complete the conference. Before the child begins reading, remind him or her that you will be asking for a retelling once the reading is complete. Then ask the child to begin reading aloud. Take a Running Record or use a Record of Reading Behaviours to record the child's reading. (Only the pages the child is asked to read aloud are recorded.)

- **Ask for a retelling/summary.** Comprehension can never be based on reading performance alone; therefore, retelling is a vital part of the Diagnostic Reading Conference. Unaided retelling consists of children retelling the story/facts any way they choose. Simply introduce the retelling session with: *Tell me all you remember about the story.* With this prompt, most children re-create the story by including characters, setting, and/or the underlying theme. If children need encouragement, provide non-contented related prompts, such as: *What else do you remember? Tell me more.* If children are still non-responsive, content-related prompts are required.

When assessing a child's retelling, listen for:

- general understanding of the story
- accurate reporting of events (non-fiction)
- sequencing of events
- words and phrases used from the text
- connections to personal knowledge and experience
- use of effective vocabulary
- elements of character and setting
- supporting details (non-fiction)

- **Check comprehension/higher-level thinking.** Following the oral reading session and the retelling, conduct an interview with the child to assess his or her understanding of the text. This interview consists of questions related directly to the events/facts in the story, inference questions, and critical-thinking questions. This helps children develop their roles as text users and text critics.

- **Conduct an interest survey.** Motivation is strongly linked to attitude; therefore, it is important to note the books children enjoy reading, their favourite authors, whether they like to read at home, and if someone reads to them outside of school. Conducting an interest survey is important in choosing texts for guided and independent reading. Note that an interest interview does not have to be conducted during each conference, perhaps just two or three times a year.

- ▶ **Check fluency.** Fluency is a critical factor in reading control. Fluency and accuracy are all highly related to comprehension. Comprehension is affected if children read slowly, attending too much to working out words and taking long pauses. Fluent reading means solving problems on the run, something all children must do if they are to gain understanding of a text. Children who read accurately, quickly, and in phrased units have much better comprehension and are more likely to read for pleasure.

While taking the Running Record, record any relevant notes about a child's reading fluency for reference when completing the scale.

- ▶ **Analyze the record.** After the conference is completed (and while the class is still working independently), go over the record while it is still fresh in your mind. Fill in any observations (e.g., looked at pictures, read through punctuation) you want to include, and calculate and circle the percent of accuracy of the child's reading. If the child has made errors and/or self-corrections, analyze the cues (M, S, V) he or she used. This information guides the text selection for instructional and independent reading.
- ▶ **Analyze the interview.** Assess the child's personal connections, responses to the comprehension questions, and his or her retelling. This will help you determine whether the child has understood the text, made personal connections, and what the child's interests are in reading. If the child was able to decode the text but unable to comprehend the story, the text level needs to be dropped to the point at which the child understands the story. Specific emphasis on comprehension through all components of a balanced literacy program becomes the focus of instruction.
- ▶ **Make instructional decisions.** Instructional decisions are critical in terms of building children's ability to read increasingly difficult text. A child should not be held too long in a level, when they could be reading more complex texts. Moving them ahead before they integrate the needed strategies will make it more difficult for the child to read and comprehend the text easily. Text difficulty usually affects the fluency rate as well.

You can use the analysis chart to help make instructional decisions for the child. After analyzing the reading record and reflecting on the conference, instructional decisions need to be made. Using the completed analysis charts, you can decide on strategies for specific children to consolidate or learn next. A strategy should be taught in a shared context and then practised in guided and independent reading. Guided reading continues to scaffold for the children before independence occurs. The self-monitoring strategies are best taught through shared reading practices.

