

**TEACHER RESOURCE**  
**FOR**  
**READING**  
**WORKSHOP**  
**GRADES 3 - 5**



## ***Welcome to Reading Workshop!***

This resource was compiled to support your implementation of Reading Workshop. The workshop model of instruction has many components and each plays a significant role. Reading Workshop is no exception. From creating classroom libraries to conferring with readers, there is much to learn and to put into practice. The items included in this resource are intended to help you learn more about the components and to offer options for your classroom practices.

The components of Reading Workshop are listed as section headings in the table of contents. Under each section, you'll find a list of the items in the resource that support that particular component. The entire resource can be accessed on the share drive, if you wish to have a "clean" or color copy.

No one resource can provide all that is needed to become a strong, confident teacher in the context of Reading Workshop. Nothing can replace your personal study to learn more, your reflection on what is and is not working in your classroom, participation in professional development activities, and collegial conversations. But it is our hope, whether you are a workshop "newbie" or seasoned veteran, the *Teacher Resource for Reading Workshop* will prove to be a practical tool for professional learning, for teaching practices, and, most importantly, for student growth.



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*from Wachusett Regional School District*

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# Section I

## GETTING TO KNOW READING WORKSHOP



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COMPREHENSIVE LITERACY FRAMEWORK

	Word Study	Reading Instruction	Writing Instruction
Kindergarten	60-90 minutes/week	60 minutes/week	90 minutes/week
Grades One-Two	15-20 minutes	45-90 minutes	45-60 minutes
		<p><b>Whole Class &amp; Small Group</b> Phonological Awareness Phonics/ Spelling High- frequency Word Study Structural Analysis Interactive Edit *</p>	<p><b>Reading Workshop:</b> Focus Lesson (10-15 min.) Independent Reading (30-45 min.) Conferring Group Share (5 min.)</p> <p><b>Small Group Instruction:</b> Guided Reading Strategy Groups Book Clubs/ Literature Circles</p> <p>Independent Literacy Work/ Centers</p> <p><b>Writing Workshop:</b> Focus Lesson (10-15 min.) Independent Writing/Conferring (25-45 min.) Conferring Group Share (5 min.)</p> <p><b>Small Group Instruction:</b> Strategy Groups Interactive Writing</p>
Grades Three-Five	15-20 minutes	30-45 minutes	60 minutes
		<p><b>Whole Class &amp; Small Group</b> Phonics/ Spelling High- frequency Word Study Vocabulary Structural Analysis Interactive Edit * Grammar*</p>	<p><b>Reading Workshop:</b> Focus Lesson (10-15 min.) Independent Reading (40-45 min.) Conferring Group Share (5 min.)</p> <p><b>Small Group Instruction:</b> Guided Reading Strategy Groups Book Clubs/ Literature Circles</p> <p>Independent Literacy Activities</p> <p><b>Writing:</b> Shared Writing Interactive Writing Interactive Edit* Handwriting</p> <p><b>Writing Workshop:</b> Focus Lesson (10-15 min.) Independent Writing &amp; Related Writing Activities (40-45 min.) Writing in a Writers' Notebook Writing Exercises Reading to Support Writing Drafting Peer Conferencing Publishing Mid-Workshop Share (as needed)</p> <p>Conferring Group Share (5 min.)</p> <p><b>Small Group Instruction:</b> Strategy Groups</p>
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# Food for Thought

## Definition of Reading

\* Comparing the role of a teacher with the role of an artist brings to mind the best definition of reading I have ever read:

Reading comprehension is a process that involves the orchestrations of the reader's prior experience and knowledge about the world and about language. It involves such interrelated strategies as predicting, questioning, summarizing, determining meanings of vocabulary in context, monitoring one's own comprehension, and reflecting. The process also involves such affective factors as motivation, ownership, purpose, and self-esteem. It takes place in and is governed by a specific context, and it is dependent on social interaction. It is the integration of all these processes that accounts for comprehension. They are not isolable, measurable subfactors. They are wholistic processes for constructing meaning. (Bartoli and Botel 1988)

I have read this definition a hundred times, and every time I read it I am struck by the many complex factors that come into play when one reads difficult text. If my students are to have any chance of becoming deeper readers, I must do more than simply assign questions at the end of each chapter or pull worksheets from a file cabinet. There is a big difference between *assigning* students difficult reading and *teaching* them how to read deeply. This definition reminds me that I am a *teacher*, not merely an information dispenser; and as a teacher, I will enter my classroom tomorrow morning with the goal of helping my students learn what deeper readers do.

\*p. 216, from *Deeper Reading: Comprehending Challenging Texts, 4 – 12* by Kelly Gallagher (2004)

# The Origin of Reading Workshop

From *Guiding Readers and Writers Grades 3-6* by Fountas & Pinnell (pp. 40-42)

Reading workshop grew out of any number of individual approaches to teaching reading over the years. The concept of a systematic and easily implemented active approach to independent reading was introduced by Atwell (1987, 1998) and has been developed by several other theorists and practitioners (Hagerty 1994; Hindley 1998; Hansen 1987; Harwayne 2000). Atwell's pioneering work offered an alternative to the tradition of "assigning" reading. Her reading workshop invited students to become more actively involved in their own learning and, in the process, to learn more about how to read various kinds of texts. This workshop approach appealed to students in ways that traditional assignments did not, and it offered teachers a chance to delve into students' perspectives and offer systematic teaching when appropriate. Atwell writes:

In establishing the structure of the reading workshop and organizing who would do what, when, and where, I looked to writing workshop for parallels. Writers had time in class to write, choices of topics and genres, access to materials, opportunities for peers to respond to their writing, and instruction and demonstrations from me in minilessons and conferences. I began to push the parallels across the curriculum, beginning with the right to choose one's own books. (1998, 35-36)

## Expanding the Reading Workshop

Although independent reading is productive, intermediate students also benefit from other kinds of instruction. They need further opportunities and further instructional support to develop their reading skills. Many needs that are evident across the group can be addressed in whole- or small-group instruction.

Thus, we have expanded the reading workshop to encompass not only the independent reading that Atwell describes, but also small-group guided reading and literature study. All three contexts provide active learning and help students become more competent readers. Integrating all three approaches provides variety in the reading program and also allows for more explicit teaching to help students develop a range of effective strategies.

Instruction also must be efficient. Both guided reading and literature study help you make the best use of your teaching day. There is simply not enough time to teach every student individually, and small-group instruction is a flexible option.

Guided reading is built around small homogeneous groups. In your regular conferences with individuals, you gain important information about their unique strengths and needs. You observe patterns across the

group that you can use to cluster students who have similar learning needs. You then teach important concepts and principles to these homogeneous groups of readers and select texts that offer appropriate supports and challenges.

Literature study, built around small heterogeneous groups, also provides more powerful and significant learning than does working alone. With your guidance, students thoughtfully and thoroughly analyze a text together, learning more about the meaning of texts than they could on their own. The small-group context offers both specific teaching and expanded thinking and support.

## Why Call It a Workshop?

We like using *workshop* to describe these three reading contexts because it suggests a group of people actively engaged in purposeful tasks. Activity is exactly what we wish to stress. Students learn by doing. Students learn to read by reading rather than simply hearing *about* reading:

Not many years ago I began to play the cello. Most people would say that what I am doing is "learning to play" the cello. But these words carry into our minds the strange idea that there exists two very different processes: (1) learning to play the cello, and (2) playing the cello. They imply that I will do the first until I have completed it, at which point I will stop the first process and begin the second. In short, I will go on "learning to play" until I have "learned to play" and then I will begin to play. Of course, this is nonsense. We learn to do something by doing it. There is no other way. (Holt 132)

A reading workshop is a laboratory in which individual students are busily engaged in reading that reflects real life; that is, they are reading in ways that match what readers do all their lives. In the reading workshop, students:

- Learn how to work together.
- Set goals and evaluate their own accomplishments.
- Engage in meaningful communication about what they read.
- Take responsibility for their own learning and supporting the learning of each other.
- Work at their own pace but are expected to accomplish a series of tasks.
- Make choices and carry out assignments.

## Characteristics of the Reading Workshop

From *Guiding Readers and Writers Grades 3-6* by Fountas & Pinnell (pp. 42-43)

The reading workshop, as broadly defined, has some important characteristics that contribute to its effective use (see Figure 4-2):

1. *Readers learn how to work together as a community, supporting one another as well as pursuing individual goals.* They meet in guided reading groups to explore a common text at an appropriate level for learning more about reading. They meet in literature study groups to explore literary elements and analyze a common text or several related texts. In this context, they can share their perspectives and learn about others' views. In the sharing sessions that follow independent reading, they communicate with each other about what they are learning. Every learner has an equal voice, and passion, caring, and respect are highly valued. Collaboration is characteristic of the workshop setting, not only cooperation among students but between adults and students. Students help one another learn and share their successes.
2. *Readers talk, read, and write about things in which they are genuinely interested.* Students usually select texts for independent reading that they want or need to explore. You may occasionally assign a text, but always with the reader's interests and strengths

3. *Readers are actively engaged in reading.* Most of the instructional time is dedicated to reading continuous text—books, stories, and informational pieces rather than lists of words, multiple-choice questions, pieces of textbooks, or short paragraphs followed by questions. Students are active agents in their own learning; you provide the materials, information, and experiences that enable them to develop systems for learning more.
4. *The reading workshop is designed to build on each student's strengths and meet his needs.* You can adjust the balance of individual, small-group, and large-group activities to provide the amount of teaching and the level of support that individual students need. For example, some students will need guided reading just about every day. Other students need more time to read independently, exploring the range of texts and topics that engage them. The lively conversations in literature study groups stretch even the less capable readers to absorb books they might not be able to tackle on their own. Informed by your assessment records and sensitive observations of your students, you know how to challenge and lift each one's learning.
5. *Readers take responsibility for their learning.* Although you provide much explicit instruction during reading workshop, students have important roles as well. With your guidance, they learn to set their own goals. They evaluate their own procedures, accomplishments, and progress as readers. They also enjoy making important contributions to the group that will help others learn.
6. *The reading workshop is rigorous and challenging, with clear expectations for students' accomplishments.* In literature study, students are expected to read and reflect on a selection and share their insights with classmates. In guided reading, they read a text that offers challenges in comprehension, text organization, or word solving. Your support enables them to solve problems in reading a text that requires more of them. Students keep records of and monitor their independent reading, documenting their accomplishments as readers. All three contexts are organized around routines and support structures that bring intention and rigor to the process.

Essential Characteristics of the Reading Workshop
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>❖ A community of learners.</li><li>❖ Genuine talk, reading, and writing.</li><li>❖ Individual strengths and needs.</li><li>❖ Individual and group responsibility.</li><li>❖ High expectations for achievement.</li><li>❖ High level of engagement.</li></ul>

Figure 4-2. Essential Characteristics of Reading Workshop

in mind. All reading is extended through talk, and much is extended through various kinds of writing. The social nature of the workshop helps students better understand what they are learning. This talking, reading, and writing provides multiple sources of information and exposes students to a variety of perspectives.

## The Advantages of Reading Workshop

From *Guiding Readers and Writers Grades 3-6* by Fountas & Pinnell (pp. 43-45)

### *The Advantages of Reading Workshop*

Implementing a reading workshop produces multifaceted results, all of which reflect the kind of reading ability that lifelong readers exhibit and therefore contribute to the quality of life.

#### ***IT BUILDS AN EFFECTIVE READING PROCESS***

In reading workshop, students read a variety of increasingly challenging texts that require them to use strategies in different ways. Literature study helps students learn to extend the meaning of texts and make connections among and between texts. In both independent reading and guided reading, teacher support helps students enjoy reading and learn more about themselves as readers at the same time.

You don't first learn about reading and then read. You learn how to read as you read.

#### ***IT INCREASES THE AMOUNT STUDENTS READ***

In the reading workshop setting, students receive the support and guidance they need to do a great deal of reading over the course of a school year. The amount of reading matters. We want our intermediate students to "put on miles" as readers—to read thousands of words, embedded in meaningful texts, every day. Their attention is seldom on words alone—it's on the meaning and the interesting aspects of the texts—but they solve words every time they read.

Research indicates that how much students read is important. Anderson, Wilson, and Fielding (1988) asked 155 fifth-grade students to note every day how many minutes they spent on a variety of activities outside of school, over periods ranging from eight to

twenty-six weeks. These researchers also gathered information about the students' reading achievement from second through fifth grade. The results (see Figure 4-3) were startling. "Among all the ways children spent their time, reading books was the best predictor of several measures of reading achievement, including gains in reading achievement between second and fifth

Percentile Rank	Minutes Per Day		Words Read Per Year	
	Books	Text	Books	Text
98	65.0	76.3	4,358,000	4,733,000
90	21.2	33.4	1,823,000	2,357,000
80	14.2	24.6	1,146,000	1,697,000
70	9.6	16.9	622,000	1,168,000
60	6.5	13.1	432,000	722,000
50	4.6	9.2	282,000	601,000
40	3.2	6.2	200,000	421,000
30	1.8	4.3	106,000	251,000
20	0.7	2.4	21,000	134,000
10	.1	1.0	8,000	51,000
2	0	0	0	8,000

Anderson, Richard C.  
Wilson, P.T.  
Fielding, L.G.  
*Growth in Reading and How Children Spend Their Time Outside of School*, 1988, Reading Research Quarterly, #23, pp. 285-303

Figure 4-3. *Good and Poor Readers*

grade. However, on most days most children did little or no book reading [outside of school]" (285).

During the reading workshop, whatever the particular instructional contexts of any given day, the student spends almost a full hour processing text. On average, over time, a student spends about thirty-five to forty-five minutes reading texts and fifteen to twenty-five minutes either discussing or writing about texts. It is obvious that time is a precious commodity in the intermediate classroom; reading workshop makes it possible to use time efficiently and intensively to assure maximum student engagement.

#### ***IT INCREASES OWNERSHIP OF AND COMMITMENT TO READING***

In reading workshop, students often select their own books, although you may also recommend and assign books. Choice is important to readers' enjoyment. In

their independent reading, students usually select their own texts, with your guidance, thus increasing their commitment to the texts and their ownership of the process. Choice helps students become more aware of themselves as readers and develop their own interests and tastes. They learn how to select wisely and to monitor the breadth of their choices so that they begin to control their own development as readers.

In the other two contexts, guided reading and literature study, you either select books for children or guide their choices carefully. To do this, you need to know the readers and know how to engage them. In this way, students encounter texts they might not have selected on their own and learn about new genres, new authors, and new styles of writing.

### *IT BROADENS READERS' LITERARY EXPERIENCES*

The *kinds* of reading students do also matters. You play an important role in helping students make good choices, not only to increase the amount and quality of what they read but also to help them gain breadth as readers. One of the purposes of guided reading in the intermediate grades is to introduce students to new genres and to the various ways in which fiction and nonfiction writers present information. You will want to include explicit examples of how to notice and use the structure of texts. Literature study invites students to analyze the features of a rich variety of texts. Guided reading and literature study nourish independent reading because students become acquainted with books different from those they would choose on their own and develop confidence in their ability to read different kinds of books.

As part of independent reading, students should be encouraged to evaluate their own lists of books and topics and think about how they might increase their breadth as readers. Here's how one teacher encouraged a reader to expand his choices:

TEACHER: What do you notice about your list?

STUDENT: I read mostly books about dinosaurs.

TEACHER: What do you think about that?

STUDENT: I'm really interested in reading about dinosaurs.

TEACHER: Yes, you are. Remember how I explained that one of the ways you can become a better reader is to read different kinds of books this year? What might you do to be sure you are also reading other kinds of books?

STUDENT: I could read books about other things, like space, or I could read fiction books sometimes.

TEACHER: Did you like *Henry Huggins* (Cleary 1985) when I read it to the class?

STUDENT: Yes, I read it myself too.

TEACHER: Beverly Cleary has written a lot of books, and they are in that basket over there. You might want to look at them to see if there's one you would like to read.

### *IT DEVELOPS RESPONSIBILITY FOR READING*

Through independent reading, students become reflective and skillful planners of their reading "diet." They keep their own records, evaluating the number as well as the kinds of books they have read. They also evaluate the quality of their written responses. They even record potential titles and topics or genres of interest in anticipation of future reading. What an exciting change from quickly scanning a shelf because they have to "pick a book."

Students also learn to respect others' learning. They learn to care for books not because they belong to the teacher but so their classmates can read them. They learn the value of quiet work not because the teacher requires it but because their peers are reading and concentrating. Their actions have community value that transcends simply doing what they are told.

In literature study, students must be prepared to work with their group. Their contributions are important because they extend the learning of their peers. In guided reading, students read the assigned selection and complete any related tasks, such as writing about the text or analyzing it in some way. Readers must "keep on schedule" so that the group can have productive meetings to discuss the text and to continue reading it at a good pace. They also need to apply what you teach them in minilessons—for example, to notice how an author uses time in a story, to predict how a character might be feeling, or to look at prefixes.

### *IT ENCOURAGES PERSONAL CONNECTIONS*

Reading workshop enables students to bring their own experiences and interests to the act of reading. In guided reading, you prompt them to share things in their background that relate to the text you have chosen for the group to read. In independent reading, even though students make their own choices and read at their own pace, you talk with them about their reading afterward, bringing out and reinforcing the personal connections they have made.

### *IT TEACHES COLLABORATION*

Readers learn how to talk with one another about their reading, sharing what they think things mean and helping others see things in a new way. In guided reading and literature study, there is a clear expectation that readers will be prepared and contribute to the discussion so that everyone can learn more and enjoy the experience. Students also have opportunities to talk about and recommend the books they read independently. They learn to be considerate of others, sharing space and materials.

**DIFFERENCES BETWEEN SSR OR D.E.A.R.  
AND INDEPENDENT READING IN READING WORKSHOP**

<b>SSR- Sustained Silent Reading D.E.A.R.- Drop Everything And Read</b>	<b>Independent Reading</b>
Student chooses any book	Student chooses book with teacher support as needed
Books may be above or below independent reading level	Student chooses "just right" books (at independent level; 95-100% accuracy; fluency; & comprehension in place)
Daily reading time is 10-30 minutes	Daily reading time is 30-45 minutes; Ideally, students read at home for an equal amount of time
Teacher "models" by reading his or her own book, reading along with the students	Teacher circulates, monitors comprehension and teaches one-on-one through conferences
Extension of reading is not required	Students respond in writing typically once a week
No reading goals	Student and teachers set goals
Students are not accountable for volume of text read	Students keep a reading log and set reading goals for volume and genres
No instruction required	Instruction occurs in focus lessons, conferences, as mid-workshop reminders, and in the whole group share



## The Architecture of Reading Workshop

### **Focus Lesson**

The whole class is brought together to learn a new strategy that furthers their reading development. The lesson is short and concise, focused on a specific objective. In September, the focus lessons are mostly about establishing routines and procedures so the children can function productively and independently of the teacher.

### **Independent Reading of Self-Selected Text**

Students:

Independent reading of "just right" books  
Responding in writing to reading

Teacher:

Observing/ Conferring/Assessing

### **Whole Group Share**

The whole class is brought together again to address the objective of the Focus Lesson



### **Book Talks**

The students' interest in books is fed as new books are presented by the teacher and by fellow classmates in brief BOOK TALKS. In September, this is the primary means by which students get to know the books that are in their classroom library. The BOOK TALK portion of the lesson may occur at different points during the Reading Workshop.





## **WHAT ABOUT SMALL GROUP INSTRUCTION?**

Most teachers choose to meet with small group of students during the independent reading portion of Reading Workshop. Groups of students meet with the teacher as the other students engage in silent reading or writing in a reader's notebook. When given the luxury of a longer period to teach literacy, some schedule meeting with small groups as a separate time apart from Reading Workshop.

### ***Kinds of Small Groups***

**Guided Reading Groups:** An instructional approach in which you bring together a small group of students who are **similar enough in their reading development** that they can be taught together for a period of time. The teacher selects a **leveled text** that provides opportunities for student to expand their reading processing powers.

**Strategy Groups:** An instructional approach in which you bring together a small group of students who are **in need of supplemental teaching** on the same skill or strategy. Students in these groups **read at various levels** and **read from their independent reading books** to practice with the teacher what has been taught in the lesson. Sometimes, teachers make copies of a short text that everyone in the group CAN read. Strategy groups often meet only one or two times-just long enough to get what they need.

**Book Clubs/ Literature Circles/ Information Circles:** Small groups of students gather together to **discuss a piece of literature in depth**. The discussion is guided by students' response to what they have read. You may hear talk about events and characters in the book, the author's craft, or personal experiences related to the story. Literature circles provide a way for students to engage in critical thinking and reflection as they read, discuss, and respond to books. Collaboration is at the heart of this approach. Students reshape and add onto their understanding as they construct meaning with other readers. Finally, literature circles guide students to deeper understanding of what they read through structured discussion and extended written and artistic response.

SAMPLE READING WORKSHOP LESSON PLAN FORMAT

*Please write in a TABLE and not in TEXT BOXES. Thank you!*

\_\_ Grade Unit of Study # 1: Launching the Reading Workshop

Lesson 1

Title of Focus Lesson: *Adding Details to Sensory Images*

Rationale/Objective: *Readers create sensory images that are full of detail. Should reflect the teaching point*

Materials	
<b>Connection</b> <i>1-3 min.</i>	<i>Yesterday we...</i>
<b>Teaching Point</b> <i>Repeat often throughout the teaching</i>	<i>Today I am going to teach you...</i>  <i>The teaching point should be worded in a kid-friendly way so teachers can repeat it several times throughout the lesson and in conferences, etc.</i>
<b>Explicit Instruction</b> <i>5-10 min.</i>	<i>People who enjoy reading visualize, or make pictures in their mind, while they read. The best sensory images are those that have lots of details so the reader sees the whole picture. Visualizations help the reader comprehend the text. It comes alive for the reader!</i>  <i>I'm going to read to you this short poem about _____. Then I'll tell you about my sensory image. I'll also draw it on this chart paper so you can really see what I am seeing in my mind.</i>
<b>Active Engagement: Guided Practice</b> <i>3-5 min.</i>	<i>I want you to practice making sensory images that are full of detail. I'll read to you a poem about _____. As I read, Make the best visualization you can. Try to include everything that's described in the poem.</i>  <i>Now, I'll read it again and ask you to sketch your image in your Reader's Notebook.</i>
<b>Link: Send off for Independent Reading</b> <i>1 min.</i>	<i>Today, while you read, I want you to make sensory images that are full of rich detail. Remember, readers make and use these images to help them understand the text...which makes it more fun to read!</i>
Share	<i>Turn and tell a partner about the best sensory image you made during your reading. Make sure you tell them about all of the details in your image.</i>

## THE ARCHITECTURE OF EFFECTIVE FOCUS LESSONS

### CONNECTION (1 minute)" Relate & State"

This is the "listen up" phase of the focus lesson, and it generally lasts no longer than a minute. We put the day's lesson into the context of the class's on-going work.

Example:

**"Last night when I looked at your writing, I noticed a lot of you were...** So today I want to show you..."

**"Yesterday we learned that writers re-read their writing to make sure that it makes sense.** Today I want to tell you one more reason why writers reread their writing. Writers reread their writing to appreciate the sounds of their writing."

**"So far, you've learned that we can generate ideas for writing by thinking of people and places.** Today I want to show you how writers also think about things to give them ideas for writing."

### THE TEACHING POINT

After putting the teaching into context, we come straight out and tell students as clearly as possible, exactly what we want to teach them today. We end by explicitly stating **the teaching point** of the day.

Example:

**"Last night when I looked at your writing, I noticed a lot of you were... So today I want to show you..."**

**"Yesterday we learned that writers re-read their writing to make sure that it makes sense. Today I want to tell you one more reason why writers reread their writing. Writers reread their writing to appreciate the sounds of their writing."**

**"So far, you've learned that we can generate ideas for writing by thinking of people and places. Today I want to show you how writers also think about things to give them ideas for writing."**

### TEACHING (6-8 minutes)"Spotlight on Something New"

There are most often two methods used within the teaching phase of the focus lesson- demonstration and explicit explanation followed by an example. At times, teachers have students engage in guided practice or inquiry.

- **Demonstration**
- **Explicitly telling and showing an example**(teacher or a pre-selected student might share his or her work)
- **Guided Practice** (Get the student started in trying out the strategy. Scaffold to lift the quality of the child's work. More common in conferences.)
- **Inquiry** (Example: Reading many texts by one author to glean writing techniques to try out in your own writing. Students discover the techniques on their own with teacher scaffolding. Less common.)

### **ACTIVE ENGAGEMENT (2-3 minutes)"Let's try it!"**

This is the active involvement phase of the focus lesson. Students have a few minutes of scaffolded practice to "try out" the teaching point.

- Turn and Talk- What did you notice the teacher do in a demonstration? How would this work for you? How do you plan to use... in your writing? (*Partners sharing: "I noticed Mr. Smith found a place where he could add dialog to his piece. I think I could add that to my story about the sleepover at Dakota's house...the part where we told scary stories."*)
- Give it a go using a shared text/idea for writing. (*Teacher: "Look at the story we've been writing about our field trip. Can you find a place where we could add dialog so our readers know how we were feeling?"*)
- Read your partners draft and find a place where s/he could...(*Partners read one of their drafts together and determine a place to add dialog.*)

### **LINK (1-2 minutes)"Wrap up & remind"**

The teaching point is restated. You try to ensure that every child applies this new learning to their ongoing work today OR encourage children to add today's teaching point to their repertoire of possible strategies or goals.

- **Crystallize the lesson.** Consolidate it into a clear, catchy phrase.
- **Generalize the lesson.** Help the students understand that this lesson applies to every day's writing.
- **Make the transition smooth.** Think through your routines and procedures for moving students from place to place, for getting tools, etc.
- **Boost the children's writing energy.** Kids should feel "pumped"- empowered, invigorated- to write!

# Focus Lesson Planning Sheet

<b>Focus Lesson Topic</b>	<b>Giving a Book Talk</b>
<b>Materials</b>	<p>A book to use during the focus lesson for which to give a book talk</p> <p>Independent reading bag with 3-5 titles, including several fiction books.</p>
<b>Connection</b> 1 minute	<p><i>Over the past few weeks you have been learning a lot about retelling. Remember, readers have to figure out and say the words on the page, but readers also have to <u>think</u> about what they are reading. Retelling is a kind of thinking that readers do. Retelling is telling the important parts of a story over again in the right order. Retelling helps readers understand a story and remember it longer. Retelling also lets us tell others what a book is about which is something you might want to do when you are telling a friend about a book he or she might want to read.</i></p>
<b>Explicit Instruction</b> 5-10 minutes  Make an anchor chart entitled Giving A Book Talk with these steps:  Title Author Character(s) Setting Problem Main Events Solution Ending (don't give too much away) Your thoughts about the book	<p><i>Today, I'm going to show you how a reader can use retelling while giving a book talk. A book talk is when you talk about a book. You don't read the whole book to that person. You tell someone about a book, retelling the story and saying some things that will let another reader think if he or she would like to read that book too. Demonstrate giving a book talk about the book chosen for this focus lesson. Model the following parts:</i></p> <p><i>First I will tell you the title _____</i></p> <p><i>Then I will you the author _____</i></p> <p><i>Now I will retell the story. I will tell you the name(s) of the main character(s). _____</i></p> <p><i>I will tell you the setting. _____</i></p> <p><i>I will tell you about the problem. _____</i></p> <p><i>I will tell you about the important things that happen in the story as the problem is worked out. _____</i></p> <p><i>*Now I will tell you a LITTLE about the ending. If the ending is something that is better enjoyed if a reader is surprised by it when he or she is reading it, then I will be careful not to give too much away. I don't want to spoil the surprise or the ending for someone reading the book later. _____</i></p> <p><i>Finally, I will tell you why I liked this story and why I wanted to tell you about it. _____</i></p>

<p><b>Guided Practice</b> 5 minutes</p>	<p><i>It's your turn to think about how to give a book talk. Look at this chart and then turn and talk to a partner. Tell each other the things you should talk about when you are giving a book talk to someone else about a story you have read.</i></p>
<p><b>Send Off [for Independent Practice]</b> about 15-20. for gr. 1 about 20-25 min.or more for gr.2/3 (Hopefully by now, the time spent in independent reading has increased since the launch of RW.) *Independent Reading time should increase as year progresses. **It is important to end time period while students are still actively engaged in their reading.</p>	<p><i>Now you will be going off to do Independent Reading. Walk quietly to your spot and read from your book bag (box). While you are reading think about what is happening in the story. Think about what you would say if you were going to give a book talk about the story you are reading.</i></p>
<p><b>Group Share</b></p>	<p>Choose one student (perhaps while you are conferring) to give a book talk about the story he/she read during IR.</p>

Possible follow up: A second lesson with another book talk (referring back to anchor chart) and with guided practice and/or share where everyone gives a book talk to a partner.

Anchor Chart: How To Give A Book Talk  
 Say:  
 The Title  
 The Author  
 The Main Character(s)  
 The Setting  
 The Problem  
 The Important Things That Happen  
 The Solution  
 The Ending (Don't give too much away!!)  
 Why you liked the story.

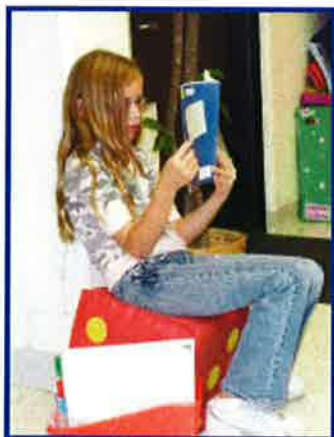
# Launching the Reading Workshop



We spend the first month of school learning the rules and procedures for reading workshop in our classroom. Below are some of the rules, routines, and mini-lessons that have been introduced to readers on Planet 13.

<p>First students learned about the 3 parts of Reading Workshop: <b>Mini-Lesson</b>, <b>Individualized Daily Reading</b>, and <b>Closing</b>.</p> <p>This helped them understand that reading workshop follows the same predictable structure everyday.</p> <p><u><a href="#">Learn more about the structure of Reading Workshop.</a></u></p>	
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<h2>Mini-Lesson</h2> <p>You and your classmates sit on the carpet for a short lesson while the teacher teaches you a strategy to help you become a better reader.</p>	<h2>IDR</h2> <h3>Individualized Daily Reading</h3> <p>You read books quietly in your book nook to help you practice what you learned in the mini-lesson.</p> <p><b>Other Things you Might Be Doing:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reading with the teacher in a Reader Reading Group</li> <li>Asking about what you're reading</li> <li>Talking about reading with your Reading Partner</li> <li>Having a Conference with the Teacher</li> <li>Discussing books with classmates in a Book Club</li> </ul>	<h2>Closing</h2> <p>You and your classmates meet back on the carpet to review the mini-lesson and talk about your reading.</p> <p>On some days you might meet with your reading partner for closing time.</p>



Students were then introduced to the concept of Book Nooks. Readers began trying out different places in the room in hopes of discovering the "best place" to read.



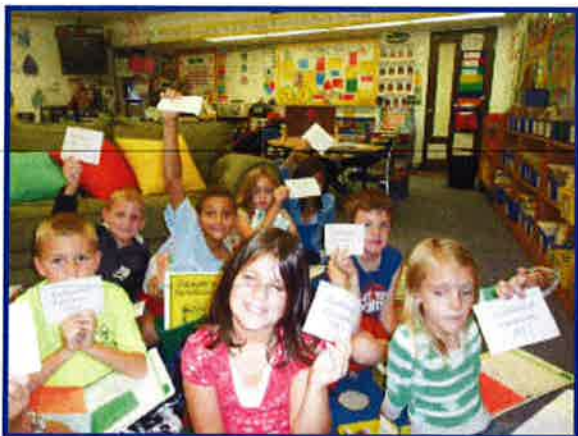
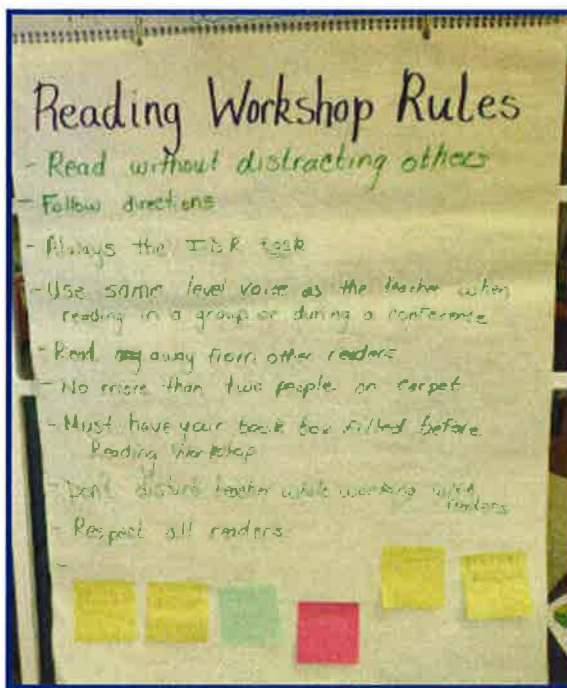
Students selected new books from the class library and learned how to record books in their reading logs.





During a mini-lesson on choosing "Just Right" books, we compared a "just right" book to a shirt that fits perfectly. An oversized shirt or a shirt that is too small are not very comfortable to wear. We used that idea as an analogy for books that are easy or challenging.

After spending a week in the reading workshop, students were familiar with the routine and were ready to make rules. The class agreed upon a list of rules that all readers should follow in order to make workshop time most beneficial and enjoyable for all readers.



When recording books in their reading log, students are asked to indicate the genre of the book with a genre code. To help them understand how to do this accurately, students were introduced to the different genres in three consecutive mini-lessons.

To practice naming the genre of a book, students played "Name that Genre." The teacher gives a description of a pre-selected book and describes a few important elements of the story. Based on the teacher's clues, students hold up a genre card and "Name that Genre."

[Learn more about studying genres in the reading workshop.](#)

We created a Self-Checklist to monitor our own reading habits during IDR time. Mrs. Gordon typed it up and copied it so that we can fill it out at the end of IDR everyday.



## Independent Reading Self-Checklist



Date: \_\_\_\_\_

I completed the IDR task.	YES!								
I read books that were "just right" for me									
I got "lost" in my book today!									
I respected all readers on Planet 13 by reading quietly to myself.									
I worked with Mrs. Newingham or Mrs. Gordon today.									
The genre of the book I read today was:									
RF	F	M	TL	HF	SF	P	I	B	AB
Number of Pages I Read Today: _____									

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

I completed the IDR task.	YES!								
I read books that were "just right" for me									
I got "lost" in my book today!									
I respected all readers on Planet 13 by reading quietly to myself.									
I worked with Mrs. Newingham or Mrs. Gordon today.									
The genre of the book I read today was:									
RF	F	M	TL	HF	SF	P	I	B	AB
Number of Pages I Read Today: _____									

[Read More about Reading Workshop](#)

## TEACHER INTERVENTIONS FOR READING DIFFICULTIES

Student Behavior	Teacher Intervention	Possible Feedback
Reader constantly abandons text.	Assist with book selection, highlighting books at the appropriate readability and interest level.	<p><i>What kinds of books do you like to read?</i>  <i>Is this a "just right" book?</i>  <i>Is this a "vacation" book?</i>  <i>Is this a "dream" book?</i>  <i>Did you use the 5-finger test to choose a book?</i></p>
Reader spends more time browsing than reading.	Teacher assists with book choice and closely monitors initial reading of text.	<p><i>Let me help you choose a book.</i>  <i>Let's take a few minutes together while you read this book.</i>  <i>Read this page and then stop and tell me what happened.</i></p>
Student selects book that is too difficult.	Help student find book on the same topic that is easier to read. Adult can read the more difficult book with the student. Assist student in strategy for future book selection, e.g. the five-finger test.	<p><i>I can tell you are interested in reading about _____.</i>  <i>This book may be a little difficult, but I can help you find another book on _____.</i>  <i>Is this a book you want to read <u>with</u> someone?</i>  <i>Let me tell you what I do to choose a book</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● 5-finger test</li> <li>● read first page and then read in middle of the book</li> </ul>
Student sounds like a reader but demonstrates little comprehension of text.	<p>Points to ponder:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● interest level</li> <li>● prior knowledge</li> <li>● ask to think /pause/retell</li> <li>● determine where comprehension breaks down (sentence, paragraph, page)</li> </ul>	<p><i>What do you know about this subject?</i>  <i>Is this a topic that interests you?</i>  <i>Stop here and think about what you just read.</i>  <i>Are there any words that confused you?</i></p>
Student constantly chooses books that are too easy.	Teacher acknowledges student interest (e.g. mystery, nonfiction) but guides to more appropriate level while continuing to provide support.	<p><i>This looks like another "vacation" book.</i>  <i>It looks like you are interested in _____.</i>  <i>Let's find another book on _____ when you finish this one. See me if you need help finding a book that's a "just right" book.</i></p>
Reader doesn't plan before reading.	Teacher models effective strategies such as: previewing, listing, mapping, asking questions, recalling prior knowledge.	<p><i>Before I start reading, I think about what I already know about the topic.</i>  <i>I ask myself questions that I want answered in the book.</i></p>
Reader doesn't set a purpose before reading.	Teacher reminds student of purposes for reading (to be informed, entertained, persuaded). Models strategies such as: identifying task, asking questions, making predictions.	<p><i>If there's a book jacket, I read it to try to figure out what the book might be about.</i></p> <p><i>Why do you think the author wrote this book?</i>  <i>Do you think this book will inform, entertain, or persuade you?</i>  <i>Before I start reading, I think of why I'm reading this book—interest, assignment.</i></p>

Student Behavior	Teacher Intervention	Possible Feedback
Reader shows excellent listening comprehension but has difficulty with comprehension when reading independently.	Teacher checks appropriateness of readability. Teacher models comprehension strategies.	<i>You really seemed interested when I was reading. You really understood what I was reading. I'm going to show you what I do when I am trying to understand what I read (choose strategy to model).</i>
Reader has inadequate background knowledge to be successful with text.	Teacher needs to provide background information (e.g. artifacts, maps, videos, experiences).	<i>What do you know about _____? Let's see if this book has some pictures that will help us try to understand what _____ looks like. I think I have something at home that I can bring in to help you understand about _____.</i>
Reader doesn't ask questions.	Teacher models questioning strategy showing how to question before, during, and after reading.	<i>When I read I am constantly asking questions. I ask questions <u>before</u> I start reading but I ask more questions <u>during</u> reading. <u>After</u> reading, I ask how I felt about the characters, events, the ending. I also ask questions if I am confused.</i>
Reader doesn't make predictions.	Teacher shares how to make predictions based on pictures, prior knowledge, and experiences. Also shows how to revise predictions.	<i>Good readers make predictions because of what they already know about a topic and the experiences they've had. Good readers also revise and adjust their predictions.</i>
Reader reads literally, doesn't make inferences.	Teacher models strategy for making inferences based on prior knowledge and from information in text.	<i>Readers sometimes have to act like a detective. Authors don't tell you everything. You have to read between the lines and try to figure things out.</i>
Reader doesn't visualize.	Teacher models a think aloud explaining what she visualizes based on descriptions from text.	<i>A good writer helps me get pictures in my head while I'm reading. I think about what the author is describing in the text.</i>
Student doesn't focus on major content.	Teacher assists student in monitoring comprehension by rereading when confused, adjusting rate of reading, taking notes, and using sticky notes and bookmarks.	<i>When I read nonfiction books, I read differently than when I read fiction. I slow down my rate of reading. Sometimes I take notes when I'm trying to remember information. I even use sticky notes or bookmarks.</i>
Reader doesn't reflect on passage.	Teacher models a think aloud demonstrating her reflections on text.	<i>As I read, I stop and reflect on what I've read. I might do that after a paragraph, a page, or even a chapter.</i>
Reader has difficulty remembering and summarizing.	Teacher models responding in a journal. Also provides opportunities for relating the new material to known material.	<i>To help me remember what I've read, I respond in a journal. I write questions I have, confusions I have, things that affect me personally, things I disagree with, things I really enjoy and want to remember.</i>

## Unit 1: Building a Reading Life: Stamina, Fluency, and Engagement

### Additional Teaching Points for the Unit

#### Session I

**If your children have had experience with this minilesson, perhaps because this is their second year using this series,** you will probably still want to begin the year by teaching readers that it's helpful to pause periodically and to take stock of ourselves. By asking oneself, "How's reading been for me lately?" we allow ourselves to learn from our past and to head towards our future with new resolve.

You might teach children that it helps to ask oneself, "How have my book choices been working for me?" Then, too, it can help to reflect on the context in which one reads, asking, "What sorts of things do I seem to need from other people to flourish as a reader? How have the relationships I've had with others helped or hurt my reading?"

Alternatively, you could teach children that one way a reader can reflect on his or her history as a reader is by making a time line of one's history as a reader (either in one's mind or on the page), identifying turning points. If you decide to teach readers to do this, you'll want to model by showing your own time line before setting them up to jot their own. You'll want to point out to your students that the reason to make a timeline is to reflect on it, and you will probably teach them a few questions that will lead them to mine those time lines for insights. For example, you could teach readers to look back on their time lines asking, "When was my reading life especially good for me? What made that particular time work for me? What does this suggest about my reading life in the year ahead?" Readers could also learn to look at their time lines and ask, "What has gotten in my way as a reader? What does this suggest about the reading life I want to make for myself?" Readers could be taught that it helps to ask, "As I look at my reading life, I've gone through stages. The first stage was. . . . The next stage was. . . ." Another prompt might be, "I've changed as a reader because I used to. . . . But now I. . . ."

When children talk and think about what has worked for them and what has not, you'll want to listen with great attentiveness and to use their input in order to imagine the way the new year will unfold. Be sure that you show children that you welcome their input and expect them to co-construct the reading workshop.

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A word of caution: Notice that I have described this work as techniques for you to teach readers to do on their own, with independence. Don't interpret these techniques as little assignments you can give to the class. Also, remember to be selective. I've suggested an array of options—choose one or two, but remember that you need to stay within a ten minute minilesson so that you protect time for reading.

You'll accomplish several important things through this lesson. First, you'll remind children that this year's reading workshop will stand on the shoulders of their previous

experiences, and you'll convey that you expect them to recall and use what they have already learned as readers. Meanwhile, you'll also convey that this year's reading workshop will have new aspects to it, addressing whatever did not work in the preceding year. This session will also help you learn a bit about your children's preferences and histories as readers. Perhaps most importantly, you'll convey to children that you welcome their input and their ideas and want them to join you in making the classroom and the year be all that it can be. Finally, you'll let children know that you care very much about the independent reading lives that each of them author this year and that your goal in teaching reading is to help each child author a reading life that is as good as possible for that child.

**If your class has many students who are resistant readers,** you may want to extend the amount of time you spend teaching them to reflect on their histories in order to plan their futures. Many of your resistant readers will probably act as if they have no investment in their reading lives. To them, reading is something they do for someone else. They wait for a grown up's orders, and comply (or resist.) In order to turn this attitude around, you may want to talk about reading as if it is a lot like sports, and teach students that just as they set goals for themselves as soccer players, baseball players, runners, so, too, readers sometimes do this for ourselves. As part of this work, you may want to teach them that they can think not only about what helps but also about what gets in the way for them.

To illustrate the importance of this sort of reflectiveness, you might begin by sharing a story from your life about a time when something wasn't going well, but you fixed it by thinking about how to make it better. For example, I started this lesson by saying, "Readers, I want to tell you a story about my brother, when he was a bit younger than you. He really wanted to be a good baseball player, so my dad gave him a batting tee—you know, a stick that he could put the baseball onto, and then swing at it. For some reason, my brother hated that tee (I'm not sure why—maybe some of you have an idea about that), so he stopped playing baseball altogether. Even though he really did want to get good at it!

"But then my brother got this smart idea. He decided to think about his life as a baseball player and to ask himself, "What's working for me as a baseball player? What's not working?" And he realized that tee-ball thing was *not working* for him. It was supposed to give him a way to practice, but he didn't like practicing alone. He thought about the problem—he needed more time to practice—and about the solution that was not working—that batting tee. And he realized that what did work for him was playing with neighborhood kids, even if they were younger than he was. So he started to organize a baseball life for himself. He rode his bike around all the houses in our neighborhood and said, "Baseball in the circle at 7." He even was smart enough to add, "There'll be cookies there." And all of a sudden, he was playing baseball again, and getting better and better at it.

"My point is not really about baseball. It is about reading. What I want to teach you today is that you and I need to take care of our reading lives just like my brother took care of his baseball life. And we can do this by *thinking*. We need to think, 'What's getting in my

way as a reader? What makes me not even want to read?’ And we also need to think, ‘What might help my reading? What might make reading a bit better for me?’

“So readers, watch me think about what doesn’t work for me as a reader and what does work for me.

“Let’s see. When is reading the pits? I hate to read when. . . hmmm. . . when someone else tells me, ‘You gotta read this book,’ and then it is *boring*. But I keep on sloughing through it, day after day after day for like a month! Have you ever done that? Yeck.

“Now let me think about what *does* work for me. Hmmm. Well, when I was at the beach this summer, I had a really exciting book to read. It was a really easy book, a mystery, and it was exciting. I guess you’d call it a page turner. And I’d start reading and not even want to stop!

“So readers, do you see that I first thought about what *doesn’t* work for me as a reader? And then I thought about what *does* work? But here’s the big thing—my brother didn’t just think about how the tee was not working for him as a baseball player and how playing with the kids *did* work for him. He also thought, ‘So how will I do things this year so baseball works?’ And you and I will need to think about that, too.”

By this time, you’ll want to support your students in trying this so you might say, “So now it is your turn. Right now, while we are sitting together in the meeting area, think about what makes reading *not* the best for you. When reading is bad for you, what’s the problem? Right now, think about that, and when you have an idea, signal to me with a thumbs up.” After a bunch of kids put their thumbs up, you might say, “Turn and tell your neighbor about what doesn’t work for you as a reader.”

It is especially important for strugglers that their reading problems and histories be heard. When a child is given space to air out the real issues he has encountered in his reading life, he can not only feel validated because he hears that others felt the same way, but also he can set the stage for you to talk about ending whatever didn’t work, emphasizing that real readers have agency and can solve our problems. For example, when you share what children have said worked for them in reading, you might say, “Wow, I was listening in, and one of the things I heard was that sometimes, when Mario’s bored on the train, he takes his Yu-Gi-Oh! cards with him and reads them over and over, and presto! He’s not bored! And now he always makes sure he has those cards in his pocket so he can pull them out whenever he gets bored. Wasn’t that smart of Mario, that he found that what works for him is to take a little reading material with him wherever he goes?”

## Session II

**If you want to help your children become active, self-reliant problem solvers,** you can teach them that the one thing any powerful learner does when he or she comes to a problem is to solve it! Before teaching this minilesson, you’ll probably want to talk casually with a few of your readers so you have in mind some of the sorts of problems

From *Units of Study for Teaching Reading: A Curriculum for the Reading Workshop, Grades 3-5*, by Lucy Calkins



they see themselves as encountering when they read. You can then cite these as examples, either in the minilesson or as you coach into children's turn and talk work. In the minilesson, you might first set your students up for the teaching point by talking a bit about the importance of being proactive problem solvers in life. "Readers, yesterday we talked about how reading works and doesn't work for us. When it doesn't work, we've got a problem on our hands. But there's something wonderful about having a problem: the act of solving it! In other words, learners who face difficulty don't stay mired in the problem. They figure out ways to solve it. This is true for scientists, artists, athletes, musicians, writers, readers, and so on." Then, turning to your teaching point, you could say, "Today I want to teach you that when you hit a challenge as a reader—whether it's a hard word, a confusing part, a book that isn't a good fit for some reason—you don't have to stay with the problem. I want to teach you that you can solve the problem yourselves by using strategies you know or inventing your own ways to overcome the challenge."

You'll want to give your students an example. You might retell a particular instance when you solved a problem. "Let me tell you about a time I did just that. I was reading a book set in Japan in the time of the samurai. So many of the character's names were unfamiliar to me, and many looked so similar. I was getting totally confused! I could have just shrugged my shoulders and read on, or I could have abandoned the book, but *no*. I solved my problem." You may want to give readers some tips about how one goes about solving a problem. For example, you could say, "First I named my problem, then I thought about some possible solutions to the problem, and finally, I chose one solution. This is what I did: I took a big sticky note and put it on the inside of the back cover. I wrote down the names of the characters and a little description: Takahashi—land owner, husband of Yukiko. That way, as I read, I could take a peek at my jottings, and that helped me a ton. I'm so glad I did that rather than just saying, 'Forget this!' and tossing the book aside. The book was great, by the way!"

"So now, I'm going to give you a moment to think of a problem you encounter as a reader. It could be a problem that comes up often, or it might be something you remember that may have only happened once or twice. Think about your problem and whether or not you ever solved it. After a few moments, we'll share with our neighbors. If you didn't solve your problem, maybe your neighbor will have a helpful suggestion!"

As children think about a problem they've had as readers and about a possible solution to that problem, you may want to do some voice-overs to remind them of how they can go about solving a problem. "Don't forget that after naming the problem (i.e., I can't read when there's noise) it helps to imagine imagining possible solutions to the problem (i.e., I could move to a quieter place; I could wear earplugs, etc.) Your minilesson will need to end with you rallying your readers to be problem solvers always—today, and everyday."

**If you have emphasized that people who want to get better at something purposely strive towards goals. Then you may want to teach readers that one way to strive towards a goal is to gather together a support group. In this minilesson, you might say, "When people make resolutions—whether it's to exercise every day or to ban candy or to stop saying curse words—we often find it helpful if we have a group of supportive**

friends. I'm thinking that we can use support groups as readers, too, to help us stick with our resolutions. As we called out our resolutions, I realized there were categories: Some of your goals involved reading a particular series or genre. Some of your goals involved reading for longer periods of time or reading faster. Some of your goals revolved around learning to simply enjoy reading. I'm thinking that we might form support groups in this class, as people do in life when we are striving towards important goals, and then we can help each other meet our goals."

### Session III

**If many of your students need support reading with prosody,** you'll want to determine whether children truly understand the importance of this. Often children think fluency equals reading quickly, and for good reason: Many of the published fluency assessments only measure reading rate. The truth is fluency involves not only reading rate, but also intonation. Fluency means reading in ways that allow a text to make sense, using one's voice to express emotion, tension, and the tone of the text. Of course, in order to read with prosody, readers also need to read with accuracy, with a reasonable pace, and with attention to punctuation, so this is not a small goal!

In this possible session, you might teach students that a reading voice needs to match the meaning of the text. One way to teach this is to demonstrate by writing a few sentences on a chart. For example, you could write something like:

I couldn't believe he reacted like that! He was so angry and I was only trying to help. I wish it had never happened. I wish he never asked me to put his iPhone in my pocket while we were biking. I was just as shocked as he was when I heard it go "cruuuuunch" as my back tire rode over it.

You could demonstrate by reading this with a monotone intonation, and then you could go to the opposite extreme and read it with an overly dramatic tone. Finally, you could read the passage with appropriate prosody. "Did you notice how it sounded when I read it in a way that reflected its meaning? Listen again, and see if you can name the emotions I convey in the first sentence, then in a later sentence, and a later one. My voice should change as the meaning of the passage changes." Then, after reading it in ways that do reflect the changing meanings of the passage, you could say, "My voice sounded exasperated in the first sentence, didn't it. Did you hear how my voice got quieter as I read on? I hope it showed that I was puzzled and worried."

You'll want to invite readers to try this themselves, perhaps asking them to reread the exact same passage, or perhaps by asking them to read from their own books, aiming to read these texts with prosody. You might remind readers that sometimes it helps to try out different voices, because some texts are written to be read in a sarcastic, biting tone and others in a poetic ethereal voice. "Fluency," you might say, "is all about finding the voice of a story."

**If your students need support to find just-right books**, you might begin a minilesson by reminding children of the folk tale, *Goldilocks and the Three Bears*. “Remember the story? Goldilocks tried out three chairs. Papa Bear’s chair was too hard, Mama Bear’s chair was too soft, and Baby Bear’s chair was just right. Well, it’s similar for readers. We try out books, looking for ones that are just right,” you might say.

You’ll want to demonstrate how a person can check whether a book is just right for them, and then you will ask kids to try out a passage or a book that you’ll distribute to them during the lesson. You may want to pretend to be an eight-year-old child reading one book in a way that shows it is too hard and another in a way that shows it is just right. You could, of course, be the reader also during the active involvement of the minilesson, leaving to children only the task of determining whether the work they are witnessing is “too hard” or “just right.”

**If you have several students who tend to gravitate toward high-status texts that are too hard for them**, you have an issue in common with teachers the world over. Many upper-grade children want to read the books that offer the highest status or texts that have a “cool” factor. The problem is that for some readers, these texts are just too hard to read. The month in which a child “reads” *Harry Potter* in a superficial way because the text is too hard to follow can be considered, in certain respects, a lost month of reading for that child.

You may want to address this issue in a minilesson, and the minilesson may not aim to teach a reading strategy so much as to acknowledge a hard truth about reading. The minilesson may aim to counsel students to enjoy reading the texts they can read with power, not allowing themselves to flounder with texts in which they are out of control.

You might say, “One of the hardest things we face is the frustrating limbo of having a reading goal yet still needing to grow to reach it. It makes me think of this kid in my neighborhood. When we were in fifth grade, Tony was a great basketball player. The whole neighborhood knew, and everyone wanted him on their teams when we played. All Tony wanted to do was slam dunk—that was his goal. He had a favorite Michael Jordan slam dunk that he wanted to master. He tried and tried, but he still needed to get a lot taller. Then one day, he got an idea. He put a little trampoline next to the hoop. He dribbled to the trampoline and jumped on, using the trampoline to dunk the ball! He was thrilled. He told himself that he was dunking the ball, but the truth was this: He wasn’t dunking. He was faking it. He still needed to grow to be able to truly slam dunk.

For the next few months, instead of becoming a better basketball player, Tony kept going through all these contortions to bring his trampoline out, to reach it in such a way that he could dunk the ball, to keep others off the trampoline, . . . it totally distracted him from the real game of basketball.

“The thing is that we readers sometimes act like Tony. Maybe we really, really want to read a particular book—like *Harry Potter* or something. It’s way too hard, and we have to pretend to read it because it’s too hard. The problem with this is that it doesn’t help our

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reading to read stuff that's too hard. For my friend Tony, dunking was too hard, but he kept faking it, and actually, using the trampoline to dunk the ball was ultimately bad for him. He lost his timing, and for a while, he couldn't even do lay-ups right. Then, once he was off-balance when he jumped, and he hit his shoulder on the back board. He had to get an x-ray. Of course, I'm not saying that reading a book that's too hard is going to injure your body, but it's not going to help you much as a reader." After making a little appeal like this, you may want to have children turn and talk about what they think about this. You might prompt them with questions like, "What are some reasons kids read books that are just too hard?" or "How can we help kids who constantly want to read stuff that's too hard?"

## Session IV

**If your children need help reading with stamina,** you may want to say, "Readers, I know that each of you knows how important it is not only to read just-right books, but I want to remind you that it's also important to read lots and to read long."

"You've been away from school for the summer, and for some of you, it may have been like your reading lives took a vacation, too. It makes me think of athletes. In the off-season, they don't run around as much, so they sort of get out of shape. Then, they need to work hard to get back up to speed. They work out longer and make plans to get back into tip-top shape. Well, we need to do that, too, as readers. We need to read longer and stronger to get into tip-top reading shape. Our reading muscles may need to be retrained and strengthened, especially if you took a break from reading.

Then you could name your teaching point, saying something like, "Today, I want to teach you that there are many things you can do to make sure that you get your reading muscles back into shape. Collecting statistics is one of them. Runners time themselves; baseball players keep tons of statistics. As readers, we can keep data on ourselves, too, and then study our data to make sure we are getting sharper. Specifically, your reading log can help you pay attention to your reading stats so you can use this information to develop your reading strength and stamina."

You might want to show them a sample reading log page and demonstrate how to look at the information it provides to get a picture of current stamina and to set goals for increasing stamina. Then, for active involvement, your students can look at their logs, thus far, and draw conclusions about themselves and then set goals.

**If your students need to increase their reading rates,** you might let them in on a few rules of thumb that could be interesting. Researcher Dick Allington suggests that for children who are reading level M or above (that is, books that are at least as hard as the *Magic Treehouse* books), a general rule of thumb is that they should be able to read close to a page a minute. That would mean that in twenty minutes, children should be reading at least fifteen to sixteen or so pages. Another rule of thumb is this: To read a book so that it makes sense, it is generally necessary to read at approximately 120 words per

minute. If a reader reads more slowly than that, it is likely that the child's reading rate is slower than normal speech, and the rate itself is apt to be making comprehension difficult. You could model what it sounds like to read at an appropriate rate that supports meaning, and then you might pass out text passages for the students to use to try to pick up their reading pace.

You may decide, on the other hand, that now is not the time for transparency around this sort of information; reading can become something other than reading if you lean too heavily on statistics such as these. If you want to lean away from statistics and yet emphasize stamina, you might talk to children about strategies readers use to push ourselves to read more. As a part of that, you could talk about ways in which readers make more time for reading in our lives. One crucial way is that readers carry books with us everywhere, using stolen moments as a time to nip back into the book.

### Session V

**If your children's effort to read faster and longer seems to be causing them to forget to pay attention to the thoughts they're having,** you may want to emphasize that although readers pick up the pace of our reading as we get stronger, we still make sure we're having thoughts about the story as we read. And one way to do this is to approach reading with some plans for the sort of mental work that we want to do as we read.

You might begin by saying, "Readers, you all have been noticing that during reading time, I move among you, pulling a chair with me, and when I sit beside one of you, and another, and another, I often ask the same question. I ask, 'What work have you been doing lately as a reader?'"

"And what I notice is that a lot of you sort of look at me with a blank expression on your face. Sometimes you say, 'I'm . . . uh . . . reading faster.' Sometimes you say, 'I'm figuring out the words and getting the story.' But mostly, you just sort of say, 'What am I doing? I'm reading.' It is as if you wanted to say, 'Duh! What'd you think I was doing—climbing mountains?'"

You'll want to crystallize your reading point, perhaps saying, "So today I realized that maybe I need to teach you what I mean when I ask you, 'What work have you been doing as a reader?' Specifically, I want to teach you that reading is intense mind work—and it is mind work that a person can choose to do and do consciously." That is not a very clear teaching point, but as you'll see, the minilesson aims to recruit kids to do some of the research, so you probably wouldn't want to spell out more than that.

"Let me show you what I mean," you could say to set up your demonstration. As you read, you'll want to think aloud to demonstrate the fact that you sometimes say to yourself, "As I read today, I'm going to think about..." Then you can show readers some of the most obvious ways that readers go about thinking during reading. That is, you might show children that sometimes you set out to ask questions, posing tentative answers to those questions and then reading on to confirm those tentative answers and to

generate new question. Then again, you might show children that you sometimes make connections to your own experience, to earlier parts of the text, and to other books as you read, using all those connections to help you predict what might happen next in the text.

Then, you could either pass out a short text or poem, or you might ask children to bring their own books to the minilesson, and ask them to pay attention to the thoughts they are having as they read. You might alternatively ask children to spy on each other as they read and think aloud.

**If your children tend to daydream as they read, losing track of the story,** you might begin with a story of a child similar to them. “A few years ago, when the fifth Harry Potter book was released—it was *The Order of the Phoenix* by the way—I had a class full of kids just like you. They loved to read, and they especially loved Harry Potter. And for *weeks* they’d been waiting for the latest Harry Potter book. Everyone was dying to be the first to get it, be the first to finish it. Oh! The excitement was insane! And so . . . much . . . fun!

“Well Samantha was the girl who got hold of it first. She brought it to school, and during lunch, I saw her face buried in the book and all her girlfriends huddled around her, chattering excitedly, trying to catch parts over her shoulder. *Everyone* wanted to be Samantha’s friend that day. *Everyone* wanted to borrow that priceless new book! (Whisper conspiratorially.) Even me! I love Harry Potter. When lunch time finished, I couldn’t take it any more. I walked up to her. ‘Pssst! Samantha!’ I said. ‘Tell me what’s happened in the book so far.’ She looked up at me. And there was this puzzled look on her face. She’d reached page thirty-two. But she said she couldn’t really remember what she’d just read! There was too much distracting her: the excitement of being a celebrity because of having this prized book, the noise of people trying to talk to her as she read, the activity in the lunchroom. So she looked at me and said, ‘I’m just going to have to start again from page—she thumbed back in the book to find it—seventeen!’

“Now Samantha was one of the best readers in my class. And what we are going to learn today is a problem that best readers and beginner readers, old readers and young readers all share. Sometimes our brain goes through the words without really absorbing what the words are *saying*. We may be moving through sentences, but our brain is thinking, ‘I’m so hungry! I wish I could have a slice of pizza right about now. Or maybe a donut. Or maybe a . . .!’ Does that ever happen to you? That your eyes feel like they’re reading about the planes used in World War II, but your brain is going through a lunch menu? **That happens to the best of readers.”**

You’ll want to crystallize your teaching point. “Today I want to teach you that the *best* readers catch our minds wandering and pull them back into the text. One way we do this is by asking ourselves, ‘What did I just read? Do I get it?’ And if we don’t remember, we go back to the last part we *do* remember getting—and start rereading from that part on, with renewed, determined alertness. Remember also, that if a reader is tired, or the environment is too distracting, or his mind is on something else, *or* the book is simply too hard, he might have to stop to ask this question more often. ‘What did I just read? Do I

get it?””

