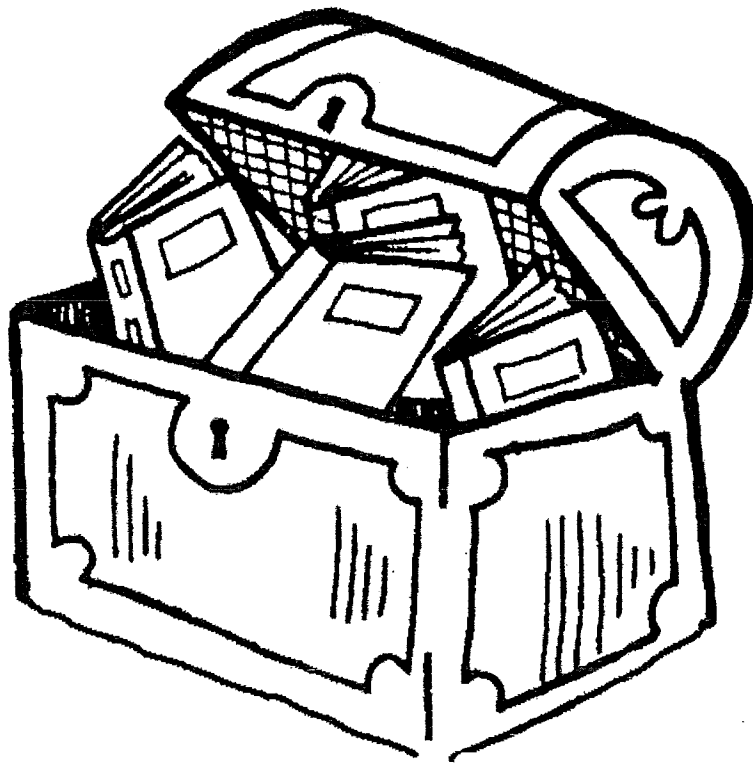


# Powerful Reading Instruction for the Differentiated Classroom



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# Powerful Reading Instruction

Powerful reading instruction is comprised of the following components:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Frequent read-aloud experiences</li><li>• Engaging conversations</li><li>• Playful phonemic awareness activities</li><li>• Explicit phonics instruction</li><li>• Robust vocabulary teaching</li><li>• Thoughtful comprehension lessons</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Meaningful fluency development activities</li><li>• Multilevel, flexible, small group instruction</li><li>• Ample time to read independently</li><li>• Effective writing instruction</li><li>• Integrated content area studies</li></ul>
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Source: Walther, M. P., & Fuhler, C. J. (2010). *Teaching struggling readers with poetry: Engaging poems with mini-lessons that target and teach phonics, sight words, fluency, & more—laying the foundation for reading success.* Scholastic.

## Frequent Read Aloud Experiences

### A Few of My Favorite Read Alouds for Launching Reading Workshop

Amado, E. (2011). *What are you doing?* (M. Monroy, Illus.). Toronto: Greenwood.

Chepito, who is hesitant to begin school, greets people around his neighborhood by asking, "What are you doing?" Soon Chepito learns that each person is reading for a different purpose, he then goes off to school to discover that reading is fun.

**Teaching Ideas:** Launching Reading Workshop—*We Are Readers!* (Month-by-Month Reading Mini-Lesson p. 43)

Klausmeier, J. (2013). *Open this little book.* (S. Lee, Illus.). San Francisco, CA: Chronicle.

The joys of reading one book after another are celebrated in this uniquely designed picture book.

**Teaching Ideas:** Launching Reading Workshop—*Readers Read Book After Book, After Book* (Month-by-Month Reading Mini-Lesson p. 62)

Messner, K. (2015). *How to read a story.* (M. Siegel, Illus.). San Francisco, CA: Chronicle

This clever step-by-step guide to reading a story includes tips for reading with fluency, predicting, talking about the story, and much more!