Running Record Sheet

Name _____	Date _____	Book Title (Level) _____	Number of Running Words _____		E	SC	Information Used		<div style="background-color: black; color: white; padding: 2px; font-weight: bold;">Analyze the errors the child has made. Which cues has the child used?</div> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Did it make sense? <input type="checkbox"/> Did meaning influence the error? Did the child make a meaningful substitution? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Did it sound right? <input type="checkbox"/> Did the child's response still fit the structure (syntax) of the sentence? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Did it look right? <input type="checkbox"/> Did the child's response show evidence of information gathered from the print? 	
				M	S	V	M	S		V
				Total						<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; text-align: center; font-weight: bold;">Observations</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; height: 150px; margin-top: 5px;"></div>

Appendix M

Text for Running Record Practice



A Little Lake for Jenny Text (Grade 1 and non-grade specific)

A Little Lake for Jenny by Pat Etue, The Porcupine Collection, Curriculum Plus, 2001

Page	Text RW 134
3	One day, Mom and Dad Went to the lake. Jenny, Jay, and Adam went to the lake, too.
5	At the lake, Jenny played in the sand with Jay and Adam.
7	"We can make a sand castle," said Jay and Adam. "I can make one, too," said Jenny.
9	Adam and Jay went for a swim in the lake. Mom and Dad went for a swim, too.
11	"Look at me!" shouted Jay. "I'm swimming in the lake!" "Look at me! I'm swimming, too!" shouted Adam.
13	"The lake is too big for me," said Jenny.
14	"We can make a little lake in the sand for you, Jenny," said Jay and Adam.
15	"Now you can swim too, Jenny," said Adam and Jay.
16	"Look at me!" shouted Jenny. "I'm swimming in the little lake. Thank you, Jay and Adam."

Text from A Little Lake for Jenny, by Pat Etue, reproduced with permission of Curriculum Plus.

Appendix N

Running Record Recording Sheet



Running Record Recording Sheet

Name: _____ Date: _____

Book Title: _____ Familiar Text: _____

Number of Words: _____ Level: _____ Unfamiliar Text: _____

Accuracy/Self-Correction Ratio: _____

Ques Used: _____ **Strategies Used:** _____

Meaning _____ Monitoring _____

Structure _____ Cross-Checking _____

Visual _____ Searching _____

Page:		E	SC	E MSV	SC MSV



Running Record Recording Sheet				Page _____	
Page:		E	SC	E MSV	SC MSV

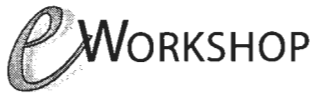


Making Instructional Decisions/Teaching for Strategies

1. What evidence can you find of strategies being used?
(Identify each strategy and give examples from the running record.)

2. What strategies are needed?

3. How would you teach the needed strategy?



How to complete the Running Record Recording Sheet.

Although you can use a blank piece of paper to administer a running record, it is helpful to use a blank Running Record Recording Sheet to help with organization.

1. Fill in the basic information on the top of the form. Include the number of running words, the level of the text and whether the book is *seen* (familiar) or *unseen* (unfamiliar).
2. After administering the running record, use a scrap piece of paper or a calculator to determine the accuracy and self-correction ratios. Write the ratios on the front of the recording sheet.

A student should self-correct after monitoring, noting a discrepancy, and searching for and using additional information to correct the problem. Self-correction is noted in the form of a self-correction ratio. The goal is for the student to self-correct at least 1 error in every 4 errors (1:4).

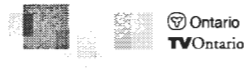
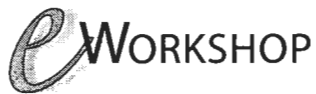
3. Under **Cues Used** summarize the cues or sources of information the student used. Look for patterns in the MSV analysis of errors and self-corrections. Use a checkmark to indicate that the source of information was used regularly.
4. Fill in the *Making Instructional Decisions/Teaching for Strategies* sheet. Record whether or not the student used the various sources of information on a regular basis.

Record other observations such as:

- Used MS together
- Neglected V
- Used V at self-correction
- Used sounding at difficulty
- Used all 3 together

5. Under **Strategies Used** consider the student's observed reading behaviours, place a checkmark beside the strategy or strategies used by the student, then add summary comments to the *Making Instructional Decisions/Teaching for Strategies* sheet.

Monitoring: Monitoring ensures that the reading makes sense semantically, syntactically and visually (makes sense, sounds right and looks right). Proficient readers stop and check the reading only if the three sources of information do not match. Young readers need to learn how to monitor reading for accuracy.