This time when you repeat the prompt that ropes their attention back to the text, you might say it slower, with drama and emphasis. These are the precise words you want to ingrain, and they will be the words you’d want to put up on a chart and refer to often—in conferences through the future weeks and months, whenever you have a reader with a roaming eye! You’re offering the added comfort that the mind’s tendency to wander could have a cause that is *external*—distractions, fatigue, or an inappropriate book level. This makes your teaching feel nonthreatening to the less confident among your readers. The solution you offer, too, must feel accessible to your struggling readers. In this case, it exists within a simple, easy-to-remember question that readers ask ourselves to get back on track. “What did I just read? Do I get it?” Your aim is to make this question feel very natural and to scaffold students’ practice at asking it of themselves often in a text, until it transforms into a self-induced strategy.

What differentiates strong readers from not-so-strong readers is not that the minds of the latter switch off during reading. We’ve already established that this happens to the best of readers. The difference is in how a strong reader *tackles* this problem. Often, as soon as he notes that it has happened, a confident reader will make nothing of it, simply retracing his steps to the point of most recent comprehension before building up to his momentum of before. To the less confident reader, a similar blank spot of comprehension can seem more daunting. It may actually challenge his already weak image of himself as a reader. It can be the spot at which he hurls the book aside or decides that reading just isn’t his thing.

In the demonstration and active involvement part of this minilesson, therefore, you might choose to emphasize that readers have agency, and readers should solve our own problems. You might decide to say that we hold the remote control to our own reading. If we miss a part, we simply rewind to the last scene we remember so that we don’t end up missing any crucial element in the story.

## Session VI

**If your children would benefit from a follow-up minilesson that expands the discussion of fix-up strategies,** you might begin a minilesson like this. “Readers, I have something to tell you. You know on the first day of the year when I told you some stuff about myself as a reader? Well, there is one important thing that I did not tell you—and this is it. I am what many people call ‘a struggling reader.’”

You could go on to say something like, “Last night, I realized that the time for my favorite show was going to get changed to Monday nights at 8:00, and I am never free then. So I decided it was time to figure out, once and for all, how to copy television shows. I got out the TIVO manual and started trying to read it, but I absolutely couldn’t make head or tails of what the heck it was saying. And you know what? I wanted to throw the towel in. I felt like saying, ‘Skip it. I don’t care that much about the show.’”

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“And I realized that I was doing what other struggling readers do all the time. I was giving up. I was feeling helpless.” Of course, you’ll want to be sure you are not just talking about yourself as a reader, but about many of the people in your class, so you might broaden your point by saying, “I’m telling you this because my hunch is that every one of us is a struggling reader when we are given some kinds of texts. For some of us, we struggle when we are given poetry. It is so symbolic that we look at it and think, ‘This is supposed to mean something?’ Some of us struggle when we try to read sports statistics. Some of us struggle when we try to read in a second language—like in Spanish for a bunch of us, or in English for some of us.”

By this time, you should have your children’s attention, and you should have established the context for today’s session. You’ll want to cite a clear teaching point: “So today I want to teach you something that I need to teach myself as well—and it is this. When we are reading something and we are struggling, that is when we need to pull out our toolkit of strategies and to do specific things so the text makes sense. When the text gets harder, we need to be *more* active as readers, not more passive (which is what we want to be).”

Either in your teaching point or later, you’d want to set up some of the work you’ll do in the minilesson by saying something like, “And most of us have a couple of strategies that are ones that we especially use when a text is difficult. Let me share with you a few that I use a lot.”

You can think of the specific strategies you might share. If I were teaching this minilesson, I might start off with a strategy such as this: “First, if a text is hard, I see if I can get help without calling ‘Help!’ in a helpless voice. I can help myself by looking at stuff the text provides as helpers. Like I look over the title and the bold-faced words, because they give me a clue about what the big parts of this will be, and then I take just one big push at a time and I feel less overwhelmed. Like I’ll see the bold heading that says, “Plugging Your TIVO In,” and then I see three paragraphs of directions. Now I have sort of a reasonable-sized challenge. There are other helpers in a text—like there are sometimes diagrams or photos. I use those, too.”

I could certainly share another strategy. I might say something like, “Another thing I do is that I plan to read the text more than one time. So instead of inching through it, trying to get everything I need from the text, I read it over one time, saying to myself, ‘Okay, I’m just going to read the start of this kind of quickly and try to get a sense of what it is mostly saying.’ It is sort of like when I read, I am coloring a picture containing whatever the text says, and during my first read, I get just the outlines of my picture. Then I reread to fill in more of the details.”

**If many of your students are new to chapter books and struggle to hold on to complex storylines that carry through across chapters**, you could begin by saying something like, “I notice that so many of you are reading in new terrain. You’re reading books with lots going on, and it’s all going on across many, many chapters. That can make it hard to hold on to the story. Today I want to teach you that one way I make sure a



story is making sense is that as I proceed from chapter to chapter, I ask myself, ‘Is the scene continuing? Are the characters in the same place, doing the same thing? Is this a new scene?’ This helps me to check that I know what is going on in a story.”

You can then take almost any book, but a short easy book will provide a crystal clear illustration. You could say something like, “I’m going to start a new chapter in my book. You can watch and see how I ask myself, ‘Is the scene continuing? Are the characters in the same place, doing the same thing?’”

Before you read the new chapter, you’ll need to let children know what was going on at the end of the previous chapter. If the book is *Annie’s Good Move* (Henry and Mudge series), the first chapter ends with Henry at his house with Mudge, imagining how Annie’s house must be because she’s getting ready to move.

“So now, I’m going to the next chapter, and before I even start reading, I know that to hold onto the story, I can ask myself, ‘Is the scene continuing? Are the characters in the same place, doing the same thing?’”

#### Chapter 2: Blotchy

When Henry and Mudge and Henry’s parents got to Annie’s House on moving day, Uncle Ed was carrying boxes, and Annie was breaking out.

“Hmmm. So I see now the scene has changed! At the beginning of this new chapter, Henry and Mudge are now at Annie’s house.” Then I turned to the class to name the strategies I’d just used in hope that they would use them as transferable to other texts. “Did you see how asking these two questions as I started the next chapter is helping me hold on to the story from chapter to chapter?”

To actively involve readers, you could say, “Let’s go to the beginning of the third chapter. We’ll check first at the end of this chapter called ‘Blotchy’ before we go on.” Then you could put the relevant page from the end of the chapter on the overhead projector, enlarging it, and help readers see that Henry was still at Annie’s house, helping them move by carrying boxes.

You could then say, “Let me read the beginning of the next chapter. Why don’t you work with your partner to do the work that readers do often and ask, ‘Is the scene continuing? Are the characters in the same place, doing the same thing?’ The next chapter starts like this:

#### Chapter 3: The New House

Annie and Mudge stayed under the covers all morning long.  
Henry brought them food.  
He brought them drinks. He even brought them a moving man.

Partners could then talk together to determine whether the scene was a continuation or whether time or place had altered. As you send readers off from the minilesson, make sure that you put the day's new strategy into a larger context of other fix-up strategies, reminding readers that these are strategies to draw on when they are confused. When reading is making sense, they won't need these strategies.

## Session VII

**If you have students who struggle to get hooked into their books,** you may decide that inspiring them to become engaged with their texts is not enough. You may need to provide specific strategies for “getting into” a story. Of course, you'll then need to come up with those strategies. Remember that there is no one Answer Book. Instead, the way to generate content that you can embed into your teaching is for you to be a reflective reader yourself. In this instance, you'll want to think about what you have done during times when it's been hard for you to immerse yourself in a book.

After reflecting on the strategies you have drawn upon, you'll then teach the children those strategies. Perhaps you will teach them that they can act like spies on the characters, following their every move, trying to anticipate what they'll do next. Then again, you may teach readers that they can give themselves a running start in a book by committing themselves to the book for at least a certain number of pages. “Readers, sometimes a book is like a box of Cracker Jacks. It takes several handfuls to get to the prize. With a book, you might have to read a few chapters to get to that good stuff, when you think, ‘Hey, I'm really into this!’”

You could also present this problem as an inquiry to the students by saying, “Think of a time when you were sort of uninterested in a book but then something changed. All of a sudden you enjoyed it. What brought on the change? What did you do?” You could give your students a few minutes to jot and then share their recollections with a neighbor before you facilitate a whole-class conversation.

## Session IX

**If your students could benefit from reading with an awareness of the author's craft,** you could open a lesson by saying, “Readers, I know you have been telling each other about the great books you are reading, and as part of that you have been summarizing those books and reading little excerpts from them. Last night I was reading *Hatchet*, and I thought that I would definitely want to tell you about the book. Then, in thinking what I should say to you about the book, I noticed that I appreciate the book especially because it has so many really beautiful parts. I found myself pausing to reread those parts. This made me realize I could teach you that another way to appreciate a book is to notice the author's craft. Maybe the author wrote something so beautifully or maybe there was a twist in the story that you thought was really well done. Well, you can create a buzz around that, an author appreciation buzz.”

Today I want to teach you that when readers create a buzz about the books we read, we not only give a friend a quick summary of the book and then read particularly enticing parts. We also sometimes tell our friend about the author's way of writing.

Later in your minilesson, you might show your children what it looks like and sounds like to appreciate the craft of the text. "Listen to this part, the part that made me pause. I love the language that Gary Paulson uses here." You could then read aloud that particular passage like it's gold, showing children how you savor the sound, the rhythm, the author's word choices. Of course, you'll want to invite children to practice doing the same, perhaps with a passage the class had admired earlier in the read-aloud book.

## Session XI

**If reading partnerships need instruction about how to listen thoughtfully and strategically to each other,** you may decide to do a variation of this minilesson in which you teach students to listen to each other as both researchers and as friends. You might begin by saying something like, "Readers, yesterday, I was sitting by myself in a café, trying unsuccessfully to read the paper. In the booth behind me, I overheard a woman talking to her friend. I found it so interesting. I'm going to act out how they were talking to each other. This is how their conversation went:

"Woman 1 said (Use a quiet, anxious voice for woman one.), 'I haven't been feeling well lately. I think I'm coming down with a throat infection.'

"Then Woman 2 said (Use a loud, overbearing voice for this woman, who doesn't listen.), 'Everyone is coming down with a throat infection. My cousin from Spain who's visiting, he just recovered from laryngitis but the doctor said. . . .'

"Then Woman 1 said, 'No, I don't think it's as severe as laryngitis. I think it might just be that I need to have some hot soup and to sleep the tiredness out of my system.'

"And Woman 2 said, 'My cousin was telling me Spain is really great this time of the year. Especially Barcelona. I'm planning a vacation there next winter.'

"So readers, I was thinking, as I listened, 'How awful!' If I were feeling sick and told my friend, and she started off about a story of her cousin and Barcelona, I'd feel even worse. It's like she's not even listening! She's just waiting for me to finish talking so she can say whatever it is that she wants to talk about."

Then, stepping back from the anecdote, you could show its reference to reading. "Does that happen to you all sometimes? When you're talking to somebody and you note that their eyes are looking at someone or something *else*, and you get a feeling that they're not really listening at all? Or you feel that instead of listening to what you are saying, they're just planning what *they'll* say?"

From *Units of Study for Teaching Reading: A Curriculum for the Reading Workshop, Grades 3-5*, by Lucy Calkins

“Today I want to teach you that the best reading partnerships are those in which each partner knows how to listen like a researcher and a friend. *Friends* don’t just listen with our ears; friends listen with our whole bodies, paying attention, not interrupting, and caring about what we hear. *Researchers* take note of everything that the partner is saying, thinking, ‘What does this tell me about my partner’s reading life?’ In our reading partnerships this year, we’re going to work very hard at listening like a researcher but also, listening like a friend. The duality of partnerships—you’re a friend as well as a researcher—will set the tone for partnerships.”

For active involvement, you might say, “Think of the one person in your life who really and truly listens. It could be your grandmother or your dad, your best friend or your cousin, or a neighbor—maybe a teacher—anyone at all. Try to think what makes this person such a great person to talk to, such a great listener. Turn and tell your partner your thoughts.”

Here is a collection of anchor chart items from a couple of teachers:

Good Listeners:

- Face the speaker and maintain an attentive posture: good eye contact, shoulders hunched forward/leaning in.
- Don’t interrupt while their partner is in the middle of a thought.
- Welcome small silences, allowing their partner to finish a thought.
- Try to show they are listening by repeating what they just heard their partner say, and then ask a *related* question, allowing their partner to elaborate. For example, “You just told me that Junie B. Jones makes you laugh. Can you say more about what makes her so funny?”
- Pay attention as the speaker is talking. They don’t mentally rehearse what they will say next *while* the speaker is still talking.
- Keep the focus on their partner as they listen. They don’t instantly delve into connecting stories about themselves. They reserve these for when it is their turn to be interviewed.
- Are genuine. They are truly interested in what their partner is telling them.

**If your children struggle to get partner conversations started**, you might channel children to use their reading logs as the focus of partner talk. You could say, “Readers, today I want to teach you that the book is a great source to get your talk going, of course, but you can also use your reading logs to get your conversations started. After all, there is much to be learned from examining reading logs!”

For the teaching demonstration, you might want to take a reading log from a previous year (or from another class or one you made up) and show it to your students, modeling how to ask, “What can I tell about this reader?” Don’t limit yourself to just thinking and talking about what kind of books the reader likes, although that is certainly important. Make sure you also look at pages read, checking to see if page counts vary on different

From *Units of Study for Teaching Reading: A Curriculum for the Reading Workshop, Grades 3-5*, by Lucy Calkins

days or depending on where the reader was (home or school). Also talk about the variety of books in the log. Does the reader read from a single genre or author for a while? Does the reader read books of varying difficulty? If you are familiar with any of the titles, you can consider the messages and themes of the books. Does the reader seem to have a type of character or issue that he or she likes to read about over and over? If so, what could that say about the reader? Once you've demonstrated examining a reading log, students can examine their own reading logs during the active involvement. You'll want to challenge them to look at their logs as if they belonged to someone else, asking, "What can I say about this reader?"

Alternatively, you could give your readers only one question to start off with instead of a handful of questions. If you have a class that still has a way to go before they master keeping their conversations on topic, you might also opt to ask your students to jot their answers down so their partner can read them, like a readers' questionnaire. If you would rather they talked, but are concerned about their talking skills, make sure you put a very short limit on their talking time. Even if it seems like too little time, students benefit more from having to stop while they are still engaged in partner talk rather than having extra time with which to get distracted.

## Session XII

**If your children can benefit from using retelling to help them monitor for meaning,** you could begin by saying, "Readers, remember that we've talked about how sometimes you're reading and your mind wanders? It's like one minute you're absorbed in the story and the next your thoughts are on something else altogether! Your brain just doesn't pick up on what your eyes are seeing." If you pause, your children will nod their heads in agreement. Then continue, "Today I want to teach you that good readers watch for times when our mind wanders, and when this happens, we stop and think, 'Who are the characters in the story?' 'What is happening?' Then we retell that part of the story, making sure we can answer those questions. If we can't answer them, we go back and reread."

You could demonstrate how you do this, using almost any text—but preferably one your children know well. First, read aloud a section of the text, and half way through your read-aloud, let your mind wander so you appear to be simply voicing the words, but thinking about other stuff altogether. Then catch yourself, with a start, and say aloud, "Oops. I think my mind was wandering. Let me see if I can answer those questions. Who are the characters in the story? What is happening?" Then you can re-create a small time line, doing a bit of rereading in the service of this, and process this by saying to children, "Readers, did you notice how asking these questions helped me remember what I just read?"

For the active involvement, you could ask children to try doing this for each other. Partner 1 can read on in his or her book, but this time deliberately letting his or her mind wander. Then the reader could catch himself or herself and ask those questions. This

From *Units of Study for Teaching Reading: A Curriculum for the Reading Workshop, Grades 3-5*, by Lucy Calkins

active involvement would feel a bit like drama, not reading, but the kids would enjoy it, and therefore this would help them remember the strategy you've taught.

### Session XIII

**If your children struggle to retell a larger chunk of their story**, you may want to teach them a concrete tool they can use to help them retell. You could say, "Readers, yesterday we spent some time going back and putting Post-it notes on the big things that have happened to our characters to help us retell. Today, I want to teach you that you can gather up these Post-it notes and make them into a time line. A time line is just what it says—a line of time. It shows what happens first, then next, then next. So the first dot on a time line is the first main event that happens in the book, the second dot is the second main event that happens, and so on. It will be easy for you to figure out the order because you'll just take the Post-its out of your book. Then you'll stick them onto a piece of paper like this (you can stick a few sample Post-its onto a big piece of chart paper so that they are lined up horizontally across the page). See how now I can look across the line and see the big things that happen in my story? When I look it over, I can see how I'll retell the story. If I come to a small event, I might pause and say to myself, 'Does that event really matter to the story? Is it big enough to be included on my retelling time line?' and then I may cross out that dot.

"Readers, once you have a Post-it time line of the big things that happen to your character, you can look back over it and retell what your character is doing or what's happening to your character. This helps you warm yourself up for reading the next chapter and remind yourself about what is going on in your book. It helps you hold onto the story."

**If your readers need help retelling in broader strokes, including fewer small details**, you can teach them how to use a time line, but you might tweak your approach so the focus is on determining importance. You might say something like this: "Today I want to teach you a great tool you can use if you want to retell by taking giant steps across a story. The tool I have in mind is a time line. I'm sure you recall that *writers* use time lines to plot out the big events of a story they hope to tell. Similarly, *readers* can recall the big events in a story by plotting those events on a time line. Remember, we're taking giant steps across the story, which means we're telling the big, important parts. So if I want to retell what I've read in *Stone Fox* so far, I'll first draw a line on my paper like this (Draw a horizontal line across a big piece of chart paper.), and then I'll add a few plot points to the line—no more than five or six—spacing them out across the line like this. (Draw five small dashes across the line.) Then I'll think to myself, 'What are the *really big* things that have happened so far across the book?' And then I'll begin adding those events to my time line, jotting just a few words for each one, like 'Grandfather gets sick' or 'Little Willy enters race.'

“But listen up, readers. This is important. If I find that I’m only halfway through retelling and I’ve already listed five or six items, then chances are I’ve retold with too much detail. In that case, I’ll go back and rethink some of my choices. For example, I wouldn’t want to plot something like ‘Doc Smith gives Little Willy a piece of cinnamon cake’ or ‘Mayor Smiley has a silk handkerchief’ because those are minor details. They don’t tell us much about the significance of the story. They may tell us something about the characters, but they don’t push the story forward. Think of it this way: If you plot something that the author could have just as easily not included in the story without affecting the outcome of it, that event should not be on your time line.”

## Session XV

**If your children need support to have more engaging conversations with their partners,** you might anchor this teaching aim in developing kids’ ability to determine importance. Knowing which part of the text merits greater attention than others is a vital first step in effective summarization and retelling and engaging conversations. We want kids to be able to pick up the most crucial details and discard less important ones as they retell with brevity and focus, with consideration for the listener.

You might say, “Readers, there are two ways to read a story. You can read with the depth of a scuba diver, searching for pearls, or you can skim, almost zipping along the surface of the reading like you’re on jet-skis. At different times, with different books, or even at different points in the same book, good readers do both.” You might pause to let this sink in, improvising with small drama as you deliver your teaching, using zipping gestures versus pearl-searching ones.

“But here’s the important difference: We know that even if we zip through certain details, we will still understand the story. Other details, however, we must hold onto tightly. Because if we zip past these, chances are we’ll be flipping back to reread later because they were really crucial. Missing them meant not being able to make sense of the rest of the story. This same principle holds true for retelling. We can retell in different ways, but when we’re retelling to help someone else follow along in our story, it’s vital that we retell with emphasis on the important parts of the story. Today I want to teach you that not all details are equal. Some are more crucial than others. We know it is a crucial detail if without it, we can’t make sense of the rest of the story.”

In your active involvement you might decide to set kids up to explore a passage brimming with the kind of lush detail that embellishes characters, mood, and setting. In partnerships, kids might practice fishing through these details for those that are the most crucial to understanding the larger story. You might remind them that the crucial details are like signposts: If you miss one, you miss a major turn in the story and find yourself lost. Once kids receive scaffolded practice at this, you’ll want to send them off with the advice that while readers have an eye for detail, we know that some details are more

crucial than others, and it is these that we pick up while retelling our stories with strength.”



## ADDITIONAL STRATEGIES FOR STUDENTS WHO STRUGGLE WITH INDEPENDENT READING TIME

Students who wrestle with reading may find it difficult to:

- Select appropriate books for independent reading.
- Become engaged in reading books for themselves.
- Sustain their reading independently.
- Respond in writing to the texts they are reading.

You can assist struggling readers by providing extra support in the right areas; indeed, the investment of only a little time adds up to big payoff.

1. Make sure you have an extensive, varied collection of books at levels suitable for the readers who need more help. A diverse collection—both in subject matter and in the degree of challenge—offers more possibilities for engaging students.
2. Provide book talks that cater to students who are reading on the easier levels. Book talks take only a minute or two and may focus on any text that is interesting, not just on “grade level” material. When you showcase a book as the subject of a book talk, it’s clear you think highly of the book. Many students will add it to their lists.
3. Help students craft book talks for one another; help them perform well by preparing and practicing the talk with you or another adult before giving it to the class.
4. Attend carefully to your reading interviews with struggling readers. Help students select books that are both interesting to them and instructionally appropriate.
5. Check in with your struggling readers at the beginning of every reading workshop; be sure they have the right materials and are getting started either with reading their books or writing their response letters.
6. Seat struggling readers next to classmates who serve as good role models; pair less capable readers with peers who are enthusiastic about reading and eagerly attend to reading their chosen books and writing in their journals.
7. Help students who need extra help find books that are easier to read; by reading lots of books that are relatively easy, readers will improve their reading ability.
8. Confer with struggling readers more frequently than with other students. While it is not always necessary to have a long conference, regularity is essential.
9. Observe your students’ oral reading frequently; when you confer with them, ask your struggling readers to read a section of their text aloud to you (choose a part that they have already read silently). Notice their word-solving strategies and take notes that will enable you to work effectively with them in guided reading.
10. Talk about the books with your students; your real conversations with your struggling readers will help them solidify their understanding and will help you determine what meanings they are bringing to the activity as well as what they are constructing from their reading. These notes will help you work effectively with them in guided reading.
11. List books in the Reading Interest section of their reading journals that are appropriate for your struggling readers; in this way, they will always have books in mind to read.
12. Make available an Alpha Smart or computer for students who struggle with writing; encourage them to type their responses to their books and then glue them in their response journals.
13. Take extra care in answering struggling readers’ response journals; reinforce their good thinking about texts and suggest further reading you know they can handle and will enjoy. Ask genuine questions that stimulate students to respond. Share your own reading attitudes and experiences so that the students can connect with you as another engaged reader.
14. Coordinate with parents; help them understand the importance of quiet, uninterrupted reading. Parents may think of “homework” as filling out worksheets or answering questions at the back of a textbook. Be sure they understand that thirty minutes of independent silent reading is homework.
15. Check in with students regularly on their home reading. As they arrive in the morning, ask your students how their reading went and talk for a minute about noteworthy details from their reading. These quick check-ins provide your struggling readers with much-needed encouragement and enable you to discreetly monitor their home reading.

## Section II

# CLASSROOM LIBRARIES



- Building & Organizing Your Classroom Library
- One Teacher's Classroom Library
- Reading A-Z Correlation Chart
- A Balanced Classroom Library
- Classroom Library Checklist
- My Classroom Library Template
- Encouraging Children to Assist with the Organizational Process
- List of Magazines
- Useful Websites for Independent Reading & Research
- Author's Websites

## Building and Organizing Your Classroom Library

"Our classroom library is so cool. We have things on everything kids love. I mean if you like space like me it's here. If I want to read a mystery it's here. When I come in here I just want to sit down and read forever."

Thomas, Grade 3  
*Good Choice! Supporting Independent  
Reading and Response K-6* by Tony Stead (2009)

### Benefits of a Classroom Library

- Provides heart of effective literacy instruction and backbone of classroom literacy activities
- Enables students to practice reading and apply reading strategies with authentic, engaging materials through choice
- Builds reading stamina
- Motivates students to read by being immersed in environment rich in text
- Increases vocabulary and comprehension through voluminous reading
- Provides books/materials that meet the interests and varied reading levels of all students so students grow into competent and confident lifelong readers
- Expands students' reading abilities and their world
- Immerses students in a variety of accessible books at all times
- Enables students to start another book immediately after one is completed
- Exposes students to a full range of genres
- Reinforces reading for authentic purposes, so students are likely to make a place for reading in their lives
- Fosters students seeing themselves as readers who have tastes and preferences

### Location of Classroom Library

- Consider student traffic patterns
- Will students be able to easily move in and out of the classroom library?
- Will they have reason to pass through it and see enticing books to draw their attention?
- Will the library invite students to sit, explore, and return?

### Organizing a Classroom Library

- There is no one right method of organizing a classroom library
- It is important that students know how to find materials easily
- Develop procedures for keeping the classroom library orderly and functional
  - Classroom Library Checkout / Return System
- Storage of materials
  - Bookshelves, baskets, combination

- Determine what will enable students to easily and freely select material independently throughout the year
- Baskets may make it easier for students to select and return materials as opposed to packing books tightly on a bookshelf with only the spines visible
  - ❖ Possible way to ensure books go back to their correct spot – put stick-on dots on same place on books with number that corresponds to number on basket
- See Appendix A, “A Balanced Classroom Library” by Angela Bunyi, Appendix B for a Classroom Library Checklist, and Appendix C for pictures of effective classroom libraries
- Compile inventory of classroom library books (See Appendix D, My Classroom Library template)
- Involve students with the organization. See Appendix E, “Encouraging Children to Assist with the Organizational Process” excerpt from *Good Choice! Supporting Independent Reading and Response K-6* by Tony Stead (2009)

### **Size of Collection**

- The gift of time is needed to build a full-range, effective classroom library – it can take up to five years with a phase-in plan.
- Several variables factor into building a collection: monetary means, creativity, and resourcefulness.
- Research suggests that a collection is based on having anywhere from 10 – 20 titles per student.

### **Collection**

- Comprises high quality works within many genres
- Includes authors and illustrators that can become favorites
- Contains enough selections to meet students’ needs and the demands of the curriculum
- Provides enough variety to meet a wide range of interests, including those of male and female readers
- Addresses a broad range of reading levels
- Contains picture books, chapter books, short story collections
- Provides comparable amount of fiction and nonfiction materials
- Includes info-fiction: material that contains both fiction and nonfiction (Imparts content understandings in an engaging manner) i.e. *The Magic School Bus* series
- Non-book Resources: In today’s society, many different materials are read and they should be incorporated into a classroom library. However, books constitute the majority of materials.
  - Magazines: Cover multiple topics, are current (See Appendix F, for a list of magazines)

“I love reading magazines because they have so many different things to read about. It’s nice because you can just look through them and find interesting articles. I learn lots from reading magazines.”

Fiona, Grade 5

*Good Choice! Supporting Independent Reading and Response K-6*  
by Tony Stead (2009)

- Newspapers:
  - ❖ Depending on the grade, entire newspaper may be placed in the collection and then at the end of the week be discarded
  - ❖ Cut out specific articles about people, places or things – paste onto oak tag, laminate, and place in classroom library under appropriate topic, such as in a basket called “What do you think?”
  
- Catalogs: If children are to be readers for many purposes, they need to understand the power of advertising – Advertising is one of the most abundant and influential reading forms that affect our daily decisions in the world of commerce – Millions of people read catalogs for pleasure – possibly set up basket “Shopping” filled with catalogs
  
- Cereal/Food Boxes: Back of boxes contain information
  - ❖ Contain an enormous variety of nonfiction information about a range of topics such as animals, plants, space, countries, people, places
  - ❖ They are on cardboard which makes them durable and easy to cut out and place in the relevant topic basket in the classroom
  - ❖ They’re free
  
- Maps: important component of our functional reading
  - ❖ Students need a focus when viewing such material; they may need specific questions to direct them to specific places or landmarks
  - ❖ Link to ongoing science and social studies themes in the classroom
  
- Brochures/Pamphlets
  - ❖ Pick up in local travel agencies or tourist information centers
  - ❖ Information is current and can easily be replaced
  
- Pictures / Photographs: Visual literacy – powerful medium for giving readers information
  - ❖ Photographs, postcards, and pictures that are relevant to specific topics to can be added to interest baskets
  
- Procedural/ How-to Guides: Ability to read and to comprehend procedures is crucial
  - ❖ When doing this kind of reading there are times when the reader needs to be in a real context where they actually engage in the process
  
- Using the Computer for Pleasure Reading:
  - ❖ Each week can select appropriate web sites for students to visit during independent reading (See Appendix G, for a list of Useful Websites for Independent Reading and Research pp. 82-7)

## Arrangement of Books and Non-Resource Materials

- Materials can be sorted/categorized/labeled in numerous ways:
  - Author
  - Topic
  - Genre
  - Theme
  - Series
  - Special Features
- Book Basket Labels are available on Beth Newingham's site and can be downloaded in PDF: [http://hill.troy.k12.mi.us/bnewingham/myweb3/basket\\_labels.htm](http://hill.troy.k12.mi.us/bnewingham/myweb3/basket_labels.htm)
- Leveling of books – Research states that students should not choose books by level because an important part of independent reading is for readers to learn how to select just right books. Within the library's setup, a range of materials should be available.
  - If leveling occurs, usually only a 1/3 of the classroom library is leveled.
  - Sites to assist in leveling:
    - **Scholastic Book Wizard**  
<http://bookwizard.scholastic.com/tbw/homePage.do>
    - **Leveled Book List**  
<http://home.comcast.net/~ngiansante/>
    - **BSD Leveled Book Database**  
<http://registration.beavton.k12.or.us/lbdb/>
    - **A to Z Teacher Stuff Leveled Book Database**  
<http://books.atozteacherstuff.com/leveled-books/>
    - **Latest Leveled Book List from Fountas and Pinnell**  
[The Fountas & Pinnell Leveled Book List, K-8, 2006-2008 Edition \(The Fountas & Pinnell Leveled Book List, K-8\)](#)
    - **Beth Newingham's site**  
<http://hill.troy.k12.mi.us/staff/bnewingham/myweb3/>
    - **Busy Teachers Café**  
[http://www.busyteachercafe.com/literacy/leveled\\_books.html](http://www.busyteachercafe.com/literacy/leveled_books.html)

## Displays within Classroom Library

- Arrange to invite readers
- Make it easy for students to select books
- Display some books face front to attract readers – use plate stands
- Feature new books when add to collection
- Feature book reviews on a bulletin board or in a binder
  - Some websites that feature book reviews
    - [www.kidsread.com](http://www.kidsread.com)
    - [www.gigglepoetry.com](http://www.gigglepoetry.com)
  - Sites that feature book reviews by kids for kids
    - [www.spaghetlibookclub.org](http://www.spaghetlibookclub.org)
    - [www.worldreading.org](http://www.worldreading.org)

- Author websites are good resources. Online, try the author's name, followed by ".com.", for example, [www.jerryspinelli.com](http://www.jerryspinelli.com). You will either get a site or a link. (See Appendix H, for a list of several Authors' Websites)
- Articles can also be at these sites
  - [www.stonesoup.com](http://www.stonesoup.com)
  - [www.zoobooks.com](http://www.zoobooks.com)
- Identify "must-reads" or "student favorites"
- Hang posters featuring well-known authors

## Other Resources

Atwell, N. (2007). *The Reading Zone: How to Help Kids Become Skilled, Passionate, Habitual, Critical Readers*. NY: Scholastic Professional Books.

Creating a Classroom Library ~ [http://www.mandygregory.com/classroom\\_library1.htm](http://www.mandygregory.com/classroom_library1.htm)

Lesesne, T. (2010). *Reading Ladders: Leading Students from Where They Are to Where We'd Like Them to Be*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

Lesesne, T. (2006). *naked reading: Uncovering What Tweens Need to Become Lifelong Readers*. Portland, ME: Stenhouse Publishers.

Moss, B. and Young, T.A. (2010). *Creating Lifelong Readers Through Independent Reading*. Newark, DE: International Reading Association.

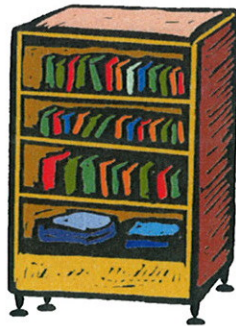
Reading Rockets: Creating a Classroom Library ~ <http://readingrockets.org/article/29298?theme>

Reutzel, D.R. and Fawson, P.C. (2002). *Your Classroom Library: New Ways to Give It More Teaching Power*. NY: Scholastic Professional Books.

Stead, T. (2009). *Good Choice! Supporting Independent Reading and Response K-6*. Portland, ME: Stenhouse Publishers.

## A PEEK INTO ONE TEACHER'S CLASSROOM LIBRARY...

Third grade teacher Claudia Kirby has an enviable classroom library. It is a delight to both her and her students. The following page is a list of the bins that are in her library. A number alongside a title of a bin indicates there is more than one bin of that particular kind of book. For example, there are two bins of *Magic Tree House* books. There is a leveled bin for each level K-T. And a leveled bin of texts on the solar system, since it is a big topic of study in the curriculum at her school.





SAMPLE ORGANIZATION FOR THE CLASSROOM LIBRARY- Claudia Kirby3rd Gr.

3<sup>rd</sup> Grade Authors (books, poems, pieces written by the students)

Audubon Yearbooks	Matt Christopher (2)
US Presidents	Roker
Biography (2 bins)	Polk Street School
African American Experience	Pee Wee Scouts
Native American Experience	Cam Jansen
History	Judy Moody
Animals (2)	Magic Tree House (2)
Science (3)	MTH Study Guides
Q&A Science Books	Picture Book Bios
Gail Gibbons	by David Adler
Spanish/Espanol	Flat Stanley
Animal Adventures	Berenstein Bears
Jokes	Jigsaw Jones
Cook Books	Invisible Inc.
Sports	Ramona (2)
Fantasy	Beverly Cleary (2)
Historical Fiction	Magic School Bus
Humor	Boxcar Children (2)
Mystery	Tomie DePaola
William Steig	Time Warp Trio
Favorites (2)	Encyclopedia Brown
Young Cam Jansen	Little House
Henry & Mudge	If You
Fox	American Girl (2)
Commander Toad	Marvin Redpost
Frog & Toad	Browsing Boxes/Variety (2)
Young Amber Brown	Now Featuring (book talk books)
Amber Brown	Leveled Bins:
Nate the Great	KLMNOPQRST
Horrible Harry	Solar System
Song Lee	
The Bailey School Kids	
Amelia Bedelia	
Critter Kids	
Pinky & Rex	
Jenny Archer	
Junie B. Jones	

# POSSIBLE TITLES FOR BOOK BASKET LABELS

Title of Basket or Container	Text Type/Genre	Title of Basket or Containers
Animals: Could also be on a specific animal	Descriptive	Mysteries Adventures Animal stories Dinosaur stories Books by a specific author Books in a series Science fiction Realistic fiction Friendship Family School Holidays Fairy tales Fables Myths and legends Poetry Scary stories Favorite read-aloud books Books highly recommended
Space	Descriptive	
The ocean	Descriptive	
Plants		
Trees		
Dinosaurs	Descriptive	
Countries	Descriptive	
Places		
Transportation	Descriptive	
Reptiles	Descriptive	
Birds	Descriptive	
Creepy crawlies	Descriptive	
Fish	Descriptive	
Sports	Descriptive	
Hobbies	Descriptive	
Celebrations	Descriptive	
People and culture	Descriptive	
Buildings and structures	Descriptive	
Food and recipes	Descriptive/procedural	
How to make	Procedural	
How to care for	Procedural	
How to do	Procedural	
How to grow	Procedural	
Puzzles and games	Procedural	
Atlases and maps	Procedural	
Experiments	Procedural	
How and why	Explanation	
Weather	Descriptive/explanation	
Water	Descriptive/explanation	
Soil	Descriptive/explanation	
Matter	Descriptive/explanation	
Energy	Descriptive/explanation	
Biographies	Retell	
History	Retell	
Pioneer days	Retell	
Disasters	Descriptive/retell	
What do you think?	Persuasive	
Catalogues	Persuasive	
Poetry	All genres	

Good books for buddy reading; Note: Two copies of each title should be included.

Leveled Reading

- [Introduction](#)
- [Leveled Books](#)
- [Multilevel Books](#)
- [Projectable Books](#)
- [Pocketbooks](#)
- [Serial Books](#)
- [Trade Book Lesson Plans](#)
- [Graphic Organizers](#)
- 
- [Reading A-Z Levels](#)
- [Stages of Development](#)
- [Leveling Criteria](#)
- [Correlation Chart](#)
- 
- [Level Assessment](#)
- [Benchmark Books](#)
- [Benchmark Quizzes](#)
- [Guidelines](#)
- [Teacher Tips](#)
- [Running Record](#)
- [Retelling Rubrics](#)

**Reading A-Z Correlation Chart**

Grade	Reading A-Z	Fountas & Pinnell	Reading Recovery	DRA
K	aa	A	1	A-1
K	A	A	1	A-1
K	B	B	2	2
K	C	C	3-4	3-4
1	D	D	5-6	6
1	E	E	7-8	8
1	F	F	9-10	10
1	G	G	11-12	12
1	H	H	13-14	14
1	I	I	15-16	16
1	J	J	17	18
2	K	J	17	18
2	L	K	18	20
2	M	L	19	24
2	N	M	20	28
2	O	M	20	28
2	P	M	28	28
3	Q	N	30	30
3	R	N	30	30
3	S	O	34	34
3	T	P	38	38
4	U	Q	40	40
4	V	Q	40	40
4	W	R	40	40
5	X	S	40	40
5	Y	T	40	40
5	Z	U-W	N/A	50

**Criteria for Leveling Reading A-Z Books:**

- Word count
- Number of different words
- Ratio of different words to total words
- Number of high-frequency words
- Ratio of high-frequency words to total words
- Number of low-frequency words to total words
- Ratio of low-frequency words to total words
- Sentence length
- Sentence complexity
- Predictability
- Language pattern and repetition
- Print size, spacing, and number of words per page
- Illustration support
- Concept load
- Topic familiarity

[More about Leveling Criteria](#)

# Appendixes

- A. A Balanced Classroom Library**
- B. Classroom Library Checklist**
- C. What Effective Classroom Libraries Look Like...**
- D. My Classroom Library Template**
- E. Encouraging Children to Assist with the Organizational Process**
- F. List of Magazines**
- G. Useful Websites for Independent Reading and Research**
- H. Authors' Websites**

## A Balanced Classroom Library

Four steps to an organized classroom library that help students read

By Angela Bunyi

I had a former student make his way to my classroom Friday afternoon. He quietly said, "Mrs. Bunyi, how are you? I am going to the Grand Canyon soon, and I was wondering if you had a book I could borrow before I go." I knew exactly where to go and sent him on his way within a matter of seconds. Honestly, it felt great to be able to place that book in his hands. It also felt wonderful to have a system that made it easy to find the requested books.

### The Tools of Our Trade

A few years back I was conducting a literacy meeting at one of my schools. The topic was building and maintaining a balanced classroom library. I used Richard Allington's quote of 1,500 books for a base in elementary classrooms and used that to support bringing in more rich literature. I still remember one teacher saying, "That's not realistic. How could we do that?" My response back was, "How can we not? It's the tools of our trade." I have said this before, but I'll say this again: I just can't imagine teaching in a literary desert. So, with so many books, comes so many responsibilities. How does one keep up with a large classroom library? I have a couple of things in place to help in our room, and I hope it will help in yours.



Here are four things to consider when building or supporting your classroom library this year:

#### 1. Organization by Themes, Not Levels

One of the first things I decided when creating my classroom library was to not organize my books by level. Considering a prominent goal for me as a teacher is to help students' independently self-select books of their choice, I plowed forward with my organization by theme. I even went to my local bookstores and noted their organization for inspiration and areas of weakness in my collection.

I discovered that students not only find books easier with this approach, but they also know their genres very well. I leave the teaching of self-selection to my mini-lessons and individual conferences. I still add the level of the book using Scholastic to help monitor my student's book selections, and I privately consult students on future book selections (level or genre balance), I just don't have bins sorted by level. It's also nice that you can visually see which genres need more representation, which helps when you go book shopping. I once heard a speaker say, "Buy the bins and the books will come." So true.

#### 2. Balance of Fiction, Nonfiction, and Informational Text

Teaching in the upper grades we all feel the pressure to teach the content areas well. And yet there is so much to cover and so little time! The good news is that we can be working smarter not harder by incorporating more nonfiction and informational texts into our classroom library. This way we are reading to learn and supporting our content standards at the same time. Research supports the following balance: 1/3 fiction, 1/3 nonfiction, and 1/3 informational text. An added bonus is that you don't have to rely on a textbook when you have high interest books on your shelves and in your student's hands. An example would be when we were researching facts on our cell video. Students looked for books in our room and the library. The textbook was not the first stop.

#### 3. Taking It to the Web

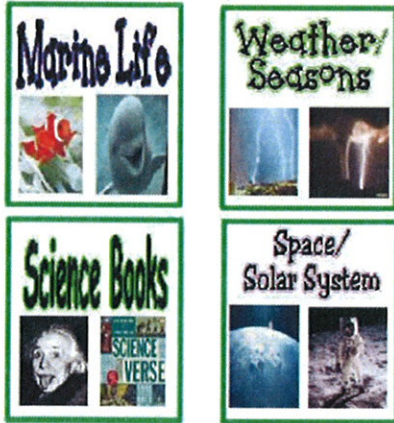
I use a paid software program called [Intelliscanner](#) for my classroom. The cost is about \$150, but I believe it is well worth it if you have a large library collection or value organization. I never knew so much information could be pulled up with an ISBN number, but with a simple scan I can decipher everything from number of pages, publishing information, author, genre, cover photo, and more! From there, I merely add the level and location for each book. Intelliscanner even comes with a free web site with a search engine for your collection. I utilized parents to scan books into the system as well as create individual book labels for bin location and level. Added bonus – a printer friendly edition is available and can be transferred to Microsoft Excel. I admit that I stopped at 2,300 books and have failed to update the site beyond that, but I use the printed version on a weekly basis. To visit our Intelliscanner site, [click here](#).

#### 4. It's All About the Bins/Labels

The bins I use are expensive. They come from [Really Good Stuff](#), but you get what you pay for. They are sturdy, durable, and they last a long time. I have four colored bins indicating genre/themes. Yellow includes poetry, and fiction. Green includes award winners and misc. topics (ex- book buddy bins). Blue includes informational books and author studies. Red is nonfiction. I now have 60 bins with most of the novels sorted by author name in a rotating bookshelf. I make sure the books are facing forward so it makes it easier to browse through books.

Regarding labels, I adapted Beth Newingham's labels (among many things!) and replaced them with realistic photos. After laminating, I used gorilla glue on the back and used clear clips to firmly secure the labels. On each book I used a clear mailing sticker to add the following information:

- \* title of the book
- \* color code to indicate section of library to return
- \* bin location
- \* level, if possible





#### Q & A With Angela

**Q 1:** This is an amazing system you have working here Angela. I always go to the Scholastic Book Fairs Warehouse Sales to build up my library. I think that another trick is to mention to parents at the end of the year that if their child has books that are too easy for them now that they would like to donate to our classroom that you would welcome their donations! I send home labels "Donated to Third Grade by:" and the kids take real pride in sending back books with the labels giving them credit. — Doug.

**A:** Good points! I forgot about mentioning the resources right under our nose. To add to that - I have asked that books be donated to the classroom instead of purchasing a gift for me during the holidays and at the end-of-the year. Last year I received 250.00 worth of Barnes and Noble gift cards...and that was just for Christmas. I received about the same amount at the end-of-the-year. Best to you, Angela

**Q 2:** Hi, I am a 4th grade teacher in Texas who is pulling hair out due to loss of books! I have great kids, but no matter what system I have in place, my classroom library books disappear. This year - BY THE TONS! I began Googling and ran across your site. I have been researching the Intelliscanner, thanks to you, but I have a couple of questions.

1. Which model do you use? 2. How easy is it to check books in and out to your students? 3. What are your procedures for lending a book? Thanks, Fraun P.

**A:** Hello! I have had my experiences with book "stealing" years, but I am fortunate enough to not have that problem this year or last. I've also received, on two different years, a large box of books found during the summer from a former student (usually one of my best readers). For the past two years I have never needed to use the Intelliscanner for checking books in and out. My kids just get books when they need them, and I have a student that keeps it organized with an early start time in the morning. So, with that said...if I had a problem with missing books, I would have a library check-out day once a week. You would simply need to scan the ISBN number, like the library at school. It's pretty quick and easy...just an extra step I don't need to take this year. The version I have is the cheapest one (not the cordless). It is now \$150.00, I believe. Hope that helps, Angela

**Q 3:** Angela, How do you finance your library? — Joe Pendleton

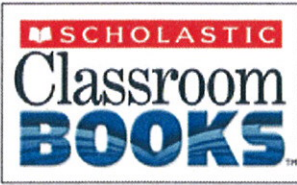
**A:** All the same methods that everyone else uses. Goodwill, garage sales, Scholastic, used bookstores, begging, stealing, borrowing, looking high, looking low. My favorite is McKay's Used Bookstore in Knoxville. I just take a shopping cart and fill it completely up every time. I have never spent less than 100 dollars in that place - ever. It's the best. You can also get quality books on CD as well. — Angela

#### About the Author

Angela Bunyi's classroom door is open and ready for you to take a peek. Be sure to follow her on Teaching Matters. In addition to one-on-one literacy conferences, she also balances small group instruction in all areas through a workshop method. She shares unique, engaging, and purposeful learning activities and projects and provides you with resources you can use right away.

# Appendix B

## CLASSROOM LIBRARY CHECKLIST



While there is no right way to organize a classroom library, use this checklist to evaluate your collection and its use.

YES	NO	STATEMENT
		1. Is there a minimum of 8 to 15 books per student?
		2. Is 1 new book per student added each year?
		3. Do the materials reflect the range of reading levels represented in the classroom, so that all students can find books that are appropriate to their independent reading level?
		4. Does the library contain a variety of materials: books, magazines, catalogs, listening center with books-on-tape, computer and computer software, art supplies and writing paper to respond to reading, etc.?
		5. Is there a balance between the fiction and non-fiction books?
		6. Do the books represent a wide variety of genres and types: picture books, chapter books, poetry, folktales, joke books, historical fiction, mystery, science fiction, fantasy, biography, classics, series, multicultural, nonfiction, etc.?
		7. Are the books selected for their quality and reader appeal, both in interest and reading level?
		8. Are the books attractive and in good condition?
		9. Are there multiple copies of popular titles, so that students can read books together?
		10. Have at least 40% of the books been published in the last 5 to 10 years?
		11. Do the books reflect cultural and linguistic diversity?
		12. Do the students have voice in recommending books for the collection?
		13. Are the materials accessible to the students?
		14. Are the books categorized and arranged in a logical and clear manner: authors, genre, themes, series, topics, new books, read-alouds, award winners, etc.?
		15. Is there easy-to-read and highly visible signage to aid the students in finding materials?
		16. Does the organization and signage invite browsing and use?
		17. Are most of the books arranged with their covers facing outward?
		18. Does the organization promote the reading of different genres, authors, and types of materials?
		19. Is there a display area to highlight books and other materials and are the displays changed frequently?
		20. Is there a management system for checking out materials and monitoring their return?
		21. Is the classroom library weeded of old, tattered, and worn books on a regular basis?
		22. Is the classroom library located in one area of the room or are the reading materials and reading areas dispersed throughout the room?
		23. Are the reading areas defined with rugs or furniture arrangements?
		24. Is there an area set aside for quiet reading?
		25. Does the quiet reading area provide alternative seating: beanbag pillows, soft cushions, rocking or easy chair, sofa, loft, etc.?
		26. Are the students encouraged to use the classroom library throughout the school day?
		27. Are students provided chunks of time to read for a variety of purposes throughout the school day: for pleasure, for information, to perform a task?



## Appendix C

# What Effective Classroom Libraries Look Like...

*(Assembly requires no tools but creativity)*

### **Libraries should be inviting and comfortable**

That means ample seating with beanbag chairs, pillows or other alternatives, as well as at least one special chair in a central spot for teacher read-aloud.



### **How much space is enough?**

Classroom libraries should be able to accommodate at least 4-5 children at a time. In fact, some experts suggest a space that measures 10 feet by 8 feet or more, if possible.



### **A quiet, cozy setting is important**

Successful classroom libraries are situated away from traffic flow and set apart with bookshelves or other barriers.

### **Book baskets can be useful**

They can be used to hold multiple copies of books for children to read to each other. Or, if open faced bookshelves aren't available, baskets offer a low-cost alternative to organizing books by genre.



### **Covers of quality books attract readers**

Book wedges or open-faced bookshelves attract attention and invite browsing. Book wedges may also be used to highlight revolving book collections that reinforce curriculum themes.

### Displays attract students...

...and pique their curiosity. Book posters and other visuals are a great way to promote reading, highlight authors, reinforce classroom themes or announce special events. This space can also be used to display student book reviews and other submissions.



### A small table can produce big results

It will provide teachers with the ability to conduct group or guided reading sessions, as well as individual lessons. A table also promotes small group discussions or cooperative learning exercises.



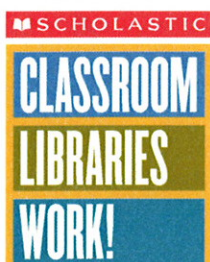
### Organization is key

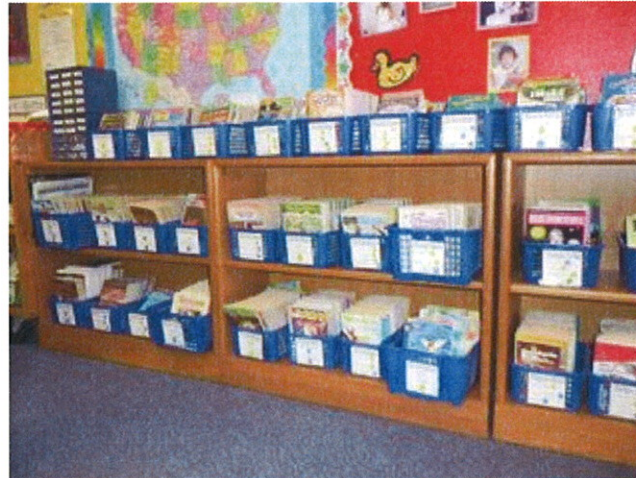
The more user-friendly a classroom library, the easier it is for students to interact with books and enjoy a meaningful experience. These books are arranged alphabetically, but they could just as easily be arranged by genre and reading level. The goal is to attract students, stimulate their curiosity and make it easy for them to find what they're looking for.



### Bookcases are fine for older students, but...

...younger students will have a difficult time reaching the top two shelves. Clearly, shelves should meet the physical requirements of the students using them. Also, shelves don't necessarily have to be placed against a wall. They can be used as a barrier to shield students from visual distractions. With this arrangement, teachers should always make certain they are able to see the entire library area from anywhere in the classroom.





Chapter book series are kept in blue baskets.



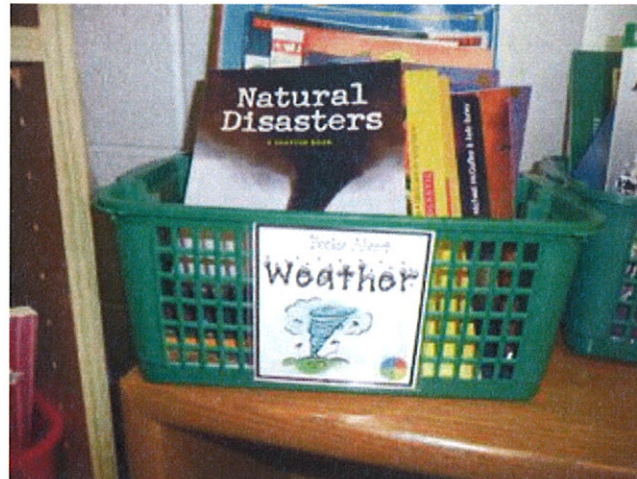
Chapter books that are not part of a series are kept in yellow baskets.



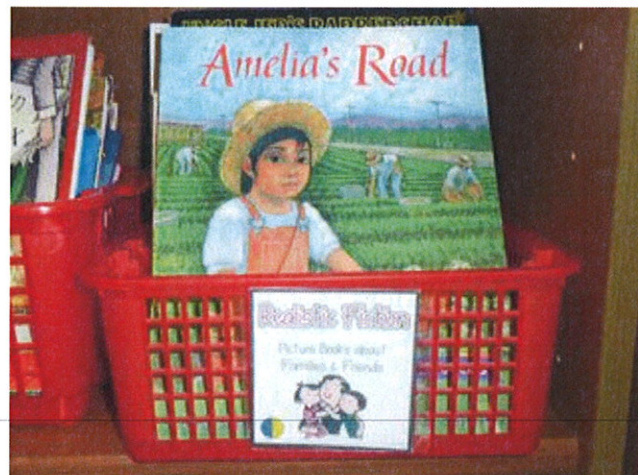
Nonfiction texts are stored in green baskets.

## Basket Labels

All baskets have a unique label that tells a reader what type of books they can find inside. The basket labels vary based on the section of the library in which the basket is located.



Nonfiction basket labels reveal the topic students will find inside.



Fiction picture book and chapter book labels reveal the basket's genre.



Chapter book series baskets reveal the name of the different series a reader will find inside.



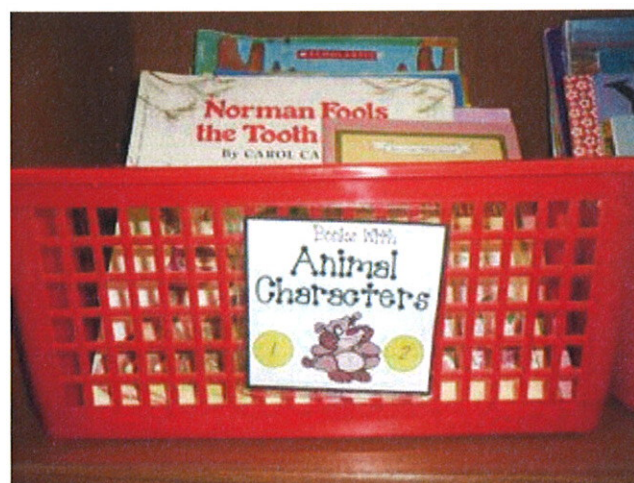
[Download my pre-made labels and a label template you can use to create your own.](#)

## How I Level My Books

I do not level my books just so that I can assign students a color code (level) and then make them read only at that level. I make certain that my students are involved in the process in every way. They read books from the classroom library and try to determine what levels seem "just right" for them. I meet with each student individually to decide upon a comfortable "just right" level so that students can start choosing appropriate books that they can read independently. (Watch my library video for more information about how this process works.) Once a student's JR level is determined, he or she can refer to the basket labels as a guide for finding books that are "just right" for them. As the school year progresses, students are constantly reevaluating what levels feel "just right" for them and reading trial books at a higher level before deciding to regularly read books at that level independently.



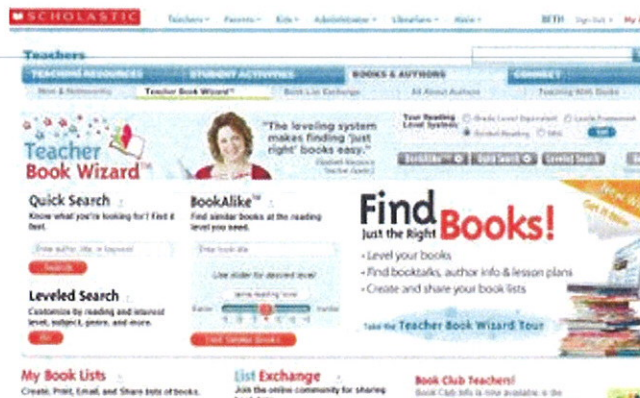
A color code sticker can be found on the back of every book.



Basket labels also indicate what color codes can be found inside.

H-I	1
J	2
K	1
L	2
M	3
N	4
O	1
P	2
Q	3
R	4
S	1
T	2
U	3
V	4
W+	5

The color codes in my library correspond to Fountas and Pinnell's guided reading levels.

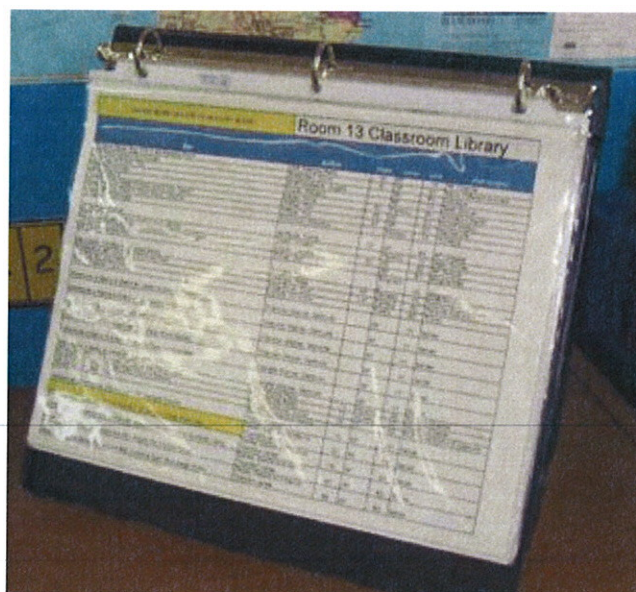


## Appendix D

### Keeping Track of Your Books

Once I began collecting a good number of books, it became important to me that I had some sort of inventory of the books I own. This is helpful when choosing books to read aloud, when suggesting "just right" books for students, and for keeping track of all my books. Since I was using the computer to look up the levels of my books, it made sense to also add the book title, author, level, and library location to an Excel file that I could access when searching for a book.

SHADED BOXES INDICATE DOUBLE COPY BOOKS									
Room 13 Classroom Library									
Title	Author	Foys	Genre	Lex	Student Location	Tracking From	Three Copies Owned	Three Copies Borrowed	Three Copies Missing
1147 <i>It's a Wonderful Life</i>	Warner, Richard	48	HF	V1	101 Piche	Character vs. Self			
1148 <i>Walking Home</i>	Wells, Robert	52	Fantasy	61	101 Piche				
1149 <i>Is it Okay When the Biggest Thing There is?</i>	Wells, Robert	51	HF	51	Science	Space Unit			
1150 <i>Is There Room on the Feather Bed?</i>	Wray, Lillian Moore	51	Fantasy	V2	101 Piche				
1151 <i>Isabel, Book One (Isabelia)</i>	Wunsch, Gordon	50	HF	50	Series				
1152 <i>Isabel, Book Two (Isabel)</i>	Wunsch, Gordon	50	HF	50	Series				
1153 <i>Isabel, Book Two (Isabel)</i>	Wunsch, Gordon	50	HF	50	Series				
1154 <i>It's a Wonderful Life</i>	Wunsch, Gordon	50	HF	50	Series				
1155 <i>It's a Wonderful Life</i>	Wunsch, Gordon	50	HF	50	Series				
1156 <i>It's a Wonderful Life</i>	Wunsch, Gordon	50	HF	50	Series				
1157 <i>It's a Wonderful Life</i>	Wunsch, Gordon	50	HF	50	Series				
1158 <i>It's a Wonderful Life</i>	Wunsch, Gordon	50	HF	50	Series				
1159 <i>It's a Wonderful Life</i>	Wunsch, Gordon	50	HF	50	Series				
1160 <i>It's a Wonderful Life</i>	Wunsch, Gordon	50	HF	50	Series				
1161 <i>It's a Wonderful Life</i>	Wunsch, Gordon	50	HF	50	Series				
1162 <i>It's a Wonderful Life</i>	Wunsch, Gordon	50	HF	50	Series				
1163 <i>It's a Wonderful Life</i>	Wunsch, Gordon	50	HF	50	Series				
1164 <i>It's a Wonderful Life</i>	Wunsch, Gordon	50	HF	50	Series				
1165 <i>It's a Wonderful Life</i>	Wunsch, Gordon	50	HF	50	Series				
1166 <i>It's a Wonderful Life</i>	Wunsch, Gordon	50	HF	50	Series				
1167 <i>It's a Wonderful Life</i>	Wunsch, Gordon	50	HF	50	Series				
1168 <i>It's a Wonderful Life</i>	Wunsch, Gordon	50	HF	50	Series				
1169 <i>It's a Wonderful Life</i>	Wunsch, Gordon	50	HF	50	Series				
1170 <i>It's a Wonderful Life</i>	Wunsch, Gordon	50	HF	50	Series				
1171 <i>It's a Wonderful Life</i>	Wunsch, Gordon	50	HF	50	Series				
1172 <i>It's a Wonderful Life</i>	Wunsch, Gordon	50	HF	50	Series				
1173 <i>It's a Wonderful Life</i>	Wunsch, Gordon	50	HF	50	Series				
1174 <i>It's a Wonderful Life</i>	Wunsch, Gordon	50	HF	50	Series				
1175 <i>It's a Wonderful Life</i>	Wunsch, Gordon	50	HF	50	Series				
1176 <i>It's a Wonderful Life</i>	Wunsch, Gordon	50	HF	50	Series				
1177 <i>It's a Wonderful Life</i>	Wunsch, Gordon	50	HF	50	Series				
1178 <i>It's a Wonderful Life</i>	Wunsch, Gordon	50	HF	50	Series				
1179 <i>It's a Wonderful Life</i>	Wunsch, Gordon	50	HF	50	Series				
1180 <i>It's a Wonderful Life</i>	Wunsch, Gordon	50	HF	50	Series				



I chose to print out my Excel library collection file as a sort of "card catalog" for students to use when looking for specific books or books by a specific author.