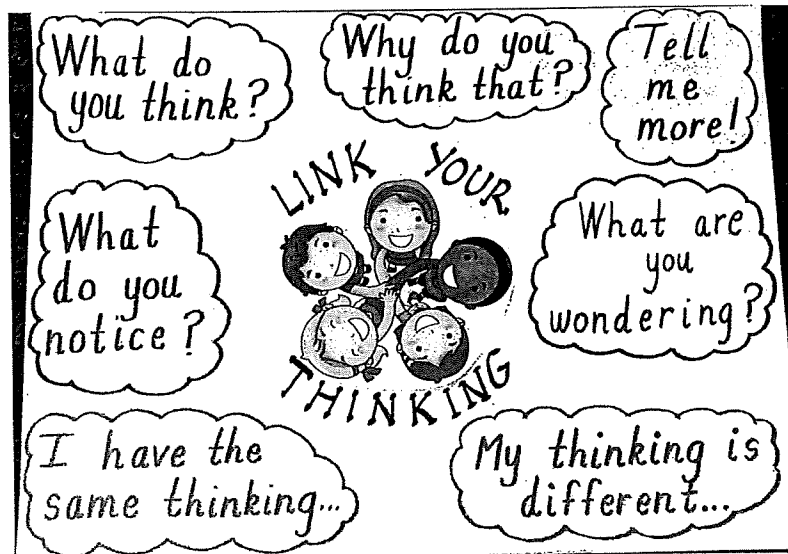
**Teaching Ideas:** Launching Reading Workshop: *Reading to Families on Curriculum Night or Literacy Night*

Torrey, R. (2015). *Ally-saurus & the first day of school.* New York: Sterling.

During lunch, Ally, who loves dinosaurs, is turned away by a group of princesses but finds another group of friends—each with their own unique interest. At the end, the teacher takes the class to the library where they all select books to match their interest.

**Teaching Ideas:** Social Studies—*Accepting Differences*; Reading Workshop—*Reading Interest Survey*

## Engaging Conversations



Mini-Lesson found on pages 52-53 of *Month-by-Month Reading Instruction for the Differentiated Classroom* (Walther & Phillips, 2012)

### Teaching Tips:

- Before you begin, model "turn and talk" with another adult or student. Emphasize the importance of having a two-way conversation with one person speaking at a time.
- Strategically pair students with a "turn and talk" partner or small group.
- During read aloud, stop several times at natural breaking points and pose the following queries for students to "turn and talk" about:

### Fiction

- What are you thinking right now?
- What do you think will happen next? What evidence have you seen or heard to prove your prediction? Does your prediction match the author's idea?
- Have a conversation about what you are inferring right now?
- Why do you think the character is behaving in a certain way? How has the character changed over time?
- How might the story end? Why do you think that will happen?
- Talk with your partner about BIG IDEAS in this story?

### Nonfiction

- Discuss one interesting way the author (and/or illustrator) presents information?
- Share with your partner something you have learned.
- What is the most important information on this page/in this section? How did the author help you figure that out?
- Discuss a question you have about the topic.

### Poetry

- What images did you visualize during this poem?
- What words did the poet use that you especially liked?

## Playful Phonemic Awareness Activities

### Phonemic Awareness Skills to Highlight Through Poetry

Before displaying poem in a pocket chart, on the overhead, or on an interactive whiteboard, begin by reading the poem aloud to strengthen students' skills in the following areas:

#### Phonological Awareness (oral/listening activities—no print)

- **Word Awareness/Concept of Word**—Give students counters and a cup or ask them to use their fingers or take a sideways step. Read aloud a sentence from the poem. Invite students drop a counter in the cup, put up a finger up, or take a sideways step each time they hear a word.
- **Concept of Syllables**—Select a multisyllabic word from the poem. Clearly say the word and invite students to clap once for each syllable they hear.
- **Concept of Phonemes**—Say a word from poem, invite students to chop the word by making a chopping motion for each sound they hear.

#### Phonemic Awareness (oral/listening activities—no print)

- **Rhyme recognition**—Ask students to identify the rhyming words they hear as you read the poem.
- **Phoneme matching**—(Alliteration) Read an alliterative sentence and say, "Listen to this sentence and tell me what sound you hear at the beginning of most words."
- **Phoneme blending**—Select a word from the poem to segment. Say each phoneme separately then say, "Listen to these sounds and tell me what word they make."
- **Phoneme segmentation**—Select a word from the poem. Say, "Listen to this word, tell me how many sounds you hear or tell me the sounds you hear in the word \_\_\_\_\_."
- **Phoneme manipulation**—Play with the words! Substitute, add, or delete sounds to create new words.