Sample monitoring summary comments:

- Paused at errors (the student knew something was wrong but did not yet know what to do about it)
- Repeated phrases after error (the student knew something was wrong and tried to obtain additional information)
- Appealed for confirmation after error

Cross-Checking: Cross-checking is a subset of monitoring. Many early readers use cross-checking. The student uses one or two sources of information, then cross-checks the word by using another (the neglected) source of information. For example: the student reads *ran* instead of *walked*. The student appears to have used meaning and structure but not visual information. If the student cross-checks, the attempt is checked using visual information. The student should note that *ran* does not visually match *walked*.

Sample cross-checking comments:

- Used V to check MS
- Used MS to check V

Searching: Searching is a strategy used by the student to search for (and use) information to solve a word. The student may use meaning, structure or visual information, or a combination of the three sources of information.

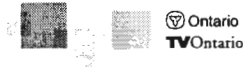
Sample searching comments:

- Used picture
- Used initial sound
- Covered ending
- Found chunks
- Read on

6. Write a brief comment on the *Making Instructional Decisions/Teaching for Strategies* sheet about required teaching focus based on the information obtained from the running record. What does the student do well? What needs to be taught next? This teaching focus can then be incorporated into individual, group or whole class instruction.

Appendix O

Using Running Records to Inform Teaching



Using Running Records to Inform Teaching

Use the time immediately after administering running record to teach your student. Ask yourself: "What is the most important teaching point that can help this student progress right now?"

If you identify similar reading difficulties or patterns amongst two or more students, then address the issue in small or large group settings.

What I see in the student's running record	What I can do
Uses 1 or 2 source(s) of information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Direct teaching to the other sources of information in Guided Reading and Shared Reading through teacher prompts: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> "Does it make sense?" (direct to meaning) "Does it sound right?" (focus attention on structure) "Does it look right?" (focus attention on visual cues) • Encourage the student to check an attempt : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> "It looks like <i>come</i>, but does that sound right?" (structure)
Uses Meaning and Structure and neglects Visual	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Direct teaching and prompts to focus on visual information • Teach effective ways to solve new words (such as chunking, initial sound, repeating and attempting the new word)
Does not address punctuation and text features	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Model during Read Aloud and writing sessions • Teach during Shared Reading and writing activities • Provide opportunities to practise in Guided Reading • Emphasize punctuation with texts that the student knows well
Applies substitutions, omissions, insertions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emphasize attention to visual information: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> "It makes sense but look at the first letter." "It sounds right but look at the end of the word." • Provide comprehension strategies and prompts for meaningless errors : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> "You said..... Does that make sense?"
Neglects meaning (may focus primarily on visual cues)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide direct teaching: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> "Good readers think about what they are reading." • Encourage the student to reread something when it is unclear or doesn't make sense • Encourage the student to predict and check what is happening • Teach pre-reading comprehension strategies like predicting, taking a picture walk, questioning and making connections during Shared Reading • Practice strategies during Guided Reading

What I see in the student's running record	What I can do
Rarely self-corrects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teach self-monitoring (checking that the words read make sense, sound right and look right) • Provide checking strategies such as re-reading, checking the picture and confirming visual information: "You said..... Does that sound right?" "Look at the picture." "Try this part again. Does that match?" • Use Guided and Shared Reading sessions to model and prompt for checking strategies
Reads slowly word for word	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read familiar books with the student, focusing on fluency, not on decoding "Make it sound smooth, like talking." • Model reading with phrasing and fluency • Prompt during Guided Reading and Shared Reading : "Make it sound like talking." "Let's try smooth reading." • Use choral reading • Provide the student with books on audiotape • Pair the student with a fluent reader • Tape the student reading, then play back the tape • Encourage reading aloud in shared writing experiences • Find books that lend themselves to fluent reading (patterned text, songbooks, rhymes) • Choose books that hold a lot of interest for the student
Struggles with high-frequency words	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create word banks and a word wall of high frequency words • Encourage the student to use the words, sort them and refer to them • Select texts that include the high-frequency words. Before reading the text, look at the word(s) with which the student has trouble. Use magnetic letters, little cards or a whiteboard. Then find the word(s) in the text before reading the whole book. Say, "Find 'is' . Good, that says 'He is...' " • Emphasize high-frequency words often, such as during shared writing and when working with magnetic letters
Invents text (early stages)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prompt the student to use a finger as a 1:1 guide when reading, and say : "Point to the words. Does that match? Did you have enough words? Did you run out of words?"