In the past couple of years, I have been transferring my book collection to [Media Collector](#), a software used with IntelliScanner. An IntelliScanner is a device used to scan the barcodes on your classroom library books. The information is collected and stored on your computer. You can choose to add your own categories to the collected information as well. For example, once a book is added to my collection, I add categories for book level and library location.

## Evaluate Your Classroom Library!

*"Jumpstart the process of building a better classroom library with the Scholastic Classroom Books "Mini" Evaluation Protocol. Use this research-based, quick, and easy-to-use audit tool to assess your current classroom books and give you the knowledge to build on them to ensure you have the right books for your students."*

[Use Scholastic's Classroom Library Evaluation Tool](#)



## Appendix E

### **Encouraging Children to Assist with the Organizational Process**

Once fiction or nonfiction topics have been decided, children can be part of the organizational process. Lisa Moynihan paired students together and gave them one or more empty baskets with the names of the selected topics. For example, Harry and Steven had the “New York City” basket and the “Mysteries” basket. Each pair then decided who was the seeker of materials and who was the keeper. The role of the seeker was to locate materials to include in their baskets. The role of the keeper was to put the resources found by the seeker into the relevant basket. Each seeker and keeper wore a tag to signify their designation. Harry wore a tag that said “Seeker of Mysteries and New York City.” Steven wore a tag that said “Keeper of Mysteries and New York City.” Lisa had come up with the idea of seekers and keepers from the Harry Potter series. Her children loved these books, and she noticed that many of them were discussing the game of Quidditch, in which teams were made up of seekers and keepers. Her use of the children’s interest to act as springboard for organizing the classroom library was brilliant.

Lisa placed all the classroom reading materials into the center of the room and asked the seekers to begin searching. The task was simple: Try to locate literature on your topics and give it to your keeper. Before letting her children embark on this mission, she had conversations with them on their roles and responsibilities:

#### **The Role of the Seeker**

- Find materials that you think should belong in your topic baskets.
- If you are unsure, give the material to your keeper and let them make the decision.
- If you find materials that belongs in another pair’s basket, give it to their seeker.
- Take time to look at the material. Don’t just make decisions based on the cover.
- If it is a story, read the blurb to see what kind of story it is, for example, mystery, adventure, science fiction.

#### **The Role of the Keeper**

- Look at the materials your seeker gives you to make sure they belong in your baskets.
- Take time to look at the material. Don’t just make decisions based on the cover.
- If you find you have too much material see whether any of it could fit into a different category and give it to that keeper.

It was amazing to watch her children in action. It was chaotic, but it was organized chaos. Within twenty minutes, 80 percent of the books and magazines had been organized. What remained was literature that didn't fit into any of the designated categories; therefore, new baskets were established to house this material. The children noticed that many of their baskets were overflowing with materials, whereas others had fewer materials. This led to discussions on subdividing categories that had an abundance of materials and purchasing new materials for categories that were spartan.

Lisa found that giving responsibility to her learners for setting up the classroom library had numerous advantages. It encouraged her learners to take care of their resources because they had been responsible for its organization. It gave her children an opportunity to become immersed in the literature available through browsing. And finally it saved her countless hours in attempting to organize the materials alone. The big decision that Lisa had to make was whether to repeat this process at the beginning of each school year. This would mean totally dismantling the classroom library at the end of each year. For Lisa, this was a simple decision. The seeker and keeper activity had been so valuable in giving her students voice that she decided to repeat the process every year.

- pp. 48-50 from "Encouraging Children to Assist with the Organizational Process" *Good Choice! Supporting Independent Reading and Response K-6* by Tony Stead (2009)

## Appendix F

<b>Name of Magazine</b>	<b>Ages/Grades</b>	<b>Website</b>
<i>Time for Kids</i>	Separate Issues for K-1, 2-3 & 4-6	<a href="http://www.timeforkids.com/TFK">http://www.timeforkids.com/TFK</a>
<i>Nickelodeon</i>	All ages	<a href="http://www.nick.com">http://www.nick.com</a>
<i>Cricket</i>	Ages 9-14	<a href="http://www.cricketmag.com/home.asp/">http://www.cricketmag.com/home.asp/</a>
<i>Pack-O-Fun</i>	All ages	<a href="http://www.craftideas.com">http://www.craftideas.com</a>
<i>Sports Illustrated for Kids</i>	Grades 3-6	<a href="http://www.sikids.com">http://www.sikids.com</a>
<i>AppleSeeds</i>	Grades 2-5	<a href="http://www.cobblestonepub.com/magazine/app/">http://www.cobblestonepub.com/magazine/app/</a>
<i>Chirp, Chickadee and Owl</i>	Grades K-3	<a href="http://www.owlkids.com">http://www.owlkids.com</a>
<i>Tony Stead's Real Life Magazines</i>	Grades 3-6	<a href="http://www.rosenpublishing.com">http://www.rosenpublishing.com</a>
<i>Highlights for Children</i>	All ages	<a href="http://www.highlights.com">http://www.highlights.com</a>
<i>Kids Discover</i>	Grades 1-6	<a href="http://www.kidsdiscover.com">http://www.kidsdiscover.com</a>
<i>Lady Bug</i>	Grades K-2	<a href="http://www.cobblestonepub.com/magazine/lyb/">http://www.cobblestonepub.com/magazine/lyb/</a>
<i>National Geographic Kids</i>	Grades 3-6	<a href="http://www.kids.nationalgeographic.com/">http://www.kids.nationalgeographic.com/</a>
<i>Ranger Rick</i>	Grades 2-6	<a href="http://www.nwf.org/gowild/">http://www.nwf.org/gowild/</a>
<i>Sesame Street</i>	Pre-K-K	<a href="http://www.sesameworkshop.org/sesamestreet/">http://www.sesameworkshop.org/sesamestreet/</a>
<i>U.S. Kids</i>	Grades 2-5	<a href="http://www.uskidsmag.org">http://www.uskidsmag.org</a>
<i>Your Big Back Yard</i>	Grades K-2	<a href="http://www.nwf.org/yourbigbackyard/">http://www.nwf.org/yourbigbackyard/</a>
<i>Plays</i>	All ages	<a href="http://www.playsmag.com">http://www.playsmag.com</a>
<i>Stone Soup</i>	Grades 3-6	<a href="http://www.stonesoup.com/">http://www.stonesoup.com/</a>
<i>Dig</i>	Grades 4-9	<a href="http://www.cobblestonepub.com/magazine/dig/">http://www.cobblestonepub.com/magazine/dig/</a>
<i>Cobblestone American History for Kids</i>	Grades 4-9	<a href="http://www.cobblestonepub.com/magazine/cob/">http://www.cobblestonepub.com/magazine/cob/</a>
<i>American Girl</i>	Grades 3-7	<a href="http://www.americangirl.com/agmg/index.html">http://www.americangirl.com/agmg/index.html</a>
<i>Boy's Life</i>	Grades 3-6	<a href="http://www.boyslife.org">http://www.boyslife.org</a>
<i>Children's Digest</i>	Grades 5-7	<a href="http://www.cbhi.org/magazines/childrensdigest/index.shtml">http://www.cbhi.org/magazines/childrensdigest/index.shtml</a>

- P. 57 ~ List of Magazines That Could Be Incorporated into the Classroom Library from *Good Choice! Supporting Independent Reading and Response K-6* by Tony Stead (2009)

# Appendix G

## Useful Websites for Independent Reading and Research

A list of useful and appropriate websites for children in primary and elementary grades follows. These have been organized under science and social studies topics that many schools have adapted as part of their curriculum.

*Note:* At the time of publication, these websites were excellent sites for children to research on a specific topic. Given the changing nature of websites in terms of complexity and content, I recommend that the teacher view these sites before giving students independent access.

### Science

#### Animals

<http://www.kidscom.com/games/animal/animal.html>  
<http://kidsgowild.com/>  
<http://www.kbears.com/> (farm)  
<http://kids.nationalgeographic.com/>  
<http://www.kidsbiology.com/animals-for-children.php>  
<http://www.tropical-forests.com/> (rain forests)  
<http://www.junglemouse.net/ani/animals.html> (rain forests)  
[http://www.nationalgeographic.com/features/00/earthpulse/rainforest/index\\_flash-feature.html](http://www.nationalgeographic.com/features/00/earthpulse/rainforest/index_flash-feature.html) (rain forests)  
<http://www.webtots.co.uk/> (for younger kids, farm)  
<http://www.ncmoa.org/costarica/> (rain forest/frogs)  
<http://nationalzoo.si.edu/Audiences/kids/>

#### Space

<http://www.nasa.gov/audience/forchildren/kidsclub/flash/index.html>  
<http://spaceplace.jpl.nasa.gov/en/kids/>  
<http://www.seasky.org/>  
<http://science.nationalgeographic.com/science/space/solar-system>  
<http://www.nasa.gov/audience/forstudents/k-4/stories/what-is-the-solar-system.html>  
<http://www.nineplanets.org>  
<http://www.kidsastronomy.com/>  
<http://www.kidskonnct.com/content/view/101/27/>

#### The Ocean

<http://www.seasky.org/>  
<http://www.calstatela.edu/faculty/eviau/edit557/oceans/linda/loceans.htm>  
[http://www.prekinders.com/ocean\\_kids.htm](http://www.prekinders.com/ocean_kids.htm)  
<http://sln.fi.edu/fellows/fellow8/dec98/intera.html>  
<http://funschool.kaboose.com/globe-rider/under-the-sea/>  
<http://www.didyounow.org/kids/ocean.htm>  
<http://kids.nationalgeographic.com/Animals/>  
<http://www.seaworld.org/wild-world/safari/virtual-aquarium/acropora-coral.htm>  
<http://www.kidzone.ws/sharks/index.htm>

## Plants and Trees

<http://www.dnr.state.wi.us/org/caer/ce/eeek/veg/trees/treestruicolor.htm>  
[http://www.forgefx.com/casestudies/prenticehall/ph/solar\\_system/solarsystem.htm](http://www.forgefx.com/casestudies/prenticehall/ph/solar_system/solarsystem.htm)  
<http://www.urbanext.uiuc.edu/firstgarden/planning/index.html>  
<http://www.primarygames.com/science/flowers/flowers.htm>  
<http://sophia.smith.edu/badseeds/plantfacts.html>  
<http://www.edenproject.com/childrens/1226.html>  
<http://www.urbanext.uiuc.edu/kids/index.html>  
<http://www.mbgnet.net/>

## Dinosaurs

<http://www.sdnhm.org/kids/dinosaur/index.html>  
<http://www.cotf.edu/ete/modules/mse/dinosaurflr/diorama.html>  
[http://www.mantyweb.com/dinosaur/dinosaur\\_games.htm](http://www.mantyweb.com/dinosaur/dinosaur_games.htm)  
<http://www.fieldmuseum.org/sue/index.html>  
<http://www.kidsdinos.com/>  
<http://kids.nationalgeographic.com/Games/PuzzlesQuizzes/Brainteaserdinosaurs>  
<http://easyweb.easynet.co.uk/~skafi/DINO.HTM>

## Reptiles and Frogs

<http://nationalzoo.si.edu/Animals/ReptilesAmphibians/ForKids/default.cfm>  
<http://www.kiddyhouse.com/Themes/frogs/>  
<http://www.chevroncars.com/learn/wondrous-world/crocodile-facts>  
[http://www.worldbook.com/wb/Students?content\\_spotlight/reptiles/facts](http://www.worldbook.com/wb/Students?content_spotlight/reptiles/facts)

## Birds

<http://www.enchantedlearning.com/subjects/birds/>  
<http://www.mbr-pwrc.usgs.gov/Infocenter/infocenter.html#Corvidae>  
<http://www.atozkidsstuff.com/baldeagle.html> (bald eagle)  
[http://www.kidsplanet.org/factsheets/bald\\_eagle.html](http://www.kidsplanet.org/factsheets/bald_eagle.html) (bald eagle)  
[http://www.birds.cornell.edu/schoolyard/all\\_about\\_birds/fun\\_with\\_birds/cool\\_facts.html](http://www.birds.cornell.edu/schoolyard/all_about_birds/fun_with_birds/cool_facts.html)  
<http://www.iwrc-online.org/kids/Facts/Birds/birds.htm>  
<http://www.kidzone.ws/animals/birds2.htm> (birds of prey)

## Bugs/Creepy Crawlies

[http://www.cdli.ca/CITE/creepy\\_crawlies.htm](http://www.cdli.ca/CITE/creepy_crawlies.htm)  
<http://coolbugstuff.com/facts.php?osCsid=ab1f1c8ce3ff9f61245120719192801b>  
<http://www.burgepest.com/bugfacts.htm>  
<http://www.ex.ac.uk/bugclub>  
<http://www.insects.org>  
[http://www.ento.csiro.au/about\\_insects/index.html](http://www.ento.csiro.au/about_insects/index.html)  
<http://www.insectfarm.com.au>

## Human Body/Nutrition

[www.yuckydiscovery.com](http://www.yuckydiscovery.com)  
<http://www.brainpop.com/health>  
<http://www.kidshealth.org/kid/>  
<http://www.innerbody.com>  
<http://vilenski.org/science/humanbody/>  
<http://dir.yahoo.com/Health/>

## Weather

<http://skydiary.com/kids/>  
<http://www.scholastic.com/kids/weather/>  
<http://www.weatherwizkids.com/>  
<http://eo.ucar.edu/webweather/>  
<http://www.tornadochaser.com/2000projects.htm>  
<http://eo.ucar.edu/rainbows/>  
<http://www.wxduke.com/>

## Energy

<http://www.energyhog.org/childrens.htm>  
<http://www.eere.energy.gov/kids/games.html>  
<http://www.eia.doe.gov/kids/>  
<http://www.eia.doe.gov/kids/energyfacts/sources/non-renewable/moreoil.html>  
[http://www.nicor.com/en\\_us/nicor\\_inc/nicor\\_in\\_the\\_community/kid\\_sites.htm](http://www.nicor.com/en_us/nicor_inc/nicor_in_the_community/kid_sites.htm)  
[http://www.energystar.gov/index.cfm?c=kids.kids\\_index](http://www.energystar.gov/index.cfm?c=kids.kids_index)  
<http://www.hightechkids.org/>

## Matter

[http://www.chem4kids.com/files/matter\\_intro.html](http://www.chem4kids.com/files/matter_intro.html)  
<http://kids.aol.com/HomeworkHelp/junior/science/matter>  
<http://www2.mcdaniel.edu/Graduate/TI/pages/LEWIS/matterweb.htm>  
<http://www.idahoptv.org/dialogue4kids/season7/matter/facts.cfm>

## Rock and Minerals

## Motion/Simple Machines



## **Social Studies**

### **Countries**

<http://cyberschoolbus.un.org/infonation/index.asp>  
<http://www.countryreports.org/>  
[http://www.studentsoftheworld.info/menu\\_infopays.html](http://www.studentsoftheworld.info/menu_infopays.html)  
<http://www.cantonpl.org/kids/country.html>  
<http://www.dltk-kids.com/world/index.htm>  
<http://kids.yahoo.com/directory/Around-the-World/Countries>  
<http://northvalley.net/kids/cities.shtml>  
<http://www.timeforkids.com/TFK/hh/goplaces/>  
<http://kids.nationalgeographic.com/Games/GeographyGames/Geospy>

### **Holidays/Celebrations**

<http://www.billybear4kids.com/>  
<http://falcon.jmu.edu/~ramseyil/holidays.htm>  
<http://www.suelebeau.com/months.htm>  
<http://www.texaseducator.com/teacher/holidays.html>

### **Transportation**

<http://www.chevroncars.com/learn/cars/car-fun-facts>  
[http://www.spokanecleanair.org/cool\\_car\\_facts.asp](http://www.spokanecleanair.org/cool_car_facts.asp)  
<http://www.trakkies.co.uk/railway-facts/fun-facts>  
<http://library.thinkquest.org/J001198/train.htm>  
<http://www.gocitybus.com/kids/mainpage.htm>  
[http://www.boeing.com/commercial/747family/pf/pf\\_facts.html](http://www.boeing.com/commercial/747family/pf/pf_facts.html)

### **Recycling**

[www.howstuffworks.com](http://www.howstuffworks.com)  
<http://www.zerowaste.co.nz>  
<http://www.nationalgeographic.com>  
<http://www.envirolink.org>

### **United States Geography**

#### **Presidents/Elections/The Whitehouse**

<http://www.kids.gov/>  
<http://millercenter.org/academic/americanpresident/>  
<http://www.whitehouse.gov/history/presidents/>  
<http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/odmdhtml/preshome.html>  
<http://score.rims.k12.ca.us/activity/presidentsday/>  
<http://www.americanpresidents.org/>  
<http://www.kidsolr.com/history/>  
<http://www.whitehouse.gov/history/life/video/index.html>

#### **American Explorers**

[http://www.kidinfo.com/American\\_History/Explorers.html](http://www.kidinfo.com/American_History/Explorers.html)  
<http://www.lucidcafe.com/library/95aug/lewis.html>  
<http://www.multcolib.org/homework/alphaexp.html>  
<http://www.42explore2.com/explorers.htm>  
<http://gardenofpraise.com/leaders.htm>  
<http://www.eduweb.com/portfolio/jeffwest/index.html>  
<http://www.nationalgeographic.com/west/index.html>

## Revolutionary War

<http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/browse/ListSome.php?category=War,+Military>  
<http://www.historyplace.com/unitedstates/revolution/index.html>  
<http://www.historyplace.com/index.html>  
[http://www.congressforkids.net/Independence\\_declaration\\_1.htm](http://www.congressforkids.net/Independence_declaration_1.htm)  
<http://www.kathimitchell.com/revolt.htm>  
<http://www.kidskonnnect.com/content/view/251/27/>  
<http://www.pocanticohills.org/revolution/revolution.htm>

## Civil War

<http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/browse/ListSome.php?category=War,+Military>  
[http://www.historynet.com/magazines/americas\\_civil\\_war](http://www.historynet.com/magazines/americas_civil_war)  
<http://www.historyplace.com/index.html>  
[http://cybersleuthkids.com/sleuth/History/US\\_History/Civil\\_War/index.htm](http://cybersleuthkids.com/sleuth/History/US_History/Civil_War/index.htm)  
<http://www.pocanticohills.org/civilwar/cwar.htm>  
<http://www.nps.gov/archive/gett/gettkidz/kidzindex.htm>  
<http://www.kathimitchell.com/civil.htm>

## Native Americans

<http://www.carnegiemnh.org/exhibits/north-south-east-west/iroquois/index.html>  
<http://www.ahsd25.k12.il.us/Curriculum%20Info/nativeamericans/>  
<http://nativetech.org/games/index.php>  
<http://www.native-languages.org/kids.htm>  
<http://www.native-languages.org/kidfaq.htm>

## General

<http://www.hightechscience.org/funfacts.htm>  
<http://www.sciencekids.co.nz/sciencefacts.html>  
<http://www.ask.com>  
<http://www.enchantedlearning.com>  
<http://www.classbrain.com>  
<http://www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/index.html>  
<http://www.askforkids.com>  
<http://www.education-world.com>  
<http://www.kidsconnect.com/>  
<http://www.education-world.com/>  
<http://www.kidsinfo.com/>

- Pp. 82-7 ~ “Useful Websites for Independent Reading and Research” from *Good Choice! Supporting Independent Reading and Response K-6* by Tony Stead (2009)

# Appendix H

## Author's Websites

LAST NAME	FIRST NAME	WEBSITE
<b>A</b>		
Adler	David A.	<a href="http://www.davidaadler.com/">www.davidaadler.com/</a>
Archambault	John	<a href="http://www.johnarchambault.com/">www.johnarchambault.com/</a>
Arnold	Caroline	<a href="http://www.geocities.com/Athens/1264">www.geocities.com/Athens/1264</a>
Arnosky	Jim	<a href="http://jimarnosky.com/">jimarnosky.com/</a>
Avi		<a href="http://www.avi-writer.com">www.avi-writer.com</a>
Aylesworth	Jim	<a href="http://www.ayles.com/">www.ayles.com/</a>
<b>B</b>		
Baudet	Stephanie	<a href="http://www.stephaniebaudet.co.uk">www.stephaniebaudet.co.uk</a>
Bauer	Joan	<a href="http://www.joanbauer.com/">www.joanbauer.com/</a>
Bauer	Marion Dane	<a href="http://www.mariondanebauer.com/">www.mariondanebauer.com/</a>
Bial	Raymond	<a href="http://www.raybial.com/">www.raybial.com/</a>
Blume	Judy	<a href="http://www.judyblume.com/">www.judyblume.com/</a>
Brett	Jan	<a href="http://www.janbrett.com/">www.janbrett.com/</a>
Brimner	Larry Dane	<a href="http://www.brimner.com">www.brimner.com</a>
Brisson	Pat	<a href="http://www.patbrisson.com/">www.patbrisson.com/</a>
Bruchac	Joseph	<a href="http://www.josephbruchac.com/">www.josephbruchac.com/</a>
Byars	Betsy	<a href="http://www.betsybyars.com/">www.betsybyars.com/</a>
<b>C</b>		
Calmenson	Stephanie	<a href="http://www.stephaniecalmenson.com/">www.stephaniecalmenson.com/</a>
Cameron	Ann	<a href="http://www.childrensbestbooks.com/">www.childrensbestbooks.com/</a>
Carle	Eric	<a href="http://www.eric-carle.com/">www.eric-carle.com/</a>
Carlson	Kirsten	<a href="http://www.mbay.net/~kirsten/">www.mbay.net/~kirsten/</a>
Carlstrom	Nancy White	<a href="http://www.nancywhitecarlstrom.com/">www.nancywhitecarlstrom.com/</a>
Caseley	Judith	<a href="http://www.judithcaseley.com/">www.judithcaseley.com/</a>
Chesworth	Michael	<a href="http://www.crashbangboom.com/">www.crashbangboom.com/</a>
Choi	Yangsook	<a href="http://www.yangsookchoi.com/">www.yangsookchoi.com/</a>
Christelow	Eileen	<a href="http://www.christelow.com/">www.christelow.com/</a>
Cisneros	Sandra	<a href="http://www.sandracisneros.com">www.sandracisneros.com</a>
Cleary	Brian P.	<a href="http://www.lkwdpl.org/lfiles/cleary/">www.lkwdpl.org/lfiles/cleary/</a>
Cobb	Vicki	<a href="http://www.vickicobb.com">www.vickicobb.com</a>
Cocca-Leffler	Maryann	<a href="http://www.maryanncoccaleffler.com/">www.maryanncoccaleffler.com/</a>
Cole	Babette	<a href="http://www.babette-cole.com/">www.babette-cole.com/</a>
Coville	Bruce	<a href="http://www.brucecoville.com/">www.brucecoville.com/</a>
Cowley	Joy	<a href="http://www.joycowley.com/">www.joycowley.com/</a>
Cushman	Doug	<a href="http://www.doug-cushman.com/">www.doug-cushman.com/</a>
Cushman	Karen	<a href="http://www.eduplace.com/author/cushman/">www.eduplace.com/author/cushman/</a>
<b>D</b>		
Dadey	Debbie	<a href="http://www.baileykids.com">www.baileykids.com</a>
Dahl	Roald	<a href="http://www.roalddahl.com/">www.roalddahl.com/</a>
Danziger	Paula	<a href="http://www.scholastic.com/titles/paula">www.scholastic.com/titles/paula</a>
DePaola	Tomie	<a href="http://www.tomie.com/">www.tomie.com/</a>
DiCamillo	Kate	<a href="http://www.katedicamillo.com/">www.katedicamillo.com/</a>
Draper	Sharon	<a href="http://www.sharondraper.com/">www.sharondraper.com/</a>
<b>F</b>		
Fleischman	Paul	<a href="http://www.paulfleischman.net/">www.paulfleischman.net/</a>
Fleming	Denise	<a href="http://www.denisefleming.com/">www.denisefleming.com/</a>
Fletcher	Ralph	<a href="http://www.ralphfletcher.com/">www.ralphfletcher.com/</a>
Fox	Mem	<a href="http://www.memfox.net/">www.memfox.net/</a>

**Author's Websites** (CONTINUED)

LAST NAME	FIRST NAME	WEBSITE
<b>G</b>		
Gantos	Jack	<a href="http://www.jackgantos.com/">www.jackgantos.com/</a>
George	Jean Craighead	<a href="http://www.jeancraigheadgeorge.com/">www.jeancraigheadgeorge.com/</a>
George	Kristine O'Connell	<a href="http://www.kristinegeorge.com/">www.kristinegeorge.com/</a>
Gibbons	Gail	<a href="http://www.gailgibbons.com/">www.gailgibbons.com/</a>
Grimes	Nikki	<a href="http://www.nikkigrimes.com/">www.nikkigrimes.com/</a>
Gutman	Dan	<a href="http://www.dangutman.com/">www.dangutman.com/</a>
<b>H</b>		
Hague	Michael	<a href="http://www.michaelhague.com/">www.michaelhague.com/</a>
Hahn	Mary Downing	<a href="http://www.childrensbookguild.org/hahn.html">www.childrensbookguild.org/hahn.html</a>
Halperin	Wendy A.	<a href="http://www.wendyhalperin.com">www.wendyhalperin.com</a>
Hamilton	Virginia	<a href="http://www.virginiahamilton.com/">www.virginiahamilton.com/</a>
Henkes	Kevin	<a href="http://www.kevinhenkes.com/">www.kevinhenkes.com/</a>
Hill	Eric	<a href="http://www.funwithspot.com/">www.funwithspot.com/</a>
Hoberman	Mary Ann	<a href="http://www.maryannhoberman.com/">www.maryannhoberman.com/</a>
Hoffman	Mary	<a href="http://www.maryhoffman.co.uk/">www.maryhoffman.co.uk/</a>
Hopkins	Lee Bennett	<a href="http://www.leebennetthopkinsbooks.com/">www.leebennetthopkinsbooks.com/</a>
<b>J</b>		
Jeffers	Susan	<a href="http://www.susanjeffers-art.com/">www.susanjeffers-art.com/</a>
Johnson	Angela	<a href="http://www.aalbc.com/authors/angela.htm">www.aalbc.com/authors/angela.htm</a>
Jones	Rebecca	<a href="http://www.childrensbookguild.org/jones.htm">www.childrensbookguild.org/jones.htm</a>
Josse	Barbara M.	<a href="http://www.barbarajosse.com/">www.barbarajosse.com/</a>
<b>K</b>		
Karas	G. Brian	<a href="http://www.gbriankaras.com/">www.gbriankaras.com/</a>
Keats	Ezra Jack	<a href="http://www.ezra-jack-keats.org/">www.ezra-jack-keats.org/</a>
Kellogg	Steven	<a href="http://www.stevenkillogg.com/">www.stevenkillogg.com/</a>
Ketteman	Helen	<a href="http://www.helenketteman.com">www.helenketteman.com</a>
Kline	Suzy	<a href="http://www.suzykline.com/">www.suzykline.com/</a>
Koller	Jackie French	<a href="http://www.jackiefrenchkoller.com/">www.jackiefrenchkoller.com/</a>
Kovalski	Maryann	<a href="http://www.maryannkovalski.net">www.maryannkovalski.net</a>
Krensky	Stephen	<a href="http://www.stephenkrensky.com/">www.stephenkrensky.com/</a>
Krull	Kathleen	<a href="http://www.kathleenkrull.com/">www.kathleenkrull.com/</a>
Kurtz	Jane	<a href="http://www.geocities.com/Athens/5232/">www.geocities.com/Athens/5232/</a>
<b>L</b>		
Laminack	Lester L.	<a href="http://www.lesterlaminack.com/">www.lesterlaminack.com/</a>
Lasky	Kathryn	<a href="http://www.kathrynlasky.com/">www.kathrynlasky.com/</a>
Leedy	Loreen	<a href="http://www.loreenleedy.com">www.loreenleedy.com</a>
LeGuin	Ursula K	<a href="http://www.ursulakleguin.com/">www.ursulakleguin.com/</a>
Levitin	Sonia	<a href="http://www.sonialevitin.com">www.sonialevitin.com</a>
Lewin	Ted	<a href="http://www.tedlewin.com/">www.tedlewin.com/</a>
Lewis	E. B.	<a href="http://www.eblewis.com/">www.eblewis.com/</a>
Lewis	J. Patrick	<a href="http://www.jpatricklewis.com/">www.jpatricklewis.com/</a>
Lowry	Lois	<a href="http://www.loislowry.com/">www.loislowry.com/</a>
<b>M</b>		
Maguire	Gregory	<a href="http://www.gregorymaguire.com/">www.gregorymaguire.com/</a>
Marcus	Leonard	<a href="http://www.leonardmarcus.com/">www.leonardmarcus.com/</a>
Martin	Jacqueline Briggs	<a href="http://www.jacquelinebriggsmartin.com/">www.jacquelinebriggsmartin.com/</a>
Martin	Rafe	<a href="http://www.rafemartin.com/">www.rafemartin.com/</a>
McDaniel	Lurlene	<a href="http://www.eclectics.com/lurlenemcdaniel">www.eclectics.com/lurlenemcdaniel</a>
McDermott	Gerald	<a href="http://www.geraldmcdermott.com/">www.geraldmcdermott.com/</a>
McKissack	Patricia	<a href="http://www.patriciamckissack.com">www.patriciamckissack.com</a>

**Author's Websites** (CONTINUED)**LAST NAME**      **FIRST NAME**      **WEBSITE****M** (continued)

McMillan	Bruce	<a href="http://www.brucemcmillan.com/">www.brucemcmillan.com/</a>
McMullan	Kate	<a href="http://www.katemcmullan.com/">www.katemcmullan.com/</a>
Medearis	Angela Shelf	<a href="http://www.medearis.com/">www.medearis.com/</a>
Mikaelsen	Ben	<a href="http://www.benmikaelsen.com">www.benmikaelsen.com</a>
Mora	Pat	<a href="http://www.patmora.com/">www.patmora.com/</a>
Moss	Marissa	<a href="http://www.marissamoss.com/">www.marissamoss.com/</a>
Most	Bernard	<a href="http://www.bernardmost.com/">www.bernardmost.com/</a>

**N**

Naidoo	Beverly	<a href="http://www.beverlynaidoo.com/index2.html">www.beverlynaidoo.com/index2.html</a>
Naylor	Phyllis Reynolds	<a href="http://www.simonsays.com/alice">www.simonsays.com/alice</a>
Numerof	Laura	<a href="http://www.lauranumeroff.com/">www.lauranumeroff.com/</a>

**O**

Olson	Julie	<a href="http://www.jujubeeillustrations.com/">www.jujubeeillustrations.com/</a>
Osborne	Mary Pope	<a href="http://www.randomhouse.com/kids/magictreehouse/">www.randomhouse.com/kids/magictreehouse/</a>

**P**

Palacios	John	<a href="http://www.johnpalacios.com/">www.johnpalacios.com/</a>
Park	Linda Sue	<a href="http://www.lindasuepark.com/">www.lindasuepark.com/</a>
Paterson	Katherine	<a href="http://www.terabithia.com/">www.terabithia.com/</a>
Paulsen	Gary	<a href="http://www.randomhouse.com/features/garypaulsen/">www.randomhouse.com/features/garypaulsen/</a>
Pearson	Tracey Campbell	<a href="http://www.traceycampbellpearson.com/">www.traceycampbellpearson.com/</a>
Pfeffer	Wendy	<a href="http://www.author-illustr-source.com/wendypfeffer.htm">www.author-illustr-source.com/wendypfeffer.htm</a>
Pienkowski	Jan	<a href="http://www.janpienkowski.com/">www.janpienkowski.com/</a>
Pilkey	Dav	<a href="http://www.pilkey.com/">www.pilkey.com/</a>
Pinkwater	Daniel	<a href="http://www.pinkwater.com/">www.pinkwater.com/</a>
Plourde	Lynn	<a href="http://www.lynnplourde.com/">www.lynnplourde.com/</a>
Polacco	Patricia	<a href="http://www.patriciapolacco.com/">www.patriciapolacco.com/</a>

**Q**

Quackenbush	Robert	<a href="http://www.rquackenbush.com/">www.rquackenbush.com/</a>
-------------	--------	--

**R**

Ransome	James	<a href="http://www.jamesransome.com/">www.jamesransome.com/</a>
Redwall	(Brian Jacques)	<a href="http://www.redwall.org/dave/jacques.html">www.redwall.org/dave/jacques.html</a>
Rowling	J. K.	<a href="http://www.jkrowling.com/">www.jkrowling.com/</a>
Ryan	Pam Muñoz	<a href="http://www.pammunozryan.com/">www.pammunozryan.com/</a>

**S**

Sabuda	Robert	<a href="http://www.robertsabuda.com/">www.robertsabuda.com/</a>
Sachar	Louis	<a href="http://www.louissachar.com/">www.louissachar.com/</a>
San Souci	Daniel	<a href="http://www.danielsansouci.com/">www.danielsansouci.com/</a>
San Souci	Robert D.	<a href="http://www.rsansouci.com/">www.rsansouci.com/</a>
Sayles	Elizabeth	<a href="http://www.elizabethsayles.com/">www.elizabethsayles.com/</a>
Schaefer	Lola M.	<a href="http://www.lolaschaefer.com/">www.lolaschaefer.com/</a>
Scieszka	Jon	<a href="http://www.guysread.com/">www.guysread.com/</a>
Simon	Seymour	<a href="http://www.seymoursimon.com/">www.seymoursimon.com/</a>
Sis	Peter	<a href="http://www.petersis.com/">www.petersis.com/</a>
Slater	David Michael	<a href="http://www.davidmichaelslater.com/">www.davidmichaelslater.com/</a>
Sloat	Teri	<a href="http://www.terisloat.com/">www.terisloat.com/</a>
Smith	Roland	<a href="http://www.rolandsmith.com">www.rolandsmith.com</a>
Snicket	Lemony	<a href="http://www.lemonysnicket.com/">www.lemonysnicket.com/</a>
Soentpiet	Chris K.	<a href="http://www.soentpiet.com/">www.soentpiet.com/</a>
Soto	Gary	<a href="http://www.garysoto.com/">www.garysoto.com/</a>

**Author's Websites** (CONTINUED)

LAST NAME	FIRST NAME	WEBSITE
<b>S</b> (continued)		
Spinelli	Eileen	<a href="http://www.eileenspinelli.com/">www.eileenspinelli.com/</a>
Spinelli	Jerry	<a href="http://www.jerryspinelli.com">www.jerryspinelli.com</a>
Stanley	Diane	<a href="http://www.dianestanley.com/">www.dianestanley.com/</a>
Steig	William	<a href="http://www.williamsteig.com/">www.williamsteig.com/</a>
Stevens	Janet	<a href="http://www.janetstevens.com/">www.janetstevens.com/</a>
Stuve-Bodeen	Stephanie	<a href="http://www.rockforadoll.com/">www.rockforadoll.com/</a>
Swinburne	Stephen	<a href="http://www.steveswinburne.com/">www.steveswinburne.com/</a>
<b>T</b>		
Tavares	Matt	<a href="http://www.matt-tavares.com/">www.matt-tavares.com/</a>
<b>V</b>		
Van Allsburg	Chris	<a href="http://www.chrisvanallsburg.com">www.chrisvanallsburg.com</a>
Van Leeuwen	Jean	<a href="http://www.jeanvanleeuwen.com/">www.jeanvanleeuwen.com/</a>
<b>W</b>		
Wait	Lea	<a href="http://www.leawait.com/">www.leawait.com/</a>
Wiesner	David	<a href="http://www.houghtonmifflinbooks.com/authors/wiesner">www.houghtonmifflinbooks.com/authors/wiesner</a>
Willems	Mo	<a href="http://www.mowillems.com">www.mowillems.com</a>
Winthrop	Elizabeth	<a href="http://www.absolute-sway.com/winthrop/">www.absolute-sway.com/winthrop/</a>
Wolff	Ashley	<a href="http://www.ashleywolff.com/">www.ashleywolff.com/</a>
Wood	Audrey	<a href="http://www.audreywood.com/">www.audreywood.com/</a>
Wood	Douglas	<a href="http://www.douglaswood.com/">www.douglaswood.com/</a>
Woodson	Jacqueline	<a href="http://www.jacquelinewoodson.com/">www.jacquelinewoodson.com/</a>
<b>Y</b>		
Yolen	Jane	<a href="http://www.janeyolen.com/">www.janeyolen.com/</a>
<b>Z</b>		
Zindel	Paul	<a href="http://www.paulzindel.com/">www.paulzindel.com/</a>
The Author Corner		<a href="http://www.carr.org/authco/index.htm">www.carr.org/authco/index.htm</a>
Children's Book Guild		<a href="http://www.childrensbookguild.org">www.childrensbookguild.org</a>
Ask the Author		<a href="http://www.ipl.org/div/kidspace/askauthor">www.ipl.org/div/kidspace/askauthor</a>

# Section III

## THE READER'S NOTEBOOK



*Also refer to sections in this resource that pertain to what is included in a Reader's Notebook, such as "Reading Logs & Responding to Reading."*

- Background Information
- How to Organize a Reader's Notebook
- Classroom Example

## Background Information on Reader's Notebooks

Excerpt from Fountas, I.C. & Pinnell, G. S. (2001) *Guiding Readers and Writers Grades 3-6*. Heinemann:

### **Using Reading Response Journals in a Reading Workshop**

The conversational writing in response journals is quite different from a book report. The response journal contains an active dialogue in which the reader communicates thoughts and feelings about the books he is reading. The emphasis is on the intersection of thinking, talking, and writing throughout the reading of a text. The journal is a storehouse of thoughts about reading, a place to record these thoughts so that one can return to, review, and reflect on them.

#### ***What Is a Reading Response Journal?***

A reading response journal is a notebook or folder of bound pages in which students write about their reading. You regularly assign writing or drawing activities for them to complete in their journals. The journal is used throughout the academic year and the assignments are completed in school. Students write in long-hand and make hand-drawn charts or quick sketches, or use computer software to complete their written or graphic responses. All messages are written in the journal (or glued in, if produced on a computer) as a continual record of one reader's reading responses through the year.

Students may divide their journals into different sections for different information. For example, students may keep a list of books they are currently reading in one section, a list of books they are interested in reading in another section, their thoughts about their reading in still another, and their writing related to book club meetings in another.

#### ***What Are the Purposes of Response Journals?***

When children write, they can discover more about what they think and feel about a text. The response journal is a way to catalog those thoughts and feelings. Not only are students learning through writing, but their writing is constantly available for reflection and sharing.



Journals are not just about keeping students accountable for what they read, although they do provide an ongoing record. Their primary use is to help individuals become better readers by:

- Engaging in critical thinking and learning about how to interpret a text.
- Connecting reading and writing.
- Developing flexibility in responding and going beyond simple retelling or answering questions.
- Using the journal to promote and support discussion.
- Formulating thoughtful and personal responses to what they read.
- Responding and reflecting continually during the reading of a text.
- Engaging in meaningful independent work while the teacher works with groups of students.
- Collecting, examining, and using interesting words and language patterns.
- Examining the writer's craft and recording the techniques they notice for later discussion and use in their own writing.
- Sketching or drawing to express their understanding in images as a support for discussion or writing.

### ***When and Where Do Students Write in Their Journals?***

How often students write in their journals varies. Some teachers ask students to write for a few minutes every day. We have found that expecting students to write one thoughtful response once a week works very well. They might write their response all at one time or over the course of two or three days, spending part of their time on reading and part of their time on writing on any given day. They can choose which days they want to write, as long as the response is completed the day before it is due.

Students share their thinking through journal responses as they are reading a text or at the completion of the text. A flexible schedule allows students to add to the response whenever ideas occur to them. During the independent reading time, students spend most of their time reading and some of their time writing.

Writing in the response journal is not a homework assignment. If we value writing in school, we want to be sure that there is time for it in school. We have

found that when students take journals home and forget them, problems are created.

### ***Can Students Use Computers to Write Their Response Journals?***

Certainly. If enough computer work stations are available in the classroom, students can keep their response journals and their reading interest lists on the computer, and teachers can respond by computer. This can make it much easier for teachers to provide timely and thoughtful responses. We do recommend that the computer time be organized efficiently—for example, if time is limited, students might outline a few ideas on stick-on notes before sitting down at the computer.

There are a couple of potential drawbacks to using computers, which must be addressed:

- If responses are recorded on the computer only, it may not be easy to browse through previous responses and refer to interest lists. This concern can be dealt with if you and the students print hard copies of your entries and glue them into a notebook so that the volume becomes a complete and permanent record of your conversation.
- If computer time is limited, students will not have access to their journals whenever they are ready to write down their thinking. Using a combination of handwritten responses and glued-in typed responses takes care of this problem.

### ***What Do Students Write in Their Journals?***

Students usually write a letter to the teacher and sometimes to each other. Each produces a thoughtful response in which thinking is shared about books they are reading or have completed.

#### ***CONTENT OF RESPONSES***

Since students choose how to frame their responses to a book and write without an assigned topic, the letters they write cover a wide variety of topics. We examined a large number of student entries from grades 3 through 6 for the range of thinking evidenced, which went far beyond retelling the story. Instead of just recounting information about the text, the students revealed active engagement with the text and shared their thinking as they:

- Recapped the story and summarized the plot.
- Stated the author's purpose.
- Elaborated on an opinion.
- Expressed an interest in the topic.
- Made connections with the characters.
- Showed empathy with the characters.
- Appreciated the richness of the author's choice of words.
- Noticed the size of the print and other elements of the text layout.
- Made predictions about the story.
- Requested information about books by the same author.
- Reflected on their writing in relation to the author's.
- Noticed and commented on illustrations and details.
- Referred to a previous entry.
- Gave an example from the text.
- Quoted passages from the text.
- Made connections between the author's life and the book.
- Generalized on the theme.
- Questioned the author's purpose for writing.
- Commented on the author's use of language.
- Commented on the mood of the story.
- Related the story to their own lives.
- Posed questions to resolve meaning.
- Showed personal reactions to the story.
- Compared books by the same author.
- Wrote in stream of consciousness.
- Showed pride in their writing.
- Reacted to characters.
- Compared the world of the characters to their world.
- Made connections to other books and movies.
- Explained their struggle with a text.
- Wondered why an author made a particular decision about some aspect of the story.
- Commented on how the character changed.
- Commented on the author's style or craft.
- Gave reasons for abandoning the story.
- Reflected on themselves as readers.
- Critiqued authors and shared what they would do differently.
- Recommended books and authors.
- Explored bigger issues beyond the text.
- Connected themes in books.
- Discussed genre.

A journal response is the reader's thinking on paper. Most of the time, students choose what they want to say but occasionally, you may assign a focus. For example, if you have presented a minilesson on how authors reveal characters in their stories, you might ask students to include in the weekly letter at least one paragraph about that in relation to the story they are reading. Or, if you have been showing students how to notice the author's use of metaphor, you might ask them to look for metaphors while they are reading and devote one paragraph in the letter to this literary technique.

For example, Carol asked her students to set some goals for their reading and to write about those goals in their weekly letter. Here is Emily's response:

Dear Ms. Won,

My goal is to think more about what I'm reading and to think about the feelings of the characters in the story. The reason I've decided to make the goal is because the book that I am reading is called *Hide and Seek*. It's about the Holocaust. This book has really made me think about the feelings of the characters, especially because it is true. I still don't understand why the Jews and other religions were separated because of their religion. This book is really making me think and I want to keep it up.

What I am going to do to keep my goal is after a few chapters I'm going to explain to myself what happened and make a picture in my mind.

From Emily

Dear Emily,

It's clear to me that you are going to take this goal very seriously and work hard and think hard to get better in the way you describe in your letter. It's interesting that you began thinking about this because of a particular book you read. I think the Holocaust is a very powerful subject for a book and can help us to think more. Let me know if you'd like to do more reading about the Holocaust and we can look for books together.

Love, Ms. Won

Assigning a focused response is appropriate when you connect it to the teaching you do in a minilesson.

In Chapter 17, we describe focused response to literature in greater detail and provide an extensive list of guiding questions to support higher-level thinking about texts.

### **FORM OF RESPONSES**

The students' written responses are first drafts, and we do not ask them to revise or copy over their entries. We do, however, expect them to strive to produce clear, legible text that reflects their current knowledge of grammar, spelling, and punctuation. In a minilesson, we show them how to note the date and use other letter conventions (see Chapter 9).

You may also want to present minilessons that introduce students to alternative responses. For example, if you provide a minilesson on how to write a book review, you might ask your students to write a book review in their journals that week. Or, if they have been working on perspective, you might ask them to write from the perspective of a character in their book. An alternative response like this is a variation from the weekly letter that asks students to think about text in specific ways.

### **LENGTH OF RESPONSES**

Entries may vary in length, although about one page seems appropriate for most third- through sixth-grade students. Less experienced students might write slightly less than a page. Older students might write longer entries. Students should understand that length is not synonymous with the quality of the response. You will want to teach them what comprises a thoughtful response and provide examples of detailed entries that reflect lucid, analytical thinking.

### **When Do I Respond to Student Entries?**

You will want to respond to the journal entries on the same day they are completed. If we require students to turn in their writing on a certain day, we need to value their sense of commitment and achievement by providing immediate feedback. It takes about five minutes to write a thoughtful response to each reader. If you have a class of twenty-five students, you might respond to five each day. Some teachers spend thirty minutes after school writing responses; others spend fifteen minutes before school and fifteen minutes after. Others manage to write a few responses during short periods of free time during the school day. You should always try to get

the journal responses written at school, but be aware that sometimes you'll have to carry them home. In unusual situations when there simply is no time for a prompt response, explain the delay.

### **Should Students Write Responses to Each Other?**

In most cases, the teacher is the primary audience and writes back to the student. Sometimes it is also appropriate for students to respond to each other. They enjoy conversing about books with each other. In addition, students may sometimes share their letters to the teacher with other students. Generally, though, your response is essential, because:

- You give every reader an opportunity for a personal interaction with you.
- You provide a model for reflecting on reading, which enables the students to understand what constitutes a quality response as they strive to meet your criteria.
- You reinforce and expand your students' understanding.
- You direct students' thinking to more effective or useful ways to reflect on the text.
- You provide positive reinforcement for students' valuable thinking, thus encouraging more of it.
- You learn more about the readers—the kinds of books they like and what they are thinking about those books.
- You gain information from which to plan for minilessons.
- You learn more about your students' writing skills so that you can address their needs in your writing program.
- You get to know your students in more personal ways.
- You can make recommendations to readers about books and authors.
- You give students "a lift"—that is, you help them understand something in a way they did not understand before.
- You get important feedback on your teaching.
- You delight your students!

Students love reading personal letters from their teachers.

If you do invite students to respond to each other, you will want to teach them how to respond well by

9/28

Dear Miss Won,

The only reason why they wing pigeons is because it cost money to shoot them and all the money goes to the park so they can fix it up. But still don't you think that it is really bad to do that to get money for the park because there are thousands of other ways to get money for the park that do not involve killing anything.

I could tell that Palmer was so nervous because when Farguar (the boy who makes people become a wringer) came to Palmer Palmer ran and ran until Farguar was totally out of site and when Palmer stopped running he said he was nervous because if he went home Farguar might be there.

If I were Palmer I would do exactly what Palmer did because I just realized me and Palmer are sort of alike. Palmer and me think that winging a pigeon is mean and cruel. We both would never want be a wringer and we both like to smuggle and hide things.

from  
Adam

Figure 10-2. Journal Letter

providing several minilessons on writing a quality response to someone's letter. Just as they learn to write quality responses to you, they can learn how to write quality responses to each other. While they enjoy writing to each other about their reading, they may be less careful about writing conventions. Thus, you will want to read their peer-to-peer letters so you can assess the quality of their responses, check their use of conventions, and examine the information they reveal about students' reading and writing.

### What Should I Write?

Reading response journals enable you to bring your own rich and varied experiences as a reader to your work with intermediate students. You approach this interchange as a friend would talk with another friend about beloved books. You value the students' thinking as you would a conversation with another literate person, reacting genuinely as a reader as you discuss reading, writing, books, and authors. You ask genuine questions and share your own opinions as a reader.

Of course, conversation between adults and conversation between you and your students are inher-

9/29

Dear Adam,

Isn't it amazing when you begin to realize that you are a lot like a character in a book and the more you read, the more similarities you come across? It helps you to understand the character more and even helps you think about why you do the things you do.

If there are thousands of other ways for the park to raise money or save money, why do you think they continue to kill the pigeons? Do you think Palmer is the only one who thinks it's cruel deep down inside? Why does it seem that Palmer is the only one who tries to get out of it somehow? Why is everyone else quiet? What do you think?

Wondering why,  
Ms. Wore

P.S. I do agree with you that it is bad that they do nothing to save money by doing things that do not involve killing.

Figure 10-3. Teacher Response to Journal Letter

ently different. You are responsible for helping these young readers develop their reading comprehension and interpretation. You reinforce good thinking, extend perspectives, and offer challenges and suggestions. It is not your role to test readers or pepper them with comprehension questions. Your questions should be authentic. If you find your students' writing confusing or illegible, say so, and offer them real reasons to improve. In the examples shown in Figures 10-2 through 10-5, notice the variety of responses and the ways in which the teacher accomplishes the goals we have described.

Here are some suggestions for providing effective, high-quality responses to your students' journal entries:

- Read the students' letters carefully so that you can respond precisely to their thoughts and questions. Do not correct the students' writing in the journal; use the inaccuracies to inform your minilessons, and model correct spelling and form in your own writing.
- Structure your message so that it connects directly with the students' message in some way. You can acknowledge their thinking or feelings, agree or disagree with them, or share similar feelings.

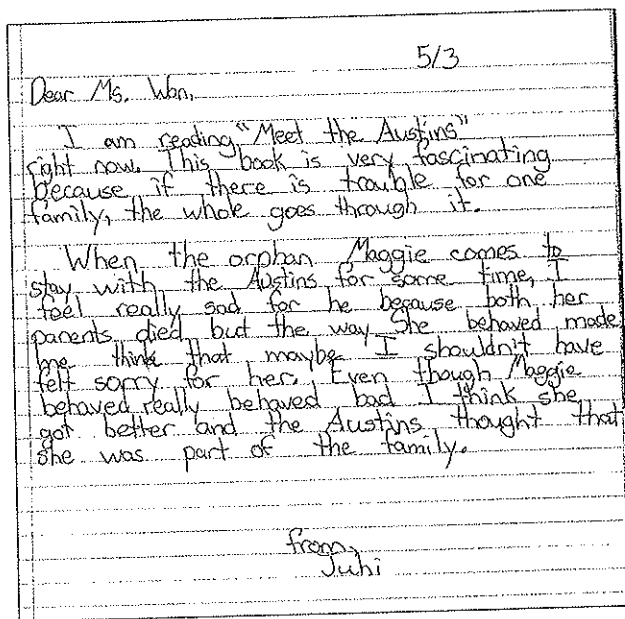


Figure 10-4. Journal Letter

- Extend the readers' thinking by providing more information or clarifying facts.
- Pose questions that prompt further thinking on the part of readers.
- Share your own reading experiences and your thoughts about yourself as a reader or writer.
- Share your own preferences and interests as a reader—authors, books, and genres you like.
- Make recommendations to readers about titles, genres, or authors that they might like to read next.
- Pose questions about things that you do not understand in the journal entry.
- Inform students when they have not provided enough information for you to understand what they are trying to say.
- Inform students if their entry is unclear or illegible. You may request that they rewrite it so that you can read, understand, and respond to it.
- Show that you value your students' thinking, reminding them that there is no single interpretation of a book. Encourage a variety of interpretations.
- Refer one reader to another to converse about the same book or to compare books by the same author or books with similar themes. They might share journal entries or simply talk about their books.

### ***Is it Important for Me to Have Read the Book the Student Is Reading?***

In general, teachers should read as many books as possible as a way to understand the texts that interest students—or might interest them—as well as the various dimensions of reading that students need to learn. Indeed, reading good intermediate-level books is a highly enjoyable and relaxing experience: carry one or two with you for those moments when you have some time to spare. Also, it's nice to spend part of your evening, weekend, or vacation with an intermediate-level book. Over time, you will certainly develop a broad knowledge of the books that are available to students in your school.

In any given year, however, it is probably impossible for you to read all the books your students are reading. Nevertheless, you can enjoy a genuine conversation with a student, just as you can with an adult, without having read the student's particular book. Our universal human experience lets you easily connect the student's book with other books you have read. Indeed, you may find a student's response so interesting that he will persuade you to read his book!

### **The Organization of the Reading Response Journal**

A reading response journal features four sections:

1. The reading list.
2. The reading interests list.
3. The response letters.
4. Book club writing.

#### ***Assembling the Journal***

We use a spiral-bound notebook of lined paper (see Figure 9-5). You can use a standard-size 8½"-by-11" notebook, but we prefer one that is 8" by 10" because it is more compact, looks more like a special journal, and fits easily into students' book boxes. The notebook should have a stiff tagboard cover rather than a plain paper one. A spiral-bound notebook works better than a stapled notebook because pages tend to rip from stapled books. A spiral-bound notebook also works better than a three-ring binder because binders are typically quite bulky. Also, with three-ring binders, students may need to punch holes in the paper, which slows the

5/5

Dear Juni,

Next the Austins is a part of a whole series of books about Vicky Austin. It's a great series. I love Madeline L'Engle. So I hope you'll try more and tell me what you think! It's such a different kind of book from the Wrinkle in Time series about Meg and Charles Wallace.

I was thinking about what you said about how trouble for one person is trouble for the whole family. It's like if one person is sad, the whole family is sad or if one person is happy, the whole family is happy. That's probably the case with many families. I was thinking about my own family. Once we were having dinner, and one person had teary eyes while talking about a sad memory. I looked around the table, and we all had tears in our eyes! When we realized this, we actually started laughing at how we all had tears in our eyes. I think it surprised us but I guess that's a part of what it means to be in a family!

What did you mean when you wrote about the Austins? How do they go through things together? Please explain your thoughts and use specific examples from the story to support your explanation.

It's interesting what you wrote about Maggie. I love characters in stories who make you think different things about them throughout the story. It sounds like you have mixed feelings about Maggie. Let me know if they continue to change. She seems like a "real" person, doesn't she?

Love,  
Ms. Worn

5/5

Dear Ms. Worn,

When I talked about the Austins and when I said that I thought they went through things together, I meant that if one person in the family was sad, then the whole family was sad, and if one person in the family was happy, then the whole family was happy. Also if one person is in trouble, the whole family tries to help them to get out of trouble. Like when Maggie gets in trouble for losing Rob, all the kids try to help her to find him, so that she doesn't get into deep trouble. Sometimes at the dinner table (in my family) just like you, my brother or the rest of my family say something sad about something and then we would find out that we are all crying and tears are streaming down our cheeks. We would all start laughing really loudly.

I think you are right that Maggie is a "real" person. She keeps on changing through out the book sometimes she is nice and sometimes she can get very unpleasant. I don't think anybody can be (in their whole lifetime) just only sweet or just only unpleasant. We keep on changing. This author is a very good author. I like the way she writes about her characters like ~~what~~ what they say or what they do. I plan to read the series with Vicky Austin in it.

From  
Juni

Figure 10-5. Teacher Response to Journal Letter

process, and papers may fall or tear out. Finally, binders can be noisy and disruptive as students click and unclick them to insert or move pages.

Some teachers prefer to give students a journal that is already organized and ready to use, with every section in place and tabs attached. You will want to place four different colored plastic, flag-type tabs across the top of the pages to create four different sections of the journal. The tabs are available in office supply stores. It's helpful to glue a copy of the Guidelines for Reading Workshop inside the back cover of the journal (see Chapter 9). Appendix 15 contains a reproducible copy.

You will also want to glue the Reading List form onto the first page of the first section of the journal (see Appendix 13 for a reproducible version). Leave about ten blank pages so readers can continue the list throughout the year.

After the ten blank pages, glue in the Reading Interests form (see Appendix 14 for a reproducible

version). Three or four blank pages should follow so readers can continue the list throughout the year.

The introductory letter that you write to students explaining how to use the journal should be glued inside the front cover or on the opening page of the response section.

The professional look of a well-designed journal influences students' thinking; they take it seriously from the beginning. If you assemble the journals with the help of small groups of students, supervise them step by step. The journal's polished appearance emphasizes that it is a valued, organized, and standardized piece of work.

### Reading List

The reading list (see Chapter 10 and Appendix 13) documents the amount and kind of reading that students do and is an invaluable resource for both you and your students. Parents will also find it interesting and rewarding to see a complete list of books their children have read throughout the year.

### EXPECTATIONS FOR READING

Students will read between thirty and forty-five minutes a day in reading workshop, and they will spend time reading at home. This comes to about five hours of reading each week. The expectations you establish with your students regarding the approximate number of books they should read during a time period will vary depending on their grade level and the size of the books they are reading. Setting expectations will keep students on track and encourage them not to waste time between books. Also, keeping a list of books to read next helps students find another book quickly.

In general, we expect fourth- through sixth-grade students to read about one chapter book per week, or about 40 books per year. Most third graders will read shorter books and may be able to read two or three in a week. These books vary considerably in length, so you will need to show children in a concrete way what you expect regarding the quantity of reading they do. Remember, too, that they will place books on the list that they have read in small-group instruction, guided reading, and literature study.

Some students may need minilessons that help them grasp two essential concepts: (1) how much to read, and (2) at what pace to read. In other words, you want your students to read at a comfortable pace that allows for reflection and understanding. They need to savor the full act of reading rather than simply race through as many books as possible. Notice that we have not asked students to indicate the *number* of pages for each book. We would not want the pages read to be the focus, nor would we want competition as to quantity.

You will also need to establish the variety of reading you expect. Some teachers set yearly expectations for the number of books their students should read in each genre, negotiating the number of informational biographies, historical fiction, realistic fiction, fantasy, science fiction, or traditional titles they will read each quarter.

### USES FOR THE READING LIST

Students use the reading list to keep a record of the books and other materials they read. Figure 10-6 is Dana's reading list. It is immediately evident that Dana has read a great many books, most of which were "just right" (as indicated by JR in the right-hand column). She read forty-one books for the year, which is almost one book for each week of school. She abandoned only

two during the year. Her list reflects great variety, including:

- Short story collections, such as *Throwing Shadows* (Konigsburg 1979) and *Altogether One at a Time* (Konigsburg 1971).
- Realistic fiction that focuses on everyday problems, such as *Meet the Austins* (L'Engle 1960) and *The Summer of the Swans* (Byars 1996).
- Fantasy, such as *The Wish Giver* (Brittan, 1970) and *The Search for Delicious* (Babbit 1969).
- Biography, such as *The Helen Keller Story* (Pearce 1959) and *The Story of Clara Barton* (Woodworth 1997).
- Historical fiction, such as *Anna Is Still Here* (Vos 1995), *Letters from Rifka* (Hesse 1992)
- Humor, such as *Danny, the Champion of the World* (Dahl 1998) and *Absolutely Normal Chaos* (Creech, 1997).
- Animal stories, such as *Stay! Keeper's Story* (Lowry, 1997).

Through her reading, Dana is exploring important themes such as death—*Meet the Austins* (L'Engle, 1960), *A Ring of Endless Light* (L'Engle, 1980), *Bridge to Terabithia* (Patterson, 1977), *Anne Frank: The Diary of a Young Girl* (1993). She is trying to understand historical events like the Holocaust. She enjoys animal stories, especially those that present unique ideas or perspectives. She is interested in adolescent topics such as love, dating, and popularity. She often selects more than one book by the same author, so she is developing a list of favorite writers. She likes sequels. She tends to select female authors and books with strong female characters.

Dana is reading historical fiction, but it tends to be on one topic. As her teacher, you might suggest ways for Dana to broaden her reading and ask her whether she would like to read more poetry or informational titles. You can also ask students to confer with each other so they can learn to take responsibility for increasing their own breadth as readers. If this is an issue for several children, you can provide a minilesson on how to examine the list of books and increase the number of authors, topics, or genres.

### Reading Interests List

Readers also keep a list of what they want to read. One part of the form is a list of topics, genres, and authors

Reading List					
Select a book to read. Enter the title and author on your reading list. When you have completed it, write the genre, and the date. If you abandoned it, write an (A) and the date you abandoned it in the date column. Note whether the book was easy (E), just right (JR) or a challenging (C) book for you.					
#	Title	Author	Genre	Date Completed	E, JR, C
1	Bridge to Terabithia	Katherine Paterson	RF	9/18	JR
2	Heidi	Joann Spahr	RF	9/21	JR
3	Search For Delicious	Natalie Babbitt	F	9/24	JR
4	Helen Keller Story	Catherine Pearce	B	10/2	C
5	The Little Prince	Saint-Exupery	F	(A) 10/4	-
6	Summer of the Swans	Betsy Byars	RF	10/9	JR
11	Mrs. Frisby and the Rats of Nimb	Robert C. O'Brien	F	10/4	JR
8	Pigs might Fly	Dick King Smith	F	10/22	JR
9	Story of Helen Keller	Lorena Hitchcock	B	10/29	JR
10	Who Put the Hair in My Toothbrush	Jerry Spinelli	RF	(A) 10/31	-
11	Story of Clara Barton	Oliver Price	B	1/4	JR
12	A Night without Stars	James Howe	RF	1/8	JR
13	Danny the Champion of the World	Roald Dahl	RF	1/10	JR

Figure 10-6. Reading List

they want to read. There is also a place to list titles they want to read. They check titles off as they read them (see Figure 10-7 for an example). When students are interested in a book on which you have give a book talk, they typically add it to their reading interests list.