For additional phonemic awareness teaching ideas see *Teaching Struggling Readers With Poetry* (Walther & Fuhler, 2010), p. 44.

### A Sampling of Teaching Ideas for "Brother" by Mary Ann Hoberman

**Fluency Fun with Tongue Twisting Poems**—Challenge students to reread this tongue-twisting poem faster and faster.

#### Picture Book Pairing

*Once Upon a Baby Brother* (Sullivan, 2010)

## Brother

I had a little brother  
And I brought him to my mother  
And I said I want another  
Little brother for a change.

But she said don't be a bother  
So I took him to my father  
And I said this little bother  
Of a brother's very strange.

But he said one little brother  
Is exactly like another  
And every little brother  
Misbehaves a bit, he said.

So I took my little bother  
From my mother and my father  
And I put the little bother  
Of a brother back to bed.

*Mary Ann Hoberman*

Source: Paschen, E. (2005). *Poetry speaks to children*. Naperville, IL: Sourcebooks. (p. 95)

For teaching ideas see p. 41 of *Teaching Struggling Readers With Poetry* (Walther & Fuhler, 2010)



# Robust Vocabulary Teaching

## Three Read-Aloud Words Plan

In her book, *What Really Matters in Vocabulary: Research-Based Practices Across the Curriculum* (2009), renowned literacy expert Patricia Cunningham shares a sensible vocabulary-building strategy. *Cunningham suggests targeting "Three Read-Aloud Words" from one read-aloud selection each week.* She dubs read-aloud words "Goldilocks" words—words that are not "too easy" and generally known by most of your students or words that are not uncommon, obscure, or "too hard." Once you've selected the target words, follow the lesson sequence she's created.

1. Read the text for pleasure.

2. Show the target words to your students on index cards, one at a time. Teach your students to pronounce each word, but ask them not to share the meanings so that you can demonstrate the strategies that readers use to acquire new word meaning during reading. Place the words where your students can see them.

3. Reread the text and invite your listeners to yell, "STOP!" when they hear a target word. At this point, stop reading and demonstrate for your readers how you use the context, illustrations, and word parts to figure out and explain the meaning of that particular word. Continue with the two other words.

4. After reading, ask questions to help readers connect the words to their own experience.

5. The next day, reread the text and ask students to retell the text to a partner using the target vocabulary words.

6. Display the words in your classroom next to the cover of book or poem. Then, challenge students to be on the lookout for these words. Place a tally mark next to each word that a student read, hears, or notices in print. Your challenge is to also try to use these words in your conversations throughout the week.

### Professional Resources:

Beck, I. L., McKeown, M. G., & Kucan, L. (2002). *Bringing words to life: Robust vocabulary instruction*. New York: Guilford.

Cunningham, P. (2009.) *What really matters in vocabulary instruction*. New York: Allyn & Bacon.

## Read Alouds with Rich Vocabulary

Title and Author	Brief Summary	Words to Highlight and Kid-Friendly Definition
<i>Amos &amp; Boris</i> (Steig, 1971)	When Amos, the mouse, rolls off his boat into the sea, Boris, a whale, saves him and brings him back to his home. Later, Amos saves Boris' life. Draw readers' attention to the similarities to the fable <i>The Lion and the Mouse</i> .	<p><b>immense:</b> very big, huge</p> <p><b>desperately:</b> needing something in an urgent or critical way, needing action right away</p> <p><b>admiration:</b> a feeling a respect and approval</p>
<i>Gumption!</i> (Broach, 2010)	Uncle Nigel and Peter go on an African expedition and encounter many challenges. With gumption, and the help of the animals, Peter manages to keep up with his uncle. Readers will enjoy the humorous pictures showing that Uncle Nigel has no idea that Peter's adventures are occurring. Pair this with <i>Officer Buckle and Gloria</i> (Rathman, 1995) to discuss how both books' illustrations add to the humor of the story.	<p><b>expedition:</b> a trip that is taken for a certain reason</p> <p><b>gumption:</b> to show bravery</p> <p><b>peered:</b> to look hard or closely at something to see it better</p>
<i>The Inside Tree</i> (Smith, 2010)	Mr. Potter's house is warm and comfortable until he decides to invite a dog and a tree inside.  Great for Peek and Predict (See M-by-M Reading page 116)	<p><b>eerie:</b> when something is spooky or scary</p> <p><b>fetch:</b> to go somewhere, pick something up, and bring it back</p> <p><b>parlor:</b> a room in a house that is used for having people over and talking.</p>
Source: Walther, M. P., & Phillips, K. A. (May, 2012). <i>Month-by-Month Reading Instruction for the Differentiated Classroom</i> . New York: Scholastic.		

## Thoughtful Comprehension

### Lessons

- Predict the Title
- Step into the Story

"Step into the Story" by Debbie Miller author of *Reading With Meaning* (Stenhouse, 2013) and *Teaching With Intention* (Stenhouse, 2008)

Prepare an overhead or interactive whiteboard document with a key picture in the book or mark a key picture in the book. [See suggestions below.] Read aloud until you come to that page. Pause and show illustration or overhead. Invite students to "step into the story" and share what they imagine the character is thinking and feeling at this moment.

Bunting, E. (1991). *Fly Away Home*. (R. Himler, Illus.). New York: Clarion.

\*\*NOTE: This book is also ideal for practicing QUESTIONING before, during, and after the story. You might want to save it for that strategy.

[The picture where the boy is watching his father drive away on the bus to work.]

Coles, R. (1995). *The Story of Ruby Bridges*. (G. Ford, Illus.). New York: Scholastic.

[The illustration that shows Ruby walking up the steps of the school for the 1<sup>st</sup> time.]

McKissack, P. (2002). *Goin' Someplace Special*. (J. Pinkney, Illus.). New York: Atheneum.

[The scene where 'Tricia Ann is pushed into the "white" hotel.]

## Meaningful Fluency Development

### Activities

To introduce the concept of fluency, read aloud two poems from Jack Prelutsky's book *Something Big Has Been Here* (1990). Begin by reading the poem "Slow Sloth's Slow Song" found on page 65 aloud and then invite your students to join in. Follow this slow poem with "Twaddletalk Tuck" (p. 64) that simply begs to be read quickly. Discuss the difference between the two readings and how Prelutsky's use of punctuation marks helps the reader to understand how to read each poem.

If you have multiple copies of the poem, invite students to read the poems with a partner. After reading "Slow Sloth's Slow Song," young learners might be interested in discovering more about sloths. If so, read aloud the nonfiction title *Let's Look at Sloths* (Piehl, 2011). As a follow-up to this lesson, read either *Hip and Hop Don't Stop* (Czekaj, 2010) or *Wolf!* (Bloom, 1999) where the wolf learns to read with style!

Source: Walther, M. P., & Phillips, K. A. (2012). *Month-by-Month Reading Instruction for the Differentiated Classroom*. New York: Scholastic.



# Slow Sloth's Slow Song

I ..... am ..... a ..... sloth .....  
a ..... sloth ..... am ..... I .....  
I ..... live ..... in ..... trees .....  
But ..... I ..... can't ..... fly .....  
I ..... do ..... not ..... run .....  
I ..... am ..... so ..... slow .....  
But ..... I ..... am ..... where .....  
I ..... want ..... to ..... go.

.....Jack Prelutsky



Source: Prelutsky, J. (1990). *Something Big Has Been Here*. (J. Stevenson, Illus.). New York: Greenwillow. (p. 65)

**Twaddletalk Tuck**  
**by Jack Prelutsky**



I'm Twaddletalk Tuck and I talk and I talk  
and I talk when I run and I talk when I walk  
and I talk when I hop and I talk when I creep  
and I talk when I wake and I talk when I sleep  
and I talk when it's wet and I talk when it's dry  
and I talk when I laugh and I talk when I cry  
and I talk when I jump and I talk when I land  
and I talk when I sit and I talk when I stand  
and I talk and I talk into anyone's ear  
and I talk and I talk when there's nobody near  
and I talk when I'm hoarse and my voice is a squawk  
for I'm Twaddletalk Tuck and I talk and I talk.