By examining children's reading interests lists, you discover their favorite titles, genres, topics, and authors. You also learn what book talks you might present as well as what books you should feature in your classroom. Reading interests lists show you not only what individuals want to read but reading patterns across age and grade. This helps you select titles and numbers of copies for your classroom library; you'll want to purchase multiple copies of the "hot," popular titles. (You might also share what you've learned with your school librarian.)

Peter's reading interests list (Figure 10-7) indicates that he is noticing authors like Dick King Smith, Scott O'Dell, Roald Dahl, and Avi, all of whom he mentions more than once. Peter is interested in reading realistic fiction, fantasy, and science fiction. He is also interested in reading about space and planets, indicated not

#	Title	Author	Genre	Date Completed	E, JR, C
14	The Gypsy Game	Zilka Keatley Snyder	RF	1/14	JR
15	Absolutely Normal Chaos	Sharon Creech	RF	1/19	JR
16	Throwing Shadows	EL Konigsburg	RF	1/27	JR
17	Altogether One At a Time	EL Konigsburg	RF	1/29	E
18	Hide and Seek	Ida Vos	HF	1/31	C
19	Anna is still Here	Ida Vos	HF	1/8	C
20	I Have Lived a Thousand Years	Brian-Jackson	HF	1/14	C
21	Missing May	Cynthia Rylant	RF	1/28	JR
22	Meet the Austins	Madeline L'Engle	RF	1/4	C
23	The Big Lie	Isabella Lettner	RF	1/4	JR
24	A Ring in Endless Light	Madeline L'Engle	RF	1/12	JR
25	Bad Girls	Cynthia Voigt	RF	1/15	JR
26	Bad Badder Baddest	Cynthia Voigt	RF	1/11	JR
27	Stay! Keepers Story	Lowry	F	1/21	JR

#	Title	Author	Genre	Date Completed	E, JR, C
28	Not Just Anybody's Family	Betsy Byars	RF	1/28	JR
29	Tangerine	Edward Bloor	RF	3/4	C
30	Four Perfect Pebbles	Lila Perl Marion Kazian	I	2/8	JR
31	Memories of Anne Frank	Alison Leslie Gold	HF	2/11	JR
32	The Wish Giver	Bill Brittan	RF	3/24	JR
33	Snake Scientist	Sy Montgomery	I	3/30	C
34	On My Honor	Marion Bauer	RF	4/5	JR
35	Spider Boy	Ralph Fletcher	RF	4/12	JR
36	Number the Stars	Lois Lowry	HF	4/19	JR
37	Wilma Rudolph Run for Glory	Linda Jacobs	B	4/26	JR
38	The Year of the Bear and Jackie Robinson	Bette Bao Lord	RF	5/3	JR
39	Letters from Rifka	Haren Hesse	HF	5/12	C
40	Wilma Rudolph Olympic Champion	Victoria Sherrow	I	5/19	JR
41	Hdes	Louis Sachar	RF	5/21	JR



only by his topics list but by some of the specific entries on his title-and-author list. He has listed books by Seymour Simon and Joanna Cole and wants to find out about the human body. Informational books on science intrigue him as does realistic fiction, especially survival stories like those by Gary Paulsen.

**Responses**

This section includes students' written responses, often in the form of letters to you. You write an introductory letter, giving students directions for sharing their thinking in their journals (see the example in Chapter 10). This letter models the form of the letter, including date, salutation, body, and closing. It helps students under-

stand the purpose of the reading response journal and how you will interact with them in the journal. The letter also provides some directions for what they can write about in the journal and communicates clear expectations for writing the letter and turning it in on the date it is due. The letter is positive and motivating.

**Classroom Example**

The following example of a fourth grader's entry and his teacher's response is typical in terms of length and complexity, assuming you are continually *teaching* students how to write quality responses.

10/15

Dear Ms. Won,

I have done a lot of thinking about this book called *The Music of Dolphins*, by Karen Hesse. It's about a girl who used to live with the dolphins and has been taken away by doctors. She has to learn English and do human ways, something that she never knew. I want to know if Milà [the girl's name] gets to go back to the ocean and play with the dolphins.

I like this book because it's like a fiction autobiography. It's weird because in the beginning of the book the letters start big and bold and then they get smaller and smaller.

I have a question for you if you have read the book. Do you know why Shay always locks herself up? I mean, who wouldn't enjoy playing and listening to music?

Sincerely,  
Jerrod

10/15

Dear Jerrod,

I think it's fascinating to think about people who are taken out of or leave the environment they are used to and go to an unfamiliar environment. It seems that would be a hard thing to do. Well, actually, I know it is difficult sometimes, because I've moved before, although my situation is different because I don't feel as though I was forced and also I felt safe because my whole family was with me. I wonder what it must be like for Mila. What do you think?

Reading Interests

Topics That Interest Me	Genre/Types of Books That Interest Me	Authors That Interest Me
space	Realistic Fiction	Smith
planets	Fantasy	O'Dell
human body	Science Fiction	Dahl
science		Avi
survival		Paulsen
funny books		Cole

Books to Read

Title	Author	Check When Completed
Hatchet	Gary Paulsen	
Pigs Might Fly	Dick King Smith	✓
Island of the Blue Dolphins	Scott O'Dell	✓
Charlie and the Chocolate Factory	Ronald Dahl	
What Do Fish Have to Do With Anything?	Avi	✓
The Black Pearl	Scott O'Dell	
Mr. Ape	Dick King Smith	
James and the Giant Peach	Ronald Dahl	
S.O.R. Losecs	Avi	✓

Title	Author	Check When Completed
Comets, Meteors, & Asteroids	Seymour Simon	
The Heart's Our Circulatory System	Seymour Simon	✓
The Magic School Bus Inside the Human Body	Joanna Cole	

Figure 10-7. Reading Interests

This is interesting because we can tie it to our social studies unit about moving. We can begin thinking about why people leave a place, why people go to other places, and what the adjustment is like for them.

Why do you think the size of print changes? What do you think that means? I think you ask a good question when you ask about Shay. I agree with you about enjoying music. Why do you think Shay acts that way?

Love,  
Ms. Won

Notice that the journal entries are a conversation between two readers who are sharing genuine thoughts and questions. As in a true conversation, they are responding specifically to what they read in the other's entry. "Through the conversational turns of the discussion, they deepen their own understandings and others' and come to know the text in new ways. . . . In the process, there is not mere understanding of the information provided, but interpretation that creates shared meaning and new understandings" (Pinnell 2000). Active listening is especially important in the process of inquiry.

In this example (an open response), Jerrod selects the aspects of the text he is thinking about. What students as readers select to share offers a window on their thinking. Often their journal responses reflect thinking beyond a literal recall of the text. Indeed, we've found that student response journals almost without fail reveal deeper analytical thinking and a more sophisticated synthesis of ideas than students produce when they are asked to answer a list of comprehension questions.

Jerrod considers the genre of the book ("fiction autobiography"). He notices aspects of the print format and searches for the meaning or symbolism they imply. He delves into character motivation and considers potential endings. Jerrod's response moves quickly from a brief statement about the book to a profound understanding of how authors use literary devices to create subtle, complex meanings and develop full-bodied characters.

He is not trying to prove to Carol that he has read the book; rather, he is engaged in a sophisticated literary conversation with her. He's eager to share his

thoughts about various aspects of the book and looks forward to receiving Carol's response. Clearly, Jerrod grasps the literal meaning of the text (the main idea and the girl's name, for example), but he is also involved as a true reader grappling with the nuances of meaning within and beyond the text. As he reads, he asks searching questions that lead him ever deeper into a complete engagement with the text.

## Using the Reading Response Journal

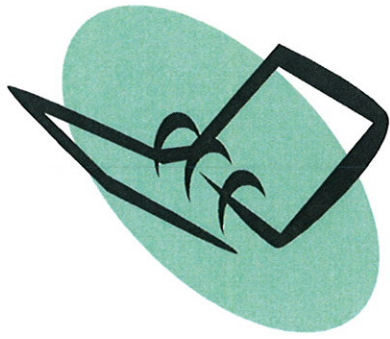
Every section of the journal requires explicit teaching. You don't simply hand out the journals on the first day of school. First you introduce your students to reading response by having them talk about their books. As they learn to discuss their books with one another, sharing their thoughts and feelings orally, they come to understand what it means to build a relationship with a book—and how one can share that relationship with others through conversation. Eventually, students learn that they can enjoy an equally stimulating written conversation about their reading with their teacher through their reading response journals. Remember the guidelines and each of the forms are meant to lead students toward a more thoughtful response. If students are not using the journal correctly or as fully as you envision, you will want to provide additional instruction.

In her classroom, Carol has clearly established the routines for using the reading response journal, and her students practice the routines daily. In particular, they:

- Keep their response journals in their book boxes.
- Write in their response journals during independent reading.
- Complete their responses in class, not as homework assignments.
- Write in their response journals during book talks to record titles of books they want to read.
- Bring their journals to the minilesson because they know Carol is going to ask them to write or sketch in them.
- Bring their journals with them when they share so that they can use them as a basis for discussion.
- Produce one thoughtful journal response each week.
- Turn in the response journal to Carol on the assigned day. (Carol reminds the group the day

before the journal is due, although the reminders eventually become unnecessary.)

- Proofread their responses before turning them in.
- Write a letter to Carol, unless she has asked for a different format for a particular purpose.
- Frame their own response and address those topics that capture their attention unless Carol has given them a focus for a particular response.
- Write, on average, a page, although the length may vary.
- Receive a prompt response from Carol, who writes back to a quarter of the students each day (Monday through Thursday).
- Expand their understandings by extending and refining their own responses as they reflect on the model Carol sets in her response.
- Discuss their entries in individual conferences with Carol, who helps them think more deeply about what they are writing.



## ***A WAY TO ORGANIZE A READER'S NOTEBOOK***

The ways to organize a reader's notebook are innumerable. There is no "one right way." The "right way" is the one that works best for you and your students.

Most teachers divide their students' notebooks into sections. Common sections include:

- **Reading Logs:** Logs may be stored in a pocket folder that is kept with the notebook
  - Daily In- and Out-of-School Reading
  - Books I Have Read
  - Books I Would Like to Read
  
- **Focus Lessons**

On these pages, students record pertinent information taught in the focus lessons. Copies of anchor charts can be glued onto blank pages in this section. It is here where students write, if asked to do so, in the guided practice portion of the lessons.
  
- **Responses to Reading**

This is the heart of the notebook because it is in this section students reflect on their thinking and respond in writing to their reading.

### ***Some also include:***

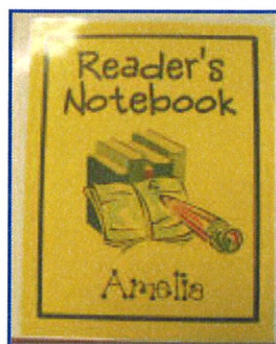
- **Guided Reading/ Book Club Reading:** Some prefer this to be a separate pocket folder and spiral notebook or marble composition book.

This section is where students do the writing necessary for guided reading lessons and book club meetings.

# Reader's Notebook

Students use their Reader's Notebooks to:

- Record books they've read
- Keep track of the genres they are reading
- List books they would like to read in the future
- Respond to their reading
- Prepare for book talks
- Keep track of Partner Reading discussions and meeting times























What Genres Am I Reading?	
Genre	Times
Fictional Literature	
Biography	
Historical Fiction	
Fantasy	
Science Fiction	
Mystery	
Informational	
Humor	
History	

## Download Reader's Notebook Pages

(To view the files below, you must have **Adobe Acrobat Reader** installed on your computer. [Click here to download the software.](#))

Section 1: Reading Record & Goal Setting	PDF File	Word File
Reading Goals	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Reading Record	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Chapter Books vs. Picture Books	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

<b>Section 2: Reading Genres</b>	PDF File	Word File
Genre Definitions		
Genre Tally Sheet		
<a href="#">Click here for more downloads and to read more about Genre Study</a>		
<b>Section 3: Reading Interests</b>	PDF File	Word File
Reading Interests		
Books to I Plan to Read		
<b>Section 4: Letter Writing</b>	PDF File	Word File
Letter Writing Ideas		
Proofreading Your Letter		
<b>Section 5: Reading Partnerships</b>	PDF File	Word File
Preparing for a Discussion		
Tips for Discussion		
Partner Reading Planning Sheet		
Book Commercials		
<a href="#">Click here for more Reading Partnership Downloads</a>		
<b>Section 6: Mini-Lesson Handouts</b>		
<p>This section is for handouts that I create that want students to refer to during their independent reading. I also put lined paper in this section for students to takes notes or complete any other tasks that are asked of them during their independent reading. Below are links to some specific mini-lessons.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><a href="#">Choosing "Just Right" Books</a></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><a href="#">Thick Questions vs. Thin Questions</a></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><a href="#">Name that Genre</a></p>		

[Back to Reading Workshop](#)

## Section IV

# LOGS, LOGS, & MORE READING LOGS!



- Reading Logs Student Reflection
- Independent Reading Logs (6)
- Books I Would Like to Read (3)
- Books I Have Read This Year (2)
- Informational Text Reading Log
- What Genres Am I Reading?
- Genres I Read in the Month Of...
- My Reading Goals

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Reading Log Reflections

**Directions:** For the past couple of weeks we have been studying ourselves as readers and working to read stronger and longer. Our reading logs can be used as a tool to help us research ourselves. Spend some time studying your reading logs. After you have looked over your reading logs and discussed what you noticed with a partner, answer the following questions independently.

How many words do you read per minute? \_\_\_\_\_

What do you notice about your reading at school? Give specific examples.

What do you notice about your reading at home? Give specific examples.

What do you notice when you compare reading at home and at school? Give specific examples.

What else do you notice? Give specific examples.

How did it go when you set a goal for your reading? For example, were you able to make the goal, did you pass the goal, did you keep moving the goal forward as the week went on? Give specific examples.



















## BOOKS I WOULD LIKE TO READ LOG

Students use this log when you or fellow students give book talks. It provides a place to record titles of books they may choose to read in the future.

“Often, when we are in the middle of reading our own books, we hear about other books that appeal to us. When that happens, we need a place to jot down the title and author so we will not forget that book. You will also want to make a brief note of *why* that book appealed to you.”

## BOOKS I HAVE READ THIS YEAR

Use this log to celebrate students’ accomplishments and to encourage them to set reading goals. It will also help you to stretch students to read different genres and get out of a reading rut. This log may be passed along to the following year’s teacher.

“After you have finished a book, enter the title and author on your list of *Books I Have Read This Year*. Celebrate your accomplishments and make that list grow!”









# INFORMATIONAL/ NONFICTION TEXT READING LOG

The following log may be useful when you focus on reading information texts. It helps students balance their fiction and information text reading. It is obviously noticeable when the list of fiction books heavily out-weighs the nonfiction. It also helps students get to know many kinds of texts that are categorized as informational texts.





# What Genres Am I Reading?

Genre	Tally
Traditional Literature	
Realistic Fiction	
Historical Fiction	
Fantasy	
Science Fiction	
Mystery	
Informational	
Biography	
Poetry	







# Section V

## PARTNERSHIPS IN READING WORKSHOP



- Benefits
- Types of Partnerships
- Suggested Area for Focus Lessons for Partnerships
- Assessing Partnerships
- Reading Interest Survey (2)
- Questions We Ask to Get to Know a Reading Partner
- Ways You & Another Reader Can Share Your Reading Lives
- To Listen Well...
- To Listen Well... Student Bookmark
- Universal Themes & Big Statement Ideas
- Reading Partnership Planning Sheet (2)
- Establishing Partnership Etiquette
- Ways You & Another Reader Can Talk About Your Books
- Ways We Can Retell to Our Partners
- Statement/Evidence Chart
- Strategies Good Readers Use
- Partner Reading Strategy Conference
- Self-Assessment & Goal-Setting Sheet
- Questioning Tally Sheet
- Reading Partnership "Thick Question" Form
- Connections Venn
- Assessment Rubric for Partnerships
- Evaluation Checklist for Partner & Group Discussions
- Partnership Self-Evaluation Checklist
- Conferring to Support Partnerships & Book Talks
- Book Recommendation Form
- Critic's Corner Form
- Book Review Template
- How to Advertise a Good Book

# Reading Partnerships

## Benefits

- Through partnerships, students **grow** as readers by...
  - Applying reading strategies in authentic texts
  - Becoming more motivated to read
  - Building reading stamina for attending to texts
  - Challenging other's ideas
  - Confirming or altering predictions
  - Considering different points of view
  - Correcting misconceptions and expanding partial understandings
  - Discussing and evaluating literature
  - Elaborating on other's ideas
  - Engaging in "real" conversations about texts
  - Improving comprehension and deepening understanding of texts
  - Having "real" opportunities for rereading, rethinking, and reflecting about texts
  - Having opportunities to solve problems and conflicts independent of the teacher
  - Having time to talk about books in authentic ways
  - Supporting each other as a cheerleader, coach, and helper

## Formation of Partnerships by Teacher

- Prior to forming partners:
  - Need to know all students as readers
  - Need to know students' interests
    - Surveys can help learn about student interests (See Appendix A)
- Partners should be based on similar
  - Independent reading levels and
  - Interests
- Same partners should exist throughout a unit of study or longer
- Partner students in a way that will encourage meaningful discussion between them

## Types of Partnerships

- Different-book Partnership:
  - Each partner is reading a different book that is shared with his/her partner.
    - More meaningful conversations may result if books are within the same genre or topic or theme or author. (See Appendix B)
- Swap-book Partnership:
  - Each partner reads a different book.
  - After partner completes his/her book, partners swap books with each other.
  - Important that partners select books of interest to both of them.

- Readers are able to talk about both books more deeply because each reader will bring different ideas to the conversation and may notice different aspects of the story and the craft.
- Same-book Partnerships:
  - Requires double copies of books
  - Partners decide together which book they will read.
  - Partners decide how the book will be read, together or independently, and then decide together what will be read and the questions that will guide each partner meeting. (See Appendixes C & D)

## **Suggested Areas for Focus Lessons for Partnerships**

- Observing partners on a regular basis to determine what's working effectively and what needs strengthening is the best way to gauge what focus lessons are needed.
- Provide partner instruction across the year through focus lessons to
  - Support the work of reading partners
  - Strengthen partner work within a unit of study
  - Acquaint new partners with each other
- Announce reading partnerships and give students time to talk casually with each other about reading – favorite genres, topics, series, interests, etc.
- Establish partnership etiquette (See Appendix E)
  - Cooperation
  - Conversation
  - Collaboration
- Teach students how to have a conversation about books
- Teach students how to share ideas and to support ideas using evidence from text. (See Appendix F for graphic organizer)
- Before, During, and After reading strategies – Reinforce strategies that can be used in partner conversations. (See Appendixes G & H)
  - Use questioning strategy to deepen understanding when read independently (See Appendix I)
- What strategies will be most effective in deepening comprehension and creating higher-level thinking for your students?
  - Acquire richer, deeper meaning through “crawling between the lines to dredge out inferences and innuendoes, how they take a stand and support it with textual evidence, how to make connections to their own lives, other texts, and the author’s craft.”
- Multiple uses of Post-its (Just a couple below)
  - To identify specific parts that will be reread to support ideas
  - To jot down ideas will bring to the conversation
- Share words find difficult and work together to pronounce and understand meaning
- Use of thought prompts (Some examples below)

- “I agree because...”
  - “I disagree because...”
  - “I used to think..., but now I realize...”
  - “I think that is important because...”
  - “That connects with another part of the book because...”
- Compose open-ended questions about text that encourage higher-level thinking: Question depth will in turn predict response depth.
- Thick vs. Thin Questions
    - Thin Questions – *Where? Who? When?*
      - Evoke a literal response, surface structure answers that are right in the text and can easily be judged as correct or incorrect – don’t generate interesting conversations
      - This type of questioning or retelling has its place at the beginning of partnerships where each partner is reading a different book
    - Thick Questions – *Why? How? What if?* (See Appendix J for form)
      - Provide in-depth searching and connecting – rooted in inference
      - *Why* questions can lead to philosophical responses (Want students to understand the why behind the what is)
      - *How* questions invite practical discussions and problem solving
      - Learn that *inferences* are the “maybes” and the “probables” they conjecture, but those tentative responses are of far less value without evidence to back them up
  - Some samples of thought provoking ideas/questions – Questions should stimulate ideas not direct them – Strategic questions demonstrate inferences, connections, syntheses, predictions, etc.
    - What’s the author saying?
    - What does the author mean by ...?
    - How does the author’s craft contribute to the emotions in the story?
    - How close to the truth is...?
    - Questioning a character’s intent
    - Questioning the author’s intent
    - Considering another point of view
    - Reflecting on the author’s craft
    - Hypothesizing or creating a new avenue of thought
    - Comparing/contrasting with other literature/authors
    - Evaluating the text
    - Making connections (See Appendix K, Connections Venn Diagram)
      - Diagram invites students into several kinds of connections
      - Provides concrete mental framework that can be accessed during reading, throughout partner conversations
      - Scaffolds them toward making associations that enrich reading and conversations
    - Analytical, critical, and evaluative questions

## **Assessing Partnerships**

- Observe partners on a regular basis to determine what’s working effectively and what needs strengthening
- Partnership Characteristics that may guide assessment
- Preparation

- Participation
  - Responsiveness
  - Organization
  - Use of language in conversations
    - Clarity
    - Specificity
    - Creativity (i.e. use of figurative language)
- Teacher Assessment Rubric (See Appendix L)
- Partnership Self-Evaluation Checklist (See Appendix M)
- Provides individual insight from each partner’s perspective
- Conferring to Support Partnerships (See Appendix N)
- Partner Celebration
- Time can be set aside for partners to share their reading experiences and the texts they encountered during their partnership.
  - Some suggestions
    - Book Reviews (See Appendix O)
    - Book Advertisements (See Appendix P)
    - Book Talks
    - Share how they benefited from their reading partnership in terms of own reading
    - Groups of four where partners exchange their experiences and then each partnership rotates to a new group (Focus lessons may be warranted to show students how those conversations occur.)
    - Generate Top 10 Lists – Keep lists updated each month
      - Develop criteria for how books get on top 10 list

## Other Resources

Cole, A.D. (2003). *Knee To Knee, Eye To Eye: Circling In on Comprehension*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

Collins, K. (2008). *Reading for Real*. Portland, ME: Stenhouse Publishers.

Lipson, M. (2007) *Teaching Reading Beyond the Primary Grades*. New York: Scholastic.

McLaughlin, M. and DeVogd, G. (2004). *Critical Literacy: Enhancing Students’ Comprehension of Text*. New York: Scholastic.

Scholastic has a plethora of information and printable materials ~ <http://teacher.scholastic.com> or <http://www2.scholastic.com> and use the Search for Reading Partnerships

Stead, T. (2009). *Good Choice! Supporting Independent Reading and Response K-6*. Portland, ME: Stenhouse Publishers.

# Appendixes

- A. Interest Surveys
- B. Themes and Big Idea Statements
- C. Same-book Planning Sheet
- D. Same-book Bookmark
- E. Partnership Etiquette
- F. Statement-Evidence Graphic Organizer
- G. Strategies That Good Readers Use / Using Strategies Flexibly
- H. Partner Reading Strategy Conference
- I. Thinking About My Reading: Questioning and Tally Sheet
- J. Reading Partnership *THICK* Question Form
- K. Connections Venn
- L. Teacher Assessment Rubric for Partnerships
- M. Partnership Self-Evaluation Checklist
- N. Conferring To Support Partnerships
- O. Book Review Templates
- P. How to Advertise A Good Book

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Reading Interest Survey

**My Favorite Genres are:** *(Circle 3)*

Realistic Fiction	Fairy Tales	Folk Tales & Legends
Fantasy	Science Fiction	Mystery
Poetry	Historical Fiction	Informational

**My favorite topics to read about are:** *(List at least 4)*

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**Do you prefer to read books in a series or books that are not part of a series?** *(Circle one)*

Series

Non-Series

Both

**What book are you reading right now?**

Title: \_\_\_\_\_ # of Pages: \_\_\_\_\_

Author: \_\_\_\_\_

Is it a chapter book? \_\_\_\_\_ Genre: \_\_\_\_\_

**What are some of your favorite chapter book series?**

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**What do you think you are best at as a reader?**

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# Reading Survey

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

1. How much do you enjoy reading? (Check one box.)

- Not at all
- A little
- A lot
- It's my favorite thing

2. How good a reader are you? (Circle one choice.)

- |                      |                 |                   |                |                     |
|----------------------|-----------------|-------------------|----------------|---------------------|
| 1                    | 2               | 3                 | 4              | 5                   |
| Not a good<br>reader | So-so<br>reader | Average<br>reader | Good<br>reader | Excellent<br>reader |

3. Who do you know who reads? (Check all that apply.)

- Most of my friends read.
- Some of my friends read.
- None of my friends read.
- My mom likes to read.
- My dad likes to read.
- No one in my family really likes to read.
- I have a brother or sister who does not read very well.

4. How often do you read outside of school? (Check one box.)

- Almost never
- Several times a month
- Several times a week
- Every day

5. For how long do you read each day? (Check one box.)

- I don't really read.
- 5–10 minutes
- 25–45 minutes
- An hour or more

6. Estimate how many books there are in your house. (Check one box.)

- 0–10
- 11–50
- 51–150
- 151–500
- More than 500



7. Check the types of reading you do outside of school.

- |   |   |                                    |
|---|---|------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Newspapers             | <input type="checkbox"/> Information books    | <input type="checkbox"/> Web sites |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Magazines              | <input type="checkbox"/> Jokes                | <input type="checkbox"/> Catalogs  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> E-mails                | <input type="checkbox"/> Manuals/instructions | <input type="checkbox"/> Other:    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Instant messages       | <input type="checkbox"/> Poetry               | _____                              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Text messages          | <input type="checkbox"/> Encyclopedia         | _____                              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Fiction: chapter books | <input type="checkbox"/> Song lyrics          | _____                              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Comics                 | <input type="checkbox"/> TV guides            |                                    |

8. I think reading is important because... (Check as many as you want.)

- |   |  |                                 |
|---|--|---------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> It will help me get a job. | <input type="checkbox"/> It's fun.                         | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: |
| <input type="checkbox"/> You need it for school.    | <input type="checkbox"/> It helps me understand the world. | _____                           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> It's my favorite thing.    | <input type="checkbox"/> It gives me information.          | _____                           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> It makes you smart.        | <input type="checkbox"/> It helps me escape.               | _____                           |

9. If I could choose, I would like to read... (Check all that apply.)

- | FICTION                                     | NONFICTION                                  | OTHER   |
|---|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Fantasy            | <input type="checkbox"/> Newspapers         | <input type="checkbox"/> TV guides            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Science fiction    | <input type="checkbox"/> Newsmagazines      | <input type="checkbox"/> Web sites            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Realistic stories  | <input type="checkbox"/> Biography          | <input type="checkbox"/> Catalogs             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Fairy tales        | <input type="checkbox"/> Autobiography      | <input type="checkbox"/> Comics               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Historical fiction | <input type="checkbox"/> Information books: | <input type="checkbox"/> Jokes                |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mystery            | <input type="checkbox"/> Animals            | <input type="checkbox"/> Manuals/instructions |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Poetry             | <input type="checkbox"/> Sports             | <input type="checkbox"/> Other:               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Scary stories      | <input type="checkbox"/> Science            | _____   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Funny stories      | <input type="checkbox"/> History            | _____   |
|   | <input type="checkbox"/> Other              | _____   |

10. Things my teacher could do that might make me more interested in reading:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

## Questions We Ask to Get to Know a Reading Partner

- *Can we look over your log and talk about how much you are reading at school and home? Are there times when you read more or less? Why do you think that happens?*
- *When you find books that are perfect for you, what do those books tend to be like? What should I know about the books in your life?*
- *What are your goals for yourself as a reader?*
- *If you think back over your life as a reader, what have the big turning point moments been for you?*
- *Can you tell me more about one turning point? How did your reading change during that moment? What did you realize about yourself as a reader?*
- *Who has helped you as a reader? What did that person do that was helpful?*

From Unit 1: *Building a Reading Life*, Session 11

## *Ways You and Another Reader Can Share Your Reading Lives*

- *Talk about your reading volume. How much do you tend to read in a day? In a minute? How might that amount be changing, and why?*
- *Talk about home reading versus school reading. How are they the same? Different? When, where, and for how long do you tend to read at home? At school?*
- *Talk about a great book and then think, "Why do I like this book so much? How can I find more books like this?"*
- *Study your logs like scientists and discuss the patterns you see. Then talk about making your reading lives as good as they can be.*

*From Unit 1: Building a Reading Life, Session 6*

## *To Listen Well...*

- *Let there be some quiet around what the other says.*
- *Let there be some time around what the other says.*
- *Let the other know we understand so far, if we do.*
- *Show the other we believe he or she is quite likely to grow a good idea out of whatever has been said so far.*
- *Ask questions if we are confused.*
- *Reflect back what the other says so he or she can hear himself or herself and figure out where to go next.*
- *Invite the other to say more, or take more time, or collect more evidence.*

From Unit 1: *Building a Reading Life*, Session 15

## To Listen Well...

- Let there be some quiet around what the person says
- Let the person know you understand so far, if you do
- Ask questions if you are confused
- Reflect back what the person says so he or she can figure out where to go next
- Invite the person to say more, or take more time, or collect more evidence
- Convey that you are sure the person is likely to grow an even better idea out of the initial one
- Give responsive feedback



## To Listen Well...

- Let there be some quiet around what the person says
- Let the person know you understand so far, if you do
- Ask questions if you are confused
- Reflect back what the person says so he or she can figure out where to go next
- Invite the person to say more, or take more time, or collect more evidence
- Convey that you are sure the person is likely to grow an even better idea out of the initial one
- Give responsive feedback



## To Listen Well...

- Let there be some quiet around what the person says
- Let the person know you understand so far, if you do
- Ask questions if you are confused
- Reflect back what the person says so he or she can figure out where to go next
- Invite the person to say more, or take more time, or collect more evidence
- Convey that you are sure the person is likely to grow an even better idea out of the initial one
- Give responsive feedback



## Universal Themes and Big Idea Statements

UNIVERSAL THEME	BIG IDEA STATEMENTS	CURRICULAR AREA	POSSIBLE TEXTS
Change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Change is a part of life.</li> <li>• People change over a lifetime.</li> <li>• Change in one area leads to change in other areas (e.g., seasonal change impacts the plants and animals in the environment).</li> <li>• Change often causes growth.</li> </ul>	<p>Science</p> <p>Mathematics</p> <p>Social Studies</p> <p>Language Arts</p>	<p><i>Chemistry for Every Kid</i> by Janice VanCleave</p> <p><i>Mosaic and Tessellated Patterns</i> by John Wilson</p> <p><i>Sarah Plain and Tall</i> by Patricia MacLachlan</p> <p><i>Lily's Crossing</i> by Patricia Reilly Giff</p> <p><i>Unfinished Dreams</i> by Jane Breskin Zalben</p>
Taking Responsibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• People have personal, community, and global responsibilities.</li> <li>• People who take responsibility can make a difference.</li> <li>• There are consequences when people do not take responsibility.</li> <li>• Responsibilities change over a lifetime.</li> </ul>	<p>Social Studies</p> <p>Science—the Environment</p> <p>Language Arts</p>	<p><i>Kids Explore Kids Who Make a Difference</i> by Westridge Young Writers Workshop</p> <p><i>The Lorax</i> by Dr. Seuss</p> <p><i>Keeping Barney</i> by Jessie Haas</p> <p><i>The Composition</i> by Antonio Skarmeta</p> <p><i>Red Scarf Girl</i> by Ji-li Jiang</p>
Exploration and Discovery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Exploration leads to new ideas and ways of life.</li> <li>• Exploration often leads to discovery.</li> <li>• Exploration involves risk.</li> <li>• Explorers must be able to overcome obstacles.</li> <li>• Exploration may lead to unexpected consequences.</li> </ul>	<p>Science</p> <p>Social Studies</p> <p>Literary Works—Self-Discovery</p>	<p><i>Miracle's Boys</i> by Jacqueline Woodson</p> <p><i>The Usborne Book of Explorers</i> by Felicity Everett</p> <p><i>Bridge to Terabithia</i> by Katherine Paterson</p> <p><i>Shanghai Messenger</i> by Andrea Cheng</p> <p><i>Half and Half</i> by Lensey Namioka</p> <p><i>Spotlight on Cody</i> by Betsy Duffey</p>

Figure 4.10

## Appendix C

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Partner's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

# Reading Partnership Planning Sheet

Title of Chosen Book: \_\_\_\_\_

Author: \_\_\_\_\_ Genre: \_\_\_\_\_

**"Meet the Book" Meeting** *(Before you start the book)* **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

- What do you think the book will be about?
- Have you read other books in this series or by the same author?
- Set up next meeting: *We will meet again when we both get to page* \_\_\_\_\_

**First Discussion Meeting:** **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

1. What is happening in the book so far? (Retell the story together)
2. What connections have you made while reading?
3. Share "thick" questions and discuss your answers.
4. Make predictions about what will happen next in the story.
5. Set up next meeting: *We will meet again when we both get to page* \_\_\_\_\_

**Second Discussion Meeting:** **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

1. What is happening in the book so far? (Retell the story together)
2. What connections have you made while reading?
3. Share "thick" questions and discuss your answers.
4. Make predictions about what will happen next in the story.
5. Set up next meeting: *We will meet again when we both get to page* \_\_\_\_\_

**Final Discussion Meeting:** *(After you finish the book)* **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

1. What happened at the end? (Retell the ending together)
2. Were you surprised by the way the story ended? Did you like the ending?
3. Share "lingering" questions about the story.
4. Choose and plan your *Final Book Project*.



## Appendix D

My Reading Partnership	My Reading Partnership	My Reading Partnership	My Reading Partnership	My Reading Partnership
<p><u>2nd</u> Meeting will be held when we both get to page _____</p>	<p><u>2nd</u> Meeting will be held when we both get to page _____</p>	<p><u>2nd</u> Meeting will be held when we both get to page _____</p>	<p><u>2nd</u> Meeting will be held when we both get to page _____</p>	<p><u>2nd</u> Meeting will be held when we both get to page _____</p>
<p><u>3rd</u> Meeting will be held when we both get to page _____</p>	<p><u>3rd</u> Meeting will be held when we both get to page _____</p>	<p><u>3rd</u> Meeting will be held when we both get to page _____</p>	<p><u>3rd</u> Meeting will be held when we both get to page _____</p>	<p><u>3rd</u> Meeting will be held when we both get to page _____</p>
<p><u>Final</u> Meeting will be held when we both get to page _____</p>	<p><u>Final</u> Meeting will be held when we both get to page _____</p>	<p><u>Final</u> Meeting will be held when we both get to page _____</p>	<p><u>Final</u> Meeting will be held when we both get to page _____</p>	<p><u>Final</u> Meeting will be held when we both get to page _____</p>



## Appendix E

<i>Cooperation: Getting Partnerships and Book Talks off the Ground</i>	
<b>Partnership Curriculum:</b> <i>Cooperation Within Partnerships</i>	<b>Conversation Curriculum:</b> <i>Cooperation in Conversations</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Students will understand the expectations for partner reading time.</li> <li>· Students will have a repertoire of ways to work together.</li> <li>· Students will have a repertoire of ways to solve problems in their partnerships.</li> <li>· Students will begin to self-manage their partnerships.</li> <li>· Students will notice characteristics of positive cooperation across the day and apply them to their reading partnerships.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Students will understand how to be an active listener.</li> <li>· Students will understand how to be a helpful speaker.</li> <li>· Students will use courteous conversation behaviors.</li> <li>· Students will know a variety of things they could talk about with partners.</li> <li>· Students will begin to pay attention to conversations across the day and in their lives.</li> </ul>
<i>Conversation: Improving Talk and Levels of Engagement During Partner Time</i>	
<b>Partnership Curriculum:</b> <i>Talking Well with a Partner</i>	<b>Conversation Curriculum:</b> <i>Having Strong Conversations</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Students will think toward partnerships as they read independently.</li> <li>· Students will have something to say to their partners.</li> <li>· Partners will make plans for their work together.</li> <li>· Partners will have strategies to stay focused in their book talks.</li> <li>· Partners will be able to resolve differences with civility.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Students will talk about their books with others.</li> <li>· Students will have a variety of things to talk about with each other.</li> <li>· Students will nurture their conversations by speaking clearly and listening intently.</li> <li>· Students will have a variety of ways to start conversations.</li> <li>· Students will have a variety of ways to maintain conversations.</li> <li>· Students will incorporate the qualities of great conversations and strong book talks into their partnerships.</li> </ul>
<i>Collaboration: Growing Ideas in Partnerships and Book Talks</i>	
<b>Partnership Curriculum:</b> <i>Working Toward New Ideas</i>	<b>Conversation Curriculum:</b> <i>Growing New Ideas in Conversations</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Students will stick with a topic of conversation.</li> <li>· Students will disagree with civility.</li> <li>· Students will make plans together for their reading, set purposes for their reading, and make goals for their reading.</li> <li>· Students will be more curious about and interested in each other's thinking.</li> <li>· Students may jot notes as they read to get ready for partner time.</li> <li>· Students will read with their partner in mind, and they'll be able to imagine parts of texts that will be of interest to their partners.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Students will talk about their books and develop theories about stories, characters, genre, etc.</li> <li>· Students will grow ideas.</li> <li>· Students will express opinions and support them with evidence from the texts.</li> <li>· Students' conversations will be characterized by longer focus on individual topics or ideas.</li> <li>· Students will use a variety of comprehension and conversation strategies.</li> </ul>

\*Pages 82-85 from *Reading for Real* by Kathy Collins (2008)

## *Ways You and Another Reader Can Talk About Your Books*

- *Share passages that especially drew you in – parts that made you feel a strong emotion or exciting parts that had you on the edge of your seat.*
- *Share parts in which you really pictured what is happening, perhaps parts where you felt like you were in a 3-D movie – one with surround sound.*
- *Show each other parts of your books where the mental movie you made as you read got blurry, places where you thought “Huh?” and then talk about those parts, discussing what’s going on in them.*
- *Figure out a tricky word by discussing what the word might mean and by using words you can read to figure out how to say this unfamiliar word.*
- *Tell the big things that happened to the main character so far, either by reaching back and starting at the beginning, perhaps saying, “Previously in...,” or by starting with now and tucking in past events.*
- *Share a passage you flagged because it is especially well written, intense, funny, and so on. Then perform the passage, talking about how best to interpret it.*
- *Act out a scene that feels important (preferably one with a lot of dialogue) and then talk about the new ideas you came up with about the characters or the story as a result.*
- *Share your predictions. Help your partner to predict what will happen in the next chapter, not just in the whole book, and to draw on specifics he or she knows from having read the book. Predict not just what will happen but how it will happen.*

From *Unit 1: Building a Reading Life*, Sessions 12 and 14

## *Ways We Can Retell to Our Partners*

- *Start at the beginning of the story and take big steps through the timeline of events, telling only the key parts.*
- *Tell parts of the story that make you want to talk about them. Make the text come alive between you and your partner.*

From *Unit 1: Building a Reading Life*, Sessions 13 and 14



## Appendix G

# Strategies That Good Readers Use

Reader's Name \_\_\_\_\_

Title of Text \_\_\_\_\_

Directions: Check each strategy that the reader shows you he or she is using by talking out loud about his or her thinking.

### Before Reading

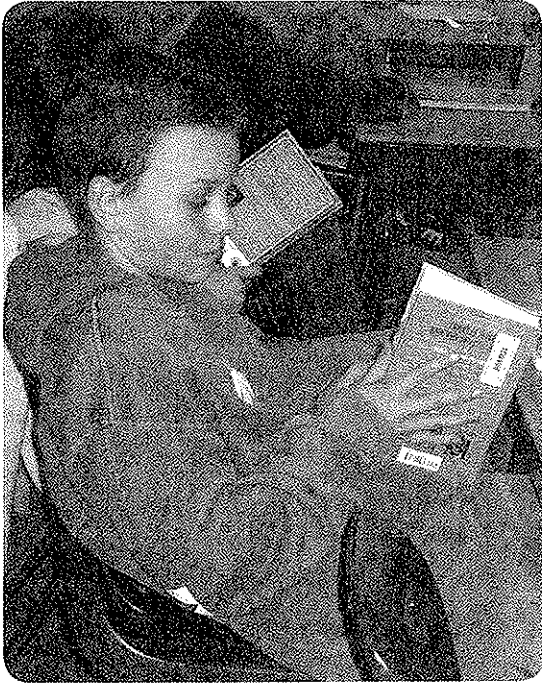
- Thinking about what he or she already knows about the topic
- Predicting what the text will be about
- Predicting what will happen next
- Asking questions about the material to be read

### During Reading

- Asking questions
- Predicting
- Inferring
- Making connections (relating what is read to previously read text, to self, to world)
- Checking for meaning and monitoring progress
- Visualizing
- Evaluating the content and own progress
- Stopping to think and to remedy any comprehension problems

### After Reading

- Summarizing and/or synthesizing information
- Evaluating the text and own performance
- Using text information to make personal response
- Using text information for other purposes, as appropriate



A student engaged in reading

## Using Strategies Flexibly

More than a decade ago Gerry Duffy concluded, “the best way to pursue meaning is through conscious, controlled use of strategies” (1993, p. 223). In the years since, this conclusion has been reaffirmed many times. A relatively short list of strategies has repeatedly been shown to be essential to effective comprehension (Dole et al., 1991; Fielding & Pearson, 1994). The very same strategies are used by very young and much older readers. (See Figure 5.1.) Ideally, as students mature, they refine these strategies to understand increasingly difficult, complex, and/or unfamiliar texts. Certainly students’ success in using strategies varies developmentally—younger children are less skilled at selecting and recruiting appropri-

ate strategies than older and more mature readers. But it is important to know that “the data suggest that students at *all* skill levels would benefit from being taught these strategies” (Rosenshine, Meister, & Chapman, 1996, p. 201).

### Seven Strategies Capable Readers Use

**MAKE CONNECTIONS:** Bridge from new to known, connecting text to self, world, and other texts

**QUESTION:** Ask questions to enhance understanding, find answers, solve problems, find specific information, etc.

**MAKE INFERENCES:** Connect ideas and/or fill-in information to make sense of unstated ideas

**VISUALIZE:** Generate mental images to stimulate thinking and heighten engagement

**SUMMARIZE:** Synthesize and organize key information to identify main points and major themes, distinguish important from unimportant information, enhance meaning

**MONITOR/REGULATE:** Pay attention to meaning, clarify or correct comprehension difficulties, and/or promote a problem-solving stance during reading

**EVALUATE:** Make judgments about the text to form new ideas and opinions and/or determine author’s purpose

**Figure 5.1** Comprehension strategies and their functions

## Appendix H

# PARTNER READING STRATEGY CONFERENCE

**Directions:** Converse with your partner to evaluate your use of a reading strategy. Then you and your partner, using your own forms, jot down notes under each question. Turn your evaluation in to your teacher.

This conference was held on \_\_\_\_\_ between:

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

What was the reading strategy you and your partner discussed?

How did the strategy help your reading?

What did you learn from your partner?

What other strategies did you use along with the one you practiced?

## Appendix I

# Thinking About My Reading: Questioning— Self-Assessment and Goal-Setting Sheet

---

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Directions: (1) Put a check mark by the things you do well as a reader when questioning.  
(2) Highlight the things you think you need to work on to become a better reader.

- I ask questions to help me clarify something in the text or a text feature.
- I ask questions to help me understand vocabulary.
- I ask questions to find specific information in the text.
- I ask questions to help me connect to the ideas or characters in the text.
- I ask questions to put myself in the text by using my senses (visualizing, tasting, smelling, and feeling).
- I ask questions to understand choices the author made when writing the text.
- I ask questions to help me understand the text organization and text structure.
- I ask questions to summarize what I have read.
- I ask questions to extend my learning beyond the text.
- I ask questions to help me understand a character or an object.
- I ask questions to help me predict.

Choose one highlighted item to improve upon:

---

---

---

Create a plan to improve upon this skill.

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_

*Comprehension Shouldn't Be Silent: From Strategy Instruction to Student Independence* by Michelle J. Kelley and Nicki Clausen-Grace. © 2007 International Reading Association. May be copied for classroom use.



# Questioning Tally Sheet

I ask questions...	Tally
to clarify something in the text or a text feature.	
to help me understand vocabulary.	
to help me find specific information in the text.	
to help me connect to the ideas or characters in the text.	
to put myself in the text by using my senses (visualizing, tasting, smelling, and feeling).	
to understand choices the author made when writing the text.	
to help me understand the text organization and text structure.	
to summarize what I have read.	
to help me extend my learning beyond the text.	
to help me understand a character or an object.	
to help me predict.	

*Comprehension Shouldn't Be Silent: From Strategy Instruction to Student Independence* by Michelle J. Kelley and Nicki Clausen-Grace. © 2007 International Reading Association. May be copied for classroom use.

## Appendix J

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Partner's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

# Reading Partnership *THICK* Question Form

Title of Book: \_\_\_\_\_

### First Discussion Meeting

*(This should be completed before you meet with your partner.)*

Thick Question #1:

Thick Question #2:

### Second Discussion Meeting

*(This should be completed before you meet with your partner.)*

Thick Question #1:

Thick Question #2:

### Final Discussion Meeting

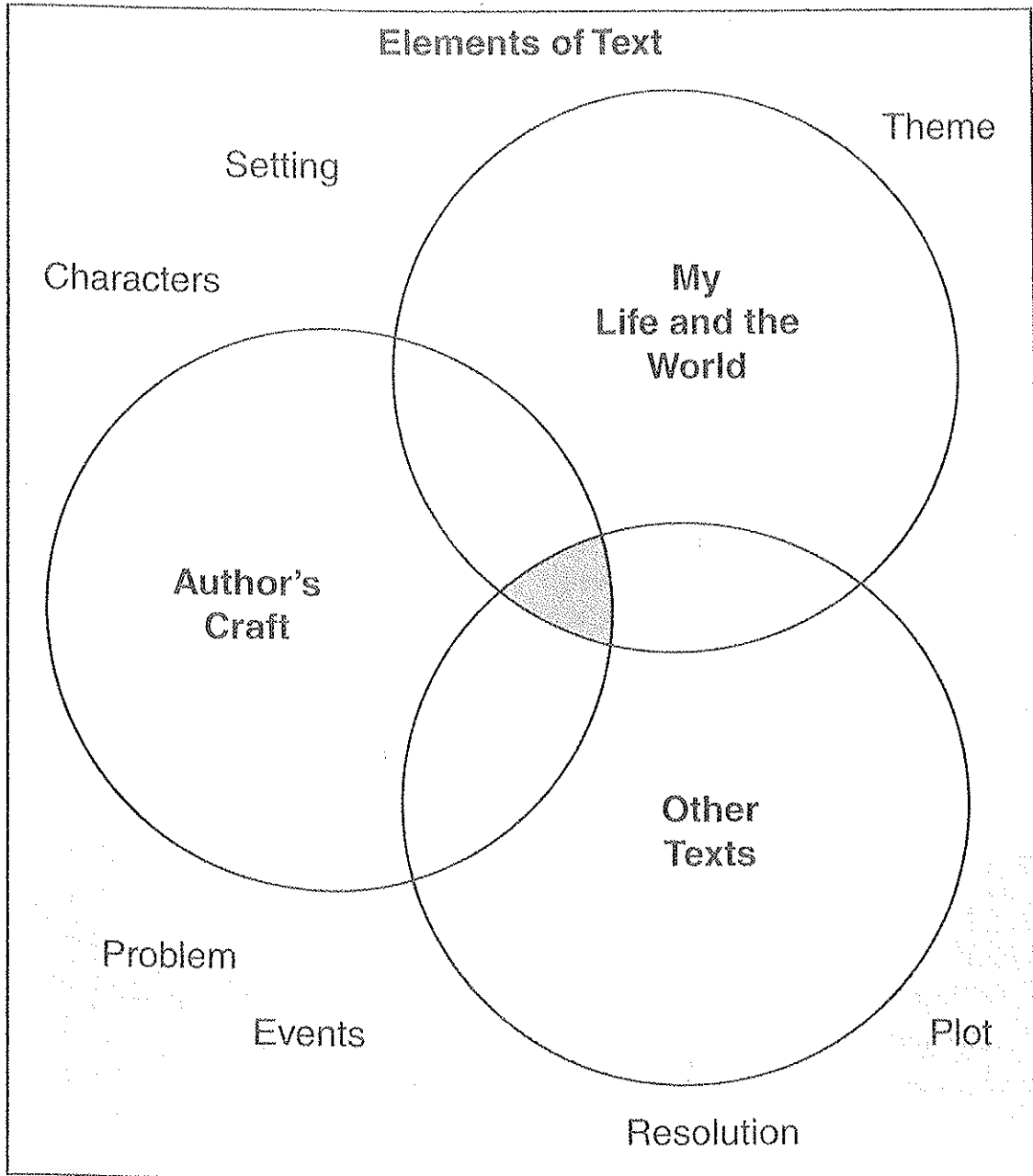
*(This should be completed after you finish the book but before you meet with your partner.)*

Lingering Question #1:

Lingering Question #2:



# Connections Venn



# Appendix L

Student's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Independent Reading Level: \_\_\_\_\_

<b>Teacher Assessment Rubric for Partnerships</b>	<b>Score:</b>				
	1	2	3	4	
<b>Date</b>					
<b>Behaviors</b>					
Works cooperatively with partner					
Listens to partner's thinking without interrupting					
Makes eye contact with partner when speaking and listening					
Keeps the conversation moving					
Uses gestures to get partner to say more					
Nods to comment to show is listening					
Asks questions					
Asks, "Can you say more about that?"					
Asks, "Why is that?"					
Repeats what partner said					
Stays on track during conversation					
Contributes to steady back-and-forth conversation					
<b>Conversation Content</b>					
Uses specific reading vocabulary					
Uses text features with nonfiction texts					
Uses story elements with fiction texts					
Supports ideas with evidence from text					
Adds relevant information					
Expresses opinions logically and relevant to text and topic					
Accepts partner's opinions when differ from own					
Disagrees with partner in a constructive manner without getting personal					

Additional Comments:

# Evaluation of Partner and Group Discussions

Student's Name \_\_\_\_\_ Observation Date \_\_\_\_\_

**Key: R=Rarely; S=Sometimes; U=Usually; NO=Not Observed**

## PREPARATION

- \_\_\_\_\_ Brought book and materials.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Brought response journal.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Completed assignment.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Contributed to group work plan.

## PARTICIPATION

- \_\_\_\_\_ Contributes to discussion.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Listens without interrupting.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Values diverse ideas.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Uses text for support.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Rereads to point to details.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Uses information from other source.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Gets involved in discussion.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Shares ideas and cooperates.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Uses prior knowledge/experiences for support.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Addresses ideas presented by peers.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Asks meaningful questions.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Can help keep discussion flowing.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Takes notes at appropriate times.

## INTERPRETATION OF MATERIALS

- \_\_\_\_\_ Talks about story, problem, or graph.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Moves beyond "I like" or "I don't like."
- \_\_\_\_\_ Uses pictures and graphs to discover meaning.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Makes reasonable predictions.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Offers personal connections.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Can consider and search out alternate interpretations.

## STORY STRUCTURE

- \_\_\_\_\_ Can talk meaningfully about plot, setting, characters, time, conflict, mood, dialogue, figurative language.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Uses structural elements in discussion.

Additional Notes and Comments:

## Appendix M

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Partner's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

### Partnership Self-Evaluation Checklist

**Directions:** Read each statement. If you feel you successfully accomplished the statement, then place a check in the box.

- 1. I listened to what my partner was saying.
- 2. I looked at my partner when s/he spoke.
- 3. I contributed to our conversation/ I talked my fair share.
- 4. I asked for explanations when I didn't understand what my partner said.
- 5. I was polite.
- 6. I piggybacked off of my partner's response in a conversational manner.
- 7. I thought my contribution today was \_\_\_\_\_ adequate.  
\_\_\_\_\_ better than adequate.  
\_\_\_\_\_ less than adequate.
- 8. The reason I checked off the specific sentence ending in number 7 is because...
- 9. My favorite part of today's partner meeting was...
- 10. The next time my partner and I meet I would like \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ to occur.

# Appendix N

The Power of Reading Partnerships: Helping Our Youngest Readers Think Deeply and Talk Well

## Conferring To Support Partnerships and Book Talks

What kind of talk?	How might it sound?	What might we say?
Reading Process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What's that word?</li> <li>• I didn't get that part.</li> <li>• Check the picture. (Offering strategy support of some kind)</li> <li>• Can I help you with that one?</li> </ul>	
Partnering Process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Let's read mine first.</li> <li>• You read the page, then I'll read the page.</li> <li>• Don't do that!</li> <li>• How would you like it to go?</li> </ul>	
Text Content	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This is like the other part where she falls off of the bike...</li> <li>• I like this page because...</li> <li>• This is what happened. First,...</li> <li>• Let's get back to the story...</li> </ul>	
Ideas Grown From Text and Talk	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I'm thinking that the author was a bad kid and she's telling us her own stories...</li> <li>• This is like when me and my brother play fight. We don't mean to hurt each other, just like these characters didn't mean it...</li> <li>• I'm just wondering whether she'll ever learn her lesson. I think...</li> </ul>	
Random, Off-Task Sorts of Things	No examples necessary!	

### Conferring Questions that Assume the Best

#### When students seem unfocused:

So what's the plan that you two made for today? (assumes a plan)

It helps to take a minute to stop and think about what you want to accomplish today...

Jot down your plan for today.

#### When students are struggling in their partnership or conversation:

What are you going to do to resolve the problem?

How can you move this conversation forward?

Remind each other of the plan for today.

Rewind the conversation for a bit to see if you can get it unstuck.

#### When a conversation has more parallel talk than connected comments:

What are you thinking about what your partner just said?

What makes you think so?

Show me the part where...

And that makes you think?

Kathy Collins

*Growing Readers: Units of Study for Primary Classrooms* (Stenhouse)

Please Note: Much of the material in this packet was created while working with the Teachers College Reading and Writing Project or else it may be based on the Project's work.

# Appendix O



<p><b>Title:</b> _____</p> <p><b>Author:</b> _____</p> <p><b>Recommended by:</b> _____</p> <p><b>Genre:</b> _____</p> <p>This book was great because...</p>	<p><b>Title:</b> _____</p> <p><b>Author:</b> _____</p> <p><b>Recommended by:</b> _____</p> <p><b>Genre:</b> _____</p> <p>This book was great because...</p>
<p><b>Title:</b> _____</p> <p><b>Author:</b> _____</p> <p><b>Recommended by:</b> _____</p> <p><b>Genre:</b> _____</p> <p>This book was great because...</p>	<p><b>Title:</b> _____</p> <p><b>Author:</b> _____</p> <p><b>Recommended by:</b> _____</p> <p><b>Genre:</b> _____</p> <p>This book was great because...</p>





Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Critic's Corner

Name of Book Critic: \_\_\_\_\_

Title of Book: \_\_\_\_\_

Author: \_\_\_\_\_

Illustrator: \_\_\_\_\_

This book was about

My favorite character in the book was

I liked/didn't like this book because

I would recommend this book to

My Personal Rating of this Book: 



<http://teacher.scholastic.com>

## Book Review Template

Introduce the book.

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Tell about the book, but don't give away the ending!

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---

Tell about your favorite part of the book or make a connection.

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Give a recommendation (e.g., If you like..., you will love this book, **or** I recommend this book to anyone who likes...)

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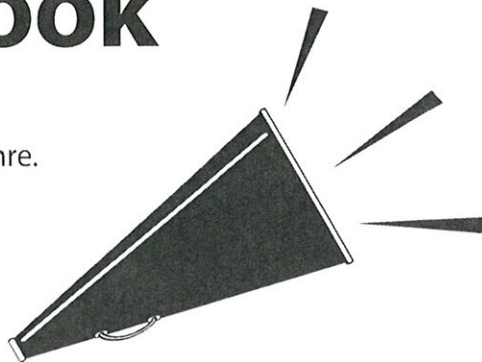
# How to Advertise A Good Book

## 1. Goal:

- To get readers excited about a book, author, series, or genre.

## 2. Getting Ready:

- Make sure you've read the entire book.
- Choose a book or series you think your classmates will enjoy.
- Think about what makes your book interesting.
- Think about how you will capture the interest of the other readers in your class.
- Write down page numbers or mark pages you plan to show the class with a sticky note before you make your presentation.
- Practice your commercial before presenting it to the class.



## 3. During the Commercial:

- Show the cover of the book to the class.
- Start with a good lead. (Sometimes a question gets the audience interested. Have you ever wanted to eat chocolate for breakfast? If so, this book is for you!)
- Tell the author, title, genre, library location, series, etc.
- Explain why you chose to share the book.
- Tell a little about the book, *but don't give away* the secrets.
- If possible, mention other books by the same author or other books in the same series.

## 4. Tips:

- Look at your classmates.
- Speak loud and clearly.
- Show your enthusiasm.
- Keep it short!

## *How to Create a Book Buzz*

- *Think about the person who wants a book recommendation.*
- *Think about the person's reading life—you may have to ask some questions.*
- *Choose a book for that person, remembering the books you know.*
- *Tell the person why you think this book might be a perfect fit.*
- *Summarize a bit of the story, highlighting the parts the reader will like.*
- *Read aloud a tiny excerpt that reveals something enticing about the book.*
- *Talk about why the book is irresistible.*

*From Unit 1: Building a Reading Life, Session 8*

# Section VI

## BOOK TALKS



- Using Teacher Book Talks: Spotlight New Books & Old Favorites
- Student Book Talks that Work
- Book Talk Ideas
- How to Advertise a Good Book
- Book Review Template
- Book Talk Guide
- Plan Your Book Talk Form
- How to Create a Book Buzz
- Book Reviews
- Book Review Criteria
- Rubric for Book Talks
- Rubric for Fiction Book Talks
- Web Resource (2)

# Spotlight New Books and Old Favorites: Using Teacher Book Talks

It's impossible to read every book in your classroom library—you don't have the time! If you have read and enjoyed a book, then by all means personalize your book talk and tell students why you enjoyed it. However, you can present cogent, inviting book talks without reading a book by following these suggestions, which have worked well for me.

- ◆ Show and discuss the cover illustration and title, and explain what they make you think about and how they make you feel.
- ◆ Read the back and inside cover and spotlight the genre of the book. You can read an excerpt from these sections to support your conclusion and/or show some illustrations.
- ◆ Quote what a reviewer says, if that is available on the back cover.
- ◆ Read the opening three sentences or paragraph aloud if they are attention grabbers.
- ◆ Make the last sentence of your book talk draw students into wanting to find out what happens. Here are some examples of last sentences that can entice readers:
  - Read to discover who survives this dangerous mission or adventure.
  - If you want to discover who saves Earth, check out this book today.
  - This book deals with solving life's problems. To learn more about this skill, read it.
  - You'll want to read this book to learn more about space exploration.
  - If suspense is your thing, this book will keep you on the edge of your seat.
  - Is your dream to be a detective? A painter? A rock star? An explorer? Then you'll gather some nifty tips by reading this one.

Finally, keep the idea in the forefront of your mind that in addition to the effective instruction you offer students, you want them to read, read, and read some more! Instruction and reading practice provide a winning combination for developing the reading stamina and skill your students need to experience success all through school.

# Student Book Talks That Work: The Best Advertisement for Reading

“I look forward to book talk days because I know I’ll find something to read,” a sixth grader told me. Students enjoy these natural advertisements if the book talk is short and focused. That’s why it’s important to provide guidelines for book talks. Otherwise students tend to retell the story, give away the ending, and ramble on until teacher and classmates tune out. Here are some general suggestions that can make book talks enjoyable and productive events:

- ◆ Give out guidelines so that students have two or three days to prepare.
- ◆ Ask students to jot down notes on a four-by-six index card; notes should address the guidelines you’ve given them.
- ◆ Ask students to limit their talks to two or four minutes.
- ◆ Encourage students to practice presenting their book talk; they should try referring to the index card occasionally instead of simply reading the notes.
- ◆ Explain that students need to make eye contact with the audience.
- ◆ Ask students to speak slowly and clearly and to vary the tone of their voices.

I ask my eighth graders to create listening standards for the audience; here’s what I posted on chart paper and review each time students present book talks:


- ◆ Be good listeners.
- ◆ Save questions for the end of the talk. Jot down a question so you won’t forget it.
- ◆ Respect your peers by not making faces, reading, writing, doodling, or giggling during book talks.
- ◆ Know that there will be time for only one or two questions per talk.

What follows are ten different book talks that students enjoy. Some are for fiction and others for nonfiction. Offer students the book talk format that works for them. If you want to give a grade, then use the content guidelines to establish a rubric. A basic rubric that works is to allot 60 to 65 percent for the content and 35 to 40 percent for presentation, based on the suggestions above. You can adapt these suggestions to your grade level and the needs of the students you teach.

## About Bringing Books to Book Talks

It’s important to recognize that some students will be able to show their books as they present their talks because they’re available in your classroom.