Source: Prelutsky, J. (1990). *Something Big Has Been Here*. (J. Stevenson, illus.). New York; Greenwillow. (p. 64)

## THOUGHTFUL COMPREHENSION LESSONS BOOKS TO SPARK COMPREHENSION CONVERSATIONS

### Inferring Big Ideas

Cecil, R. (2012). *Horsefly and honeybee*. New York: Holt.

A sweet story about a horsefly and honeybee that decide to nap in the same flower, have a fight, and each lose a wing. Later, when the bullfrog wants to eat them, they work together to fly away.

**Teaching Ideas:** Comprehension Conversations—Inferring Big Ideas (K), Social Studies—Friendship, Teamwork

Rosenthal, A. K. (2013). *Exclamation mark*. (T. Lichtenheld, Illus.). New York: Scholastic.

Feeling alone in a world of periods, the exclamation mark tries everything to fit in and is about to give up when he meets the question mark. Question mark helps him discover his unique talent—exclaiming!

**Teaching Ideas:** Inferring Big Ideas—Accepting Differences

**Accepting Differences Text Set Ideas:** *Odd Velvet* by Mary E. Whitcomb, *The Rag Coat* by Lauren Mills.

### Asking and Answering Questions

Williams, L. E. (2010). *The can man*. (C. Orback, Illus.). New York: Lee and Low.

When Tim's parents can't afford to buy him a new skateboard for his birthday he is looking for ways to earn money. Along comes Mr. Peters, a homeless man dubbed "The Can Man" for collecting cans, giving Tim an idea. Soon, Tim discovers that he has taken away Mr. Peters' only source of income.

**Teaching Ideas:** Comprehension Conversations—Inferring Big Ideas; Social Studies—homelessness; Pair with *Fly Away Home* by Eve Bunting

**Accepting Differences Text Set Ideas:** *Odd Velvet* by Mary E. Whitcomb, *The Rag Coat* by Lauren Mills.

# Introducing Story Elements Using C. L. A. P. S.

## Different Versions of The Turnip Tale

Preparation: Create a large C. L. A. P. S. Chart to Record Story Elements

Thinking About Story Elements					
Title of Story	Characters	Location (Setting)	Action	Problem	Solution

### Mini-Lesson 1:

- Introduce C. L. A. P. S.
- Sing C. L. A. P. S. Song
- Read a version of a familiar tale
- In a shared writing format, complete one row of the chart

Story Elements: C.L.A.P.S.

Tune: If You're Happy and You Know It  
Written by: Dr. Walther

Characters, Location, Action, Problem and Solution

Characters, Location, Action, Problem and Solution

When you use the elements

Then your story will make sense

Characters, Location, Action, Problem and Solution

### Different Versions of the Russian Folktale *The Turnip*:

- Big Pumpkin* (Silverman, 1992)
- The Enormous Carrot* (Vagin, 1998)
- The Enormous Potato* (Davis, 1998)
- The Enormous Watermelon* (Parkes & Smith, 1997)
- The Giant Cabbage* (Stihler, 2003)
- The Giant Carrot* (Peck, 1998)
- The Gigantic Turnip* (Tolstoy, 1999)
- Kumak's Fish* (Bania, 2004)
- A Little Story About a Big Turnip* (Zunshine, 2004)
- The Turnip* (Brett, 2015)