Others might have gotten their books from the school or public library and might not be able to bring them in.



### *Book Talk 1: What's the Genre?*

- ◆ State the title and author.
- ◆ Identify the genre of your book. Is it mystery, fantasy, science fiction, historical or realistic fiction, myth, legend, a short story collection, biography, autobiography, informational text?
- ◆ Offer two specific examples from the book that helped you determine what genre it is.
- ◆ Think of and share one big idea or theme the author was trying to convey. Explain what in the book helped you figure out this idea or theme.

### *Book Talk 2: Think and Connect to Learn*

- ◆ State the title and author and topic.
- ◆ Explain two fascinating and/or new facts you learned about the topic.
- ◆ Explain the significance or importance of this topic by connecting it to a personal, community, or world issue.
- ◆ Show how the book changed your thinking about this topic or why this topic interests you so much.

### *Book Talk 3: Novel Thoughts About the Main Character*

- ◆ State the title and author.
- ◆ Identify the protagonist and a key problem he or she faced.
- ◆ Discuss how the protagonist deals with the problem.
- ◆ Explain how the problem affects the protagonist. What does he or she learn from coping with this problem?
- ◆ Draw a conclusion about the protagonist's problem-solving abilities.

### *Book Talk 4: Novel Thoughts About the Antagonistic Forces*

- ◆ State the title and author.
- ◆ Identify two problems the protagonist faced and three antagonistic forces that worked against the protagonist and/or created these problems.
- ◆ Show how each antagonistic force worked to create a problem or conflict.
- ◆ Were the conflicts resolved? If so, explain how. If not, explain why.

### *Book Talk 5: Biography and Autobiography*

- ◆ State the title and author (and for a biography, also identify the person the book is about).



- ◆ Explain what this person did that changed our world, the environment, saved lives, or in some way helped people.
- ◆ Choose a person or event that shaped this person's life and explain how.

### *Book Talk 6: Find Three Items*

- ◆ State the title and author.
- ◆ Choose three important items from your book. These can be anything that's significant—a character, setting, object, animal, plant, car, invention.
- ◆ Illustrate each item or find an appropriate picture or illustration in magazines or on the Internet.
- ◆ Explain why you chose each item and explain its significance to the book you've read.

### *Book Talk 7: To Read or Not Read This Book!*

- ◆ State the title and author.
- ◆ Tell the class whether you recommend the book or give it a negative rating.
- ◆ Choose two or three items from the list that follows. Make sure you offer specific details from your book to illustrate each item.
  - Is this a genre you love? Explain what about this genre has such great appeal.
  - Was the book a page turner? Explain why.
  - Did you connect to a character? Explain why you did or did not.
  - Were there surprises that kept up your interest? Share one.
  - Did every chapter end with a cliff-hanger? Give one example.
  - Was it boring? Explain why.
  - Did your mind wander when reading? Explain why this happened.
  - Was the plot unbelievable? Explain why.

### *Book Talk 8: Find a Passage You're Compelled to Share*

You will need to bring your book to class for this one.

- ◆ State the title and author.
- ◆ Find a passage from your book—no more than half a page—that you connected to.
- ◆ Make sure that the passage connects to a theme in the book that you can pinpoint.
- ◆ Read the passage out loud, clearly and with expression.
- ◆ Explain why you connected to this passage and how it related to the theme you identified.



### *Book Talk 9: Characters Do Change*

You will need to bring your book to class for this one.

- ◆ State the title and author.
- ◆ Reflect on the main character's personality and think how he or she changed from the beginning to the end of the book.
- ◆ Describe what the character was like at the beginning. Read a short passage from the beginning of the book that reveals this personality trait.
- ◆ Explain how and why the main character changed. Read a short passage from the end that shows this change.
- ◆ End by recommending or not recommending this book. Give specific reasons.

### *Book Talk 10: Connecting Is Cool*

You will need to bring your book to class for this one.

- ◆ State the title and author.
- ◆ Find a passage—no more than a paragraph—that you connected to. Read it to the class.
- ◆ Explain the connection you made to this selection.
- ◆ Connect the passage to a theme of the book or to the main character's problems, conflicts, or decisions. Be specific.
- ◆ End by identifying the genre and why this type of genre appeals to you.



## *Book Talk Ideas*

A book talk is a short, oral sharing of a book that has been read. It may include book elements that:

- 😊 Made you laugh
- 😡 Made you angry
- 😭 Made you cry
- 🤔 Made you think about things that happened to you
- 🤔 Made you think about things you never thought about
- 😲 Made you say “Wow!”

The following questions could be used as guidelines to help a student prepare for his/her book talk:

### *FICTION*

1. Why did you choose this book?
2. How did this book make you feel?
3. Tell about something that happened or somebody in the book that reminded you of your own life.
4. What was your favorite or least favorite part in the book and why?
5. What questions would you like to ask the main character?

### *NONFICTION*

1. Why did you choose this book?
2. What were the most memorable things you learned while reading this book?
3. What did the author include that helped you understand the topic or information?
4. What did you learn as a result of reading this book?
5. What questions do you still have after reading this book?

### *Suggestions for students to make your book talks even more fun:*

1. Read a favorite passage from your book (less than one minute).
2. Show and tell about the cover of the book
3. Tell a little about the author
4. Talk about other books by this author
5. Mention other books that remind you of this one
6. Show pictures, photographs or diagrams from your book

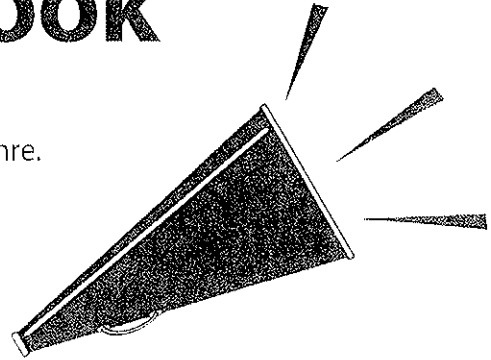
# How to Advertise A Good Book

## 1. Goal:

- To get readers excited about a book, author, series, or genre.

## 2. Getting Ready:

- Make sure you've read the entire book.
- Choose a book or series you think your classmates will enjoy.
- Think about what makes your book interesting.
- Think about how you will capture the interest of the other readers in your class.
- Write down page numbers or mark pages you plan to show the class with a sticky note before you make your presentation.
- Practice your commercial before presenting it to the class.



## 3. During the Commercial:

- Show the cover of the book to the class.
- Start with a good lead. (Sometimes a question gets the audience interested. Have you ever wanted to eat chocolate for breakfast? If so, this book is for you!)
- Tell the author, title, genre, library location, series, etc.
- Explain why you chose to share the book.
- Tell a little about the book, *but don't give away* the secrets.
- If possible, mention other books by the same author or other books in the same series.

## 4. Tips:

- Look at your classmates.
- Speak loud and clearly.
- Show your enthusiasm.
- Keep it short!



<http://teacher.scholastic.com>

Introduce the book.

Tell about the book, but don't give away the ending!

Tell about your favorite part of the book or make a connection.

Give a recommendation (e.g., If you like..., you will love this book, **or** I recommend this book to anyone who likes...)

## BOOK TALK GUIDE

Use these questions to prepare you for your book talk.

- Why did you choose your book?
  
- What has happened in the story to make you want to read on? OR
- What new, interesting information have you read?
  
- What connection can you make to a character or to the text?
  
- What do you think will happen from where you left off?
  
- Ending Page \_\_\_\_\_

## BOOK TALK GUIDE

Use these questions to prepare you for your book talk.

- Why did you choose your book?
  
- What has happened in the story to make you want to read on? OR
- What new, interesting information have you read?
  
- What connection can you make to a character or to the text?
  
- What do you think will happen from where you left off?
  
- Ending Page \_\_\_\_\_

NAME:

DATE:

**PLAN YOUR BOOK TALK**

**Choose the book you want to talk about to others.**

Book Title:

Author:

**Will you...**

Read an interesting or exciting section? Page:

Show an illustration? Page:

Make a connection? With which part?

Other?

**Plan your opening. What will you say to hook your listeners?**

**Plan your closing. What will you say to entice your listeners to read the book?**

**Remember to tell the title, author, genre, and where the book is located.**

*Don't forget to rehearse. Practice in front of a mirror or tape record or video record yourself.*

## How to Create a Book Buzz

- Think about the person who wants a book recommendation.
- Think about the person's reading life—you may have to ask some questions.
- Choose a book for that person, remembering the books you know.
- Tell the person why you think this book might be a perfect fit.
- Summarize a bit of the story, highlighting the parts the reader will like.
- Read aloud a tiny excerpt that reveals something enticing about the book.
- Talk about why the book is irresistible.

From Unit 1: Building a Reading Life, Session 8



## Book Reviews

Students enjoying hearing the opinions of their peers and are more likely to select a book when it comes with a recommendation from a friend. As a result, I encourage the students to do lots of book reviews for the books they read during independent reading.

### Demonstration

I start by demonstrating a book review as a minilesson. I either read professional reviews from the newspaper or write one of my own to give the students an idea of how a book review might sound. I want to make it clear that this is not a retell—it is an *evaluation* of the book. I remind students that this is a little like a commercial. When you watch a commercial on television, its purpose is to sell a product and convince you to buy it. A book review has the same attributes, except that a book reviewer might also tell you NOT to read the book. The important issue is to have an opinion and then justify the opinion with specific information.

### Launching the Reviews

I explain that we will be doing book reviews at the end of independent reading. I encourage students to stop reading periodically and to make a conscious effort to think about their review so that they will be fully prepared to share at the end of our reading time. I find that students tend to try a littler harder to connect with their books when they know they will be reviewing for a listener. I also find that for teachers who are concerned about whether or not the students are “really reading” during this time, an end-of-reading review adds a measure of accountability unlike a test or series of teacher-generated questions.

**Partner Reviews** Involve pairing students to meet with a partner, having them show the books they are reading, and doing brief reviews for each other. If the students are having trouble getting started, I make an overhead transparency or Review Guidelines card with some reminders. Even a starter as simple as “Say Something” (Harste, Short, and Burke, 1988) can help students get started and frame the book review as a genuine conversation between readers.

**Group Reviews** Require that teams of four to six students sit in a circle, and share their book reviews. With the group reviews, I do ask students to jot down their key thoughts as some students get so involved listening that they forget what they had to say about their own book.

**Sticky Note Reviews** For this review process, I give each student a 3 × 5 sticky note and encourage them to write their review on the note,

sign it, and place it inside the front cover of the book. Soon, many of the classroom books are filled with personal reviews and these play a large role in book selection.

### Key Questions

- What are the traits of a good book?
- How are the books I like different from the ones I don't like?
- How can I quickly communicate my opinions to another reader?
- How might my review help another reader?
- How can I be specific and use examples from the book to justify my opinion?



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[Reviews Book](#)   [Book Summaries](#)

22867 Literature



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[Book Reviews and Discussion](#)



A good review **SHOULD** include:

- A description of the content of the book and how it compares to similar books.
- A detailed account of your thoughts going into your ratings. (for example: I only gave the story a 3.5 rating because ... )
- Suggestions on what you might have done to improve the book:
  - alternate endings
  - authoring from a different character perspective

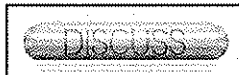
A good review **SHOULD NOT** include:

- spoilers: any story information or details that might detract from a readers enjoyment of the book.
- profanity and/or derogatory comments; only constructive criticism please.
- simple opinions: we would like to know **WHY** you liked or disliked the book.

A good review **MAY** include:

- comments on the illustrations when available:
  - what form were the illustrations (example: drawings, watercolors, etc.)
  - did you enjoy the illustrations and why?
  - were the illustrations appropriate and why?
  - did the illustrations add to, or detract from, your overall enjoyment of the book?

You may read others views and add your own on what makes a good book review here:



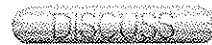
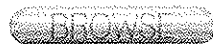
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Rubric ID: 1006866

### Book Talk

CATEGORY	Outstanding! 4	Wow! 3	So-So 2	Oops 1	Score
<b>Content</b>	Has clearly read and understands the book. Shows the book and reads a select portion of the text that creates excitement about the book.	Has read and understands the book. Shows book and reads a portion of the book.	Has read the book and shows some understanding. Shows the book and reads a portion of the text that may not create excitement.	Has not read the whole book and/or does not understand the book. Does not show the book and/or does not read a portion of the text aloud.	
<b>Preparedness</b>	Completely prepared and has rehearsed.	Seems pretty prepared, but might have needed more rehearsals.	Somewhat prepared, it is clear that rehearsal was lacking.	Not prepared, did not rehearse.	
<b>Speaking</b>	Speaks clearly and distinctly all the time, is loud enough for everyone to hear.	Speaks clearly and distinctly most of the time, and is loud enough most of the time.	Speaks clearly and distinctly some of the time and is sometimes loud enough to hear.	Often mumbles or can not be understood, not loud enough to hear.	
<b>Posture and Eye Contact</b>	-Stands up straight, looks relaxed and confident. - Establishes eye contact with everyone in the room during the presentation.	Stands up straight and establishes eye contact with everyone in the room.	Sometimes stands up straight and establishes some eye contact.	Slouches and/or does not look at people during the presentation.	
<b>Total</b>					

Date Created: September 28, 2003  
Date Last Modified: October 01, 2003

## Story Telling: **Script for booktalk**

Teacher name: \_\_\_\_\_

Student Name \_\_\_\_\_

CATEGORY	4	3	2	1
<b>Written Copy</b>	The student turns in an attractive and complete copy of the booktalk in the correct format.	The student turns in a complete copy of the booktalk in the correct format.	The student turns in a complete copy of the booktalk, but the format was not correct.	The student turns in an incomplete copy of the booktalk.
<b>Sequence</b>	The booktalk begins with an interesting hook and then retells an exciting part of the story. The booktalk concludes with a restatement of the title, author, and a compelling reason for reading the book.	The booktalk begins with a hook and then retells one or two parts of the story. The booktalk concludes with a restatement of the title, author, and a reason for reading the book.	The booktalk begins by retelling one or two details of the story. The booktalk concludes with a restatement of the title and author.	The booktalk retells the entire story.
<b>Setting</b>	Many vivid, descriptive words are used to tell the audience when and where the story takes place.	Some vivid, descriptive words are used to tell the audience when and where the story takes place.	The audience can figure out when and where the story took place, but the word choices are limited, vague, or overused.	The audience has trouble telling when and where the story takes place.
<b>Characters</b>	The main characters are named and clearly described (through words	The main characters are named and described (through words	The main characters are named. The audience knows very little about	It is hard to tell who the main characters are.

	and/or actions). The audience knows and can describe what the characters look like and how they typically behave.	and/or actions). The audience has a fairly good idea of what the characters look like.	the main characters.	
<b>Problem</b>	It is immediately clear to the audience what problem the main character(s) face and why it is a problem.	It is eventually clear to the audience what problem the main character(s) face and why it is a problem.	It is clear to the audience what problem the main character(s) face, but it is not clear why it is a problem.	It is not clear what problem the main character(s) face.

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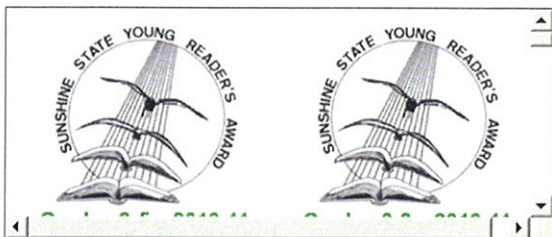
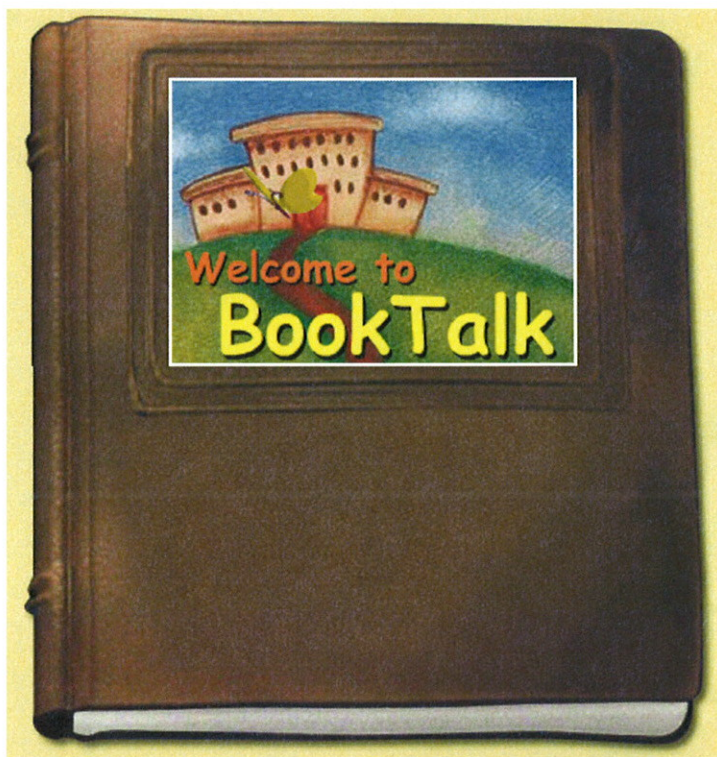
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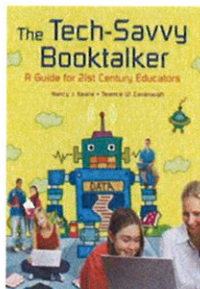
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## Section VII

# CONFERRING WITH READERS



- The Importance of Conferring About Reading Not Just About the Text
- Guidelines for Conferring with Students About Independent Reading
- Content Reading Conference: Nonfiction
- Content Reading Conference: Fiction
- Book Conference Form for Fiction or Nonfiction
- Strategic Reading Conference Form
- Peer Book Conference Form
- Student-to-Teacher Retelling Conference Form
- Teacher-to-Student Reading Conference Form
- Questions to Support Comprehension of Fiction
- Questions to Support Comprehension of Nonfiction
- Questions to Support Comprehension of Biography
- Questions to Guide Readers in a Conference

## The Importance of Confering with Each Child About Reading, Not Just About the Text at Hand

We draw a chair alongside a reader and ask, “How’s it going?” The child shrugs and answers, “Good. It’s a good book.” The child is sitting there, holding a two-hundred-page book that we only vaguely remember. What do we say next? We can elicit from the child what will probably be a somewhat jumbled and unclear summary of the book, but we’re not sure that doing so will pay off. And other than that, we are not sure how to get a footing so that the conversation has traction, so that our teaching is worth taking the child away from his reading for that time.

It’s in those moments—when we feel at a loss over how to teach well—that we long to go back to the days when the whole class read a book we knew well, say, *Skylerk* (the sequel to *Sarah, Plain and Tall*). We knew that book backward and forward and could point out the four references to summer heat and dryness in the first two pages, showing kids that MacLachlan deliberately highlighted the drought because it will be central to the story. Then we could point out, too, all the references to people leaving the prairie for other places, and write “repetition” or “foreshadowing” or whatever else we want to make of this on the board, and onward we could go through that book, finding things on every page that we could teach.

When teaching reading, there is a place for instruction that is grounded in a specific book. I share the feeling that when a group of young readers and I gather around a book that I know well, it’s as if I’ve hit payday. The opportunities to teach are almost overwhelming. There’s so much to notice in a book and so much mental work that can be done. It’s this richness that nourishes our mini-lessons, providing much of the content for them. What’s more, when we thread a shared book through minilessons, the structure of minilessons saves us from the temptation to function as four guides rather than teachers, to fool ourselves into thinking we are teaching if we simply point out the lovely sights in a book that others might miss as they drive past them; the structure of minilessons requires that we instead we make careful choices about what we will invest a bit of time in teaching. Because we just have one minilesson a day, we are required to think, “Of all that the book offers, what is particularly relevant to the work these readers are doing with their own books?” and we then to extrapolate and highlight just one kind of mental work and teach not our every observation in the shared book but the work that a reader can do to produce those (perhaps pointing out that when readers look at things that recur in a book, we see things the author believes are important, such as in *Skylerk* when we see signs of drought. Readers could then notice that they can also see repeated references to people leaving the prairie.) So yes, it is true that when we work together with a group of readers on a shared book, this shared focal point guarantees that we are never at a loss for something to teach.

But there must also be a place to teach young readers to apply all that they learn from those times when we lead work on shared texts (in minilessons, book clubs, and guided reading groups). In the end, if I were to ask each of you, my readers, “What is your real goal as a teacher of reading?” most of you would say that you want to help the young people in your care author richly literate lives. You want to help young people read their own books with increasing engagement, discernment, power, and responsiveness. If many of our ultimate goals have everything to do with kids’ own reading, then we need to make sure that a fair percentage of our teaching time puts us face to face with kids’ own reading. And that is what happens when we pull a chair alongside a reader during independent reading time. It is important to pay attention to what our students are doing as independent readers for lots of reasons. One reason is that this way, we essentially will have made an appointment to support that youngster’s independent reading. Even if we are not as adept as we’d like to be at doing this work, kids notice what we notice. If we care about their independent reading, they’ll care about it. And then, too, as we do this confering, we learn to do it, and we become skilled at this, just as we may already be skilled at other aspects of teaching reading.

But also, it is important to pull our chairs alongside a child and help that child to use all we’ve been teaching while on the run as the child reads, because in the end, this makes it vastly more likely that all our teaching will be taught in the service of independent reading. If we are working with one child and another and another, and we see that most of our kids are starting and abandoning books, are not getting engaged in the through-line of the story when reading independently, we’re going to think twice before making our minilesson into a chance to teach readers to notice the repetition of drought images in *Skylerk*. Instead, we’ll look at *Skylerk* with our kids’ independent reading in mind and think, “How can I find in this book—or not in this book—some real lessons that are actually going to pay off for the kids I have, not the kids I wish I had?”

Of course, stressing that confering is critically important in the teaching of reading doesn’t take away the fact that sometimes, when we pull a chair alongside the child and ask, “How’s it going?” and hear in response, “Fine,” we don’t know what to say. We sometimes feel empty-handed as teachers, unsure of what we can draw upon in the absence of knowing well the book the child is reading. In the upcoming portion of this chapter, I’ll help you feel less empty-handed.

# Guidelines for Conferencing With Students About Independent Reading

Last week I completed *Becoming Naomi Leon* by Pam Munoz Ryan (Scholastic, 2004). My dear friend and colleague Ruth Culham had read this book and kept urging me to read it so we could have a telephone chat about our feelings and reactions. A great read has that magical energy, compelling you to exchange ideas or nudge a friend to read the book because you know she'll adore it too. Conferencing about books with students and teaching them to confer with one another validates the reader and the text and fosters both unprompted, emotional responses as well as responses that call for proof from a text (Rosenblatt, 1938, 1978, 2005).

My students give high marks to short book conferences because conferencing with me or a peer enables them to socialize and share their enthusiasm or negative feelings toward a recent text. Conferences can focus on trade books, graphic novels, magazines, or even comic books, if that's what your students choose to read. Conferences offer you glimpses into students' reactions to their reading, their use of strategies, their fluency, and their ability to discuss a text, which in turn can provide you with insights into their reading process and literary tastes. Here are some guidelines for organizing book conferences.

- ◆ Hold conferences with students when they are working on independent reading or journal writing about reading.
- ◆ Keep conferences to four to six minutes so you can complete four or five each day. Set a timer to help you with time limits.
- ◆ Meet at a table or desk that's set apart from the class; this fosters privacy.
- ◆ Invite students to choose a book from their book log. If possible, have the student bring the book to the conference. Explain that there will be times when *you* will choose a book from their log; make sure it is a title they have read recently.
- ◆ End the conference by sharing all the positives you observed. For example, you may recap two or three high points or share one of these comments:
  - You really understood the genre.
  - You were able to help me understand why you enjoy that topic.

## Mine Those Interest Surveys

Review students' completed interest surveys (see page 39) so you can use their interests as a springboard for recommending books.

- I'm pleased with your understanding of this reading strategy.
  - You were able to use details to support your ideas about character, setting, problems, and conflicts.
  - You made excellent connections.
  - I enjoyed your fluent and expressive reading.
  - The illustrations you shared showed me how much you've learned.
  - You helped me understand how this book changed your thinking.
- ◆ Store the conference notes in your literacy folder or in a file folder so you can refer to these when discussing reading progress with students and parents.

The conference forms have open-ended questions. Feel free to make these more specific if you have read the book. You don't have to know every book in order to confer. Students' responses will let you know whether they recall specific details.

I've also included a peer book conference form. Pair up students for conferences after you've conferred with them at least two times. Set time limits and remind students to use their soft voices. Circulate as partners confer so you can answer questions and respond positively to what you hear and observe.

## Suggestions for Reacting to Students' Negative Talk

When conferences become negative and students repeatedly tell you, "I hate this book" or "I hate to read," put your negative reactions aside and wait to draw conclusions about the students. Usually, such comments indicate the student has difficulty reading, and by the middle grades, students tend to cover up the pain of not being able to read with what we teachers call "attitude."

Try asking students why they feel this way. You can also listen to them read out loud to see if the text they've selected is too difficult. Sometimes students don't have enough background knowledge of the genre and/or the topic, and that impedes comprehension.

Once I know that a student struggles with reading, I make myself available when that student chooses a book or magazine. I always offer the student three or four choices, explaining, "If you don't like one, then put it aside and try another. I'm hoping one of these will capture your interest. If not, see me, and we'll look further." Be patient and positive and remember it takes time to rebuild self-esteem; vent your frustration with a colleague so you can remain positive and caring with the student.

## Content Reading Conference: Nonfiction

*Directions:* Jot down notes based on the conversation between you and your student, using the questions below.

Title and Author \_\_\_\_\_

---

What about this topic interests you?

List two or three fascinating pieces of information or two or three interesting ideas you learned.

Did the book change the way you think? If so, explain how.

Would you look for another book by this author? On this topic? Explain why or why not.

## Content Reading Conference: Fiction

*Directions:* Jot down notes based on the conversation between you and your student, using the questions below.

Title and Author \_\_\_\_\_

What drew you to this book?

What type of fiction is this text? Can you show me what helped you figure this out?

Name the protagonist and one key problem he or she faced. Describe how the protagonist dealt with this problem.

Did you connect to a character, event, or problem? Did the book remind you of a movie? Another book? A world issue? Pick one or two and explain.

Describe a major change in the protagonist from the beginning to the end of the story. Then give a cause of this change: Was it a character? A conflict? An event? Inner thoughts and emotions?

## Book Conference Form for Fiction or Nonfiction

*Directions:* Jot down notes based on the conversation between you and your student. Prompts for stirring up the conversation are in italics. *Record your notes on separate paper.*

Title and Author \_\_\_\_\_

Why did you choose the book?

*Is it a topic you love? Did someone recommend the book? Who?*

What do you like about the topic, the protagonist, the setting, problems, conflicts?

*Can you find a favorite part, read it, and explain why you liked it?*

*Did you learn new information about this topic? Explain.*

*Was there a nifty photograph? Share and discuss it.*

*Do you have a lot in common with a character? Explain.*

*Did the author create suspense or make you laugh? In which part? How? Can you find and read a passage that did this?*

Can you connect the title to the text?

*What about the text does the title reflect?*

*Were there words in the title that the author used in the text? Explain.*

*Did the title point to a specific event, character, or detail? Explain.*

How did the reading go?

*Did you enjoy the book? Explain why or why not.*

*Were there parts that confused you? Can you share one? How did you get unconfused?*

*Did you learn new words? Information? Ideas? Share some.*

## Strategic Reading Conference

*Directions:* Jot down notes based on the conversation between you and your student, using the questions below.

Title and Author \_\_\_\_\_

Reading Strategy:

How can this strategy help you understand what you read?

What other strategies do you use while you read?

How do you apply this strategy when you read?

Find a page in your book and think aloud to show me how you apply the strategy.



## Peer Book Conference

*Directions:*

1. Jot down some notes that reflect what you and your partner discussed. Use the prompts below to spur the discussion.
2. Turn the completed form in to your teacher.

Partner's Name \_\_\_\_\_

Title and Author of Partner's Book \_\_\_\_\_

Preparation Checklist: Came with book \_\_\_\_\_ pencil \_\_\_\_\_ form \_\_\_\_\_

What genre was the book? Can you give two or three examples that support your decision?

Choose one of these prompts, discuss it, and *jot down the high points of your conversation on the back of this form or on a separate piece of paper.*

- ◆ Retell a favorite part.
- ◆ Discuss the information you learned.
- ◆ Explain how the book changed your thinking about a topic or idea.
- ◆ Describe two settings and explain how each was important to the story or text.
- ◆ Explain one key conflict and the outcome.
- ◆ Discuss a character or event you connected to and explain why.
- ◆ Discuss why you think the protagonist changed from the beginning to the end.
- ◆ Explain how the information you read about can change the way we live, save lives, help the environment, and so on.
- ◆ Select a favorite illustration, photograph, or passage from the text and explain why you it is your favorite.
- ◆ State a problem a character faced and explain how it was resolved. If it wasn't resolved, explain why.

## Student-Teacher Retelling Conference Form

*Directions:* Note key points discussed for each section.

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Student states strengths:

Teacher states observed strengths:

Student offers one or two ways to improve:  
(To help student do this, review notes on the retelling form.)

Teacher and student set one or two goals for next retelling:

Additional notes and comments:

## Teacher-Student Reading Conference Form

Topic to be discussed:

Points student raised and discussed:

Points teacher raised and discussed:

Student's goals:

Teacher's recommendation:

Actions/goals teacher and student negotiated:

Follow-up conference needed? \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Additional notes and comments:

# Questions to Support Comprehension of Fiction

## *Personal and Textual Connections*

- ❖ How does the story make you feel?
- ❖ Have you ever had similar experiences?
- ❖ Does the book remind you of another book?
- ❖ Do any of the characters remind you of someone in your life?
- ❖ How is this story like any other story you know?
- ❖ How are the characters, setting, and problems like those in other stories you have read?
- ❖ How are the characters, setting, and problems connected to your life?
- ❖ Were you reminded of anything in your own life?
- ❖ What does this story make you think or wonder about?
- ❖ What surprised you?

## *Setting*

- ❖ Where and when does the story take place?
- ❖ Where else could the story take place?
- ❖ Could the setting be a real place that exists in our time?
- ❖ Is the place important to the story? How?
- ❖ What words did the author use to describe the place?
- ❖ What can you hear, see, feel, or smell as you read?
- ❖ How important is the place or time to the story?
- ❖ How much time passes in the story?
- ❖ In another time or place, how would the story change?
- ❖ How did the author control the passing of time?
- ❖ How is the setting like another place you know?
- ❖ Does the season or the time affect the characters or the plot of the story?

## *Characters*

- ❖ Are there any powerful characters in the story? What makes them that way?
- ❖ Who is the most interesting character? Why?
- ❖ Who is the most important character? Why?
- ❖ What character is the fairest? Why?
- ❖ Who is the bravest character? Why?
- ❖ Which character taught you the most?
- ❖ Who else could be in the story?
- ❖ What choices did a character have?
- ❖ How does the author/illustrator reveal the character? (Look at what the character does, thinks, or says; or what others say *about* the character.)
- ❖ How does one of the characters change? Why?
- ❖ Which characters change and which don't? How is character change important in the story?
- ❖ Who is a character that plays a small role? Why is this character necessary in the story?
- ❖ What did you learn from one character in the story?
- ❖ How did characters feel about one another? Why?
- ❖ Are the characters believable? Why or why not?

## Questions to Support Comprehension of Fiction (continued)

### *Plot*

- ❖ How did the author begin the story to engage the reader?
- ❖ What is the story problem? How do you think it will be solved?
- ❖ What challenges do the characters encounter and how do they deal with them?
- ❖ What choices did the characters have?
- ❖ How does a character's actions affect other people in the story?
- ❖ What was the most important part of the story?
- ❖ How would you describe the story shape? (linear, triangular, circular; for example, home-adventure-home)
- ❖ What is the high point of the story?
- ❖ What are the important events in the story?
- ❖ What is the order of events in the story? (for example, series of sequential events, letter or diary, record, flashback)
- ❖ Could the order of events be changed or could any of the events be left out?
- ❖ Were you able to predict the story ending?
- ❖ How did the story end?
- ❖ If you were the author, would you have ended it in any different way? How?
- ❖ What clues did the author give to allow the reader to predict the ending?
- ❖ What lesson does this story teach about life?
- ❖ What do you think will happen next in the story?
- ❖ What do you think will happen next for the characters after the story ends?
- ❖ Do you think the story really could have happened?
- ❖ How does the author provide information or details to make the story seem realistic?
- ❖ How does the author help you feel that you are really there [in both realistic stories and fantasy]?
- ❖ How was the story resolved?
- ❖ What two or three sentences summarize the whole story?
- ❖ Make a sketch or picture of an event in the book.
- ❖ What are the most important events of the story?
- ❖ Do you have any unanswered questions about the story?

### *Theme*

- ❖ What is the author's message?
- ❖ What is the story really about?
- ❖ Do you think the title is appropriate for the story?
- ❖ What does the story mean to you?
- ❖ Why did the author write this story?

### *Perspective*

- ❖ Who tells the story? Is this the best person to tell it? Why?
- ❖ Whose point of view is used in the story?
- ❖ What other voices could tell the story?
- ❖ How would the story be different if told through another character's eyes?

## Questions to Support Comprehension of Fiction (contin

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### *Language*

- ❖ What are some interesting words, phrases, or sentences?
- ❖ Are there words that were used to create a feeling or picture in your mind?
- ❖ Where did the author describe something well?
- ❖ What images did the writing evoke? How did the author use language to evoke images?
- ❖ What were some of the strongest words the author used?
- ❖ How did the author begin/end the story?
- ❖ Was any of the language especially interesting, vivid, or surprising?

### *Illustrations*

- ❖ What do the illustrations add to the story?
- ❖ How important are the illustrations?
- ❖ What is the role of illustrations in conveying the meaning of the story?
- ❖ What is your favorite illustration? Why did you choose it?
- ❖ Could you picture what was happening when there was no illustration?

### *Author/Illustrator*

- ❖ Would you read other books by this author? Why or why not?
- ❖ Have you read other books by this illustrator? How is this text similar to or different from c has illustrated?
- ❖ What other books does this book make you want to read?
- ❖ Why do you think this particular author wrote this book?
- ❖ What did the author have to know to write this book?
- ❖ What did the author do to interest the reader or pull the reader into the text?
- ❖ Did the author keep you interested? How or why?
- ❖ How is this book like other books by this author?
- ❖ Why do you think the author began/ended the story this way?
- ❖ Why did the author choose the title? Would you choose the same one?

### *Genre*

- ❖ What is the genre? How did you know?
  - ❖ Is this text a good example of this genre? Why?
  - ❖ How is this book like other books you've read in this genre?
  - ❖ What do you find difficult about reading books in this genre?
-

# Questions to Support Comprehension of Nonfiction

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## *Personal and Textual Connections*

- ❖ What do you already know about this topic?
- ❖ How does this [book, article, topic] remind you of other texts you have read?
- ❖ What have you experienced in your life that helps you understand this topic?
- ❖ Does this text provide useful information for you personally?
- ❖ What is your interest in this topic?
- ❖ What experiences or life circumstances led you to read about this topic?
- ❖ How does the information in this text fit with what you already know?

## *Content*

- ❖ Why is this topic important [socially, scientifically, and practically]?
- ❖ What perspective does the author take on this topic?
- ❖ What part of the topic has the author chosen to present in the text?
- ❖ What are some of the most important words related to the topic, and what do they mean?
- ❖ What are some of the most important ideas related to this topic?
- ❖ Were there parts of the book you didn't understand? What puzzled you? What questions do you still have?
- ❖ Is the topic covered adequately?
- ❖ Are different viewpoints presented on the topic?
- ❖ Does the author explain how facts were arrived at?
- ❖ What did you learn about this topic?
- ❖ What does this text make you want to learn more about?

## *Accuracy and Authenticity*

- ❖ Is the information up-to-date?
- ❖ Is sufficient evidence provided to support what the author says?
- ❖ How has the author established the authenticity of the text?
- ❖ Are the illustrations authentic?
- ❖ Are the facts and information in this text consistent with other sources?
- ❖ Is all important information included? Was important information missing?
- ❖ Does the author make a clear distinction between fact and opinion?
- ❖ Has the author presented information to accurately represent people and places—without stereotypes or omissions?
- ❖ Has the author been fair?
- ❖ Do facts and information support the author's general statements?
- ❖ Did the author present an objective point of view?
- ❖ Is there any information that could be misleading?
- ❖ Have any groups been omitted from the [history, record of scientific progress]?

## *Style*

- ❖ How has the author made this topic readable?
- ❖ How has the author made this topic interesting?
- ❖ How has the author made it easy for you to find information?

## *Text Structure/Organization*

- ❖ What are the ways the author presents information on this topic?

## Questions to Support Comprehension of Nonfiction (continued)

### *Text Structure/Organization*

- ❖ What are the ways the author presents information on this topic?
- ❖ How is information organized [by topic, in time, by contrasting ideas, etc.]?
- ❖ Is the information presented clearly?

### *Text Features/Illustrations/Format*

- ❖ What does the title tell you about this text?
- ❖ How do headings and subheadings help you find information in this text?
- ❖ What information is provided through illustrations [drawings, diagrams, maps, charts, etc.]?
- ❖ Does the text have reference aides such as table of contents, index, bibliography, glossary, and appendices? Are they easy to use? How are they helping you?
- ❖ Are the illustrations clear and understandable? Are they easy to interpret?
- ❖ Are the illustrations explained by labels, legends, and captions when needed?
- ❖ Does the total format of the text help you understand the topic better?

### *Author*

- ❖ What qualifications does the author have to write this text?
- ❖ How does the author use experiences and/or knowledge to do a good job of providing information?
- ❖ What is the author's perspective or stance toward the topic?
- ❖ What has the author said that makes you question the accuracy of the information?

Figure 17-7. Questions to Support Comprehension of Nonfiction (continued)

## Questions to Support Comprehension of Biography

*Note: Many questions suitable for discussion of narrative texts and informational texts are also appropriate for biography. The follow questions are specific to biography.*

### *Personal and Textual Connections*

- ❖ What do you already know about the subject of this biography?
- ❖ What does the story of this person's life make you think or wonder about?
- ❖ What surprised you about this person?
- ❖ How does this person's life story remind you of your own life or the lives of people you know?
- ❖ What do you know about the period of history in which this person lived?
- ❖ Does this person's life remind you of other biographies you have read or of fiction texts?
- ❖ How is the person in the biography like people you know?
- ❖ How are this person's problems like the problems of people in other biographies or fiction books you have read?

### *Setting*

- ❖ How important is the setting [place, time in history, and other events taking place at the time] to the subject's life or accomplishments?
- ❖ How does the author include details that help you understand the subject?



## Questions to Support Comprehension of Biography (continued)

---

- ❖ Does the setting change over the person's life?
- ❖ Is the information about the setting authentic and consistent with history?
- ❖ How did the author write about the setting to make it authentic?

### *Structure or Organization*

- ❖ At what point in the person's life did the author begin the biography?
- ❖ How did the author organize the telling of the events of the person's life (chronological, under topics, etc.)?
- ❖ How did the author use dialogue, flashbacks, foreshadowing, and other ways of organizing text to make this person's life interesting?
- ❖ If dialogue is invented to make the text interesting, how well does it work?
- ❖ How did the author use anecdotes, original documents, eyewitness accounts, and interviews to make the person's life interesting?
- ❖ Are the events depicted for the subject's life believable and consistent with other information about the time period?

### *Events*

- ❖ What were the important events in the subject's life?
- ❖ What were the challenges faced by the person?
- ❖ What were the important actions the person took?
- ❖ How did the subject's actions affect others?

### *Author*

- ❖ Why did this author choose this subject?
- ❖ How did the author go about getting to know the subject?
- ❖ What research or other action did the author take to make the biography authentic?
- ❖ What did the author have to know to write this biography?

### *Theme*

- ❖ What was the author trying to say by writing about this person?
- ❖ Why did the author think this subject was important?
- ❖ What was the most important thing about the subject of this biography?
- ❖ Are different points of view on the times or events presented in an objective way?
- ❖ What insights does the book provide into today's problems and issues?

### *Subject*

- ❖ What does the character look like?
  - ❖ What kind of person is the subject?
  - ❖ Is the subject living now or did the subject live in past history?
  - ❖ How does what the subject says inform you?
  - ❖ What do others say about the subject?
  - ❖ Does the subject change over the biography? How and why?
  - ❖ How do the subject's actions reflect the times in which he or she lived?
-

# ??? Questions to Guide Readers in a Conference ???

The **BIG** Question: What are you thinking right now?

## Questions to ask readers at the start of a conference:

How is it going?	Who is the author of your book?
What is the title of your book?	Are there chapter titles?
Have you read any other books by this author?	What made you select this book?
What is happening right now in your book?	Who are the main characters?

## Questions to ask to guide readers' use of strategies. These questions can be asked before, during, or after the child reads aloud to you:

### Connections

What part of the story reminded you of something in your own life? Or something that has happened to you?

Are there things you know about that help you to understand the book?

Does something in this book remind you of another book you read before?

### Visualizing

While you were reading what images/pictures did you make in your head?

- Describe them to me.

What (specific) words helped you create that picture in your mind?

### Inferences

What do you predict will happen next/in the story? Why do you think that?

What do you think of (opinion of character/setting)? Why?

What conclusion can you draw from what you already know/read? Why?

### Questioning

What did you wonder about (or question) as you read this part?

What questions do you have at this point in the story/text?

What part of the story/text confused you? How can we work through this confusing part?

### Determining Importance in Text

What is the story/text mainly about?

Are there some parts of this story that are more important than others? Which ones?

### Synthesizing/Summarizing

In just a few sentences, what is the story about?

**Questions to ask readers at the end of a conference:**

How do you feel about reading aloud?

Which strategies will you try now?

Do you think you will read other books by this author? Why?

What will be your plan of action as you continue to read this book?

**Questions to ask to guide readers in fixing up their reading:**

What will you do to figure out this word? (If they pause at a word.)

Does this word look like another word you have seen before?

What will you do if a part in the story/text confuses you?

Created by Chris Kehan

Adapted from the following texts:

Strategies That Work by Stephanie Harvey & Anne Goudvis

Mosaic of Thought by Ellin Oliver Keene & Susan Zimmerman

# Section VIII

## RESPONDING TO READING IN WRITING



### Getting Started

- The Role of Writing in the Reading Curriculum
- Writing About Reading
- "Me as a Reader": Written by a Student

### Tracking Thinking

- Text Coding
- Post-Its with a Purpose
- Post-It Questions
- Text Coding Bookmark
- Assessing Sticky Notes: Proof of Post-Its
- Thinkmarks: An Option to Sticky Notes
- Student Sample of Sticky Notes & Written Reflection
- Student Sample of Reflection in the Form of a Teacher Letter
- Prompts to Help Go From Sentences to Paragraphs
- Chart: Prompts to Help Yourself Grow Ideas

### Questions to Prompt Thinking

- Some Questions We Can Teach Readers to Ask
- Questions to Support Comprehension of Fiction
- Questions to Support Comprehension of Nonfiction
- Questions to Support Comprehension of Biography
- Comprehension Questions that Connect Readers with Literature
- Comprehension Questions to Motivate Discussions of Illustrations

### Reading Response Topics

- Suggestions for Reading Response Topics
- Deepening Engagement with Characters
- You're in Hollywood
- Character Analysis
- Comparing Characters
- Nonfiction Prompts
- Facts About
- Nonfiction Response Form
- Response to Biography

### Assessment of Reading Responses

- Rubrics to Assess Reading Responses (7)
- Student Self-Assessment Forms (2)

An excerpt from: ***Writing About Reading: Deepening & Clarifying Ideas About Texts*** from *A Guide to the Reading Workshop* by Lucy Calkins; Heinemann 2010



Take this opportunity to step back for a moment, pause, and think about what you believe about writing about reading. What is the purpose of responding to reading with some writing? How does writing about reading look, in classrooms, at its best? Give yourself the job of researching the writing about reading that your students are doing. Look in your classroom and also across your school. Be an investigator, if only for a day or two. Watch kids' engagement as they write about their reading and watch their pace. Talk to them about that writing. What are they aiming to do? What does good work entail? Why are they doing this? How does this help their reading? Look back over the work they've done to notice how their writing about reading seems to have changed over time, looking not at the fancy piece they did with tons of input from you, but the everyday writing they do about reading.

You will probably see what I see all too often. In far too many classrooms, youngsters aren't clear why they are writing about reading. If pressed, they think it is for you, so that you can check on whether they did the reading. They do not know what is entailed in doing this well, and they have no expectations that the writing is supposed to be for them. They don't think it helps them read, save perhaps for the fact that helps them recall names and places. And it is not unusual for students' writing about reading to look pretty much the same one month and the next.

If you give yourself the job of sorting the writing about reading your students are doing into piles—one pile for the writing that feels like deadwood and the other pile for writing that has life to it—you may be surprised to notice how much of it doesn't feel as if it is serving much of a purpose. It does not have to be this way.

In this chapter, I'll suggest ways you can make the writing your students do in the reading workshop more vital and more supportive of their reading. Writing can be a powerful tool for thinking, and your students can certainly use writing to deepen their thinking about reading. But I want to emphasize that in your reading workshop, your first goal needs to be to support your children's *reading*. If you are going

to ask students to write about their reading, that writing must support their reading, and if you are not vigilant, their writing about reading can instead compete with and replace their reading.


## Holding Fast to Reading as a Priority

Ultimately, people learn to read by reading. Our data reveal an extraordinary alignment between the levels of text difficulty a student can handle and the student's score on the standardized test. The way that students progress up levels of text difficulty has everything to do with time spent reading. There is a mountain of evidence available to suggest that the one thing that readers need above all is time for reading—not only to become better readers, but also to conquer the high-stakes tests. In the name of "holding readers accountable" for reading, it is all too easy to create conditions in which there is very little time for reading.

Certainly, until readers are reading a huge volume of texts, carrying books between home and school, making time in their lives for reading, getting engaged in storylines and arguments and lines of thought that make them want to read on, your most important goal needs to be to support your students' progress toward becoming avid readers. Telling students to write regularly about every little bit of reading they do will definitely not help that cause! And even after your students are reading up a storm, the writing that you ask students to do in response to their reading must not interfere with that reading.

There is another reason why I recommend you be cautious about the amount of writing you expect of your readers. It is this. If our goal is to make sure we help kids make richly literate lives for themselves, if we really want children to initiate reading in their own lived lives, then we would be wise to think about what people do who love to read and read a lot. Perhaps you are such a person. If not, you will have someone in your life who is totally head over heels for reading. Think about it. How much writing about reading does that person do?

The truth is that not many people read a chapter in an enthralling novel and then pull out the computer to write about that chapter. Instead, we read a chapter, and our response is to read the next chapter. We are more apt to pause to write after reading a chapter in an informational text, but still it's safe to say that some of us would not choose to read if every text we read needed to be accompanied by entries and essays, book reviews, and letters to an author, a classmate, a teacher.



*When we write, we put our  
thoughts on the page, we hold  
our thoughts in our hands,  
and we set our thoughts on  
the table before us and invite  
others to join us in thinking  
about those thoughts.*

# Writing About Reading

Early in the year during your read aloud, work with students to share ideas about their thinking. Once readers have become accustomed to talking with their partner about an idea, they will be ready to put their thoughts down on paper. Those conversations can be prepared for by writing their ideas on a post-it before they convene with another reader. The kind of writing that readers do is listed below.

- jotted notes
- timelines
- sketches
- lists
- informal records of thoughts
- quick entries
- theory scratched into a boxes and bullets outline
- less frequent elaborated developed essays
- “Me As A Reader”- Students write at the end of the month how they grew as a reader. They review their post-it notes and comment on them.

## Me As A Reader

homework  
~~10.4.04~~  
reading  
me as a reader

As a reader I think I've grown because now I notice more things in my books. I notice the stereotypes of gender and race and things like that. I learned that even <sup>if</sup> a book looks really easy there is still some depth to the book that I would definitely not have noticed before. Like in the paperbag princess. I would have just read the story, enjoyed it, but I would not have thought about how it switches the stereotypes of normal fairy tales.

I'm also starting to ~~start~~ read books with more variety. Usually I would read a book and if I liked it and I see it again a few months or years later I would read it again. I would rarely read new books that I wasn't familiar with. Now I ~~am~~ am beginning to look at and consider more books I've never read before. And I hope I can start to look at new genres now. I still have not begun to go away from adventure fantasy and <sup>starts</sup> mystery to memoirs and ~~diets~~.



# TEXT CODING FOR STICKY NOTES OR THINKMARKS

**BK =** Background Knowledge  
*I already knew that...*

**C =** **Connection**  
Text to Text      T/T  
Text to World      T/W  
Text to Self      T/S  
*This makes me think of...*

**I =** **Inference**  
*From the clues in the text I can figure out...*

**V =** **Visualize**  
*I can envision, hear, taste, smell, or feel the...*

**R =** **Research**  
*I need to look for more information about...*

**Q =** **Question for Discussion**  
*I didn't really understand... OR  
I wonder...*

**P =** **Prediction**  
*Later in the book, I predict that \_\_\_\_\_ will  
happen because...*

**! =** **WOW! New Idea!**  
*This part was really cool because...*

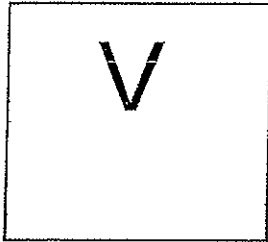


# Post-Its with a Purpose

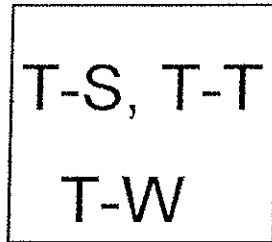


Reading like a reader . . .

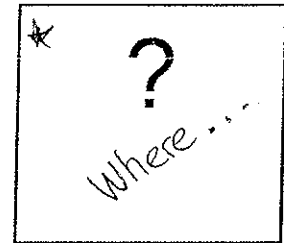
Visualizing



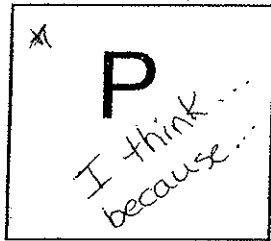
Text-to-Self, Text-to-Text  
Text-to-World



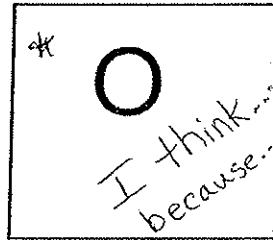
Questions I have



Predictions

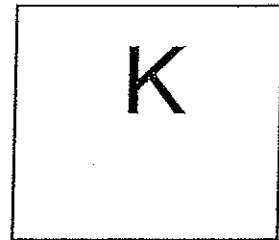


Opinions

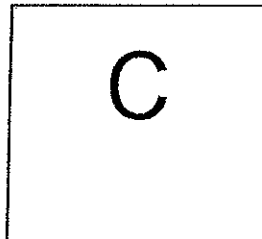


*A = kids actually write on these Post Its*

Key Points

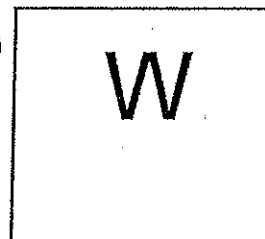


Confusing Part



*? = Ask t.  
RR = re-read  
RA = read ~~at~~ aloud  
RO = read on*

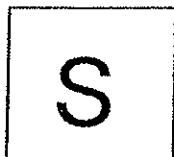
Unknown Word



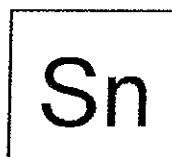
Reading like a writer . . .

*Go Back = to where you understood it  
blue post it*

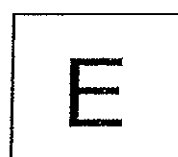
Simile



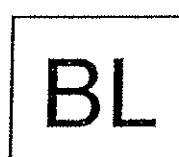
Snapshot



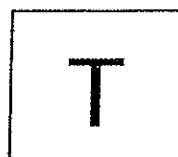
Exploded Moment



Beautiful Language



Thoughtshot



# Post-It Questions

- I wonder why...
- ?
- I like the way the author...
- I predict...
- Now I know...
- Connections
  - \*Text to self
  - \*Text to world
  - \*Text to text
- Vocabulary Question
- *this reminds me*



Coding Text

I=Important

PK=Prior Knowledge

S=Synthesis

MI=Mental Images

!=An Inference

?=Question

P=Prediction

P/C=Prediction/  
Confirmed

P/D=Prediction/  
Disconfirmed

Disconfirmed



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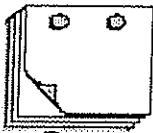
P/C=Prediction/  
Confirmed

Confirmed

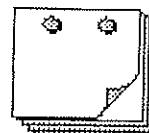
P/D=Prediction/  
Disconfirmed

Disconfirmed

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_



# Proof of Post-its



Good readers *think* while they are reading. We have been learning about some strategies that good readers use like predicting (**P**), visualizing (**V**), questioning (**?**), summarizing (**S**), inferring (**I**), and making connections (**T-T**, **T-S**, **T-W**). Putting post-its at different places in our books proves that we are thinking while we are reading.

Place the post-its you used on this sheet and share your thoughts.


pg. \_\_\_\_\_

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pg. \_\_\_\_\_

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pg. \_\_\_\_\_

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AN OPTION TO USING STICKY NOTES...

## ***THINKMARKS***



Copy the following two pages back-to-back & cut them apart. Students write on these bookmark-like sheets rather than write on sticky notes.

<b>Thinkmark</b>	Name _____	
	Title _____	
	Author _____	
	Page	
	Page	
	Page	

<b>Thinkmark</b>	Name _____	
	Title _____	
	Author _____	
	Page	
	Page	
	Page	

<b>Thinkmark</b>	Name _____	
	Title _____	
	Author _____	
	Page	
	Page	
	Page	

Page	Page	Page	Page
------	------	------	------

Page	Page	Page	Page
------	------	------	------

Page	Page	Page	Page
------	------	------	------



Sample

## Post-it Notes on The Séance

Why does Lauren really hate Sara?  
 who really is Roberta's champion?

9-8-05 | P. 26

9-10-05 | I can't believe Sara got murdered and was found dead in a swamp. I still think that Fant did all of this. P. 122

9-13-05 | I can't believe that Carley Hughes actually killed Sara. But why did he do it? P. 183

I am on the Part where Lauren has to choose to go or don't go to the Séance. P. 92 | 9-8-05

9-11-05\* | Questions  
 • was Sara really murdered?  
 • How did she disappear from the séance?  
 • why was Sara's mom not hysterical? P. 97

9-13-05 | why was Carley's grandmother trying to kill Lauren? Now I understand what kind of person is Carley's grandmother. P. 205

9-9-05 | I think Fant took Sara. I think he kidnapped her from where the séance was taking place. P. 66

I can believe that Roberta got murdered now. I got the feeling that now it is the Sheriff. P. 137 | 9-12-05

9-13-05 |  
 • why did Carley kill Sara?  
 • why was he crying about it?  
 • what was up with his Grandmother P. 203

NAME: Evan Quiñones		TITLE: The Séance		AUTHOR: Joan Lowery Nixon	
DATE	PAGE From	To			
9-8-05	1	26			
9-9-05	27	38			
9-9-05	39	66			
9-10-05	67	97			
9-11-05*	98	122			
9-12-05	123	129			
9-12-05	129	146			
9-13-05	147	165			
9-13-05	166	183			
9-13-05	183	210			

29.04

# Coraline

Classwork  
10.3.04  
Coraline  
post-its

There's tension when Coraline backs away from her "other" mother. <sup>Because it leads to awkwardness.</sup>

The other mother is the one who has the power over everything in the world Coraline is in. Coraline has no power at all. Yet.

Here there's tension because Coraline pulls away and asks for what her real parents are and she accuses her other mother.

Here there's tension because Coraline refuses to talk with her or love her and this creates tension.



10.04.04



When Coraline pulls away from her other mother there's tension because no one knows what to say and it's awkward. She tells the other mother she will

## Coraline

1029.04

Most of my post-its are about the many places where tension takes place. Many times in the story Coraline brings a large amount of tension between her and her other mother. This tension comes up because Coraline speaks her mind. She says to her <sup>other</sup> mother things like "I won't love you." and she tells her other mother that she is not her <sup>real</sup> mother. Many of those comments create a tense silence between Coraline and her other mother. It made them feel awkwardness and a feeling of not knowing what to say. It's like a stiff atmosphere.

Another time where there was tension was when Coraline's mother reached for Coraline but Coraline backed away. This created tension because the other mother can only put her arm down limply which leads to a strong silence of looking away from each other. The tension here was building up and they each knew it in a way because after a little <sup>time</sup> the other mother took Coraline and locked her in a place behind a mirror. The tension <sup>in each situation would</sup> lead from one thing to another where someone would leave the room or in this case be locked behind a mirror.

Dear #.

He... Could... Go... All... The... Way... TOUCHDOWN!

Chris Coogan also known as Crash, has just scored another touch down. Maybe I should start from the beginning. You see Crash is the school's football sensation. He is nicknamed Crash because he is always crashing into someone. From people of the football field to his non-violent, veggie-eating neighbor, Penn Webb. It all started in the summer when Crash was going into first grade. Crash was burying his mom's pansies when he saw a dorky, little runt running down the sidewalk. BAM! A message hit him like a milk truck. The message said "Don't let him pass." Ever since then, him and his friend, Mike, who moved in the neighborhood in the the third grade, have been teasing and messing around with Penn all the time like there is nothing better to do. It was now the seventh grade, and Crash and Mike are still teasing Penn. And here is were gets very interesting. I did a lot of inferring about Penn Webb. I inferred that Penn was persinsent because whether he was protesting against the mall to save the environment or if he was just getting teased he kept at it no matter what anybody said to him. I made couple T/S and T/T in Crash. One of the T/S I made was when Crash scored six touch downs he was elated and I was really happy when I got a big hit in my back all game. A T/T I made was with Palmer from Wringler and Penn. The T/T was that they both were really nice and they never made fun of anyone!! I did some

visualizing in Crash too. I visualized Penn Webb's house. I imagined the size of the house being the size of a garage. I saw Penn's dirty, old room with his only toy, a little, rusty Conestoga wagon. I also could visualize Penn's kitchen: A tiny little table for eating in the center of the room and an old fridge to the side and just dust would pretty much cover the rest of the room. Now, Penn was slowly gaining people to his side. First, it was Jane Forbes, who Crash admired. Then, came Crash's sister. After a while, tons of people were supporting the environment and doing all sorts of other kind things. Mike was messing with Penn more than ever and Crash didn't know which side to take. I made a T/T with Beans from Wringer and Mike. It was that they both weren't very nice and they both always tease people. I predicted Crash was going to go on Penn's side and I was right. He started being really nice to Penn. One of the nice things he did for Penn was he let him win the race that allows you to go into the Penn Relays. I made a T/S there. The T/S was that people have done nice things for me before and Crash did a nice thing to Penn. Soon, Crash and Penn became best friends! I loved Crash. I hope my next book is just as good!

Your Student,

# Prompts That Can Help Readers Go From Sentences to Paragraphs of Thought

Teach your students to use key phrases to extend their thinking, first through oral conversations and then into your read aloud. After reading a portion of your book ask for student ideas to think about the book. Encourage the use of the thought prompts below to promote more talking and thinking.

- To add on...
- In other words...
- On the other hand...
- For example, in the text
- Another example of that is...
- I agree because...
- One place where you see this is...
- The part of the text that really shows this idea is...

## PROMPTS TO HELP YOURSELF GROW IDEAS

- This makes me think...
- I can picture that this goes like this...
- The weird thing about this is...
- The idea I have about this is...
- So, in other words, the idea is...
- It is important to notice...
- This reminds me of...
- Someone might wonder...
- I used to think.... But now I am realizing...
- On one hand... but then again, I also think...

## Some Questions We Can Teach Readers to Ask

### **Improving literal understanding and moving to interpretation through character study**

- What do we notice about the setting?
- How is the setting important to the story?
- Who are the characters and how do they relate to each other?
- Which character(s) seems most important to the story?
- What kind of person does this character seem to be?
- What issues and challenges does this character face?
- What's inside this character that will help her/him face these challenges?
- What's inside this character that gets in the way, or even adds to these challenges?
- How is this character changing and why?
- How is this character having an effect on other people?
- How are other people or events having an effect on this character?
- Do I want to be like this character? Why?

### **Moving beyond character to the world of the story and to issues in the world**

- What's the story about?
- What's at stake?
- Do I perceive any subtext? What does this story imply about possibility, choice, issues?
- What theories do I want to carry with me as I read?
- How are these theories changing as I read?
- What does this text suggest about issues such as race, class, gender, children, adolescence?
- What ideas or issues seem to be hiding in this text?
- Does this text seem to want me to teach me certain things?
- How does it get me to think these things?
- What understandings do I come to have when I read this text?
- Do I think the same way this text seems to want me to think?
- Does this text reinforce the way I thought already about this issue?
- Or does it make me think differently?

### **Reading across texts**

- Does this text remind me of any others that deal with these ideas?
- Do I see ideas that exist in the world, in this text?
- How does this text reinforce or conflict with the ideas of these other texts?
- Where do I stand right now with my thinking about these ideas?
- How do I want to talk back to this text?
- What do I still not really know?
- What other texts might I read to find out more?

### **Changing as a reader and creating change through reading**

- What do I really like about this text?
- What bothers me from this text?
- What is going to stay with me from reading this text?
- How am I different from reading this text?
- What does this writer do that I could do as a writer?
- If I were to write about this text, what would I want to tell people?



# Questions to Support Comprehension of Fiction

## *Personal and Textual Connections*

- ❖ How does the story make you feel?
- ❖ Have you ever had similar experiences?
- ❖ Does the book remind you of another book?
- ❖ Do any of the characters remind you of someone in your life?
- ❖ How is this story like any other story you know?
- ❖ How are the characters, setting, and problems like those in other stories you have read?
- ❖ How are the characters, setting, and problems connected to your life?
- ❖ Were you reminded of anything in your own life?
- ❖ What does this story make you think or wonder about?
- ❖ What surprised you?

## *Setting*

- ❖ Where and when does the story take place?
- ❖ Where else could the story take place?
- ❖ Could the setting be a real place that exists in our time?
- ❖ Is the place important to the story? How?
- ❖ What words did the author use to describe the place?
- ❖ What can you hear, see, feel, or smell as you read?
- ❖ How important is the place or time to the story?
- ❖ How much time passes in the story?
- ❖ In another time or place, how would the story change?
- ❖ How did the author control the passing of time?
- ❖ How is the setting like another place you know?
- ❖ Does the season or the time affect the characters or the plot of the story?

## *Characters*

- ❖ Are there any powerful characters in the story? What makes them that way?
- ❖ Who is the most interesting character? Why?
- ❖ Who is the most important character? Why?
- ❖ What character is the fairest? Why?
- ❖ Who is the bravest character? Why?
- ❖ Which character taught you the most?
- ❖ Who else could be in the story?
- ❖ What choices did a character have?
- ❖ How does the author/illustrator reveal the character? (Look at what the character does, thinks, or says; or what others say *about* the character.)
- ❖ How does one of the characters change? Why?
- ❖ Which characters change and which don't? How is character change important in the story?
- ❖ Who is a character that plays a small role? Why is this character necessary in the story?
- ❖ What did you learn from one character in the story?
- ❖ How did characters feel about one another? Why?
- ❖ Are the characters believable? Why or why not?

## Questions to Support Comprehension of Fiction (continued)

### *Plot*

- ❖ How did the author begin the story to engage the reader?
- ❖ What is the story problem? How do you think it will be solved?
- ❖ What challenges do the characters encounter and how do they deal with them?
- ❖ What choices did the characters have?
- ❖ How does a character's actions affect other people in the story?
- ❖ What was the most important part of the story?
- ❖ How would you describe the story shape? (linear, triangular, circular; for example, home-adventure-home)
- ❖ What is the high point of the story?
- ❖ What are the important events in the story?
- ❖ What is the order of events in the story? (for example, series of sequential events, letter or diary, record, flashback)
- ❖ Could the order of events be changed or could any of the events be left out?
- ❖ Were you able to predict the story ending?
- ❖ How did the story end?
- ❖ If you were the author, would you have ended it in any different way? How?
- ❖ What clues did the author give to allow the reader to predict the ending?
- ❖ What lesson does this story teach about life?
- ❖ What do you think will happen next in the story?
- ❖ What do you think will happen next for the characters after the story ends?
- ❖ Do you think the story really could have happened?
- ❖ How does the author provide information or details to make the story seem realistic?
- ❖ How does the author help you feel that you are really there [in both realistic stories and fantasy]?
- ❖ How was the story resolved?
- ❖ What two or three sentences summarize the whole story?
- ❖ Make a sketch or picture of an event in the book.
- ❖ What are the most important events of the story?
- ❖ Do you have any unanswered questions about the story?

### *Theme*

- ❖ What is the author's message?
- ❖ What is the story really about?
- ❖ Do you think the title is appropriate for the story?
- ❖ What does the story mean to you?
- ❖ Why did the author write this story?

### *Perspective*

- ❖ Who tells the story? Is this the best person to tell it? Why?
- ❖ Whose point of view is used in the story?
- ❖ What other voices could tell the story?
- ❖ How would the story be different if told through another character's eyes?

## Questions to Support Comprehension of Fiction (contin

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### *Language*

- ❖ What are some interesting words, phrases, or sentences?
- ❖ Are there words that were used to create a feeling or picture in your mind?
- ❖ Where did the author describe something well?
- ❖ What images did the writing evoke? How did the author use language to evoke images?
- ❖ What were some of the strongest words the author used?
- ❖ How did the author begin/end the story?
- ❖ Was any of the language especially interesting, vivid, or surprising?

### *Illustrations*

- ❖ What do the illustrations add to the story?
- ❖ How important are the illustrations?
- ❖ What is the role of illustrations in conveying the meaning of the story?
- ❖ What is your favorite illustration? Why did you choose it?
- ❖ Could you picture what was happening when there was no illustration?

### *Author/Illustrator*

- ❖ Would you read other books by this author? Why or why not?
- ❖ Have you read other books by this illustrator? How is this text similar to or different from c has illustrated?
- ❖ What other books does this book make you want to read?
- ❖ Why do you think this particular author wrote this book?
- ❖ What did the author have to know to write this book?
- ❖ What did the author do to interest the reader or pull the reader into the text?
- ❖ Did the author keep you interested? How or why?
- ❖ How is this book like other books by this author?
- ❖ Why do you think the author began/ended the story this way?
- ❖ Why did the author choose the title? Would you choose the same one?

### *Genre*

- ❖ What is the genre? How did you know?
  - ❖ Is this text a good example of this genre? Why?
  - ❖ How is this book like other books you've read in this genre?
  - ❖ What do you find difficult about reading books in this genre?
-

# Comprehension Questions:

## Narrative

1. If you could be any character in the story, who would you be?
2. Do you like the story? Why or why not?
3. Do you share any of the feelings of the characters in the story? Explain.
4. What do you feel is the most important word, phrase, paragraph in this story? Explain why it is important.
5. What was your first reaction to this story? Describe or explain it briefly.
6. How does this story make you feel? Explain.

# Questions to Support Comprehension of Nonfiction

## *Personal and Textual Connections*

- ❖ What do you already know about this topic?
- ❖ How does this [book, article, topic] remind you of other texts you have read?
- ❖ What have you experienced in your life that helps you understand this topic?
- ❖ Does this text provide useful information for you personally?
- ❖ What is your interest in this topic?
- ❖ What experiences or life circumstances led you to read about this topic?
- ❖ How does the information in this text fit with what you already know?

## *Content*

- ❖ Why is this topic important [socially, scientifically, and practically]?
- ❖ What perspective does the author take on this topic?
- ❖ What part of the topic has the author chosen to present in the text?
- ❖ What are some of the most important words related to the topic, and what do they mean?
- ❖ What are some of the most important ideas related to this topic?
- ❖ Were there parts of the book you didn't understand? What puzzled you? What questions do you still have?
- ❖ Is the topic covered adequately?
- ❖ Are different viewpoints presented on the topic?
- ❖ Does the author explain how facts were arrived at?
- ❖ What did you learn about this topic?
- ❖ What does this text make you want to learn more about?

## *Accuracy and Authenticity*

- ❖ Is the information up-to-date?
- ❖ Is sufficient evidence provided to support what the author says?
- ❖ How has the author established the authenticity of the text?
- ❖ Are the illustrations authentic?
- ❖ Are the facts and information in this text consistent with other sources?
- ❖ Is all important information included? Was important information missing?
- ❖ Does the author make a clear distinction between fact and opinion?
- ❖ Has the author presented information to accurately represent people and places—without stereotypes or omissions?
- ❖ Has the author been fair?
- ❖ Do facts and information support the author's general statements?
- ❖ Did the author present an objective point of view?
- ❖ Is there any information that could be misleading?
- ❖ Have any groups been omitted from the [history, record of scientific progress]?

## *Style*

- ❖ How has the author made this topic readable?
- ❖ How has the author made this topic interesting?
- ❖ How has the author made it easy for you to find information?

## *Text Structure/Organization*

- ❖ What are the ways the author presents information on this topic?

## Questions to Support Comprehension of Nonfiction (continued)

### *Text Structure/Organization*

- ❖ What are the ways the author presents information on this topic?
- ❖ How is information organized [by topic, in time, by contrasting ideas, etc.]?
- ❖ Is the information presented clearly?

### *Text Features/Illustrations/Format*

- ❖ What does the title tell you about this text?
- ❖ How do headings and subheadings help you find information in this text?
- ❖ What information is provided through illustrations [drawings, diagrams, maps, charts, etc.]?
- ❖ Does the text have reference aides such as table of contents, index, bibliography, glossary, and appendices? Are they easy to use? How are they helping you?
- ❖ Are the illustrations clear and understandable? Are they easy to interpret?
- ❖ Are the illustrations explained by labels, legends, and captions when needed?
- ❖ Does the total format of the text help you understand the topic better?

### *Author*

- ❖ What qualifications does the author have to write this text?
- ❖ How does the author use experiences and/or knowledge to do a good job of providing information?
- ❖ What is the author's perspective or stance toward the topic?
- ❖ What has the author said that makes you question the accuracy of the information?

Figure 17-7. Questions to Support Comprehension of Nonfiction (continued)

## Questions to Support Comprehension of Biography

*Note: Many questions suitable for discussion of narrative texts and informational texts are also appropriate for biography. The follow questions are specific to biography.*

### *Personal and Textual Connections*

- ❖ What do you already know about the subject of this biography?
- ❖ What does the story of this person's life make you think or wonder about?
- ❖ What surprised you about this person?
- ❖ How does this person's life story remind you of your own life or the lives of people you know?
- ❖ What do you know about the period of history in which this person lived?
- ❖ Does this person's life remind you of other biographies you have read or of fiction texts?
- ❖ How is the person in the biography like people you know?
- ❖ How are this person's problems like the problems of people in other biographies or fiction books you have read?

### *Setting*

- ❖ How important is the setting [place, time in history, and other events taking place at the time] to the subject's life or accomplishments?
- ❖ How does the author include details that help you understand the subject?

## Questions to Support Comprehension of Biography (continued)

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- ❖ Does the setting change over the person's life?
- ❖ Is the information about the setting authentic and consistent with history?
- ❖ How did the author write about the setting to make it authentic?

### *Structure or Organization*

- ❖ At what point in the person's life did the author begin the biography?
- ❖ How did the author organize the telling of the events of the person's life (chronological, under topics, etc.)?
- ❖ How did the author use dialogue, flashbacks, foreshadowing, and other ways of organizing text to make this person's life interesting?
- ❖ If dialogue is invented to make the text interesting, how well does it work?
- ❖ How did the author use anecdotes, original documents, eyewitness accounts, and interviews to make the person's life interesting?
- ❖ Are the events depicted for the subject's life believable and consistent with other information about the time period?

### *Events*

- ❖ What were the important events in the subject's life?
- ❖ What were the challenges faced by the person?
- ❖ What were the important actions the person took?
- ❖ How did the subject's actions affect others?

### *Author*

- ❖ Why did this author choose this subject?
- ❖ How did the author go about getting to know the subject?
- ❖ What research or other action did the author take to make the biography authentic?
- ❖ What did the author have to know to write this biography?

### *Theme*

- ❖ What was the author trying to say by writing about this person?
- ❖ Why did the author think this subject was important?
- ❖ What was the most important thing about the subject of this biography?
- ❖ Are different points of view on the times or events presented in an objective way?
- ❖ What insights does the book provide into today's problems and issues?

### *Subject*

- ❖ What does the character look like?
  - ❖ What kind of person is the subject?
  - ❖ Is the subject living now or did the subject live in past history?
  - ❖ How does what the subject says inform you?
  - ❖ What do others say about the subject?
  - ❖ Does the subject change over the biography? How and why?
  - ❖ How do the subject's actions reflect the times in which he or she lived?
-

# Comprehension Questions: Expository

1. Who wrote this? What audience do you think the author had in mind? Why?
2. What was the author's purpose? How do you know?
3. What category of nonfiction is this? How does the author organize the information? Does this work?
4. Can you find examples of humor, propaganda, anecdotes, sensory words, sarcasm, or emotional appeal? Why did the author use these techniques?
5. What questions come to mind during and after reading? Was the author's meaning clear to you? If not, why?
6. Does the author express his or her opinions or biases? Support your answer with examples.
7. Write five questions that can be answered from reading the article and five that require further information.

- Evelyn Krieger



# Comprehension Questions That Connect Readers With Literature

1. What did you notice in the book?
2. How does the story make you feel?
3. What does the story remind you of in your own life?
4. If you were going to tell someone about your book, what three things would be important for you to share? Tell why they are important.
5. Did your feelings about what you read change as you were reading?
6. If the author were here, what would you like to say to him/her?
7. What do you think is the most important or most interesting part of this story? Why do you say this?
8. Who do you think was the most important character in the story? Why do you say this?
9. What was your favorite part of the book? Tell what it was and why you liked it.
10. If a friend asked about this piece, what would you say?

- Kelly & Farnan, 1994

# **Comprehension Questions to Motivate Discussions of Illustrations**

- 1. How did the illustrations contribute to the interest and value of the book?**
- 2. How did the illustrations compare with YOUR visualization of the descriptions in the story?**
- 3. Why is it important for the author and illustrator to work together?**
- 4. In what ways is the format important in making a book appeal to the reader?**
- 5. Why do illustrators use differing styles of illustrations?**

# Suggestions for Reading



## Response Topics

- Write about your favorite part of the book and why it was important to the story.
- Explore how the main character changed throughout the story.
- Write about something that surprised you or that you found interesting.
- Describe an interesting or important character in your book.
- Describe parts of the book that puzzled you or made you ask questions.
- Write about an important lesson that was learned in the story.
- Tell your thoughts or feelings about the **theme** of the story.
- Write your predictions about the story and tell whether or not they were right.
- Explain how the book reminds you of yourself, people you know, or of something that happened in your life (T-S Connections).
- Explain how the book reminds you of other books, especially the characters, events, or setting (T-T Connections).
- Describe how this book is like other books by the same author, on the same topic, or in the same genre.
- Retell the ending of the story AND write your feelings about it.
- Describe the author's craft: What was good about the author's writing? What things might you try to do

in your own writing that you learned from this author?

- Explain why you think that your book is popular with students in the class (if it is popular with other readers in the class).
- Would you recommend the book to another reader? Explain why or why not.
- Describe what you would change about the book if you could rewrite it.
- Describe in details the setting of your book and how it fits into the story.
- Write a letter to a character in the book or a letter from one character to another.
- Write a diary entry in the voice of a character in your book.
- Compare two characters in the book to each other by describing their similarities and their differences.
- Compare a character in your book to a character in another book you have read.
- Make a list of "lingering questions" you have after finishing the book.

Some ways that we can use our reading notebook to deepen our engagement with the character of the story include:

1. Make a list of the important clues (taken from the story) that tell us about the character so far. Write a found poem using words from this list, or write an "I am" poem in the voice of the main character.
2. Sketch: draw your character or an image that reminds you of the character, based on clues we find in the text about the character's appearance.
3. Write an entry or create an image of an experience in the character's life that seems important, and maybe write why this feels important to us.
4. Say what we like or don't like about the character and why.
5. We could write about our connection to the character, and what this character makes us think of in our own lives.



# You're in Hollywood!!



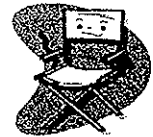
Have you ever wanted to be a movie or TV director? Well, here's your chance! You have won a contest and the prize is that you get to choose a great book to make into a movie or TV show. It will be your job to choose the actors and actresses who will play the main and supporting characters. Your characters can be real live actors or actresses, animated characters, or a combination of the two. Be sure to tell who the character is in the book and why you cast a particular star in that part. After you finish casting your show, make a movie poster that will make people rush to see your production!! Good Luck!!

\_\_\_\_\_

Book Title

\_\_\_\_\_

Director (That's You!)



Short summary: This is a story about \_\_\_\_\_

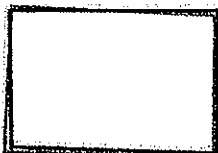
\_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

Character: \_\_\_\_\_

Played by: \_\_\_\_\_

Because: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_



Character: \_\_\_\_\_

Played by: \_\_\_\_\_

Because: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

# Character Analysis

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Grade: \_\_\_\_\_

Title of Book: \_\_\_\_\_

**Likes**

**Best friends**

**Dislikes**

**Best qualities**

**What I think about them**

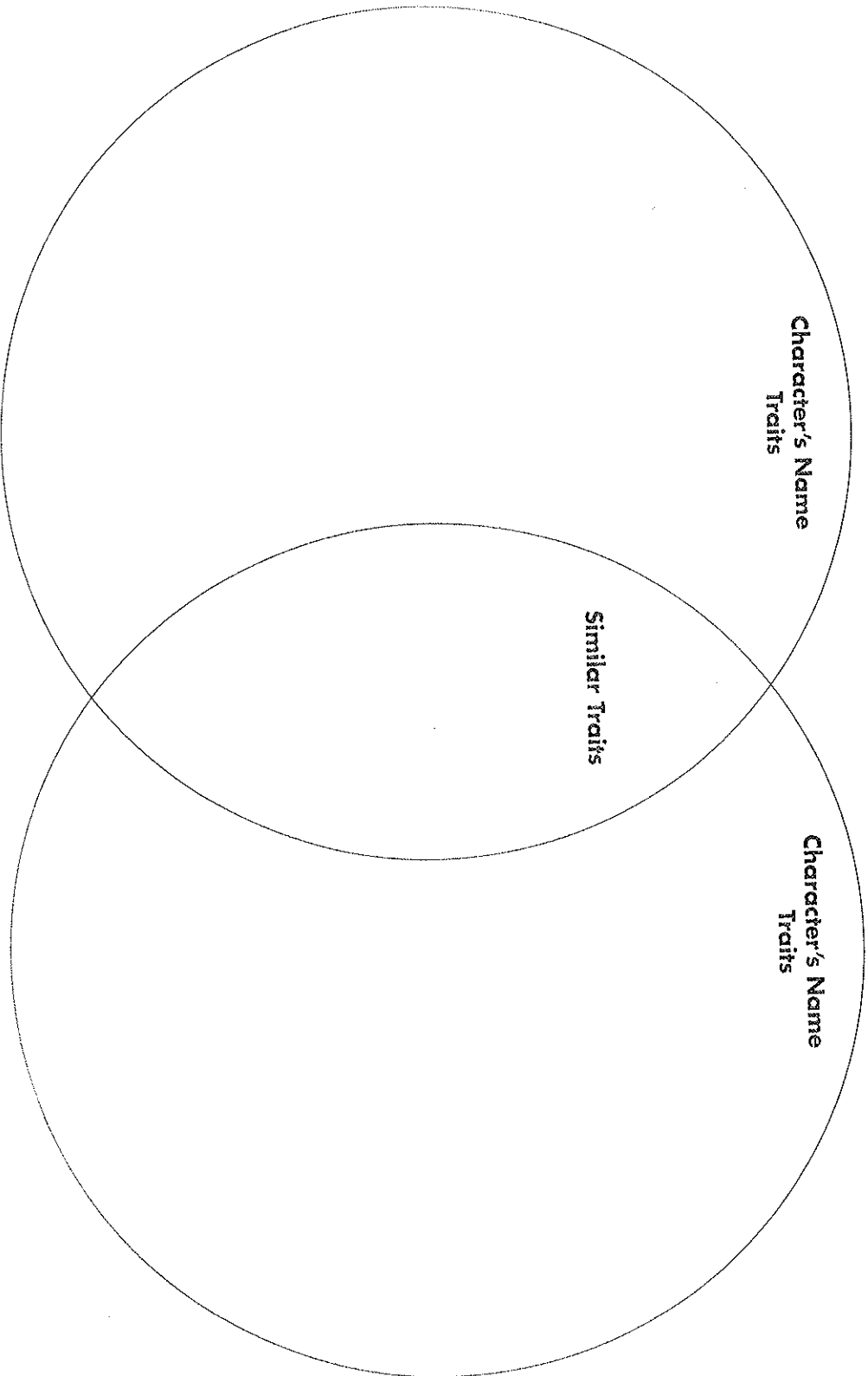
**Worst qualities**

# Comparing Characters

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Title of Book: \_\_\_\_\_





## Nonfiction Journal Prompts



Directions:

Read the assigned selection and write a response. Begin each response with the book title and the date of your journal entry. Example:

Book Title

Nov. 2, 2002

Before you read the book . . .

- ♦ What do you know about the topic before getting started on the book?
- ♦ What do you want to learn?
- ♦ Why did you choose this book?

While reading the book . . .

- ♦ What information surprised you?
- ♦ How can you use this information in your life?
- ♦ What information do you question or think might not be correct? How might you check it out?
- ♦ What is the most important thing you have learned? Why?
- ♦ What is the most interesting thing you read?
- ♦ What techniques does the author use to make this information easy to understand?
- ♦ Where do you think you could look for more information on this topic?

## Nonfiction Journal Prompts



Directions:

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Nov. 2, 2002

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- ♦ What is the most interesting thing you read?
- ♦ What techniques does the author use to make this information easy to understand?
- ♦ Where do you think you could look for more information on this topic?

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Grade: \_\_\_\_\_

**Facts About:**

<b>Facts I Think I Know</b>	<b>Facts Confirmed</b>	<b>New Facts I Learned</b>

# **Title**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Grade: \_\_\_\_\_

Title of Book or Article: \_\_\_\_\_

**These are the best facts presented**

**These are the main opinions presented**

**This is how strong I thought the article was**

# Biography on \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Grade: \_\_\_\_\_

**Connections you made**

**Review: What did you think about this text?**

# Biography on \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Grade: \_\_\_\_\_

**Key details about birth and growing up**

**Key accomplishments—What made them famous**

# Reading Notebook Student Rubric

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Text read \_\_\_\_\_

CRITERION	1	2	3	4
<b>Understanding of Text and Evidence of Deep Thinking</b>	My response shows that I wrote about what I read.	My response provides some evidence that I understood what I read and thought about what it meant.	My response shows that I understood what I read. If there were questions to respond to, I did. I explained my deep thinking and supported it by using evidence from the text.	My response shows that I understand what I read. If there were questions to respond to, I did. I explained my deep thinking and supported it by using evidence from the text, including well-chosen quotes.
<b>Organization and Clarity</b>	It might be hard for a reader to follow what I wrote.	My response can be followed, but there are parts that are confusing.	It's easy to follow what I wrote, and my response has a clear beginning, middle, and end.	I wrote a well-organized response; it reads smoothly and I have a strong lead, good transitions, and a clear conclusion.
<b>GUM (Grammar, Usage, Mechanics)</b>	Many errors (in spelling, punctuation, or grammar) make my response hard to read.	Mostly okay spelling, punctuation and grammar for my grade level and classroom expectations.	A-okay for my grade level and classroom expectations.	A-okay, and I took some risks to write complex sentences and/or challenging words as well.

Rubric for Reading Response	Excellent	Good	Attempting	No Attempt
<p><b>Capturing Your Thinking</b></p> <p>I talked about at least three different ideas I had about the book, and I showed my thinking by using some of these strategies:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Discussing my thinking about the story (Characters, Setting, Plot, Solution, Theme, etc.)</li> <li>2. Connecting--showing evidence from the book</li> <li>3. Predicting/Inferring</li> <li>4. Questioning</li> <li>5. Reacting to what is happening in the story</li> </ol> <p>I answered the questions my teacher asked me from my last letter in complete sentences.</p>	4	3	2	1
<p><b>Thoughtfulness/Details</b></p> <p>I supported my thoughts with evidence from the text.</p> <p>I explained my thinking with telling why I think what I do (because . . .).</p> <p>I showed that I understand my job as a reader and a writer for my response.</p> <p>I put effort into my letter with meaningful thinking and/or questioning about the book I am responding to.</p>	4	3	2	1
<p><b>Clarity</b></p> <p>I wrote a response that makes sense. It was easy for the reader to understand my thinking. I showed the ability to express my thinking clearly with complete sentences.</p>	4	3	2	1
<p><b>Voice/Personality</b></p> <p>My response is interesting to read, not just a boring list of ideas. It has comments about my thinking (What would I do? How would I feel?).</p>	4	3	2	1
<p><b>Grammar, Usage, Mechanics, and Spelling (GUMS), Timeliness, and Neatness</b></p> <p>My response was edited for proper grammar and spelling.</p> <p>It was turned in on time and written neatly.</p> <p>I had all the parts of a letter.</p> <p>I wrote a new paragraph for each new thought/idea.</p>	4	3	2	1

## Reader's Notebook Rubric

Criteria	A	B	C	D
Volume and Variety	Entries are mostly one page. Student has used a variety of notebook and comprehension strategies.	Entries are about a page long. Student has tried different notebook strategies but tends to use only strategies teacher requests.	Entries vary in length. Student attempts different strategies but tends to use retelling and summary as primary tools.	Entries are within a half of a page. Little attempt is made to try different strategies as talked about in class.
Thoughtfulness	Entries are reflective and may reveal new understandings about the text. Student is careful to use proper GUMS.	Entries are thoughtful and demonstrate use of the different comprehension strategies. Student is careful with GUMS.	Entries show a limited understanding of the text beyond retelling. Student has made several errors with GUMS.	The entry is riddled with errors in GUMS. It demonstrates little thought beyond the story line.
Organization	Entries are organized in a manner that is useful to the reader. Use of paragraphs and a logical order of ideas are apparent.	Entries are somewhat organized. Text is in a logical order and may be arranged in paragraphs.	Entry organization seems haphazard, skipping from one idea to the next. Little explanation supports new ideas.	Ideas in the entry are not organized.
Frequency	At least 90 percent of required entries are completed.	At least 80 percent of required entries are completed.	At least 74 percent of required entries are completed.	73 percent or less of the required entries are completed.



NAME:

DATE:

<b>Qualities of a Reading Response</b>				
<b>Quality</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>
Demonstration of Text Understanding (including providing evidence and making connections)	shows multi-dimensional understanding of text	shows adequate understanding of text	shows some understanding of text	shows no understanding of text
<b>Quality</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>
Voice/Personality	uniquely expressed and interesting to read	contains few interesting parts	mostly dull	trite/empty
<b>Quality</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>
Clarity of Expression	uses language very effectively to communicate ideas	uses language adequately to communicate ideas	shows some difficulty using language to communicate ideas	is unable to use language effectively to communicate ideas
<b>Quality</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>
Use of Conventions (spelling, grammar, punctuation)	uses conventions accurately so response is easily understood	uses adequate conventions so response is mostly understood	uses a few conventions so parts of response are understood	uses almost no conventions so writing is difficult to read and understand
<b>Quality</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>
Awareness of Self as a Reader and Writer	shows high level of awareness of self as a reader and/or writer	shows adequate awareness of self as a reader and/or writer	shows little awareness of self as a reader and/or writer	shows no awareness of self as a reader and/or writer

Comments:

# Reading Journal Assessment

	4-5 Points	2-3 Points	0-1 Point
<b>Comprehension</b>	Written response demonstrates clear understanding of reading	Written response demonstrates a general understanding of reading	Written response is vague and unclear.
<b>Application of Mini-Lesson/ Instruction</b>	Consistently applies concepts of mini-lessons/instruction	Usually applies concepts of mini-lessons/instruction	Unable to apply concepts of mini-lesson/instruction
<b>Completeness</b>	Journal consistently done and turned in on time Always includes dates, book title(s), genre, pages read.	Journal usually done and turned in on time Usually includes dates, book title(s), genre, pages read.	Journal not turned in on time Rarely or never complete.
<b>Personal Response</b>	Personally reacts to and responds to texts	Some personal response and reaction	Little or no personal response or reaction
<b>Writing Conventions</b>	Demonstrates proper conventions; neat and legible	Demonstrates some writing conventions; readable	Inconsistent use of writing conventions; illegible

Total Points \_\_\_\_\_ /30      Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

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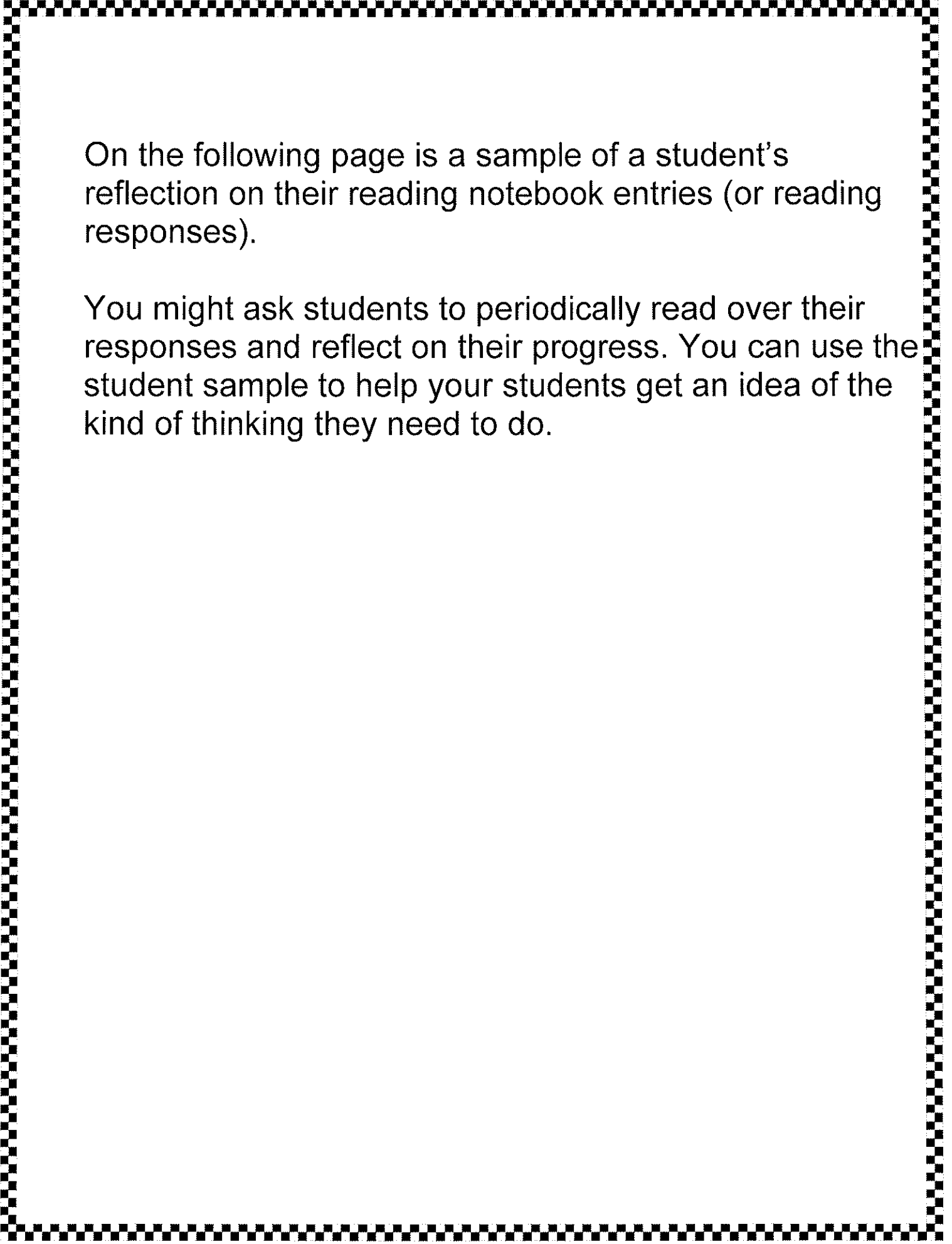
Note: Points are given per criterion within each element.

## Response Rubric

	Getting Started	Almost There	On Target	Wow!
<b>PERSONAL RESPONSE</b>	Limited comprehension with no connections between reading and personal experience or knowledge	Some attempts made to connect reading to self; may be too general or confusing	Comprehension demonstrated using some personal experience and/or connection between text and self	Response reveals personally relevant and meaningful comprehension, with examples from prior experience
<b>CRITICAL RESPONSE</b>	Does not take a critical stance (may relate events, describe characters, etc.) and/or responses show misunderstanding	Uses little evidence from the text to support ideas and opinions, or uses that evidence inappropriately	Effectively identifies an element of author's craft or message and analyzes it—making connections to other text and/or evaluating the work	Analyzes the author's message, identifying big ideas, themes or style; specific examples provided as evidence to support opinions and judgments
<b>ORGANIZATION AND DETAILS</b>	Unfocused writing, random details with little coherence	Response occasionally focused, with some detail	Generates a reasonably focused, connected and coherent response with good use of details to support ideas	Excellent organization that enhances ideas, making extensive use of text details for support
<b>OTHER</b> (e.g., spelling, mechanics)				







On the following page is a sample of a student's reflection on their reading notebook entries (or reading responses).

You might ask students to periodically read over their responses and reflect on their progress. You can use the student sample to help your students get an idea of the kind of thinking they need to do.

## Reflection

homework  
: 904  
Reflection  
of  
notebook

Reading my notebook, I've noticed that topics for my entries for each book are mostly about relationships between characters and the tension they have and how the character feels about the other person. I think since I've done it so much its one of my strengths because I effortlessly think about relationships. I also think that I should start to write about something else then, like character change and other topics.

I have also noticed that my post-its don't follow one thing in the book. They kind of are about different things and never focused for a few post-its. I think that is something I could work on. As a goal I could focus more on a problem the character keeps facing, or the way the character grows throughout the book, and changes.

I think so far I am doing pretty well in trying new things such as books that are not memoir but they are books written like a memoir but the story isn't real. I think that the next goal I should have is to move on now to real memoirs and poetry books like Witness. I think I could also read non-fiction books that are different from memoir. Basically push aside fantasy for a little while and see what else is out there.

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# Section IX

## ASSESSMENT



### **Background**

Assessment: The Force that Should Drive Reading Instruction  
Opportunities for Assessment in a Reading Workshop  
Easing Into Assessments during the First Six Weeks of School

### **Surveys to Know Your Students as Readers**

Getting to Know Your Students  
Reading Survey  
Intermediate Reading Interview  
Interest Survey I  
Interest Survey II  
What's Easy? What's Hard?  
Reading Strategy Interview  
Questions for Children Gather Insights about Themselves as Readers  
End-of-Year Survey

### **Assessing General Reading Workshop Behaviors & Independent Reading**

Independent Reading Rubric  
Rubric for Assessing Independent Reading Time  
Intermediate Reading Workshop Rubric  
Independent Reading Checklist  
Behavior/Attitude checklist  
Checklist for Monitoring Independent Reading  
What to Observe on Different Learning Situations A & B  
Assessing reading Habits, Volume & Stamina Levels L-Z

### **Assessing Reading Strategies**

Monitoring Students' Reading  
Checklist of Strategies Students use Before Reading  
Checklist of Strategies Students use During Reading  
Checklist of Strategies Students use After Reading  
Strategies that Good Readers Use  
Benchmarks for Oral Reading Rate (Words per Minute)  
Retelling Checklist: Narrative Texts  
Retelling Checklist: Informational Texts  
Questions to Support Comprehension of Fiction  
Questions to Support Comprehension of Nonfiction  
Questions to Support Comprehension of Biography

### **Student Self-Evaluation**

Helping Students Self-Evaluate  
Progress in Reading Reflection  
Checklist to Rate Your Reading Strategy Use  
End-of Marking Period Reading Inventory  
I Used to...but Now I Can  
Workshop Self-Evaluation

### **Make Your Own Rubric**

How-to from Scholastic.Com  
All-Purpose Rubric



# Assessment: The Force That Should Drive Reading Instruction

*"But I always send students' writing and tests home," a sixth-grade teacher told me.*

*"How do you know what lessons your students need?" I asked.*

*"We have to follow a curriculum outline," she said.*

*"How do you establish grades?" I asked.*

*"Well, I total the grades in my record book," she replied.*

I find this conversation to be more the rule than the exception in schools I work in. There is a disconnect between the experiences students bring to school and the curriculum and grading methods districts mandate. Too often, mandated curricula and grading methods do not respond to students' instructional and emotional needs.

In the above scenario, students either benefit and improve from instruction because they can meet the challenges of the one curriculum, or they find themselves unable to achieve success at school and each year slip further and further behind. However, when assessment becomes the force that drives instruction, teachers can discover where each student is and plan effective teaching to move everyone forward. This means, however, that you must adjust the curriculum for those students who need different materials, as the reading strategy curriculum described in the previous chapter allows.

As you read this section on assessment you'll explore ways to get to know your students as readers and thinkers during the first few weeks of school. In addition, you'll learn the importance of reflecting throughout the year on students' written

work, their responses and reactions during strategy lessons, their self-evaluations, your observational notes or checklists, and any tests you give. The more you contemplate what your students can do well and identify areas of need, the better you will be able to plan lessons that reach every learner. To accomplish this task, it's important to understand how I'm using the terms *assessment*, *interpretation*, *evaluation*, and *scaffolding*. (For a more comprehensive set of assessment forms, see *35 Must-Have Assessment and Record-Keeping Forms for Reading* by Laura Robb, Scholastic, 2001.)

## Defining Terms: Assessment, Evaluation, Interventions, and Scaffolding

Assessments in language arts classes are the data you collect about each student. Included are standardized and teacher-made tests, reading surveys, interest inventories, journal entries, teachers' observational notes, checklists, students' self-evaluations, book logs, conferences, oral-reading error analyses, writing samples, and spelling. When you collect and review a range of assessments, you can identify a child's strong points and weak areas more accurately than if you rely on one or two measures. It's important to keep students' work at school, so you have at your fingertips a range of assessments from different learning situations completed at different times.

Collecting many assessments over several weeks can guide your thinking about a child. As you review these assessments, you start to interpret the data and draw conclusions about the kind of instruction and emotional support a child needs to progress. For example, you may find that even though you've focused on making inferences with fictional texts, two students cannot explain orally or in writing what they know about this strategy. The pair's journal entries reveal that they can't use dialogue or characters' actions to infer. The observational notes you've taken during group lessons show little participation during discussions that require making inferences. When assessments drive instruction, the course of action is clear. While the rest of the class reads or completes independent writing, you will work two-on-one with these students on making inferences. What you do with the pair is based on your evaluation.

Evaluation, for me, means transforming the interpretations gathered from studying assessments into possible teaching interventions. I use the word *possible* because there's no magic formula that can fix things. I like to develop two or three interventions, or alternate ways of helping students understand a strategy, so if one doesn't work I can shift to another. In the above case, you may provide both students with extra guided practice in making inferences using easy texts. Another possibility would be to think aloud and model how you infer, then start the process for the students and invite them to share in the thinking. You could collaborate with the pair on completing a journal entry so you can support them and they can support each other.

It's a reality that one or both students might still be shaky with inferential thinking. That's okay. Move on to another unit of study and different strategies. However,

periodically provide the pair with additional review lessons on making inferences. As eighth grader Ali—whom I'd taught two years earlier—said to me during a conference, "I hated reading at the beginning of sixth grade. I couldn't concentrate on a book. I couldn't understand a lot of words. But I never let on and tried to cover up by listening; but you knew I needed help. Now, I'm loving reading and loving that I can choose what I like and can read. I know how to figure out a word's meaning and when to reread." Mull over and digest Ali's point: Progress may not occur for a student in your class. With repetition of teaching for strategies, building vocabulary, and lots of time spent reading for enjoyment, students can make great strides over time.

When you offer students extra support to help them learn a task they can accomplish with your guidance, you are scaffolding their learning (Vygotsky, 1978; Wilhelm, 2001). Scaffolds are one kind of intervention, because they provide students with the support needed to complete a task. Your observations of students combined with their assessments will enable you to decide how much scaffolding or support from you they need during reteaching lessons. As you observe that students can complete more of the task independently, let them. This means you may model part of the task and let the student finish it. The goal of all scaffolding is the gradual release of control over a task from teacher to student. This can occur in several days, weeks, months, or even years.



## OPPORTUNITIES FOR ASSESSMENT IN A READING WORKSHOP

Reading Workshop Component	What Occurs	Assessment Opportunity
Mini-Lesson	Teacher reads aloud: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• models reading behaviors</li> <li>• teaches reading strategies</li> <li>• instructs in author's craft</li> </ul>	Interest/participation Attentiveness/eye contact Response to questioning Demonstrated understanding of concepts
Independent Reading/ Conferring	Student selects books.	Strategies used to choose book Appropriate level of book Number of books read
	Student individually reads silently.	Engagement with text Amount of time on task Level of independence
	Student reads/discusses book with others (pairs, group).	Involvement in discussion with others Language used in discussing book Preparation done
	Student discusses book with teacher.	Retelling of reading Language used in discussing text Demonstrated understanding of reading Fluency Running record
Writing in Response to Reading	Student writes in response to reading: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teacher directed</li> <li>• Personal response</li> </ul>	Depth of understanding of reading Application of concepts Personal responses and reactions Ability to write in response to teacher direction Control over text conventions
Sharing	Students share insights from reading. Class responds and comments. Teacher intervenes, comments, and refocuses.	Confidence Willingness to share with an audience Oral language skills Listening skills Demonstrated ability to comprehend text Depth of comments given to other readers

## Tips for Taking Observational Notes

Finding the time to take observational notes in addition to planning lessons, reading assessments, and teaching all day can be daunting, especially if you are a novice teacher or have never taken such notes before. I suggest starting small. Set aside five to ten minutes twice a week and observe one student at a time. Once you feel comfortable with the process, try observing two students, then three. With three students, you'll have to add an extra day for observing as well as five extra minutes.

It's important to tell students what you are doing and how it can help you improve their reading skill and stamina. Students will feel the same way you do when an administrator observes you and jots down notes. Their first reaction is to think that you're jotting down one negative thing after the other. Tell students that they can read what you've written and that you will most likely discuss what you have noticed with them.

Make sure you don't editorialize when taking notes and make judgmental statements such as "Mark doesn't care about reading," "Mark is nosy and more interested in what classmates are doing," or "Mark's journal work shows he's careless." Instead, write what you see, and be as objective as possible. The above notes can be rewritten this way: "It takes Mark 15 of the 20 minutes reserved for reading to get into a book," "What classmates do distracts Mark and takes him away from reading," and "Mark's entry does not follow the model on the chart; he writes two to three phrases."

### *Guidelines for Taking Useful Observational Notes*

Use sticky-notes. Place the student's name, the date, and the situation at the top of the note. Situations you may choose to observe can be discussions, silent reading, journal work, choosing a book from the class library, or partner work.

- ◆ Put several sticky-notes on a piece of paper attached to a clipboard.
- ◆ Carry a pencil and extra sticky-notes with you or store them nearby where they're accessible.
- ◆ Jot down objective notes about a student in different learning situations.
- ◆ Writing notes may happen *after* a situation. For example, you'll jot down notes after you lead a reading group or provide extra help.

<http://www.choiceliteracy.com>

## Easing into Assessments During the First Six Weeks of School

Franki Sibberson and Karen Szymusiak

*Note to readers: This feature is an excerpt from **Day-to-Day Assessment in the Reading Workshop**, published in 2008 by Scholastic. All rights reserved by the publisher.*

As Lucy Calkins reminds us in *The Art of Teaching Reading* (2000), "Once you really pull in close to consider children's understandings (and misunderstandings), it quickly becomes clear that 'simply' giving children time to read, texts they can understand, and conversations that hold them accountable to the text is a gigantic thing. An absolutely mind-blowing number of skills are needed and developed by anyone who reads with engagement and interest" (p. 357). We want our students to be reading books they enjoy and to be able to stick with the book until they are finished. We know that the first step for all children is getting into books.

### Observation During Independent Reading

For the first several days of independent reading, we don't administer assessments in the traditional sense. Instead, we watch, listen, and learn about what students do in the routines. This is an important time for informal assessments. This work is so informative. For example, we may learn that a few children are struggling and others are quite secure in their reading. We try to notice as much as we can about our new students, including the following:

#### The Kind of Book Each Child Chooses to Read

- Haylie had a stack of books that were thick and difficult.
- Alyssa chose picture books that we read to the class.
- Conner was comfortable with nonfiction books that had lots of photos.
- Madelyn had a book in a series that she had been reading.
- Alex read *Boxcar Children*.
- Brennen brought all of his books from home and had no interest in books from the classroom library.

#### The Level of Engagement of Each Child

- Jonathan got up to use the restroom at least once each day during independent reading time.
- Shannon looked engaged but finished books very quickly.
- Matt got up to get tissues and drinks of water often.

#### The Location Each Child Chooses to Read

- Jessica always found a spot by herself and started reading.
- Kai seemed to like to read near friends. He often stopped to share something with a friend he was sitting near.

#### The Extent to Which Each Child Sticks with Books Over Several Days

- Carly quit several books during the first few days.

- Brennen finished a Magic Treehouse book during the first week.

### The Extent to Which Each Child Browses Books Thoughtfully

- Maggie chose books very quickly by looking at the cover.
- Sam seemed to be looking for something in particular on the shelves.

We need to avoid making big judgments about students' reading during the first few weeks. Rather, we need to watch for patterns, ask ourselves new questions, and get to know children the best we can by observing them in the process of reading. After we have observed them for several weeks, we can compile the information and plan instruction more effectively.

## Reading Logs

Students use a reading log to write for a few minutes each day about their independent reading. These logs are on separate sheets of paper so that we can collect and analyze them as we build profiles of each student. Later these logs will change to something more focused on the child's individual goals. But for now, we want to see what happens when they can respond to anything that seems important to them. They are free to write whatever they choose - perhaps a note on why they chose the book, where they decided to read, connections to other things they've read. At the end of each week, students answer two questions in their logs:

*What did you learn about yourself as a reader?*

*What goal do you have for next week's independent reading?*

The logs serve two purposes. First, they provide us with a glimpse of how students are using their time and what they think about their reading. We can quickly see when students start a new book. We can see the types of responses students write when given little or no direction. We can identify the kinds of goals they are setting. We can note how they write about themselves as readers.

Second, reading logs allow students to be in charge of their own reading lives and to set goals accordingly. If they did not have these logs, we would be the ones to say, "Joey, you quit three books today. You need to stick with one next week." Instead, the log is a tool to help students make discoveries like these on their own.

We collect the information from logs in many ways. We look over students' shoulders as they are writing. We often read them to get a sense of how the whole class is progressing. We lead whole-class conversations based on reflections from reading logs.

### What We Look for in Reading Logs

- What kinds of comments are students making about the book?
- Are they finishing books?
- Are they reading a single book over several days or bouncing around?
- What genre do they seem to be reading?
- Are they thoughtful about their book choice?
- Do they set goals? What kinds of goals do they set?
- How do they see themselves as readers?

During the first six weeks, we help students who are having difficulty reading to build their identities as readers. We need to allow them to act like readers even if they don't see themselves as readers. We always have some students who pretend to read, but we know that will change. We are comfortable with children choosing books that are not necessarily right for them

(too easy, too hard, not interesting) because we are confident they'll make wiser choices over time. For example, Franki noticed that Kelsie was busy with long, hard books, but her eyes wandered often and she didn't actually seem to be reading. At this point in the year, Franki didn't want to interfere because she knew from experience this issue would resolve itself in the first few weeks. Franki continued gathering information about Kelsie. When Kelsie exhibited behaviors like these, Franki knew that she needed to find a way to place value on easier less demanding books. We are giving students big messages about their role in the reading workshop and letting them know that we see them as readers. The less we control students' reading, the more we can watch and learn about who they are as readers.

*Excerpt from **Day-to-Day Assessment in the Reading Workshop**, published in 2008 by Scholastic. All rights reserved by the publisher.*

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# Getting to Know Your Students

Fifth grader Sabrina answers seven questions about her reading life in the sample to the right. It's obvious that her feelings about reading are more negative than positive. For the most part, *boring* is the word that Sabrina uses; it's Sabrina's way of telling me that she doesn't connect to books and therefore they truly are boring for her. But the last detail Sabrina shares, "I like to read poems," sets my adrenaline racing, for Sabrina has given me the perfect hook.

At my first short conference with Sabrina, I share how thrilled I am that she enjoys poetry. I also hand her two Shel Silverstein books and invite Sabrina to browse through them during independent reading time and read any poems that catch her attention. During our second conference, Sabrina reads two of her favorite poems to me. Next time, she tells me, "I'll show you a poem I wrote." The foundation for further communications about reading is strengthening, all because of the information gathered on an assessment.

Instead of plunging right into the curriculum the second day of school, set aside time to get to know your students and give them insight into your

Sabrina

I read because  
the teachers make me  
read. They sometimes read  
the making. Sometimes if it  
is interesting, I'll go  
I will read the whole  
book. It makes me  
want to do something  
else.

~~the~~ adventure, excitement  
boring.

I don't know.

I read outside

~~I don't know~~

I don't know

reading and learning life. Building connections to students' reading lives allows us to find out their interests and their strengths and needs as learners. I've chosen four forms for students to complete—forms that I find provide beneficial feedback.

The Reading Survey, What's Easy? What's Hard? and the Reading Strategy Interview can offer insights into what students know about reading strategies, the strategies students use before, during, and after reading, and their feelings about reading. The Interest Survey can help you suggest books on topics that students might enjoy. Moreover, opening communication with a helpful and positive stance builds the trust needed to help students become better readers and learners.

Students' answers on these forms become the topics for conversations at conferences with you. Let students know that this information won't be graded. Reserve time for students to chat about their responses to prompts on the forms with a partner or with their group. Talking reclaims prior experiences. The more time you allow students to ponder the prompts, talk, and respond, the richer the data will be.

What I also enjoy doing is sharing with students how I complete a form. This way students gain insights into my personal reading life. Moreover, you'll find there is a direct relationship between the kind of modeling you provide and students' responses. I prefer that students complete these forms in class where they can seek support from me or a partner and have enough time to compose thoughtful answers.

I store surveys, checklists, self-evaluations, photocopied journal pages, tests, and observational notes in a file folder that I keep for each student. Having assessments in one place enables me to access them quickly and use them at parent or administrative conferences and to plan instructional moves.

### Seven Questions About Reading

1. Why do you read?
2. What benefits do you see in reading? How do you think reading helps you?
3. What do you do well as a reader?
4. Do you read at home? How often? What do you read?
5. How does reading make you feel?
6. What are some of your favorite books?
7. Do you have a favorite author? Why do you enjoy this author's books?

—from *Reading Strategies That Work* (Robb, 1996)

## Reading Survey

*Directions:* Fill in the blanks.

1. What words pop into your mind when you think of reading a book? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. Do you read at home? \_\_\_\_\_ How often do you read at home? \_\_\_\_\_
3. Where's your favorite place to read at home? \_\_\_\_\_ At school? \_\_\_\_\_
4. How do you find books you love to read? \_\_\_\_\_
5. Besides books, what other types of materials do you read? \_\_\_\_\_  
Why do you enjoy these? \_\_\_\_\_
6. Do you own a library card? \_\_\_\_\_  
How often do you visit the library to check out books? \_\_\_\_\_

*Directions:* Complete these sentences. (You may use a separate sheet of paper.)

7. My favorite author is \_\_\_\_\_
8. The best book I've read is \_\_\_\_\_
9. The best book someone has read to me is \_\_\_\_\_
10. The topics I enjoy reading about are \_\_\_\_\_
11. I watch TV for \_\_\_\_\_ hours a day because \_\_\_\_\_
12. I spend \_\_\_\_\_ hours a day playing video and electronic games.
13. I spend \_\_\_\_\_ hours a day on the computer.
14. The things I'm great at as a reader are \_\_\_\_\_
15. The things I need to work on to improve my reading are \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
16. I use these strategies as I read: \_\_\_\_\_
17. I enjoy talking about books because \_\_\_\_\_
18. I enjoy discussing books with a partner or group because \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
19. I enjoy responding to books in my journal because \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
20. I know how to choose books for enjoyment. This is what I do: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

## Reading Interview (Intermediate)

1. Do you like to read? \_\_\_\_\_ Why or why not? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. What is your all-time favorite book? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. What are your favorite types of books to read? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. Do you have an author who you prefer? \_\_\_\_\_  
Who is it? \_\_\_\_\_  
Why do you prefer him/her? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
5. How often do you read? \_\_\_\_\_
6. Where do you like to read? \_\_\_\_\_
7. Do you like to be read to? \_\_\_\_\_ Why or why not? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
8. What do you think you do best in reading? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
9. What do you do when you have trouble reading a word? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
10. Do you recommend books to others? \_\_\_\_\_
11. Do you think you are a good reader? \_\_\_\_\_ Why or why not? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
12. What do you do when you don't understand something you are reading? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
13. What do you think would be a good goal for you in reading this year? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## Interest Survey

*Directions:* Complete this page so your teacher and school librarian can help you find books that you will want to read.

1. What do you enjoy doing most in your spare time?  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. What sports do you love to watch? Explain why.  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. What sports do you enjoy playing? Explain why.  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. Do you have a favorite subject? Can you explain why you enjoy it?  
\_\_\_\_\_
5. If you could travel back in time, where would you go? Explain why.  
\_\_\_\_\_
6. If you could visit any place on Earth, where would you go? Explain why.  
\_\_\_\_\_
7. Do you read comic books and magazines? Which ones do you enjoy most?  
\_\_\_\_\_
8. What kinds of music do you enjoy? Do you have a favorite group? Instrument? Musician/musical group? Name these.  
\_\_\_\_\_
9. Do you have any hobbies? List them and tell about your favorite.  
\_\_\_\_\_
10. What do you enjoy most when reading on your own? Circle the genres you like best.  
\_\_\_\_\_

mystery	historical fiction	science fiction
romance	biography	diaries
realistic fiction	series books	letters
information books	folk tales	suspense
fantasy	short stories	myths, legends
funny stories	history	

\*\*\*\*\*

# Interest Survey

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

## Complete each statement.

1. When I have free time I like to \_\_\_\_\_

2. My favorite indoor games are \_\_\_\_\_

3. My favorite outdoor games are \_\_\_\_\_

4. Topics I'd like to learn more about are \_\_\_\_\_

5. The music I like best is \_\_\_\_\_

6. The subject I like best at school is \_\_\_\_\_ because \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

7. The books I choose are usually about \_\_\_\_\_

8. When I'm with friends we like to \_\_\_\_\_

9. Some of my favorite movies are \_\_\_\_\_

10. The things I enjoy most at school are \_\_\_\_\_

11. If I could travel somewhere, it would be \_\_\_\_\_ because \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

12. If I had \$50.00, I would spend it on \_\_\_\_\_

## The “What’s Easy? What’s Hard?” Strategy

### PURPOSE:

To obtain information that illustrates how students see themselves as readers; to discover, early in the year, students’ reading strengths and needs.

Pose the “What’s easy/hard?” questions and invite students to reflect on their reading lives. Before asking students to respond on the form, use a think-aloud to model how you organize your answers. Write the prompts on chart paper, then think-aloud to make the process visible. Here’s what I think aloud for What’s Hard About Reading and Why? and What’s Easy About Reading and Why?:

*Lots of thoughts bombard my mind. I have to admit that reading can be tough for me, especially when it’s on a new topic or about something that doesn’t capture my interest, or when it’s a boring, fact-packed textbook that has no stories. Having to cope with many unfamiliar words makes reading hard.*

*Reading mysteries is easy because it’s one of my favorite genres. I also find reading about topics I love easy, because I have lots of background knowledge to help me understand. Short action stories in magazines are enjoyable because I can finish them in one sitting. I also find reading education journals and books easy because of my rich prior knowledge and intense interest in these.*

Next, jot down notes under each question, modeling that thinking precedes note-taking and writing. Then, invite students to ask questions and discuss your responses. Most students experience relief and express delight to learn that I encounter tough reading situations. “It helps me to know that you have trouble with some books,” a seventh grader said. For those who say, “I don’t know” or “I have nothing to say,” ask them to write those words on the paper. In a conference, you can explore reasons why a student can’t write about his or her reading process.

## What's Easy? What's Hard?

WHAT'S EASY ABOUT READING? EXPLAIN WHY.

WHAT'S HARD ABOUT READING? EXPLAIN WHY.





## Questions Used to Help Children Gather Insights about Themselves as Readers

Question 1: What do you think is important for me to know about you as a reader?

Question 2: Think about last weekend. Will you list and tell a little about the times in the weekend when you read?

Question 3: Tell the story of one time in your life when reading was especially good for you.

*Below, you'll find responses that several children gave to this set of questions. The teachers who designed them used these questions as start-of-the-day 'Do-Now' activities, and were stunned to see how revealing children's answers were!*

Children's Responses:

**Question 1: What do you think is important for me to know about you as a reader?**

Daniel:

As a reader I love fantasy. As a reader, I am fantasy. I am addicted to it. I have spent days reading the Inheritance trilogy by Christopher Paolini, weeks reading the Artemis Fowl series and years reading the Harry Potter series. My dad says stuff like that is junk, not fit to be called a book. He tells me I should read books with more...essence inside them: Tom Sawyer and Huckleberry Finn by Mark Twain, The Brothers Kamarazou by Dostoevsky, Uncle Tom's Cabin, and so on. I try to, but I am drawn back to fantasy like a moth to a candle. When I'm troubled, I want to get lost under a thick shield of demons and wizards and Celtic gods and 678-year-old alchemysts. (Nicolas Flamel). Such things are better than four titanium walls.

I feel every iota of hatred for the Ra'zac in Eragon and downcast with grief at Dumbledore's death. But now, I am sawing at my "bond of obsession" for fantasy. From books, any book things hit me in a different impression. Personally, I think [Chinese characters], or Three Kingdoms, is very good.

Brianna Trani, School - ?

I think that you should know that sometimes I challenge myself to get better at reading so I can move up a level. I think that you should know that sometimes when a book is too hard or the book has small print I stop reading it and I need to read in a quiet space or else when I stop reading I can't remember anything that I read.

Anna:

It's important for you to know that I stop a lot to write thoughts. I try to stop after every chapter to write. I can't have other interesting things happening around me while I'm reading but I can have other boring things happening around me while I read. I really like historical fiction especially when it's about immigrants coming to America during the late 1800's and early 1900-s.

Jormaris:

The Reason I like to Read is that sometimes I open a book and totally in a whole new world. By the time I know about the characters problem I zoom in to the book. I think "Hmm what will happen next" so I think for a while and I say to myself okay so maby this or maybe this will happen okay then I finesh the book and my Imanation is done for the day!

Ken:

I usually miss/make up/change words when I am reading. I also look at the cover frequently so I know what I am reading. Not only do I read the blurb over and over again I also read what the reviewers say.

Me as a reader loves mysteries and adventures. I also read fantasy.

This maybe a short article but I promise this all I think you should know about my reading.

**Question 2: Think about last weekend. Will you list and tell a little about the times in the weekend when you read?**

Nina:

The first time that I read was on Saturday. I read for about 40 minutes. It was very quiet so I was more into the book. I actually felt like I was with the characters.

I read in my bed because it is a comfortable yet quiet place and I concentrate more when I am in my room sometimes. I also read in my room because it is really quiet in there when the TV is not on or my brothers aren't in my room.

The second day of reading was on Sunday and I read for about 40 minutes also and I had almost no distractions. Most of the time I was in the book but not all of the time. (Mostly) it was quiet but not as good as Saturday a bit.

Brianna:

On Saturday I went to Home depot and I read the sign and that told me that me and my mom where there. On Sunday I went to the garage to get picked up for a party and it was garage two twenty and I read the garage sign and it said two twenty and we were there.

Anna:

- I went to see a friend and located which buzzer to press by finding her last name on the list of people who lived in the building.
- I went through a catalog and read the description for products.
- I went shopping with my mom and looked for sale signs.

Jormaris:

Stand Tall Molly, by Lou Melon

Molly Lou Melon is one of my favorite books I read over & over again it is so fun to read books over again because you get to really get that book memorized so that's why you should read books over again!

Fallon:

Over the weekend I only read once but for a long time. I read on my parents' bed relaxed. I was reading a book called Eleven when suddenly I heard the TV go on. I got really annoyed so I moved up to my room. In my room it was quiet so I started my reading again. I felt like I was finally in a place where I could be alone and the area around me was peaceful. I sat on my green beanbag chair in the corner of my room, now that is my new favorite place to read. I also sometimes read on my bed. But my favorite place to read is on my beanbag chair in my room all alone.

**Question 3: Tell the story of one time in your life when reading was especially good for you.**

Jormaris:

Once I got a little sad and Ms. Feeney said, "It's time for reading" so I read and it kinda calmed me down it really helped me get what was in my mind out. So reading is a really good thing to do. It calms you down you relax and most of all have fun books can be interesting it can be cool so just lay back pick an amazing book and start reading your favorite & amazing book you are about to read today.

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

1. What do you think is important for me to know about you as a reader?

②  
The reason I like to read is that sometimes I open a book and totally in a whole new world. by the time I know about the characters Problem I zoom into the book. I think "Hmmm what will happen next" so I think for a while and I say to myself okay so maby this or maybe this will happen okay then I finish the book and my Imanation is done for the Day!

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

1. What do you think is important for me to know about you as a reader?

I love to read and am a very strong reader. Reading is not one of my favorite subjects but I would like it to be. I can read hard books but I'm very picky with the books I read and I would like to become less picky this year. I also have certain series I like to read. My favorite Genre is realistic fiction. I don't really like science books. I like books about girls and adventure. I can read long books but I prefer short and hard books. Once I get into a book I can't stop reading it but if I pick a book I don't like, I won't read it. I love to read and hope to become a better reader in 5<sup>th</sup> grade this year so I will want to read most Genres not just one.