### Mini-Lessons 2 and beyond:

1. Introduce the elements of a narrative. You will notice as you look at the sample chart that we used the acronym C.L.A.P.S. (Characters, Location, Action, Problem, Solution). This creative idea came from the children's author Candace Fleming who shares this "secret formula" when she works with children on their own writing. Young readers can also use this acronym to help identify the elements of their favorite stories.
2. Read a variety of familiar tales and discuss the elements of each tale. Some questions to guide your discussion include: Who are the main characters in this book? Where did this story take place? What are the characters doing? What is the problem they encounter or goal they are trying to achieve? Did they solve the problem or reach their goal? How would this story change if it had different characters or a different setting?
3. Once students understand and can identify the story elements, choose a few different versions of the same story. For this example we used different versions of *The Enormous Turnip*.
4. Read one story each day and record the elements on a large classroom chart.
5. As you add to the chart, discuss how understanding the elements of one story can help them to read the next. Also point out how a writer can change the story by simply changing one or two elements. Discuss the possibilities this opens for your young writers. Beginning writers love to write different versions of familiar books. For example, a student might choose to write *The Enormous Sunflower*. What characters would they create to help pull the plant out? Who would be the last little character that finally gets the job done?
6. To extend this lesson, provide students with a small copy of the chart and books at their level. They can work with a partner or small group to complete their own comparison of story elements.

Source: *Literature Is Back!* (Fuhler & Walther, 2007, pp. 81-83)

## Thinking About Story Elements

Title of Story	Characters	Location (Setting)	Action	Problem	Solution
<i>Big Pumpkin</i>	witch ghost vampire mummy bat	near a graveyard, hours away from Halloween	get the pumpkin off the vine	the pumpkin is big	the bat told them to work together
<i>The Enormous Potato</i>	farmer wife daughter dog cat mouse	in a field, garden or farm	pull the potato out of the ground	the potato is enormous	they pulled together. In the end, the mouse helped.
<i>The Enormous Watermelon</i>	Old Mother Hubbard Other Nursery Rhyme Friends Wee Willy Winky	in a garden	pull the watermelon out	the watermelon is enormous	Old Mother Hubbard asked for help
<i>The Giant Cabbage</i>	Moose Vole	in a garden	put the cabbage in Moose's truck	the cabbage is giant	they used tools and worked together
<i>The Giant Carrot</i>	Papa Joe Mama Bess Brother Abel Little Isabel	near their cabin on a warm, spring day	get the carrot out of the ground	the carrot is giant	they pulled together. In the end, Little Isabel helped.
<i>The Gigantic Turnip</i>	old man old woman brown cow pot-bellied pigs black cats hens geese canaries mouse	in a large, overgrown garden	pull out the turnip	the turnip is gigantic	they pulled together. In the end, the mouse helped.
<i>Kumak's Fish</i>	Kumak Kumak's wife Kumak's wife's mother Kumak's children	the great frozen lake	get the fish on Uncle Aglu's amazing hooking stick	the fish were also working together and pulling back	Kumak and all of the villagers pulled the fish out.

# Story Elements: C.L.A.P.S.

Tune: If You're Happy and You Know It  
Written by: Dr. Walther

**C**haracters, **L**ocation, **A**ction, **P**roblem and **S**olution

**C**haracters, **L**ocation, **A**ction, **P**roblem and **S**olution

When you use the elements

Then your story will make sense

**C**haracters, **L**ocation, **A**ction, **P**roblem and **S**olution



# Guiding Readers

## The Three Steps to Effective Guided Reading Lessons

- Pinpoint an instructional focus
- Select an appropriate text that is slightly challenging
- Determine which teaching points will scaffold readers so they can take the next step in becoming more independent

### Pinpoint an Instructional Focus

**Monitoring**—First and foremost, if the reader is not monitoring for meaning, we scaffold, prompt, and teach this foundational skill.

**Decoding**—If the reader stops at a tricky word, then we prompt for decoding strategies and reinforce decoding as a teaching point.

**Fluency**—Fluency comes next because once a reader develops automaticity with words and decoding, he or she is ready to be prompted for fluency.

**Vocabulary**—It is common for skilled decoders to plow right through unknown words, decode them accurately, but not use the context clues to figure out the meaning of the word. Scaffolding vocabulary is an ideal teaching point for transitional and fluent readers!

**Comprehension**—Comprehension appears last in the sequence because it is the *goal of every guided reading lesson* and the previous scaffolds and teaching points will support the readers' understanding of the text.