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

1. What do you think is important for me to know about you as a reader?

From reading many books, I learned to see deeper meaning in phrases. I love to read and get absorbed in books quickly. So during my free time, I usually read. One of my FAVORITE places to go are either the bookstore or library. While picking books, I first think of a subject <sup>or genre that</sup> I want. Then with that in my head, I go off and wander around then come back to room with an armful of books. Then, I'd go back and get some more until Mom says that this pile (referring to the first pile of books) is ENOUGH!! Then, I'd go home and go into a different world of books and read and finish book, and and finish book. Sometimes my Mom jokes that even though a bomb went off, I'd still be reading until a brick falls on me.

End of the Year Student Survey

Atwell

What 10-12 books do you love so much that you think they might convince a \_\_\_\_-grade boy/girl who's a lot like you- except that s/he doesn't read much-that books are great?

\*\*\*\*\*

What features about the classroom library did you like?

What features do you think need to be changed? How should they be changed?



## Independent Reading Rubric

	<b>2 points</b>	<b>1 point</b>	<b>0 points</b>
Good readers fill their reading plans with reading for every day of the week.	All seven days in the week are planned for independent reading.  Title as well as page or chapter numbers are used to indicate reading that was planned.	One or two of the days were not planned for independent reading. <b>OR</b> Chapter page numbers were not used in the plan.	More than three days were not planned for independent reading. <b>OR</b> The plan was lost or missing on the due date.
Good readers plan for 30 minutes of reading every day.	All days are planned for 30 minutes of "personal best" reading.	One or two days are not planned for personal best reading.	More than three days are not planned for personal best reading.
Good readers try to stretch themselves by reading a little bit more each week.	This week's plan shows an increase in the number of pages planned compared to last week.  The number of pages you planned to read each day this week is more than the number you planned to read each day last week.	This week's plan shows no increase in your personal best.  The number of pages you are planning to read each day this week is the same as the number you planned to read each day last week.	This week's plan shows a decrease in your personal best reading time.  The number of pages you planned to read each day this week is fewer than the number you planned to read each day last week.
Good readers mark their reading plans to show their progress towards their goals.	All seven days have a record showing what you actually read.	One or two days do not have a record showing what you actually read.	More than two days do not have a record showing what you actually read.
Good readers reflect about their reading lives.	Your reflection is written in four complete sentences and tells about your reading for the week.	Your reflection is written in two or three complete sentences and tells about your reading for the week.	Your reflection is written in one complete sentence and tells about your reading for the week.

## Rubric for Assessing Independent Reading Time

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

*Goal:* Use reading workshop time wisely, resulting in many opportunities for volume reading.

4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Chooses suitable texts for self-selected reading.</li><li>• Locates an area for reading and begins reading immediately.</li><li>• Uses reading workshop time wisely, resulting in opportunities for volume reading.</li><li>• Completes group assignment before self-selecting another reading option.</li><li>• Respects other readers by reading or discussing books quietly.</li></ul>
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Chooses suitable texts for self-selected reading.</li><li>• Locates an area for reading and begins reading immediately; requires few reminders.</li><li>• Uses reading workshop time wisely; requires few reminders, resulting in many opportunities for reading.</li><li>• Completes group assignment before self-selecting another reading option most of the time; requires few reminders.</li><li>• Respects others by reading or discussing books quietly.</li></ul>
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Chooses suitable texts for self-selected reading; requires many reminders.</li><li>• Locates an area for reading with difficulty (moves from spot to spot); requires many reminders before beginning to read.</li><li>• Uses very little of the reading workshop time wisely; requires many reminders, resulting in few reading opportunities.</li><li>• Completes group assignment before self-selecting another reading option; requires many reminders.</li><li>• Respects others by reading or discussing books quietly; requires many reminders.</li></ul>
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Chooses suitable texts for self-selected reading; requires full support.</li><li>• Locates an area for reading with difficulty (moves from spot to spot); requires full support before beginning to read.</li><li>• Uses very little reading workshop time wisely; requires full support resulting in little or no reading opportunities.</li><li>• Completes group assignments before self-selecting another reading option; requires full support.</li><li>• Respects others by reading or discussing books quietly; requires full support.</li></ul>

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

# Reading Workshop Rubric (Intermediate)

Key Elements	5 Points	4 Points	3 Points	2 Points
<b>Mini-Lesson</b>	Consistently demonstrates understanding of concepts	Usually demonstrates understanding of concepts	Sometimes demonstrates understanding of concepts	Rarely or never demonstrates understanding of concepts
	Always participates in mini-lesson	Usually participates in mini-lesson	Sometimes participates in mini-lesson	Rarely or never participates in mini-lesson
<b>Reading/Conferring</b>	Consistently selects quality books at appropriate level	Usually selects books at appropriate level	Sometimes selects books at appropriate level	Has difficulty choosing books at appropriate level
	Consistently identifies the genre of the book he/she is reading	Usually identifies the genre of the book he/she is reading	Sometimes identifies the genre of the book he/she is reading	Never identifies the genre of the book he/she is reading
<b>Journaling</b>	Consistently reads independently and uses time wisely	Usually reads independently and uses time wisely	Sometimes reads independently and uses time wisely	Rarely reads independently
	Demonstrates clear understanding through discussion/retelling	Demonstrates general understanding; can retell most of the important points	Inconsistently demonstrates understanding; can retell some of the important points	Demonstrates little understanding; prompting needed in retelling
	Consistently uses reading strategies	Usually uses reading strategies	Sometimes uses reading strategies	Rarely uses reading strategies
	Consistently completes books	Usually completes books	Often abandons books	Usually abandons books
	Consistently completes journal when assigned	Usually completes journal when assigned	Sometimes completes journal when assigned	Rarely or never completes journal when assigned
	Consistently writes quality entries	Usually writes quality entries	Sometimes writes quality entries	Rarely writes quality entries
<b>Take-Home Reading</b>	Consistently reads for the required amount of time; completes home reading log	Usually reads for the required amount of time and completes home reading log	Sometimes reads for the required amount of time and completes home reading log	Rarely reads for the required amount of time or completes home reading log

Total Points \_\_\_\_\_/55 Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

Note: Points are given per criterion within each element.



## Behaviour/Attitude Checklist



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### Readers' Workshop Behaviour/Attitude Checklist

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Pays attention while mini lessons are taught

\_\_\_\_\_ Establishes eye contact

\_\_\_\_\_ Involved in group discussions

\_\_\_\_\_ Follows directions

\_\_\_\_\_ Settles down quickly and reads

\_\_\_\_\_ Reads silently, does not whisper or disrupt others

\_\_\_\_\_ Discusses book with peers

## Checklist for Monitoring Independent Reading

OBSERVATIONS	TEACHER'S NOTES	DATES OBSERVED
<p><b>Book Log Entries</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Number of books</li> <li>◆ Variety of titles</li> </ul>		
<p><b>Independent Reading</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Selects books on comfort or recreational level.</li> <li>◆ Gets started quickly.</li> <li>◆ Self-helps before seeking peer or teacher assistance.</li> <li>◆ Shows pleasure in reading through talk, projects, journal entries.</li> <li>◆ Concentrates on book.</li> <li>◆ Changes books several times during a silent reading period.</li> <li>◆ Frequently talks to others.</li> <li>◆ Occasionally stops and shares a favorite part.</li> </ul>		

**ADDITIONAL NOTES AND COMMENTS:**

## Checklist A: What to Observe in Different Learning Situations

KEY: R=RARELY S=SOMETIMES U=USUALLY NO=NOT OBSERVED

SITUATION	OBSERVED BEHAVIOR	DATE	KEY
During/After Mini-Lesson	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Listens to demonstration.</li> <li>◆ Studies chart carefully.</li> <li>◆ Asks questions.</li> <li>◆ Shares strategies and process.</li> <li>◆ Remains silent in follow-up discussion.</li> </ul>		
Book Discussions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Brings book, pencil, journal.</li> <li>◆ Reads assigned pages.</li> <li>◆ Listens when others speak.</li> <li>◆ Participates.</li> <li>◆ Values others' ideas.</li> <li>◆ Supports points with story.</li> <li>◆ Reads parts of text to prove a point.</li> <li>◆ Shares in group decision making.</li> </ul>		
During Short Conferences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Talks about issues.</li> <li>◆ Can explain confusing parts.</li> <li>◆ Participates in setting goals.</li> <li>◆ Can apply strategies to reading.</li> </ul>		

**ADDITIONAL NOTES AND COMMENTS:**

Scholastic Teaching Resources Teaching Reading: A Complete Resource for Grades 4 and Up

## Checklist B: What to Observe in Different Learning Situations

KEY: R=RARELY S=SOMETIMES U=USUALLY NO=NOT OBSERVED

SITUATION	OBSERVED BEHAVIOR	DATE	KEY
Meeting With Strategic Reading Groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Reads assigned pages.</li> <li>◆ Shows an understanding of practiced strategy with text.</li> <li>◆ Talks about how strategy works.</li> <li>◆ Understands how strategy supports reading.</li> <li>◆ Asks probing questions.</li> <li>◆ Shares process.</li> <li>◆ Uses text to support answers during discussions.</li> </ul>		
Students Write in Journals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Heads page correctly.</li> <li>◆ Follows guidelines for journal entry.</li> <li>◆ Returns to text to collect specific details.</li> <li>◆ Stays on task.</li> <li>◆ Volunteers to share entry with group or class.</li> </ul>		
Oral Book Talks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Follows guidelines.</li> <li>◆ Speaks clearly.</li> <li>◆ Makes good eye contact with audience.</li> <li>◆ Backs up opinions with details from text.</li> </ul>		

**ADDITIONAL NOTES AND COMMENTS:**



Reader's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Questions to Consider for Assessing Reading Habits, Volume, and Stamina Levels L–Z

Use information from conferring notes and book logs:

		Next Steps/Comments:
Did the child log her/his reading every day?	Yes No	
Was there evidence that the child reads at home?	Yes No	
Was the child reading books that fit with the unit of study that was being taught?	Yes No	
Does the child tend to <i>choose</i> books that are ...	Below instructional level (too easy)  At independent level (just right)  Above independent level (too hard)	
Does the child choose books that she/he enjoys?	Yes No	
Does the child always/usually finish books?	Yes No	
About how many minutes per day does the child read?	_____ minutes	
Does the child read an appropriate number of pages in an appropriate amount of time for the level of text?	Yes No	

# Monitoring Students' Reading

Completing checklists of reading behaviors you've observed and comparing these checklists with the observational notes and written assessments you've collected can enable you to monitor and evaluate each student's needs. Read each checklist carefully before using it. Note, too, that checklists have space under "Additional Notes and Comments" so you can write important details not covered on the list or elaborate on your observations.

I recommend completing a checklist for each proficient and grade-level reader twice a year. For students who struggle, it's helpful to complete a checklist every six to eight weeks—more frequently if you feel it's appropriate. One checklist can last the year if you date your notes.

You can complete checklists while circulating around the room, focusing on one or two students. Checklists can also be completed during a planning period on the day you observe students. If you wait more than a day, memories become fuzzy and less accurate. In this section, I've included three kinds of checklists:

- ◆ Checklists that monitor students' behavior before, during, and after reading.
- ◆ Checklists that guide your observations when you zoom in on one or two students. You can use these lists of behaviors in different learning situations as a checklist or as guidelines for what to look for while taking observational notes. (See tips for taking observational notes on page 50.)
- ◆ A checklist that monitors students independent reading.

All year you'll have opportunities to watch how students absorb and apply strategies before, during, and after reading. In addition, it's also important to observe students when they read independently during sustained silent reading. To reflect on students' independent reading, here are four things you can do:

- ◆ Study the books noted in their reading log (see pages 422–423).
- ◆ Examine journal entries and critical paragraphs.
- ◆ Evaluate their oral book talks.
- ◆ Hold short one-on-one conferences.

As you collect and reflect on data, complete parts of the checklist and date your notes.

## Checklist of Strategies Students Use Before Reading

**KEY: R=RARELY S=SOMETIMES U=USUALLY NO=NOT OBSERVED**

BEFORE-READING STRATEGIES	INDICATORS THAT STUDENT USES THE STRATEGY	DATE	KEY
Brainstorm, Cluster, Fast-Write, Web, List, K-W-H-L	Uses these to activate prior knowledge and experiences to improve comprehension.		
Predict	Uses title, pictures, and some text to support predictions.		
Question	Uses pictures, title, topic, chapter headings, boldface heading and words, captions, graphs, and charts to generate meaningful questions.		
Visualize	Creates mental pictures of words, concepts, and predictions.		
Make Connections	Uses title, topic, pictures, and parts of the text to make personal connections.		
Set Purposes	Uses pictures, title, topic, chapter headings, boldface heading and words, captions, graphs, and charts to set purposes for reading or to generate questions or make predictions that set purposes.		

**ADDITIONAL NOTES AND COMMENTS:**

## Checklist of Strategies Students Use During Reading

KEY: R=RARELY S=SOMETIMES U=USUALLY NO=NOT OBSERVED

DURING-READING STRATEGIES	INDICATORS THAT STUDENT USES THE STRATEGY	DATE	KEY
Adjust Reading Rate	Changes purposes for reading a text, such as rereading, reading for pleasure, or reading to collect information and construct meanings.		
Predict/Support/Confirm/Adjust	Uses text to support predictions as well as to confirm and adjust them.		
Question	Asks questions while reading. Knows that the text may not answer all questions.		
Monitor Understanding	Constructs meaning and identifies parts of text that are not understood.		
Self-Correct	Can correct without help parts of the text that don't make sense. Has strategies to say and figure out the meaning of difficult words.		
Reread	Rereads to boost recall, to revisit favorite parts, and to understand confusing parts.		

**ADDITIONAL NOTES AND COMMENTS:**

## Checklist of Strategies Students Use After Reading

**KEY: R=RARELY S=SOMETIMES U=USUALLY NO=NOT OBSERVED**

AFTER-READING STRATEGIES	INDICATORS THAT STUDENT USES THE STRATEGY	DATE	KEY
Confirm/Adjust Predictions	Uses specific text details to support predictions.		
Retell	Uses details to retell story orally or in writing. Sequences events.		
Skim and Reread	Returns to the text to prove points during discussions and for written responses.		
Take Notes	Can select important details independently.		
Make Inferences With Fiction	Uses dialogue, settings, conflicts, plot, characters' decisions, and facts to explore implied meanings.		
Make Inferences With Informational Texts	Can build new understandings and concepts and can link information to ways it helps others.		
Cause/Effect/Infer	Can select and categorize a cause, find effects, and use both to make inferences.		
Journal Work	Supports ideas and positions with details from text.		

**ADDITIONAL NOTES AND COMMENTS:**

# Strategies That Good Readers Use

Reader's Name \_\_\_\_\_

Title of Text \_\_\_\_\_

Directions: Check each strategy that the reader shows you he or she is using by talking out loud about his or her thinking.

## Before Reading

- Thinking about what he or she already knows about the topic
- Predicting what the text will be about
- Predicting what will happen next
- Asking questions about the material to be read

## During Reading

- Asking questions
- Predicting
- Inferring
- Making connections (relating what is read to previously read text, to self, to world)
- Checking for meaning and monitoring progress
- Visualizing
- Evaluating the content and own progress
- Stopping to think and to remedy any comprehension problems

## After Reading

- Summarizing and/or synthesizing information
- Evaluating the text and own performance
- Using text information to make personal response
- Using text information for other purposes, as appropriate

Teachers College Reading and Writing Project

## Benchmarks for Oral Reading Rate – Words per Minute

Our assessment for Oral Reading Rate is one that assumes fluency, as in, we are checking the rate at which a reader reads with accuracy, intonation and meaningful phrasing. The reader should be in an appropriate level text, therefore.

Reading Level	<u>Level 1</u> Needs Support  <u>May indicate that the reader should be in easier texts, and/or needs fluency support– see p. 2</u>	<u>Level 2</u> Approaches Standards  <u>Fluency instruction needed – see page 2 of this packet</u>	<u>Level 3</u> Meets Standards	<u>Level 4</u> Exceeds Standards
J	44 wpm or less	45-54 wpm	55-85 wpm	86 wpm or more
K	54 wpm or less	55-64 wpm	65-95 wpm	96 wpm or more
L	59 wpm or less	60-69 wpm	70-100 wpm	101 wpm or more
M	64 wpm or less	65-74 wpm	75-105 wpm	106 wpm or more
N	64 wpm or less	65-79 wpm	80-110 wpm	111 wpm or more
O	64 wpm or less	65-79 wpm	80-115 wpm	116 wpm or more
P	69 wpm or less	70-89 wpm	90-125 wpm	126 wpm or more
Q	74 wpm or less	75-104 wpm	105-140 wpm	141 wpm or more
R	74 wpm or less	75-104 wpm	105-145 wpm	146 wpm or more
S	79 wpm or less	80-109 wpm	110-145 wpm	146 wpm or more
T	84 wpm or less	85-114 wpm	115-150 wpm	151 wpm or more
U	84 wpm or less	85-114 wpm	115-150 wpm	151 wpm or more
V	84 wpm or less	85-114 wpm	115-150 wpm	151 wpm or more
W	89 wpm or less	90-124 wpm	125-160 wpm	161 wpm or more
X	89 wpm or less	90-124 wpm	125-160 wpm	161 wpm or more
Y	89 wpm or less	90-124 wpm	125-160 wpm	161 wpm or more
Z	99 wpm or less	100-129 wpm	130-165 wpm	166 wpm or more

Source: These oral fluency numbers are based upon “Oral Reading Rates” found in the *DRA2 Teacher Guide K-3 and 4-8 (Developmental Reading Assessment)* by Joetta M. Beaver and Mark A. Carter, Ph.D., 2006, Pearson Education, Inc.

## Teachers College Reading and Writing Project

### **Why Oral Reading Rate matters:**

Oral reading rate, when it assesses fluent reading, is a measure of word recognition automaticity (the ability to recognize words automatically). It is an indicator of potential reading volume and a predictor of comprehension.

### **If a student performs at Level 1 in Oral Reading Rate:**

Almost by definition the reader cannot in fact read this text with accuracy, comprehension and fluency and needs to be reading a just right text.

When students read very slowly, it is an indicator of compromised fluency, accuracy, and/or comprehension and probably the student is not well-matched to the level of book he or she is reading. The first step for most students scoring at Level 1 would be to reassess the reading level. You could look again at notes from your assessment of the student's independent reading level. Does the running record indicate that the student is reading with 96% to 100% accuracy or better? Does the retell of the passage indicate a strong understanding of the passage? Was the student able to answer three of the four comprehension questions correctly? Was the passage read with features of level three or four fluency as noted in the fluency scoring guide?

If the child did, indeed, read with high comprehension and accuracy, and the intonation for fluency was appropriate, but he or she reads aloud very slowly, then you could work on the automaticity work we recommend for Level 2 range readers. You might also compare the student's oral and silent reading rates, while checking comprehension. It is possible that some English Language Learners may be reading silently with comprehension, but when they read aloud to you, their fluency and oral rate are low. These children probably need to hold two levels of books then – see below.

### **If a student performs in the Level 2 range of Oral Reading Rate:**

This student needs support in reading with automaticity. One recommendation is that the student has two books going simultaneously. One book is the independent reading book; the other book is a book for fluency practice.

The fluency practice book is at a level in which the student scores in the level 3 range for oral reading rate. This is the book in which the student will practice strategies for fluent reading. For example: a student might have a level K book for independent reading and a level J book for practicing fluency. In short – the independent book is at the independent reading level and the fluency practice book is at a level in which the student scores in the level 3 range on the oral reading rate scale.



## Retelling Checklist: Narrative Texts

Title and Pages of Retelling \_\_\_\_\_

*Directions:* Jot down notes next to each section. You may want to record the retelling on an audiocassette.

### ELEMENTS NOTED IN STUDENT'S RETELLING

### TEACHER'S NOTES

Used written/mental notes:

Identified settings: time and place:

Identified the main character:

Told main character's problem(s):

Included plot details:

Mentioned other characters:

Made connections:

Speaking patterns:

- ◆ Spoke in complete sentences:
  
- ◆ Told details in sequence:

Goal for next retelling:

Additional notes and comments:

## Retelling Checklist: Informational Texts

Title and Pages of Retelling \_\_\_\_\_

*Directions:* Jot down notes next to each section. You may want to record the retelling on an audiocassette.

### ELEMENTS NOTED IN STUDENTS' RETELLING

### TEACHER'S NOTES

Used written/mental notes:

Stated topic:

Provided rich facts:

Stated main idea:

Made connections to (self, other topics, issues):

Synthesized information by using own words:

Speaking patterns:

- ◆ Spoke in complete sentences:
- ◆ Told details in sequence:

Goal for next retelling:

Additional notes and comments:

# Questions to Support Comprehension of Fiction

## *Personal and Textual Connections*

- ❖ How does the story make you feel?
- ❖ Have you ever had similar experiences?
- ❖ Does the book remind you of another book?
- ❖ Do any of the characters remind you of someone in your life?
- ❖ How is this story like any other story you know?
- ❖ How are the characters, setting, and problems like those in other stories you have read?
- ❖ How are the characters, setting, and problems connected to your life?
- ❖ Were you reminded of anything in your own life?
- ❖ What does this story make you think or wonder about?
- ❖ What surprised you?

## *Setting*

- ❖ Where and when does the story take place?
- ❖ Where else could the story take place?
- ❖ Could the setting be a real place that exists in our time?
- ❖ Is the place important to the story? How?
- ❖ What words did the author use to describe the place?
- ❖ What can you hear, see, feel, or smell as you read?
- ❖ How important is the place or time to the story?
- ❖ How much time passes in the story?
- ❖ In another time or place, how would the story change?
- ❖ How did the author control the passing of time?
- ❖ How is the setting like another place you know?
- ❖ Does the season or the time affect the characters or the plot of the story?

## *Characters*

- ❖ Are there any powerful characters in the story? What makes them that way?
- ❖ Who is the most interesting character? Why?
- ❖ Who is the most important character? Why?
- ❖ What character is the fairest? Why?
- ❖ Who is the bravest character? Why?
- ❖ Which character taught you the most?
- ❖ Who else could be in the story?
- ❖ What choices did a character have?
- ❖ How does the author/illustrator reveal the character? (Look at what the character does, thinks, or says; or what others say *about* the character.)
- ❖ How does one of the characters change? Why?
- ❖ Which characters change and which don't? How is character change important in the story?
- ❖ Who is a character that plays a small role? Why is this character necessary in the story?
- ❖ What did you learn from one character in the story?
- ❖ How did characters feel about one another? Why?
- ❖ Are the characters believable? Why or why not?

## Questions to Support Comprehension of Fiction (continued)

### *Plot*

- ❖ How did the author begin the story to engage the reader?
- ❖ What is the story problem? How do you think it will be solved?
- ❖ What challenges do the characters encounter and how do they deal with them?
- ❖ What choices did the characters have?
- ❖ How does a character's actions affect other people in the story?
- ❖ What was the most important part of the story?
- ❖ How would you describe the story shape? (linear, triangular, circular; for example, home-adventure-home)
- ❖ What is the high point of the story?
- ❖ What are the important events in the story?
- ❖ What is the order of events in the story? (for example, series of sequential events, letter or diary, record, flashback)
- ❖ Could the order of events be changed or could any of the events be left out?
- ❖ Were you able to predict the story ending?
- ❖ How did the story end?
- ❖ If you were the author, would you have ended it in any different way? How?
- ❖ What clues did the author give to allow the reader to predict the ending?
- ❖ What lesson does this story teach about life?
- ❖ What do you think will happen next in the story?
- ❖ What do you think will happen next for the characters after the story ends?
- ❖ Do you think the story really could have happened?
- ❖ How does the author provide information or details to make the story seem realistic?
- ❖ How does the author help you feel that you are really there [in both realistic stories and fantasy]?
- ❖ How was the story resolved?
- ❖ What two or three sentences summarize the whole story?
- ❖ Make a sketch or picture of an event in the book.
- ❖ What are the most important events of the story?
- ❖ Do you have any unanswered questions about the story?

### *Theme*

- ❖ What is the author's message?
- ❖ What is the story really about?
- ❖ Do you think the title is appropriate for the story?
- ❖ What does the story mean to you?
- ❖ Why did the author write this story?

### *Perspective*

- ❖ Who tells the story? Is this the best person to tell it? Why?
- ❖ Whose point of view is used in the story?
- ❖ What other voices could tell the story?
- ❖ How would the story be different if told through another character's eyes?

## Questions to Support Comprehension of Fiction (contin

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### *Language*

- ❖ What are some interesting words, phrases, or sentences?
- ❖ Are there words that were used to create a feeling or picture in your mind?
- ❖ Where did the author describe something well?
- ❖ What images did the writing evoke? How did the author use language to evoke images?
- ❖ What were some of the strongest words the author used?
- ❖ How did the author begin/end the story?
- ❖ Was any of the language especially interesting, vivid, or surprising?

### *Illustrations*

- ❖ What do the illustrations add to the story?
- ❖ How important are the illustrations?
- ❖ What is the role of illustrations in conveying the meaning of the story?
- ❖ What is your favorite illustration? Why did you choose it?
- ❖ Could you picture what was happening when there was no illustration?

### *Author/Illustrator*

- ❖ Would you read other books by this author? Why or why not?
- ❖ Have you read other books by this illustrator? How is this text similar to or different from c has illustrated?
- ❖ What other books does this book make you want to read?
- ❖ Why do you think this particular author wrote this book?
- ❖ What did the author have to know to write this book?
- ❖ What did the author do to interest the reader or pull the reader into the text?
- ❖ Did the author keep you interested? How or why?
- ❖ How is this book like other books by this author?
- ❖ Why do you think the author began/ended the story this way?
- ❖ Why did the author choose the title? Would you choose the same one?

### *Genre*

- ❖ What is the genre? How did you know?
  - ❖ Is this text a good example of this genre? Why?
  - ❖ How is this book like other books you've read in this genre?
  - ❖ What do you find difficult about reading books in this genre?
-

# Questions to Support Comprehension of Nonfiction

## *Personal and Textual Connections*

- ❖ What do you already know about this topic?
- ❖ How does this [book, article, topic] remind you of other texts you have read?
- ❖ What have you experienced in your life that helps you understand this topic?
- ❖ Does this text provide useful information for you personally?
- ❖ What is your interest in this topic?
- ❖ What experiences or life circumstances led you to read about this topic?
- ❖ How does the information in this text fit with what you already know?

## *Content*

- ❖ Why is this topic important [socially, scientifically, and practically]?
- ❖ What perspective does the author take on this topic?
- ❖ What part of the topic has the author chosen to present in the text?
- ❖ What are some of the most important words related to the topic, and what do they mean?
- ❖ What are some of the most important ideas related to this topic?
- ❖ Were there parts of the book you didn't understand? What puzzled you? What questions do you still have?
- ❖ Is the topic covered adequately?
- ❖ Are different viewpoints presented on the topic?
- ❖ Does the author explain how facts were arrived at?
- ❖ What did you learn about this topic?
- ❖ What does this text make you want to learn more about?

## *Accuracy and Authenticity*

- ❖ Is the information up-to-date?
- ❖ Is sufficient evidence provided to support what the author says?
- ❖ How has the author established the authenticity of the text?
- ❖ Are the illustrations authentic?
- ❖ Are the facts and information in this text consistent with other sources?
- ❖ Is all important information included? Was important information missing?
- ❖ Does the author make a clear distinction between fact and opinion?
- ❖ Has the author presented information to accurately represent people and places—without stereotypes or omissions?
- ❖ Has the author been fair?
- ❖ Do facts and information support the author's general statements?
- ❖ Did the author present an objective point of view?
- ❖ Is there any information that could be misleading?
- ❖ Have any groups been omitted from the [history, record of scientific progress]?

## *Style*

- ❖ How has the author made this topic readable?
- ❖ How has the author made this topic interesting?
- ❖ How has the author made it easy for you to find information?

## *Text Structure/Organization*

- ❖ What are the ways the author presents information on this topic?

## Questions to Support Comprehension of Nonfiction (continued)

### *Text Structure/Organization*

- ❖ What are the ways the author presents information on this topic?
- ❖ How is information organized [by topic, in time, by contrasting ideas, etc.]?
- ❖ Is the information presented clearly?

### *Text Features/Illustrations/Format*

- ❖ What does the title tell you about this text?
- ❖ How do headings and subheadings help you find information in this text?
- ❖ What information is provided through illustrations [drawings, diagrams, maps, charts, etc.]?
- ❖ Does the text have reference aides such as table of contents, index, bibliography, glossary, and appendices? Are they easy to use? How are they helping you?
- ❖ Are the illustrations clear and understandable? Are they easy to interpret?
- ❖ Are the illustrations explained by labels, legends, and captions when needed?
- ❖ Does the total format of the text help you understand the topic better?

### *Author*

- ❖ What qualifications does the author have to write this text?
- ❖ How does the author use experiences and/or knowledge to do a good job of providing information?
- ❖ What is the author's perspective or stance toward the topic?
- ❖ What has the author said that makes you question the accuracy of the information?

Figure 17-7. Questions to Support Comprehension of Nonfiction (continued)

## Questions to Support Comprehension of Biography

*Note: Many questions suitable for discussion of narrative texts and informational texts are also appropriate for biography. The follow questions are specific to biography.*

### *Personal and Textual Connections*

- ❖ What do you already know about the subject of this biography?
- ❖ What does the story of this person's life make you think or wonder about?
- ❖ What surprised you about this person?
- ❖ How does this person's life story remind you of your own life or the lives of people you know?
- ❖ What do you know about the period of history in which this person lived?
- ❖ Does this person's life remind you of other biographies you have read or of fiction texts?
- ❖ How is the person in the biography like people you know?
- ❖ How are this person's problems like the problems of people in other biographies or fiction books you have read?

### *Setting*

- ❖ How important is the setting [place, time in history, and other events taking place at the time] to the subject's life or accomplishments?
- ❖ How does the author include details that help you understand the subject?

## Questions to Support Comprehension of Biography (continued)

---

- ❖ Does the setting change over the person's life?
- ❖ Is the information about the setting authentic and consistent with history?
- ❖ How did the author write about the setting to make it authentic?

### *Structure or Organization*

- ❖ At what point in the person's life did the author begin the biography?
- ❖ How did the author organize the telling of the events of the person's life (chronological, under topics, etc.)?
- ❖ How did the author use dialogue, flashbacks, foreshadowing, and other ways of organizing text to make this person's life interesting?
- ❖ If dialogue is invented to make the text interesting, how well does it work?
- ❖ How did the author use anecdotes, original documents, eyewitness accounts, and interviews to make the person's life interesting?
- ❖ Are the events depicted for the subject's life believable and consistent with other information about the time period?

### *Events*

- ❖ What were the important events in the subject's life?
- ❖ What were the challenges faced by the person?
- ❖ What were the important actions the person took?
- ❖ How did the subject's actions affect others?

### *Author*

- ❖ Why did this author choose this subject?
- ❖ How did the author go about getting to know the subject?
- ❖ What research or other action did the author take to make the biography authentic?
- ❖ What did the author have to know to write this biography?

### *Theme*

- ❖ What was the author trying to say by writing about this person?
- ❖ Why did the author think this subject was important?
- ❖ What was the most important thing about the subject of this biography?
- ❖ Are different points of view on the times or events presented in an objective way?
- ❖ What insights does the book provide into today's problems and issues?

### *Subject*

- ❖ What does the character look like?
  - ❖ What kind of person is the subject?
  - ❖ Is the subject living now or did the subject live in past history?
  - ❖ How does what the subject says inform you?
  - ❖ What do others say about the subject?
  - ❖ Does the subject change over the biography? How and why?
  - ❖ How do the subject's actions reflect the times in which he or she lived?
-



# Helping Students Self-Evaluate

*"I don't know what to say about my reading."*

*"I'm good at it."*

*"It's boring."*

These are typical comments from students who don't know what to write about when evaluating their reading lives. Moreover, comments such as these discourage teachers from using self-evaluation. Using a prompt such as "I used to . . . and now I can . . ." or "I used to . . . and now I'm still . . ." are quick ways for students to think of one area where they've moved forward (see page 66). Students taught me to include the "and now I'm still" phrase because sometimes they did not feel any change had occurred, and this is important too. You can further scaffold the prompts by focusing them on a specific issue, such as making inferences, self-monitoring, enjoyment of free choice reading, and so on.

Here are some examples of statements using these prompts:

*I used to not know what an inference was but now I know it and can make inferences about characters.*

—Eighth Grader

*I used to hate to read books in my free time, and I still hate to do it.*

—Fifth Grader

*I used to skip over words I didn't understand, but now I try to figure them out.*

—Seventh Grader

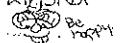
*I used to just read words and it was boring, but now I predict and connect, and I'm liking it more.*

—Fourth Grader

Honest statements from a student can supply you with the information you need to plan ways to support that student and help her move forward. It's also important to recognize that you may not witness much change during the year. But I believe that each time you support a student during the year, you have begun a life-changing process that other teachers will continue. Wendy, a seventh-grade student in a special class I taught at Johnson-Williams Middle School in Berryville, Virginia, is an example of this. All year Wendy insisted that she "still hated reading." Although she read in class and seemed to enjoy reading to her kindergarten buddy, Wendy's mantra—"I hate to read"—remained unchanged. Three years later, when Wendy was a junior in high school, she wrote the letter at left to me.

In all my years of teaching, Wendy's letter is the only one I received. But I have to believe that even though you and I might not see the changeover, the support we and others after us offer students can and does make a difference in their learning over time.

Mrs. Robb,

I hope remembers me.  
You worked with  
me to help me or  
to insitene me to  
read more. I wanted  
to thank ~~to~~ you for  
incouraging me to  
read. I remember  
when I first ~~went~~  
went into your  
class I had to  
read, but now I  
read when ever I get  
a chance. I wrote  
to say thank you.  
You were my  
Favorite teacher.  
I miss you.  
I hope we  
see each  
other soon.  
Your friend always,  
Wendy Higster  


# Progress in Reading Reflection

With guidance from you, students can reflect on, take notes on, and write about their progress or lack of progress in reading. Supplying questions that reflect what you've been working on can spark ideas that students can jot down. To facilitate this process, use the guidelines that follow.

- ◆ Select questions from the box below that indicate what you and students have focused on over the past weeks.
- ◆ Write these questions on chart paper or the chalkboard.
- ◆ Organize students into pairs and have partners discuss their responses to these questions.
- ◆ Invite students to brainstorm or write a free-flowing list of their ideas.
- ◆ Have students use their brainstorming to write about their reading process on separate paper.

## Questions That Encourage Students to Brainstorm Ideas About Their Progress in Reading

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| ◆ What strategies do I use before I read? How do these help?                          | ◆ What does my reading log show about the amount of reading I do? Why is practicing reading important? |
| ◆ How do I activate my prior knowledge and experiences?                               | ◆ Do I choose to read at home? Why?  |
| ◆ Do I chat with a partner or friend to activate prior knowledge? How does this help? | ◆ What do I do if a passage confuses me?   |
| ◆ What do I do when I can't pronounce a word?   | ◆ What do I do if I read a section and don't recall anything?  |
| ◆ How do I figure out the meaning of an unfamiliar word?                              | ◆ Do I set purposes? Why does this help?   |
| ◆ How do I help myself recall information?  | ◆ Do I connect my life and experiences to the book?  |
| ◆ How do I select the important details in a passage? Chapter? Book?                  | ◆ When do I skim? How does this help me?   |
| ◆ Do I reread? When? Why?   | ◆ Do I enjoy reading? Why? Why not?  |
| ◆ What kinds of free choice books do I choose?  | ◆ Can I make inferences?   |
| ◆ What does my reading log show about my interests?                                   | ◆ Can I build new understandings about a topic?  |
|   | ◆ Do my journal entries have specific examples from the text to support my ideas?                      |

## Checklist to Rate Your Reading Strategy Use

*Directions:* Read each item carefully and check the ones you do before, during, and after reading. Then set one or two goals on the back of this form by using items from the checklist.

### BEFORE READING

- \_\_\_\_\_ I think about the cover, title, and what I know about the topic.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I skim, look at, and think about illustrations, photos, graphs, and charts.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I read headings and captions.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I read the back cover and/or the print on the inside of the jacket.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I use the three-finger method to find a book that's just right for me.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I ask questions.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I make predictions.

### DURING READING

- \_\_\_\_\_ I make mental pictures.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I identify confusing parts and reread them.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I use pictures, graphs, and charts to understand confusing parts.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I identify unfamiliar words and use context clues to figure out their meanings.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I stop and retell to see what I recall. If necessary, I reread.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I predict and adjust or confirm as I read on.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I raise questions and read on to discover answers.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I jot down a tough word and the page it's on and ask for help.

### AFTER READING

- \_\_\_\_\_ I think about the characters, settings, events, or new information.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I discuss with a partner or group.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I can write open-ended discussion questions.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I can make connections.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I can make inferences.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I can figure out a character's personality.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I reread parts I enjoy.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I skim to find details.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I reread to find support for questions.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I can find themes in stories and novels.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I can find details in informational texts and discover main ideas.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I can write my reactions or positions and support them with text details.

## Semester End Reading Inventory

### Knowing what to read...

How do you select a "just right" book? How do you know it is a "just right book"?  
Can you give an example of a "just right book"?

---



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### Knowing how to read...

How many reading strategies can you think of? Can you tell how you use each one?

Strategy name...	How I can use it...

**Knowing what to look for...**

How many story elements can you list?

---

---

What are some things that good authors do in their writing?

---

---

---

What was your favorite read aloud this year? Tell why you liked it.

---

---

---

What was the best book you read to yourself? Tell why you liked it.

---

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---

How have you become a better reader?

---

---

---

What is one goal for yourself as a reader?

---

---

---

---

## I Used to . . . but Now I Can . . . or I Used to . . . and I Still . . .

*Directions:*

1. Complete one of the prompts below to show whether you've improved or changed in your ability to understand and apply reading strategies.
2. Respond to the prompt that you feel shows where you are at this point.
3. Use the idea box to get started. You and your teacher may have other suggestions, and that's fine.

**I USED TO . . . BUT NOW I CAN . . .**

**I USED TO . . . AND I STILL . . .**

### Here Are Some Ideas to Write About

I . . .

- ◆ read slowly
- ◆ hesitate and repeat words
- ◆ don't recall details
- ◆ don't support predictions
- ◆ don't think about characters
- ◆ don't reflect on a finished book
- ◆ check out books that are too hard
- ◆ am not able to infer
- ◆ retell the text
- ◆ skip hard words
- ◆ don't read every day
- ◆ never enjoy reading

# Workshop Self-Evaluation



---

## Workshop Self-Evaluation

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

What do I plan to accomplish during today's class:

What did I actually get done:

What can I do next time to better achieve my goals:

Here is a list of two goals I plan to achieve for the next readers' workshop class

[Assessment Main](#)

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[Best Practices: Pieces of the Puzzle](#)

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# All-Purpose Rubric

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Teacher \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

ELEMENT TO BE ASSESSED	CRITERIA			
	1 Beginning	2 Developing	3 Accomplished	4 Expert
Name the skill, aspect of work, etc.	Description of this level of performance	Description of this level of performance	Description of this level of performance	Description of this level of performance

# Section X

## READER RESPONSE TOOLKIT



# *Reader Response Toolkit*



*Wachusett Regional School District*

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## Responding to Reading

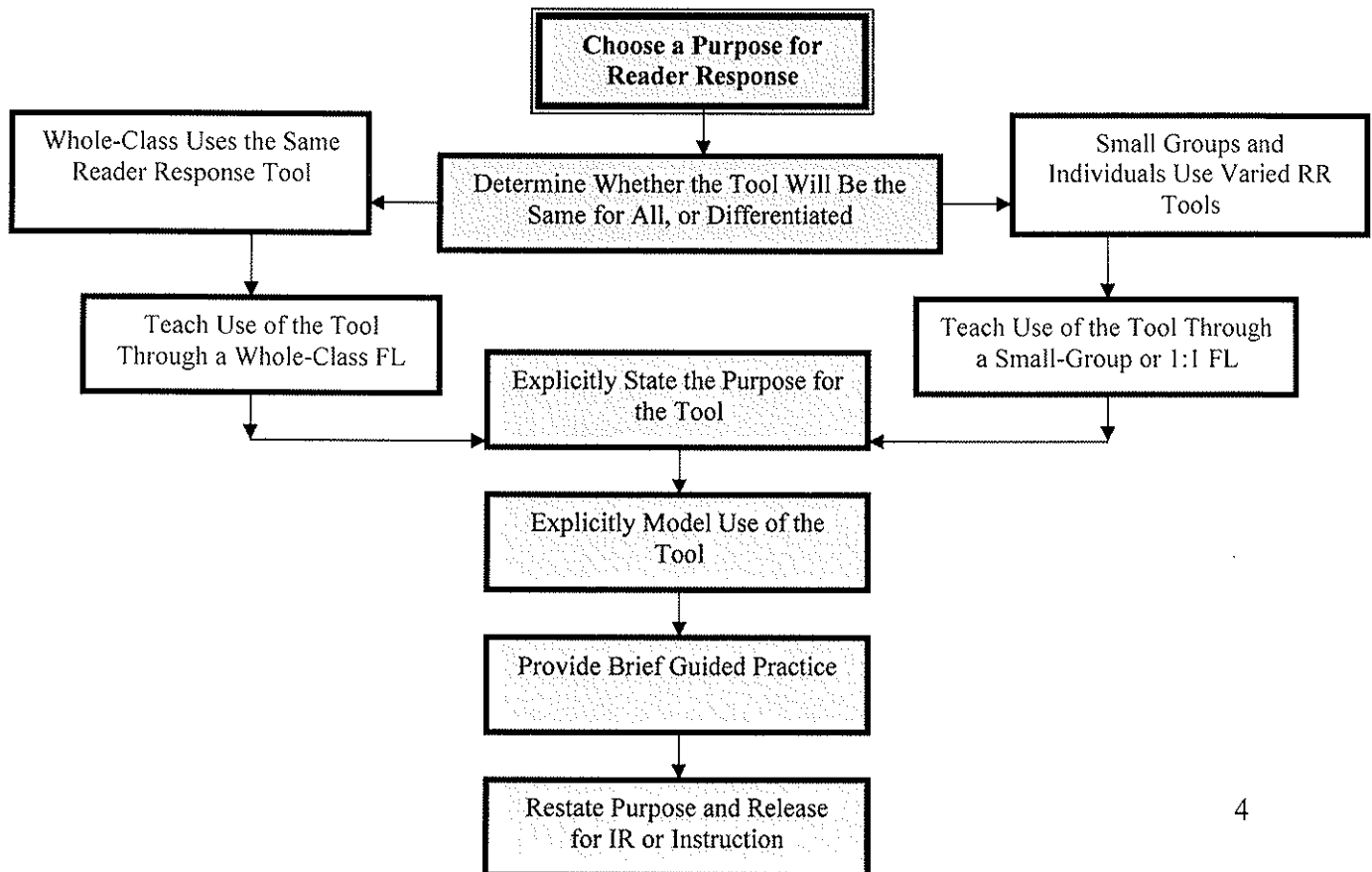
Reading response allows us to regularly and accurately assess independent reading and small-group instruction. Data from these assessments make it possible to plan appropriate instruction for each individual. Reading response tools can help us assess many skills and strategies such as the following:

- Did the student understand the text?
- Is the student applying particular strategies while reading?
- What strategies are applied most frequently?
- Which strategies should I focus on developing with this student?
- Has the student shown growth over time in his/her ability to apply a particular strategy?
- Can a student retell the story?
- Can the student confirm predictions with evidence from the text?
- Can the student pose relevant questions about the text?
- Can the student answer questions with evidence from the text?
- Can the student make relevant connections to the text?
- Are student inferences based on background knowledge and text clues?
- Does the student use context clues to uncover the meaning of unfamiliar words?
- Can the student identify literary elements?
- Can the student identify examples of figurative language?
- Is the student prepared to discuss a text for a literature circle meeting?
- Did the student select a "just right" text?
- Was the student able to determine important information from the text?
- Was the student able to track his/her thinking through the story?
- Was the student able to trace the development of a resolution in a story?
- Was the student able to track character changes throughout a text?

This document provides some helpful tools for gathering data through reader response.

# Steps for Utilizing Reader Response Tools

1. Identify your purpose for assessment (How will this data help you plan instruction?)
2. Determine whether all students will use the same tool or whether small-groups and individuals will use varied options at the same time.
3. Identify the reader response tool that is well correlated to your assessment purpose. Sometimes, reader response tools will focus on single strategies or skills. If your goal is to determine whether students are synthesizing, (applying multiple strategies simultaneously), reader response tools might focus on two or three goals or strategies.
4. If all students are using the same reader response tool, provide a whole-class focus lesson during which you
  - a. Explicitly state the purpose of the tool as a way to track thinking around the strategy being studied
  - b. Explicitly model the use of the reader response tool
  - c. Allow a brief guided practice where students try out the tool with partners
  - d. Restate the purpose of the tool as you release students to IR
5. If a small-group of students or an individual will be using the reader response tool, provide a brief focus lesson during which you
  - a. Explicitly state the purpose of the tool as a way to track thinking around the strategy being studied
  - b. Explicitly model the use of the reader response tool
  - c. Allow a brief guided or shared practice where students try out the tool
  - d. Restate the purpose of the tool as you continue with reading or instruction



## Sentence Prompts

Sentence prompts illicit specific types of written or oral feedback. Sentence prompts can be used when you are taking notes based on oral discussion during a literature circle, strategy group, guided reading group, or independent reading conference. Sentence prompts can also be used when student respond in writing through journals, letters to the teacher, think sheets, and class charts.

### Some Ideas for Prompts...

I wonder...

I notice...

I predict...

I like...

My question is...

A connection I have is...

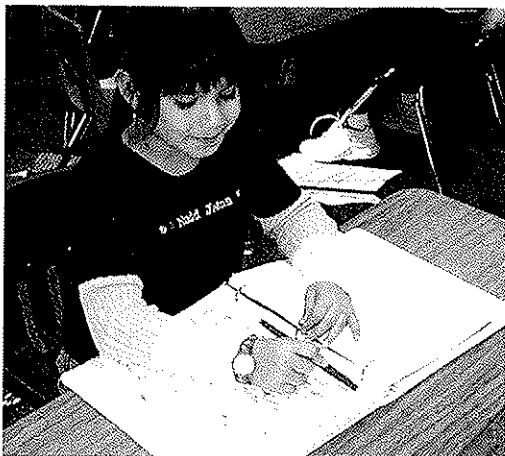
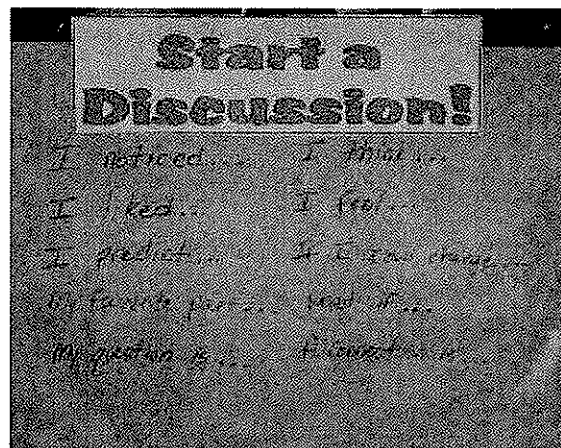
The problem in this story is...

The word \_\_\_\_\_ was tricky for me so I ...

I can tell this book is "just right" because...

One change I notice in the main character is...

When I read the words \_\_\_\_\_ I could picture...



This book made me feel like...

I would recommend this book to someone who...

I think the message conveyed by the author is...

One piece of important information I uncovered is...

I was surprised when...

I can relate to...

I'd like to find out if...

The resolution in the story happens when...

I think \_\_\_\_\_ because in the text it says...

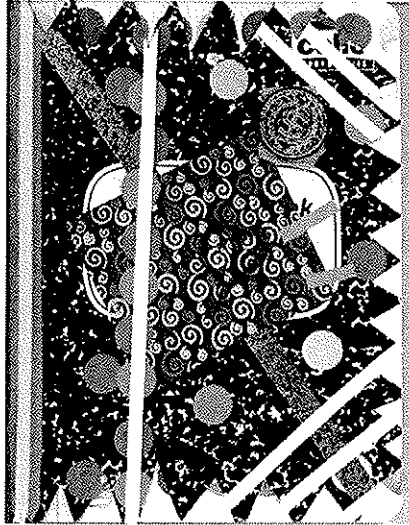
I can tell the character \_\_\_\_\_ feels \_\_\_\_\_ because...

I was confused when...

A strategy of \_\_\_\_\_ helped understand the text because..

## Journals and Letters

Students can use a journal or letter format to express a more lengthy, in-depth response to text. Booklets, composition notebooks, diaries, or lined journal worksheets can be used for this purpose. Dated entries allow you to assess progress over time.



A composition notebook transformed...

### Some Ideas for Journals, Letters, and Other Forms Intended to Communicate Thoughts About Texts...

- Diary entries in the voice of a character
- Letter from one character in the text to another
- Letter from one character advising another on future events or decisions
- Journal entries with "photos" (drawings) of the various settings where important events took place
- Letter from one student to another recommending a book
- Letter to the teacher describing the events that occurred in recent reading
- Two-column journal for recording a summary on one side and a reflection on the summary on the other side
- Pictorial journal entry using symbols to represent characters and their actions in a retelling
- Scrapbook depicting "artifacts collected" while "journeying" through a book
- "Photo" (sketch) journal depicting a changing character over the course of a text



- Seasonal celebration card to another student accompanied by a "gift wrapped" book from the classroom library (e.g., Dear Robyn, I chose this book as a gift for you. I thought you might like it because...)

Some journal-writing may be more focused and in response to a teacher provided prompt. *Journal*/prompts are typically multi-layered and more thought provoking than *sentence* prompts. The same journal prompt can be reused multiple times over the course of a text-reading. As responses to the same prompt change over time, comprehension progress is revealed. Alternatively, using varied prompts can reveal aspects that challenge individual readers.

When you model response through journal prompts, be explicit about the format and aspects you want included.

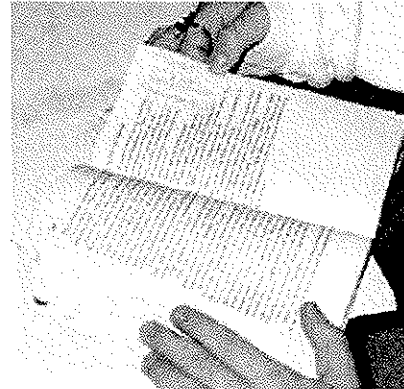
## Some Ideas for Journal Prompts...

- Did the setting or any of the characters remind you of people or places in your own life? How were they alike and how were they different?
- Does this story or its characters remind you of another story you have read? Does it remind you of a movie? How are they alike? And how are they different?
- If you could change the life of a character in the story, who would it be? What changes would you make? Why would you make these changes?
- Do you feel sympathy for any characters in the story? Why do you feel this way? Does this character remind you of anyone in your life?
- Do you dislike any characters in the story? What makes you dislike this character? Does this character remind you of anyone in your life?
- Which character do you most identify with in the story? What things do you have in common? What things are different?
- While reading, list some words or phrases that are unfamiliar, interesting, important, or tricky. Describe why you listed these words and phrases. What was special about them? What strategies, if any, did you use to unlock meaning?
- What are your hopes and dreams for the each of the important characters in the story?
- How did a character in the story solve a problem? What personality traits do you think allowed the character to reach this resolution?
- If you could ask any character a question, what would you ask? If you could ask the author a question, what might that be? Explain why you chose these questions.
- Did you hope for a different ending? Write a letter to the author suggesting an alternate ending?
- What message do you think the author is trying to convey? How does he or she get the message across?



## Sticky Notes

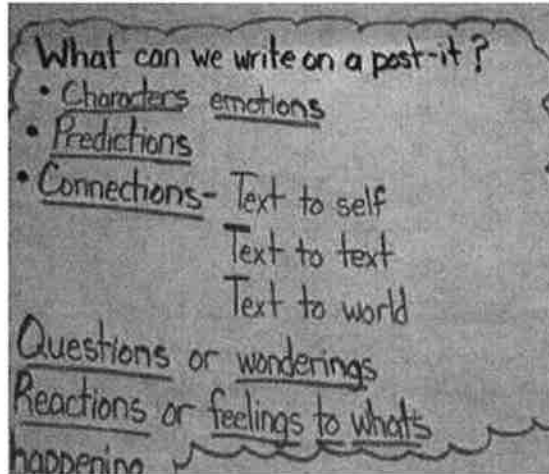
Sticky notes are a way to quickly track thinking about questions, connections, unknown words, predictions, and many other aspects of reading. Sticky notes allow a reader to document thinking directly on or beside the text. This minimizes the distraction of leaving the text while reading. It also helps to keep the focus on the *reading* rather than the writing, as it involves the recording of simple words and phrases. For struggling readers and writers, sticky note use does not need to involve writing at all. Color-coded stickies allow students to simply mark the text where they encountered connections, surprises, tricky words, or points where they applied strategies. Having a text marker for those points in their reading will help them share their thinking and recall important events.



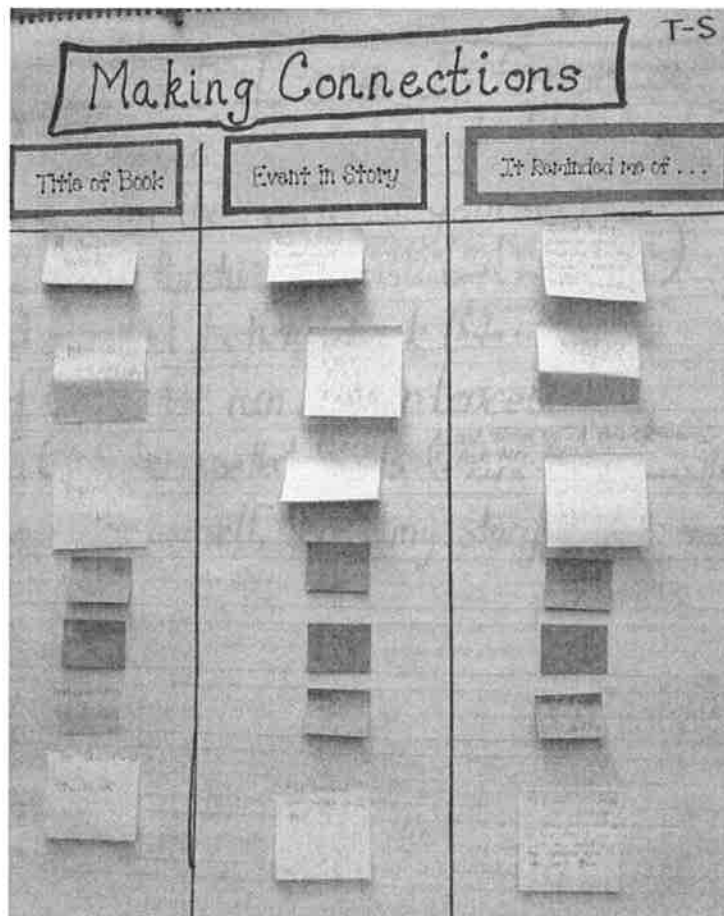
### Some Ideas for Using Sticky Notes...

	ES	-ES	y-ies
	Stars	Stiches	Kerry → karies
	Wears	riples	
A HUG!	Grandparent	contin	cup → cups
	turns	contin	cup → cups
	fleets	contin	cup → cups
	creckles	contin	cup → cups
	things	contin	cup → cups
	hands	contin	cup → cups
	in 15	contin	cup → cups
	Bunies	contin	cup → cups
	Leafs	contin	cup → cups
	ings	contin	cup → cups
	ings	contin	cup → cups

Ask students to hunt for certain types of words (e.g., words ending in -ies) in their texts. Students can record these words on stickies and classify in their journals.



Create an anchor chart that suggests open-ended opportunities for sticky note use



Provide a whole-class purpose for stickies. This class chart allows independent readers to post findings about their connections to their "just right" texts.

## Class Charts

Class charts provide a means for sharing, comparing, and preserving important information about texts. Each student or small group can be responsible for contributing to one line of the chart. Students can record findings directly, use stickies, or have the teacher scribe.

### Some Ideas for Using Class Charts...

Title	Copyright	Special Part	What he teaches us
The Very Hungry Caterpillar	1969	The fruit pages get bigger. Holes in pages	Life cycle of a caterpillar. If you eat too much you get sick. Days of the week & counting
23 at the Zoo	1968	Train at bottom of page. Fold out zoo page	Counting to 10 and numbers Animals that live in the zoo.
My Apron	1994	He wrote a letter to us.	We can write from our memories. We can help even if we can't write.
Upa, Please get the Meat for Me	1986	The pages folded out. There was a face in the moon.	The phases of the moon. It teaches us to follow our dreams.
A House for Hermit Crab	1987	Illustrations have texture & look wet	Months of the year Making friends/ <sup>how to</sup> share Sea Life
The Greedy Python	1985	Funny-like poetry Rhyming	Don't be greedy
The Secret Birthday Message	1971	The pages had shapes cut out of them. The book had a map in it.	The book taught us to follow directions. The book teaches us shapes.
Have You Seen My Cat?	1987	He repeated the words. He underlined my <sup>(opinion)</sup> <del>cat</del>	Cat family Cats that live around the world
The Very Lonely Firefly	1995	The fireflies light up - Repeats phrase Speech bubbles	There are a lot of different kinds of light. Don't give up! Taught us about fireflies.
The Grumpy Ladybug	1977	The pages were cut from small to large. A whale's tail was cut out. The sun rose and set.	Be nice and be a good friend. The book taught us time. It teaches us to share. There were many different animals and insects.
The Very Quiet Cricket	1990	The sound effects Repeated a phrase Different hellos	Don't give up! Manners Crickets & other dn bugs

Compare text themes through an author or genre study

Eve Bunting		
Title	Message	Words that "grab" our attention
Fly Away Home	We should be thankful for our homes.	Dad & I try not to get noticed. Not to be noticed is to look like nobody at all. "Fly, bird," I whispered. "Fly away home!"
The Wall	We should honor those who fought for our freedom. It is sad when we lose something as a mirror one we love. We should always remember them	This is the wall, my grandfather's wall. The wall is black & Dad's rubbing the name... maybe he just wants to remember the way it feels.
The Wednesday Surprise	We can help each other no matter our age. Always try to read.	... best surprise of all Grandma is some actress? I am sick from being nervous.
Jin Woo	There is enough love in a family for everyone.	Were they this happy when they adopted me? They say they have so much love inside of them... what they give me won't take away.

Analyze genre or author style, including use of figurative language (e.g., simile)

## **MCAS-Style Reading Response**

Open response questions on the MCAS ask students to read a short text, text excerpt, or poem, and respond to a directed question. We can prepare our students for these types of questions by integrating them in to our reader response repertoire.

### ***What Texts Do I Use for Open Response Questions Used During Independent Reading?***

For lower level readers, a whole text is typically fine to use in place of short text. For higher level readers with lengthier texts such as chapter books, ask that they respond to an open response question using one chapter. You can also incorporate differentiated selections of short text into the independent reading book bags in your class.

### ***How Do I Tailor These Questions to Match Individual Texts?***

Like many of the other tools in this document, open response MCAS questions ask students to apply multiple strategies to a text and then reflect their thinking about that text in writing. The following pages include open response questions taken from the most recent MCAS exams at grades three, four, and five. The specific text references have been deleted so that you can tailor these questions to each student's independent reading selections. Simply have each student replace the blank spaces with titles, character names, and other information from their specific texts. Be sure to model this in a focus lesson so that students are clear on how a common class question will be tailored to match their specific reading.

### **How Do I Score These Prompts if Students are Basing Responses on Different Texts or Text I Haven't Read?**

The MCAS usually asks students to cite evidence that supports their thinking. Ask that your students cite page numbers in addition to descriptions of their evidence. This will allow you to assess the response without having read the text in entirety. Scoring guides for each question are included on pages 21-25. The scoring guides are the same used to assess MCAS responses.

You can reuse these prompts over and over again, as students can just adapt them to new texts they read. Once you have used the scoring guides to assess responses, select exemplars that show what a "4" or "3" might look like. Use these exemplars in focus lessons where you explicitly model how to generate good responses to MCAS-type questions.

## Question 1

Based on your reading of \_\_\_\_\_, describe three  
(fill in your title here)

\_\_\_\_\_ in the chart below.  
(Pick and record one in the space above: events, characters, or changes)

Support each of your descriptions with evidence from the text in the second column.

Three _____ (events, characters, or changes)	Evidence from the Text
1.	1.
2.	2.
3.	3.





















### Scoring Guide for Question #1

<b>Score</b>	<b>Description</b>
<b><u>4</u></b>	The response is a clear, complete, and accurate description of THREE items and evidence from the text for each. The response includes important information from the text.
<b><u>3</u></b>	The response is a mostly clear, complete, and accurate description of THREE items and evidence from the text for each. The response includes relevant but often general information from the text.
<b><u>2</u></b>	The response is a partial description of THREE items and evidence from the text for each. It includes limited information from the text and may include misinterpretations.
<b><u>1</u></b>	The response is a minimal description of THREE items and evidence from the text for each. It includes little or no information from the text and may include misinterpretations.
<b><u>0</u></b>	The response is totally incorrect or irrelevant.