### Match the Text to Your Instructional Focus

Focus	Text Features	A Few of My Favorites
Decoding	Some challenging words to decode	Scholastic Guided Science Readers (Levels A-D)
Fluency	Dialogue, few decoding challenges	Elephant and Piggie, Fly Guy
Vocabulary	Unfamiliar words with text or illustration clues (context, known parts, glossary)	Scholastic Vocabulary Readers
Retell	Straightforward storyline, supportive illustrations	<i>Frog's Lunch</i> by Dee Lillegard, <i>My Lucky Day</i> by Keiko Kasza
Main Idea	Informational texts with supportive text features like headings, diagrams, or captions	<i>Critters in Camouflage</i> by Karen Alexander, <i>Hibernation</i> by Tori Kosara both from Scholastic Common Core Text Sets
Infer	Fables, short stories, poetry, texts with surprises	Fables by Arnold Lobel <i>Teaching Struggling Readers With Poetry</i> (Walther & Fuhler, 2010)

### Scaffold, Prompt, Teach

Focus	Sample Prompts
Monitoring	Reread and think about what would make sense and begins with that letter.
Decoding	Get your mouth ready to say the first sound.
Fluency	Reread it the way the character would say it.
Vocabulary	Look at the picture/text feature to help you better understand that word.
Retell	Tell me about what you just read.
Main Idea	What are the key ideas the author wanted you to learn?
Infer	How do you think the character feels about _____? What evidence/clues helped you to figure that out?

Source: *Next Step Guided Reading Assessment* (Richardson & Walther, 2013)



## Transform Your Classroom Into a Reading Zone

Atwell, Nancie. (2007). *The Reading Zone: How to Help Kids Become Skilled, Passionate, Habitual, Critical Readers*. New York: Scholastic.

Nancie teaches 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade reading, writing, and history at the Center for Teaching and Learning, a K-8 demonstration school she founded in Edgecomb, Maine in 1990.

The Top Ten School Conditions to Help Students Enter *THE READING ZONE* as determined by her students (p. 23):

### 1. **Booktalks** and mini-lessons

The most important work as a reading teacher *is to become so intimate with good books that we bring life, with our voices to the tattered spines that line the shelves of our libraries* (p. 67).

*A book talk is simply a short, direct enthusiastic endorsement of a book we love. Who the main character is, what his/her problem is, a bit of the plot, maybe a theme of the book or its genre, and what made you love it - why you rated it a 9 or 10.*

2. A big, diverse classroom library with regular new additions
3. Quiet, daily in-class time to read
4. Individuals' free choice of books, authors, and genres
5. Recommendations of books from friends and the teacher and a **special bookshelf for kids' favorites**. You can access the **Kids Recommend Pages** at [www.c-t-l.org](http://www.c-t-l.org).
6. Comfort during in-class reading time
7. Students' letters to teacher and friends about their reading
8. Individuals' conversation with the teacher about their reading
9. Individuals' lists of books that want to read someday (**Someday pages in reading/writing notebook**)
10. Homework reading of at least a half an hour every night

# Explore the W. O. R. L. D.

## Be a Writer—The Writing Center

### Purpose

In the writing center students have an opportunity to write independently and apply what they are learning during writing workshop.

### Writing Center Materials

- A variety of paper in different shapes, sizes, and colors
- Little books
- Colored Pens/Pencils
- Envelopes/Mailbox

### Writing Center Menu Ideas

- *My Book of Colors*—Copy crayon shapes on different colors of paper. List or draw things that are that color.
- *My Idea Notebook*—A notebook filled with ideas for writing! See *Month-by-Month Trait Based Writing Instruction* (Walther & Phillips, 2009, p. 176-178)
- *My Alphabet Book*—Read a variety of alphabet books. Place a collection in the writing center. Give students a booklet with letters of alphabet - List or draw things that begin with that letter.
- Notes and Lists: After teaching "Jot it Down!" mini-lesson see *Month-by-Month Trait Based Writing Instruction* (Walther & Phillips, 2009, p. 100) during writing workshop provide note and list paper (p. 183) in the writing center.
- Riddles
- *My Shape Book*—Make shape books of animals, plants, etc. Students write words, sentences, or phrases to describe that thing.
- Beginning, Middle, and End mini-book
- Poetry writing
- Biographies of family members
- Informational writing—Research reports

## Be an Observer—The Exploration Station

### Purpose

Do you occasionally run out of time for your science and social studies lessons? To solve this problem, Kathy and I created this center to enhance our content area instruction and provide time for students to observe and explore content-related books and materials. Observers are always excited to share their new learning, and we're amazed at how much they discover on their own when given time to observe, think, and learn together. It is best if you match the materials in this center to what you are studying in your classroom. Students can record their observations on individual recording sheets, on sticky notes to add to a chart posted nearby entitled "What I Noticed/What I Learned," or in a "Be an Observer" notebook that they only use in this center.

<b>September</b>	A basket of wordless books, art prints, digital media
<b>October</b>	A basket of wordless books, art prints, digital media
<b>November</b>	Air and Weather Unit—air experiments, weather log
<b>December</b>	Solar System Unit—planet posters, space books
<b>January</b>	A basket of traditional tales
<b>February</b>	History—President posters, biographies/Geography—maps, globes
<b>March</b>	A basket of poetry books, post-its for noticing craft techniques
<b>April</b>	Rock Unit—rocks/gems, magnifying glasses, rock identification posters, books
<b>May</b>	Insect Unit—caterpillars, bug books, insect diagrams

# Be a Reader—The Reading Center

## Purpose

The reading center is a place for students to practice reading self-selected books and apply the strategies they are learning during read aloud, shared reading, and guided reading. Through repeated reading, partner reading, discussion, and response they apply their newly learned skills to authentic reading situations.

## Reading Center Materials

- Books, books and more books!! Your classroom library should be well stocked with a variety of genre including poetry, picture books, informational books, mystery, fantasy, and popular series books. Gather inviting books to meet your students' interests and reading abilities.
- Bins, baskets, tubs, shelves. Organize your books in a way that makes sense to you and your students. Some teachers prefer to let their children assist in book organization.
- Students' individual "Book Boxes" or "Book Bags"
- Comfortable pillows, chairs, bean bags
- Carpet
- A lamp or two for atmosphere
- A place for students to record their reading and/or responses to what they have read (optional).
  - Reading Record - List of what they have read
  - Reading Log - Responses to what they have read
  - Critic's Corner
  - Book Recommendation Chart
  - Graphic organizers for reading response

## Reading Center Mini-lessons

- The care and keeping of books
- Getting a book and putting it away
- Choosing a "just right" book
- Reading with a partner
- Responding to a book
- What do I do when I'm finished with a book?

## Be a Listener—The Listening Center

### Purpose

As students enjoy audio books, they hear fluent reading modeled. They can listen to books that are above their independent reading level.

### Listening Center Materials

- Books with CD, MP3, Cassette Tapes
- Individual Headsets (optional)
- Teacher-made recordings/Activities

### Listening Center Mini-lessons

- How to insert, play, and put away a CD.
- How to adjust the volume
- What to do if the machine is not working
- How to work together to choose an audio book.

## Be a Word Detective

### Purpose

To reinforce the skills learned during systematic word study. Include activities and games that review consonants, short vowels, long vowels, blends, digraphs, sight words, and so on.

### Word Detective Center Materials

- File Folder Games
- Word Games
- Wal-Mart Games
- Target Games
- Any kind of games
- Games, Games, Games
- Play-Doh to make words
- Phonemic Awareness Games

### Word Detective Mini-lessons

- Setting up and cleaning up the games
- Reviewing the rules
- Deciding who goes first?
- Taking turns
- What do you do when you don't agree? Compromising.

## Noteworthy Resources about Teaching Reading

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- Hoyt, L. (2005). *Spotlight on comprehension*. Heinemann.
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- Keene, E. O. (2012). *Talk about understanding: Rethinking classroom talk to enhance comprehension*. Heinemann.
- Miller, D. (2013). *Reading with meaning: Teaching comprehension in the primary grades* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed). Stenhouse.
- Miller, D. (2008). *Teaching with intention: Defining beliefs, aligning practice, taking action*. Stenhouse.
- Miller, D., & Moss, B. (2013). *No more independent reading without support*. Heinemann.
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