### Scoring Guide for Question #2

<b>Score</b>	<b>Description</b>
<b><u>4</u></b>	The response is a clear, complete, and accurate explanation of how one character's life was different from another character's life. The response includes important details from the story.
<b><u>3</u></b>	The response is a mostly clear, complete, and accurate explanation of how one character's life was different from another character's life. The response includes relevant but often general details from the story.
<b><u>2</u></b>	The response is a partial explanation of how one character's life was different from another character's life. It includes limited details from the story and may include misinterpretations.
<b><u>1</u></b>	The response is a minimal explanation of how one character's life was different from another character's life. It includes few or no details from the story and may include misinterpretations. OR The response relates only minimally to the task.
<b><u>0</u></b>	The response is totally incorrect or irrelevant.

### Scoring Guide for Question #3

<b>Score</b>	<b>Description</b>
<b>4</b>	The response is a clear, complete, and accurate description of the problems faced by the subject(s) of the article. The response includes important details from the article.
<b>3</b>	The response is a mostly clear, complete, and accurate description of the problems faced by the subject(s) of the article. The response includes relevant but often general details from the article.
<b>2</b>	The response is a partial description of the problems faced by the subject(s) of the article. The response includes limited details from the article and may include misinterpretations.
<b>1</b>	The response is a minimal description of the problems faced by the subject(s) of the article. The response includes few or no details from the article and may include misinterpretations. OR The response relates minimally to the task.
<b>0</b>	The response is totally incorrect or irrelevant.

### Scoring Guide for Question #4

<b>Score</b>	<b>Description</b>
<b>4</b>	The response is a clear, complete, and accurate description of the different feelings the speaker has throughout the poem. The response includes important details from the poem.
<b>3</b>	The response is a mostly clear, complete, and accurate description of the different feelings the speaker has throughout the poem. The response includes relevant but often general details from the poem.
<b>2</b>	The response is a partial description of the different feelings the speaker has throughout the poem. The response includes limited details from the poem and may include some misinterpretation.
<b>1</b>	The response is a minimal description of the different feelings the speaker has throughout the poem. The response includes few or no details from the poem. OR The response relates minimally to the task.
<b>0</b>	The response is totally incorrect or irrelevant.

### Scoring Guide for Question #5

<b>Score</b>	<b>Description</b>
<b><u>4</u></b>	The response is a clear, complete, and accurate explanation of the main idea and why it is important. The response includes important information from the article.
<b><u>3</u></b>	The response is a mostly clear, complete, and accurate explanation of the main idea and why it is important. The response includes relevant but often general information from the article.
<b><u>2</u></b>	The response is a partial explanation of the main idea and why it is important. The response includes limited information from the article and may include inaccuracies or misinterpretations.
<b><u>1</u></b>	The response is a minimal explanation of the main idea and why it is important. The response includes little or no information from the article and may include inaccuracies or misinterpretations. OR The response relates minimally to the task.
<b><u>0</u></b>	The response is totally incorrect or irrelevant.

### Scoring Guide for Question #6

<b>Score</b>	<b>Description</b>
<b><u>4</u></b>	The response is a clear, complete, and accurate description of the main idea. The response includes important information from the article.
<b><u>3</u></b>	The response is a mostly clear, complete, and accurate description of the main idea. The response includes relevant but often general information from the article.
<b><u>2</u></b>	The response is a partial description of the main idea. The response includes limited information from the article and may include misinterpretations or inaccuracies.
<b><u>1</u></b>	The response is a minimal description of the main idea. The response includes little or no information from the article and may include misinterpretations or inaccuracies. OR The response relates minimally to the task.
<b><u>0</u></b>	The response is totally incorrect or irrelevant.

**Scoring Guide for Question #7**

<b>Score</b>	<b>Description</b>
<b><u>4</u></b>	The response is a clear, complete, and accurate explanation of how each character tricks the other. The response includes important details from the folktale.
<b><u>3</u></b>	The response is a mostly clear, complete, and accurate explanation of how each character tricks the other. The response includes relevant but often general details from the folktale.
<b><u>2</u></b>	The response is a partial explanation of how each character tricks the other. The response includes limited details from the folktale and may include misinterpretations or inaccuracies.
<b><u>1</u></b>	The response is a minimal explanation of how each character tricks the other. The response includes few or no details from the folktale and may include misinterpretations or inaccuracies. OR The response relates minimally to the task.
<b><u>0</u></b>	The response is totally incorrect or irrelevant.

**Scoring Guide for Question #8**

<b>Score</b>	<b>Description</b>
<b><u>4</u></b>	The response is a clear, complete, and accurate explanation of how character's feelings change. The response includes important details from the story.
<b><u>3</u></b>	The response is a mostly clear, complete, and accurate explanation of how character's feelings change. The response includes relevant but often general details from the story.
<b><u>2</u></b>	The response is a partial explanation of how character's feelings change. The response includes limited details from the story and may include misinterpretations.
<b><u>1</u></b>	The response is a minimal explanation of how character's feelings change. The response includes few or no details from the story and may include misinterpretations. OR The response relates minimally to the task.
<b><u>0</u></b>	The response is totally incorrect or irrelevant.

### Scoring Guide for Question #9

<b>Score</b>	<b>Description</b>
<b><u>4</u></b>	The response is a clear, complete, and accurate explanation of why something was important to a character in the text and how he or she showed that feeling. The response includes important details from the selection.
<b><u>3</u></b>	The response is a mostly clear, complete, and accurate explanation of why something was important to a character in the text and how he or she showed that feeling. The response includes relevant but often general details from the selection.
<b><u>2</u></b>	The response is a partial explanation of why something was important to a character in the text and how he or she showed that feeling. The response includes limited details from the selection and may include misinterpretations or inaccuracies.
<b><u>1</u></b>	The response is a minimal explanation of why something was important to a character in the text and how he or she showed that feeling. The response includes few or no details from the selection and may include misinterpretations or inaccuracies. OR The response relates minimally to the task.
<b><u>0</u></b>	The response is totally incorrect or irrelevant.

## Think Sheets and Thought Organizers

The following tools can be used by individual students or small groups. These tools can be tailored to best match your grade level, instructional needs, and the needs of your students.

### *How Do I Use These Think Sheets and Organizers for Assessment Purposes?*

These forms allow us to track student thinking over time. Assigning the same think sheet over multiple texts provides insight into progress around particular strategies. Using multiple response forms for the same text allows you to assess whether students are applying multiple strategies proficiently.

### *What Questions Can Be Posed and Answered Through the Use of These Assessment Think Sheets and Organizers?*

Many types of questions can be answered through think sheet and organizer assessment. The open-ended nature of these tools allows you to figure out on what level (comprehension, passage, or word level) students are focused. Once the thought process has been revealed, we have evidence that tells us what we need to explicitly model for a student. Open-ended response also provides clues as to where meaning breaks down.

**Is the meaning lost during reading?  
Is the meaning lost after reading?  
Is the meaning lost when translating thoughts to paper?**

Open-ended response also alerts us to when students are moving beyond basic expectations and grasp meaning at a much deeper level.

- What strategies did these students employ to help them develop deep understandings?
- What new texts should we suggest to further develop these strategies and continue to engage this type of student?

Open-ended response addresses questions we have about whether a student has selected a "too-hard" text. A child may read fluently with a high level text. Highly fluent readers are often proficient at locating answers to very directed questions. This is because they are quickly able to recall and match language from the text to language in the question.

**Example:** The following text and question is presented to a fluent reader who struggles with comprehension.

Unicorns are mythical creatures. Believed to be bearers of good tidings, unicorns were revered in ancient times. Unicorns have been depicted in many forms of ancient folklore and art. They are usually pictured as white horses with spiraling gold or silver horns.

1. What are unicorns?
2. Why were unicorns revered in ancient times?
3. How are unicorns usually pictured?

Though this example is full of difficult vocabulary and varying sentence structures, a fluent reader could easily answer these questions. Comprehension issues could be well-masked, if they exist for this student. Open-ended response forces a student to reveal what they know or don't know on a comprehension level.

### **Sample Questions that Can Be Answered through Open-Ended Response?**

- What do my students know about the strategy of...?
- How have my students progressed in their ability to apply the strategy of...?
- What type of instruction should I plan to help improve a student's ability to respond in this format?
- Where does a student show a weakness in his/her ability to reveal his/her thinking?
- Is there a disconnect between a student's oral and written abilities to respond to text?
- What sort of support tools can I provide a student in order to help him/her organizing her thinking better?
- On what level is the student engaging with this text?

## Character Traits

Choose a character from the story. Which of the following words describe the personality of this character?

humble  
brave  
courageous  
serious  
funny  
humorous  
sad  
resourceful  
stubborn  
loyal  
gullible  
caring  
carefree  
selfish  
unselfish  
generous  
self-confident  
respectful  
considerate  
imaginative  
inventive  
creative  
independent  
studious

successful  
responsible  
helpful  
dreamer  
happy  
disagreeable  
conceited  
leader  
demanding  
bossy  
gentle  
loving  
proud  
wild  
messy  
neat  
joyful  
cooperative  
lovable  
ambitious  
quiet  
curious  
witty  
fighter

bold  
patriotic  
fun-loving  
energetic  
cheerful  
thoughtful  
calm  
rude  
mean  
daring  
dainty  
busy  
lazy  
honest  
mischievous  
friendly  
adventurous  
hard-working  
timid  
shy  
determined  
intelligent

What made you choose these words to describe the character? What evidence from the text supports your choices?

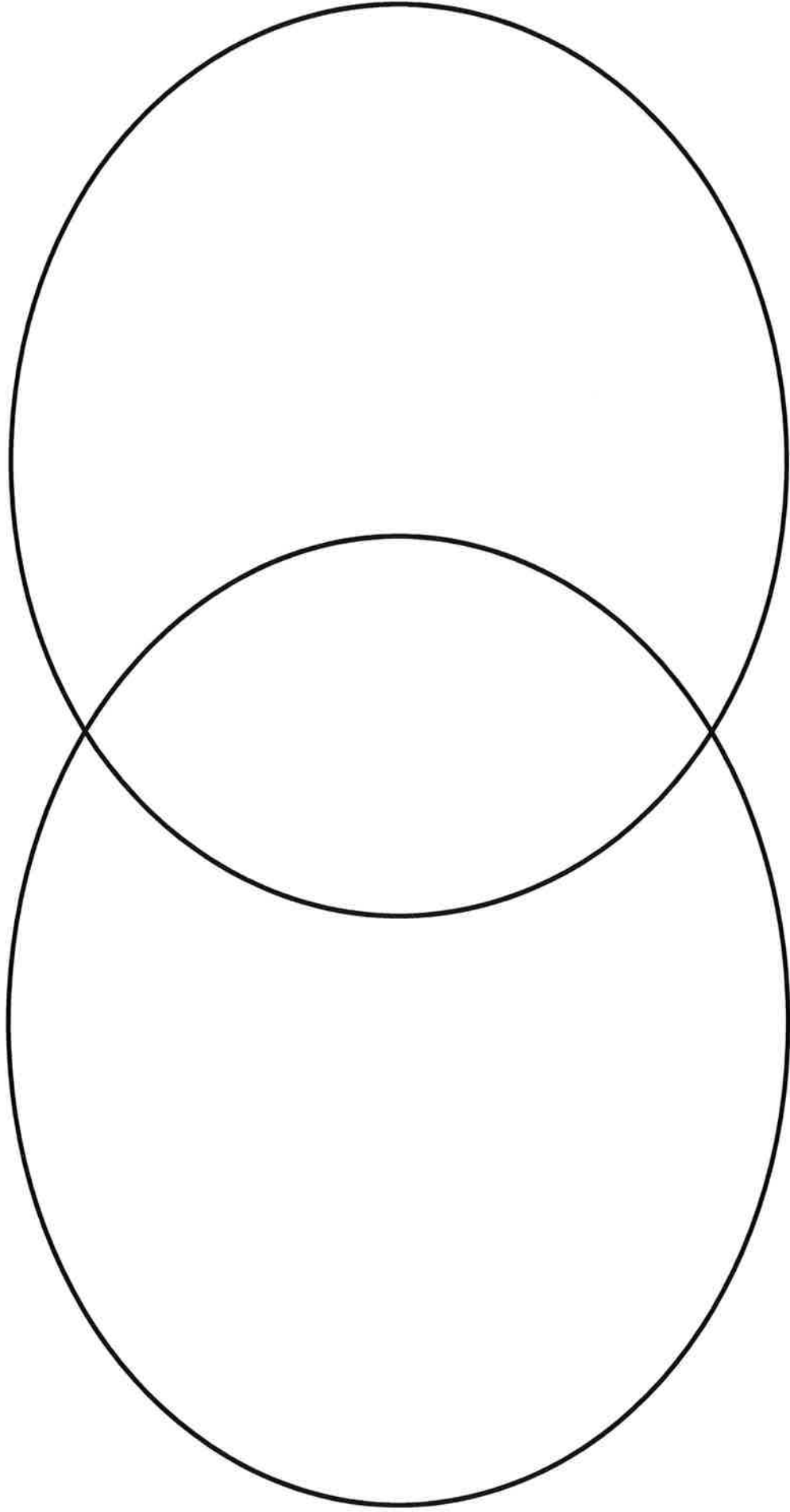


## Thinking about Character Quotes

Page #	What did the character say?	Why do you think this is important in the story?

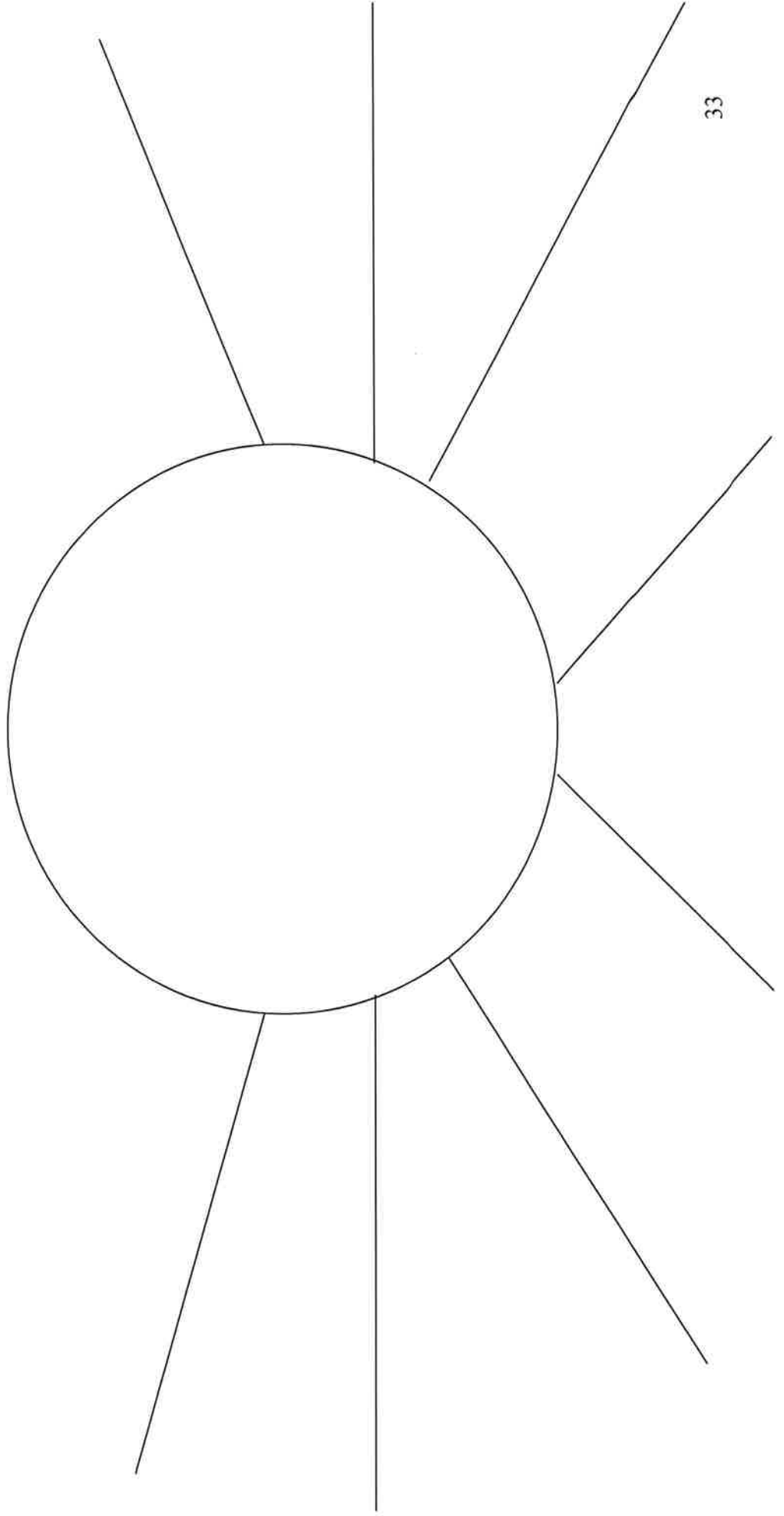
## Compare the Important Characters in the Story

What do they have in common? What makes them different?



## Character Web

Draw and label your character in the center circle. Write phrases or words that tell about your character on the lines.



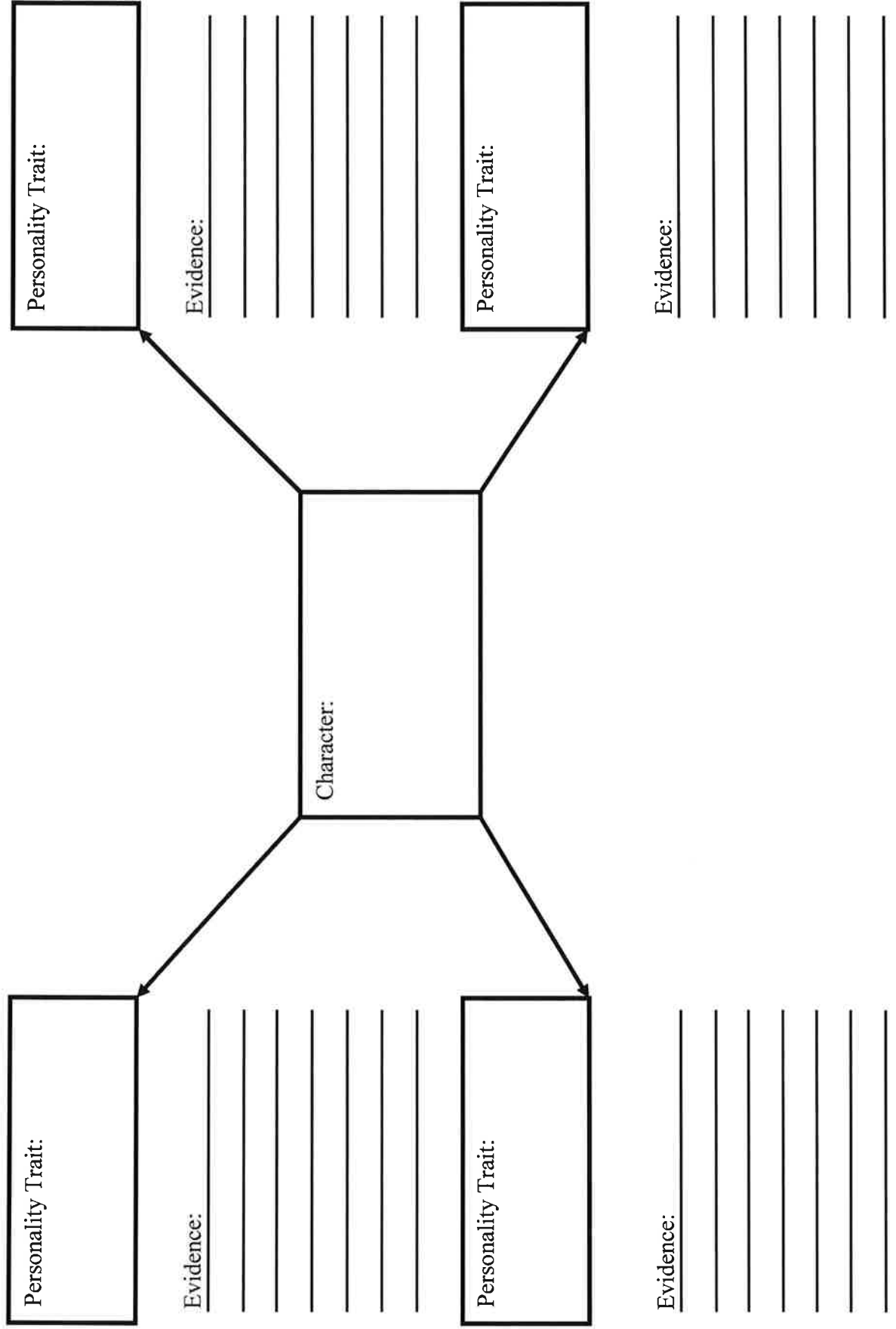
## Character Responses to Events

Page	Event	Character Response

## Character Grid

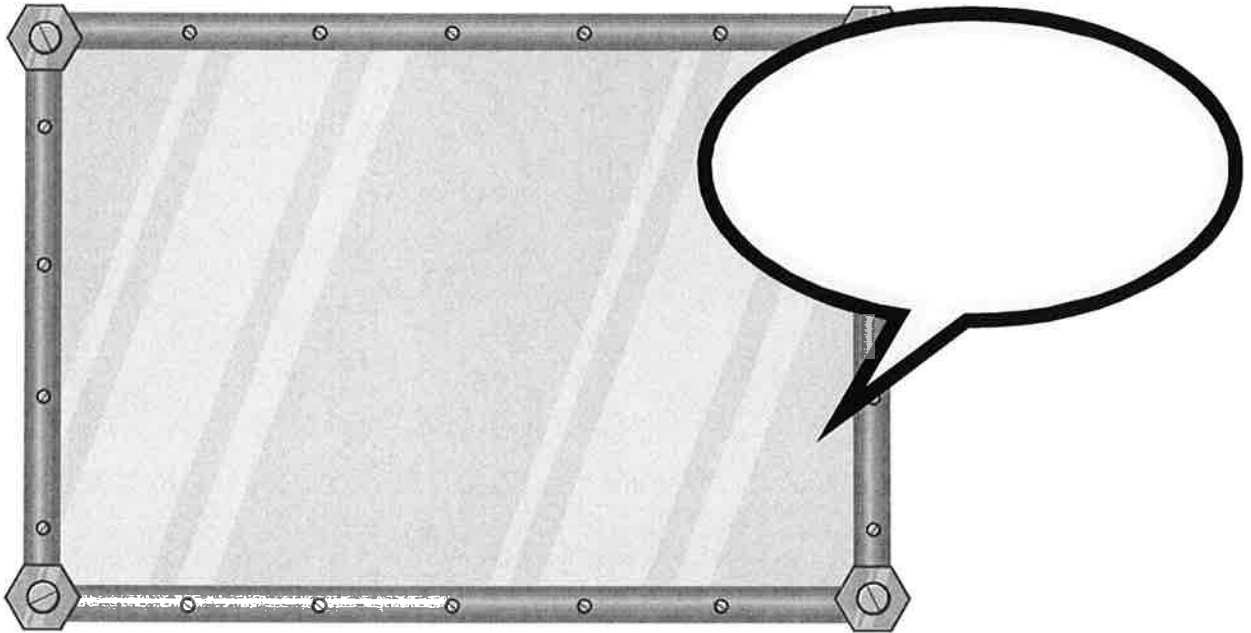
<b>Character:</b>			
<b>Says/Thinks</b>	<b>Looks</b>	<b>Does</b>	<b>Others Say/Think</b>
<b>Character:</b>			
<b>Says/Thinks</b>	<b>Looks</b>	<b>Does</b>	<b>Others Say/Think</b>

# Character Traits Based on Evidence from the Text

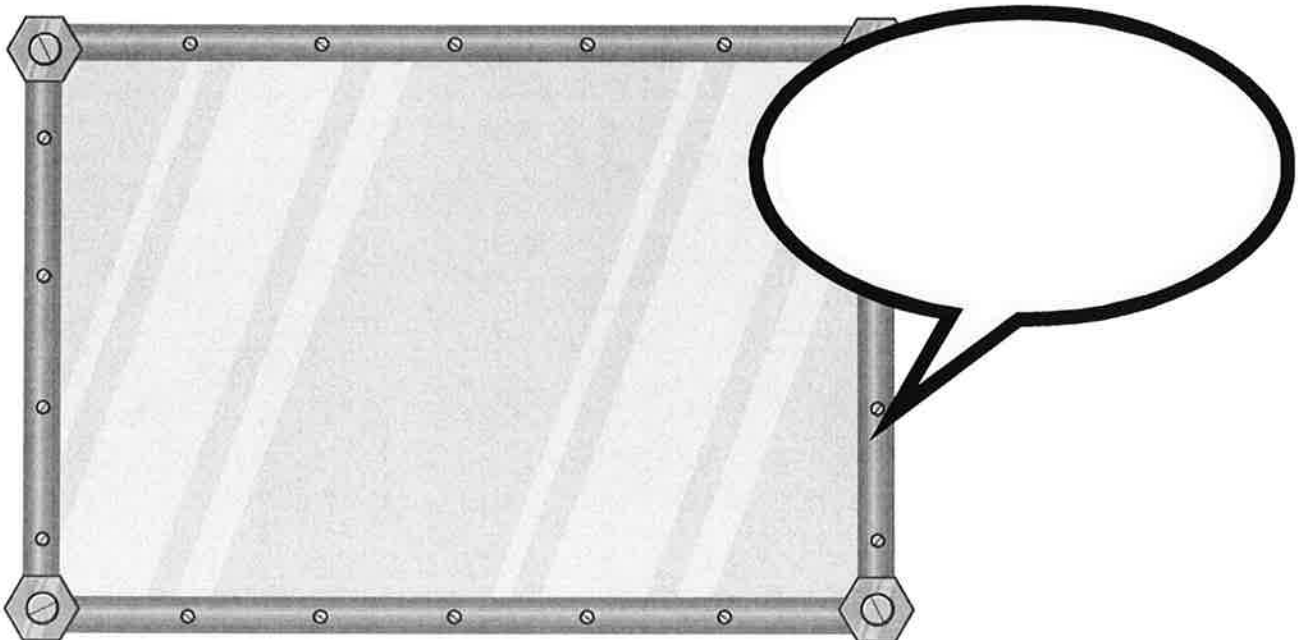


## Character Reflections

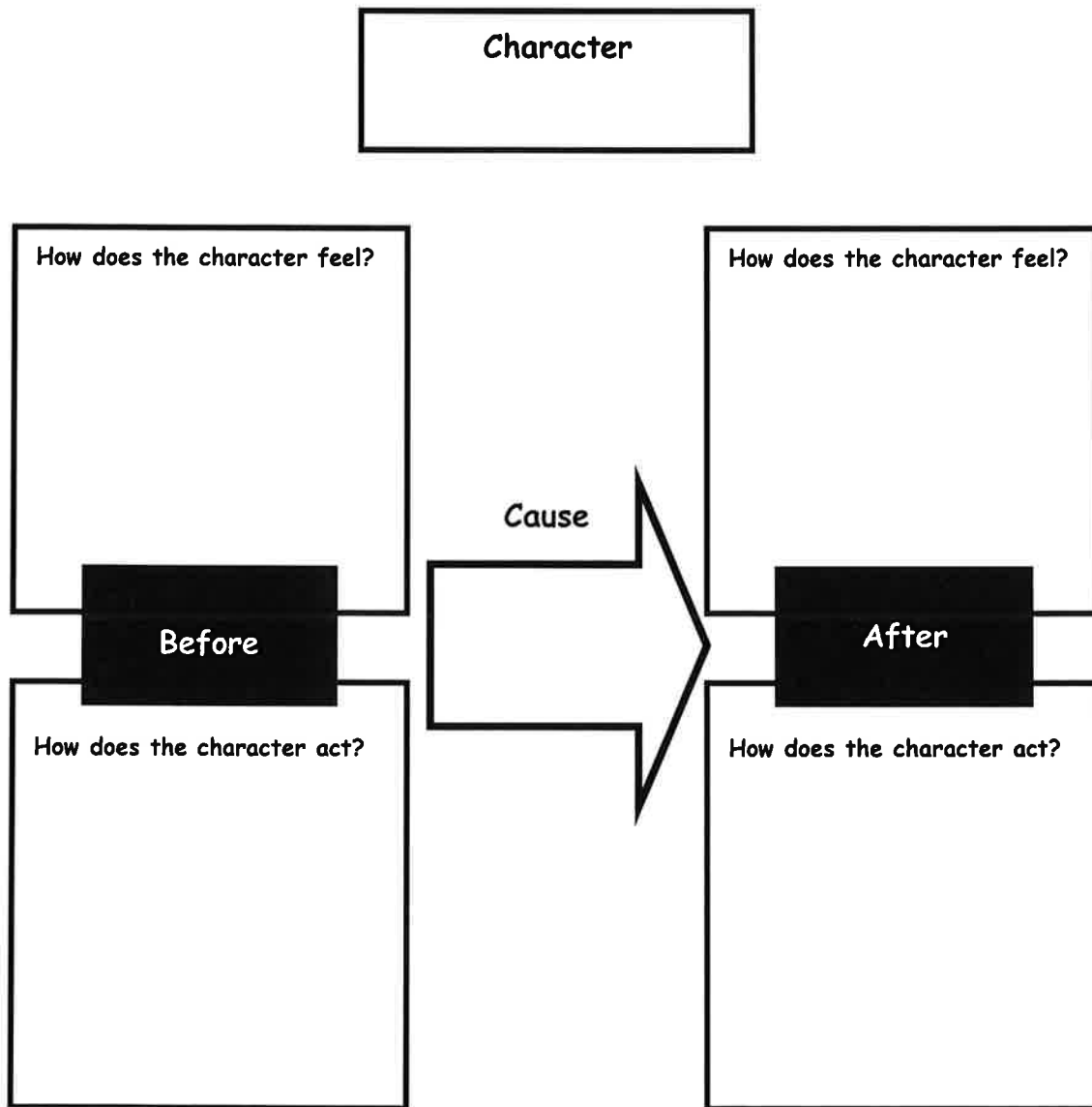
As you **begin** to read, choose a character from the story. Imagine you are the character. What do you see as you look at yourself in the mirror? Draw the image of yourself in the mirror below. What are you saying to yourself as you look in the mirror?



**After reading**, imagine you are the same character. What do you see as you look in the mirror now? What are you saying to yourself now as you look in the mirror?



# Character Development Story Map





**Choose one character from the story.  
Which of the words below describes this character?**

**My character is...**

**Words that describe my character are...**

**I think these words describe my character because in the  
text...**

curious

bossy

gentle

loving

wild

messy

neat

joyful

smart

calm

mean

rude

polite

funny

sad

giving

caring

selfish

friendly

shy

proud

busy

lazy

responsible

helpful

honest

## How is a character feeling?

Highlight words below that describe how a character in the story feels. Use these words:

- To inspire a drawing of your character with a caption explaining your drawing (Use the words in your caption!)
- In a letter to your teacher describing how a character is feeling
- In a journal entry where you tell how a character feels after an important event in the story
- In a poem about how the character's feelings have changed
- To discuss your character's feelings in a literature circle discussion

afraid  
angry  
annoyed  
anxious  
argumentative  
ashamed  
belligerent  
bewildered  
bold  
bossy  
brave  
calm  
carefree  
caring  
cautious  
cheerful  
confident  
confused  
content  
courageous  
cranky  
curious  
daring  
defiant  
depressed  
desperate  
determined  
devious  
disappointed  
disgusted  
dismayed  
elated  
embarrassed  
excited  
exhausted  
friendly  
frightened

frustrated  
happy  
hopeful  
humiliated  
impatient  
indignant  
guilty  
infuriated  
irritated  
jealous  
joyful  
jubilant  
lonely  
lazy  
loving  
mischievous  
miserable  
nervous  
nonchalant  
optimistic  
mortified  
patient  
patriotic  
perplexed  
preoccupied  
proud  
puzzled  
relaxed  
resentful  
pessimistic  
sad  
satisfied  
scared  
shocked  
skeptical  
selfish  
shy  
stubborn  
surprised  
suspicious  
terrified  
thoughtful  
timid  
vulnerable

Title: \_\_\_\_\_ Name: \_\_\_\_\_

<b>Facts</b>	<b>Questions</b>	<b>Response</b>

## KWL Nonfiction Chart

What topic will you be reading about? \_\_\_\_\_

Use the chart to find out what you already **know**, what you **wonder** about, and what you have **learned** after reading.

Know	Wonder	Learned

## Reactions to the Story

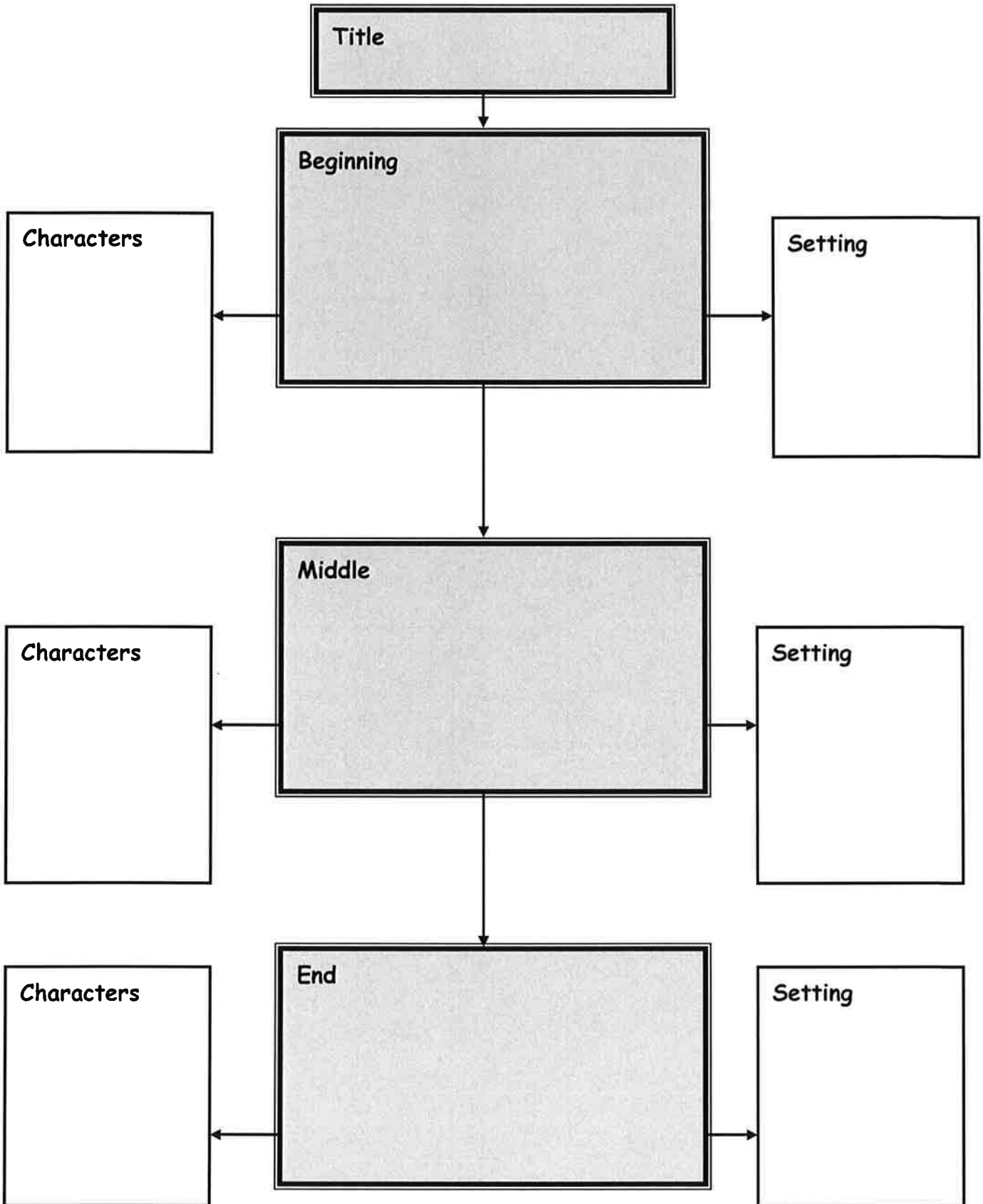
Choose five events from the story. Describe each event. Then, describe your reaction to each event.

### Some Ideas for Reactions...

How did it make you feel? Does it create new predictions or change old predictions you may have had? Did it surprise you or change the way you feel about a character?




Event	Personal Reactions

# Retell Map



## Responding to Reading with Questions

Question Type	My Questions	Sparked by something I read on page...
<p><b>Asking about Basic Facts</b>                      Example: What is the name of the Momma Bear?</p>		
<p><b>Wondering about Predictions</b>                      Example: Will Goldilocks learn a lesson from her experience?</p>		
<p><b>Why or How</b>                      Example: Why did Goldilocks eat porridge that wasn't hers?</p>		
<p><b>Wondering about Connections</b>                      Example: Is the story of Goldilocks going to be similar to other stories I have read?</p>		
<p><b>Thinking about My Feelings</b>                      Example: Why did the ending of the story bother me?</p>		

Day	Book Title	Here's how I feel about this book/chapter... I feel this way because...			Minutes	Parent Initials
						
S						
M						
T						
W						
TH						
F						
S						

**At-Home Reading Response Log**



# Tracking My Thinking through the Chapters

Book Title \_\_\_\_\_ Author \_\_\_\_\_


Describe important events, characters, and settings, or attach stickies with your notes about the text in each chapter.

1	2	3
4	5	6
7	8	9

10	11	12
13	14	15
16	17	18
19	20	21

**Comparing Folktales**

Title →				Similarities	Differences
Setting					
Characters					
Problem					
Events					

Title (Con't) 				Similarities	Differences
Solution					
Magic					
Illustrations					

## Story Map

**Title and Author**

**Setting**

**Problem**

**Events**

**Solution**

## Story Notes

<b>Story Title:</b>		
<b>Setting</b>	<b>Character</b>	<b>Character</b>
<b>Character</b>	<b>Character</b>	<b>Character</b>
<b>Problem</b>	<b>Special Language</b>	<b>Interesting Parts</b>
<b>Theme (story message)</b>		

### Book Comparison Chart

Title	Major Characters	Setting	Problem	Solution	Theme

# Tracking Important Ideas/Details

## Important Ideas

## Details

Page # \_\_\_\_\_

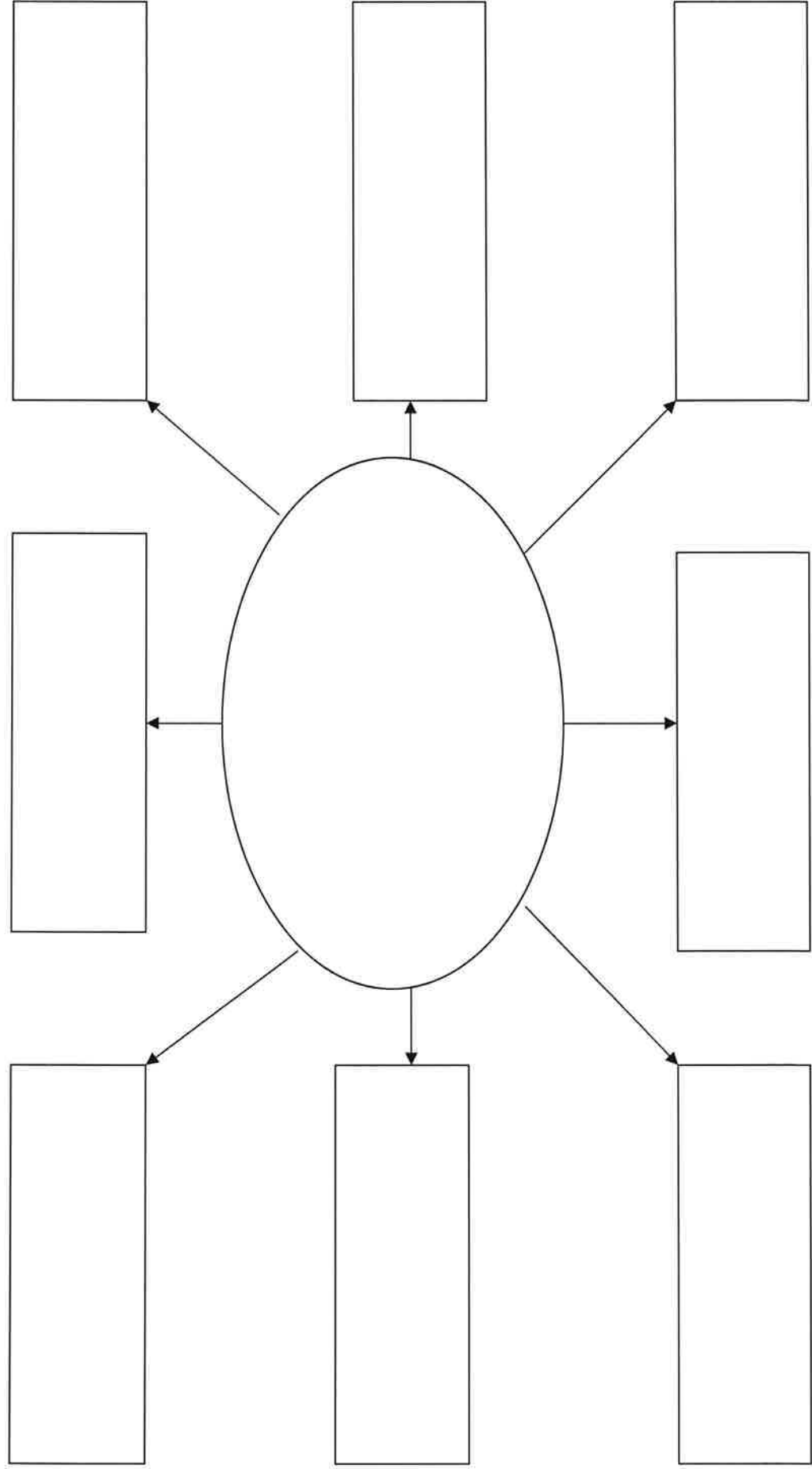
Page # \_\_\_\_\_

Page # \_\_\_\_\_

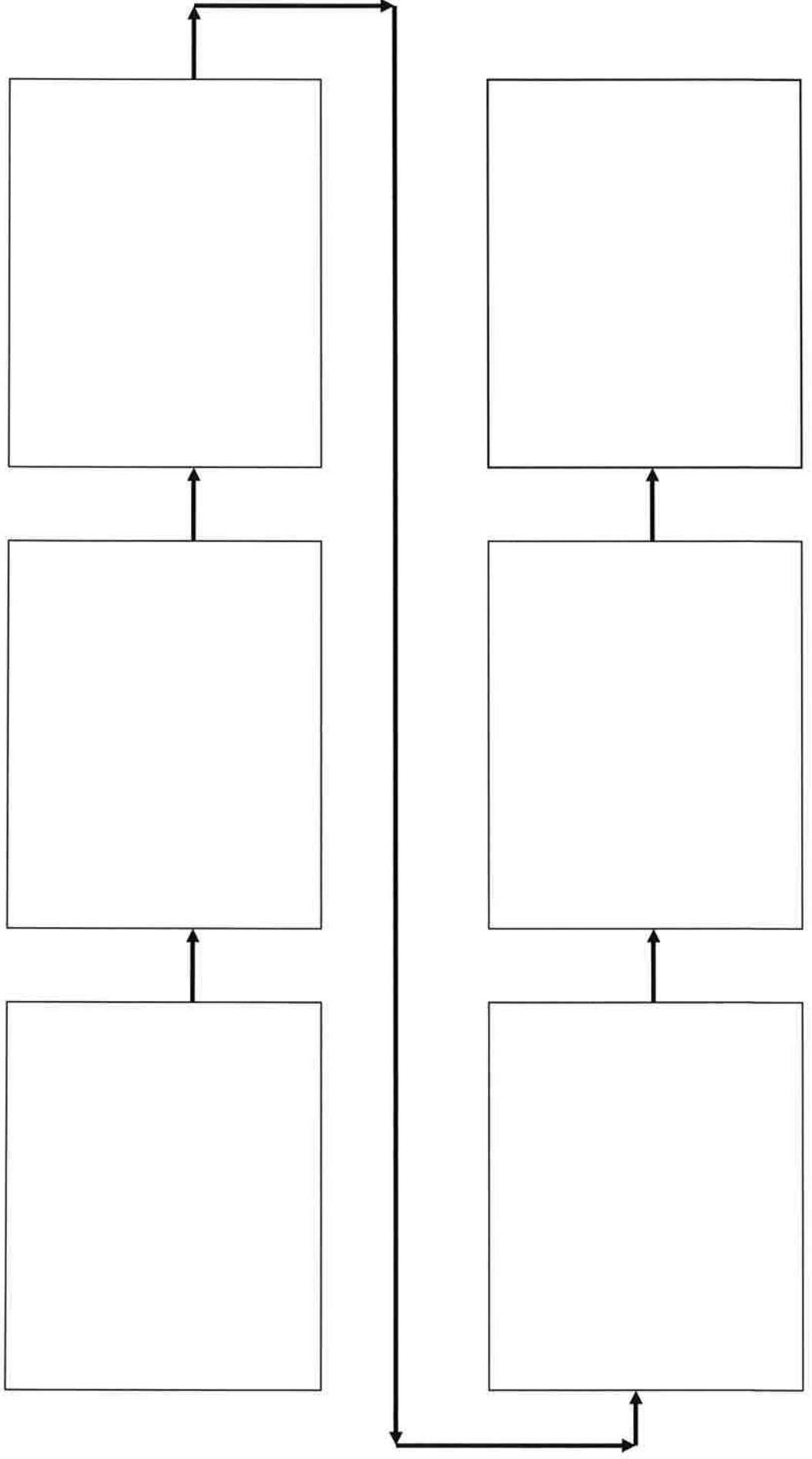
Page # \_\_\_\_\_



# Nonfiction Information Web



**Retell in Sequence**



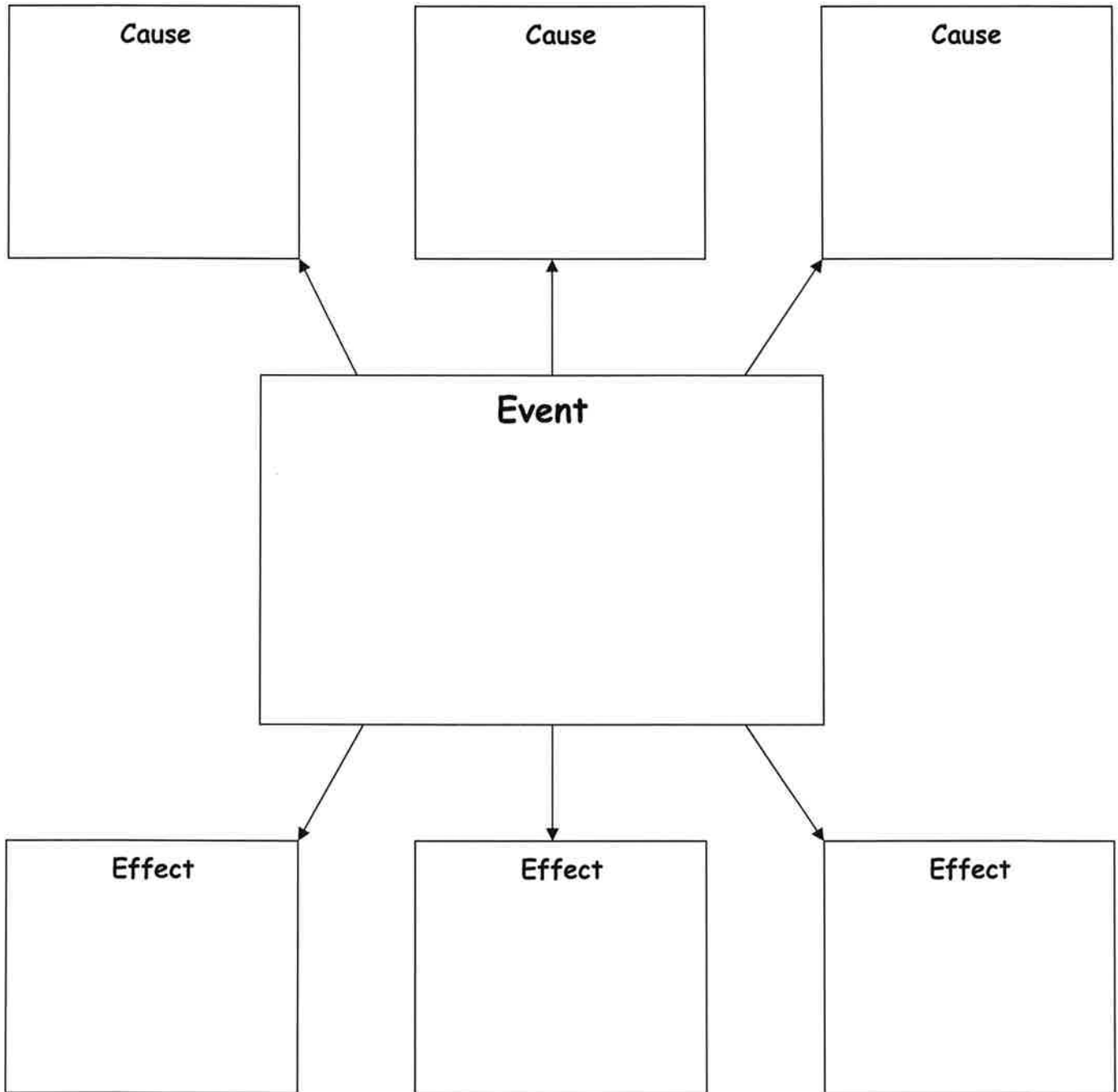
# Cause and Effect

Cause

Effect



## Cause and Effect Chart



## One, Two, Three Nonfiction Analysis

Read the text and put it down. Without looking at the text, write everything you learned in the first column. Then, reread the text and write any additional things you learned or remembered in the second column. Repeat this again for the third column.

1	2	3

Did you notice any difference in what you learned or remembered in each column?

## Making Inferences about the Text

**Background Knowledge + Text Evidence = A Good Inference!**

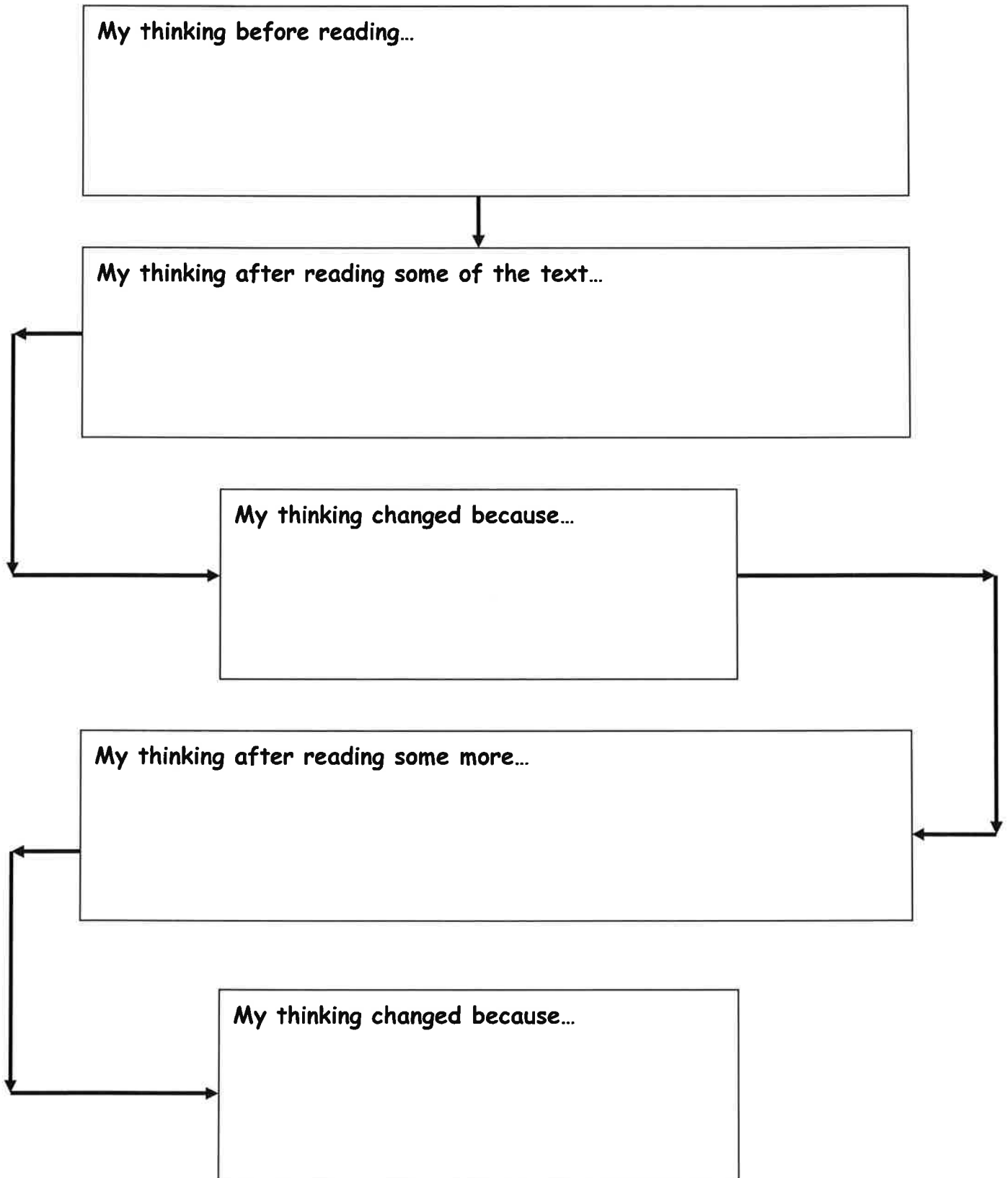
**(BK + TE = GI)**

<b>My Inference</b>	<b>Background Knowledge that Supports my Thinking</b>	<b>Evidence from the Text that Supports my Thinking</b>

## Supporting My Thinking with Evidence

My Thinking	Evidence from the Text

## Tracking Changes in My Thinking





## Storyboard Sketching

Draw the important parts in the story.

A storyboard sketching grid consisting of three empty rectangular panels arranged horizontally. Each panel is a large rectangle, and they are separated by thin vertical lines. The entire grid is enclosed in a thin black border.

## Storyboard Sketching

Draw the important parts in the story.


## Navigating a Nonfiction Text

As you use each of the features below, describe how it helped you during your reading.

<b>Feature</b>	<b>How it Helped Me</b>
<b>Table of Contents</b>	
<b>Headings and Subheadings</b>	
<b>Bulleted Information</b>	
<b>Bold Print</b>	
<b>Photographs/Diagrams</b>	
<b>Captions</b>	
<b>Glossary</b>	
<b>Index</b>	

## Thinking about Words

If you come across an unfamiliar word as you read, add it to the chart below. Describe how you figured out its meaning.

New Word	How did you figure out its meaning?

# Literary Elements

If you find metaphors, similes, or other literary elements in your reading, record them in the chart below. How does each help you better understand what the author is trying to say?

Here's what I found...	Page #	How does it help my understanding?

## What I Remember about the Story

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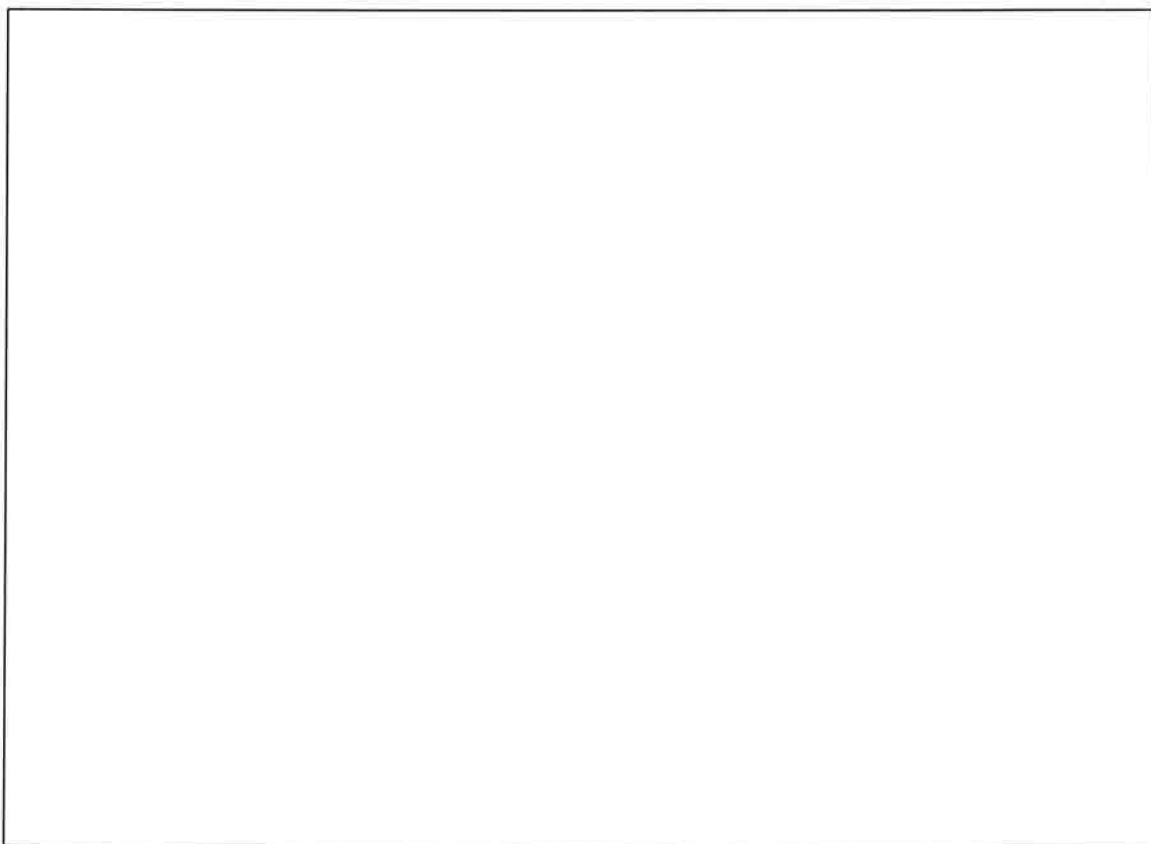
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## What I Learned from My Reading

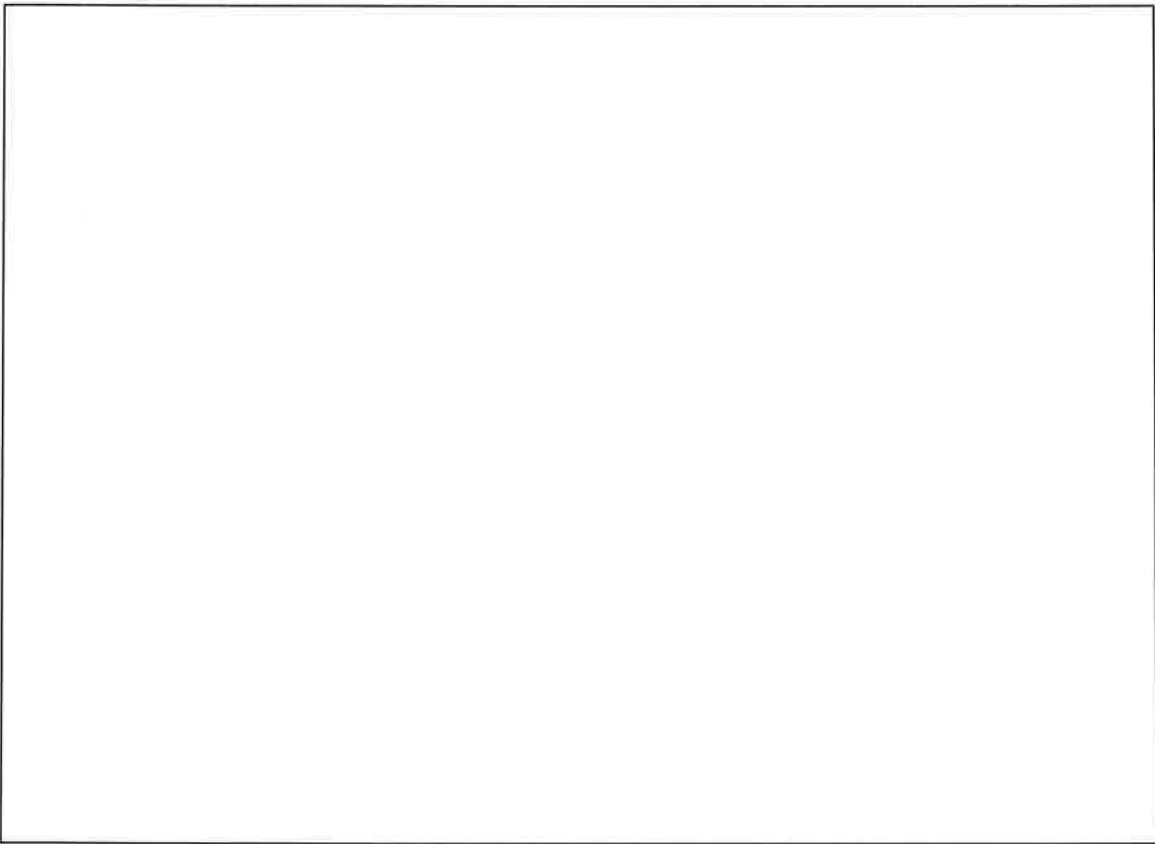
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## My Book Recommendations

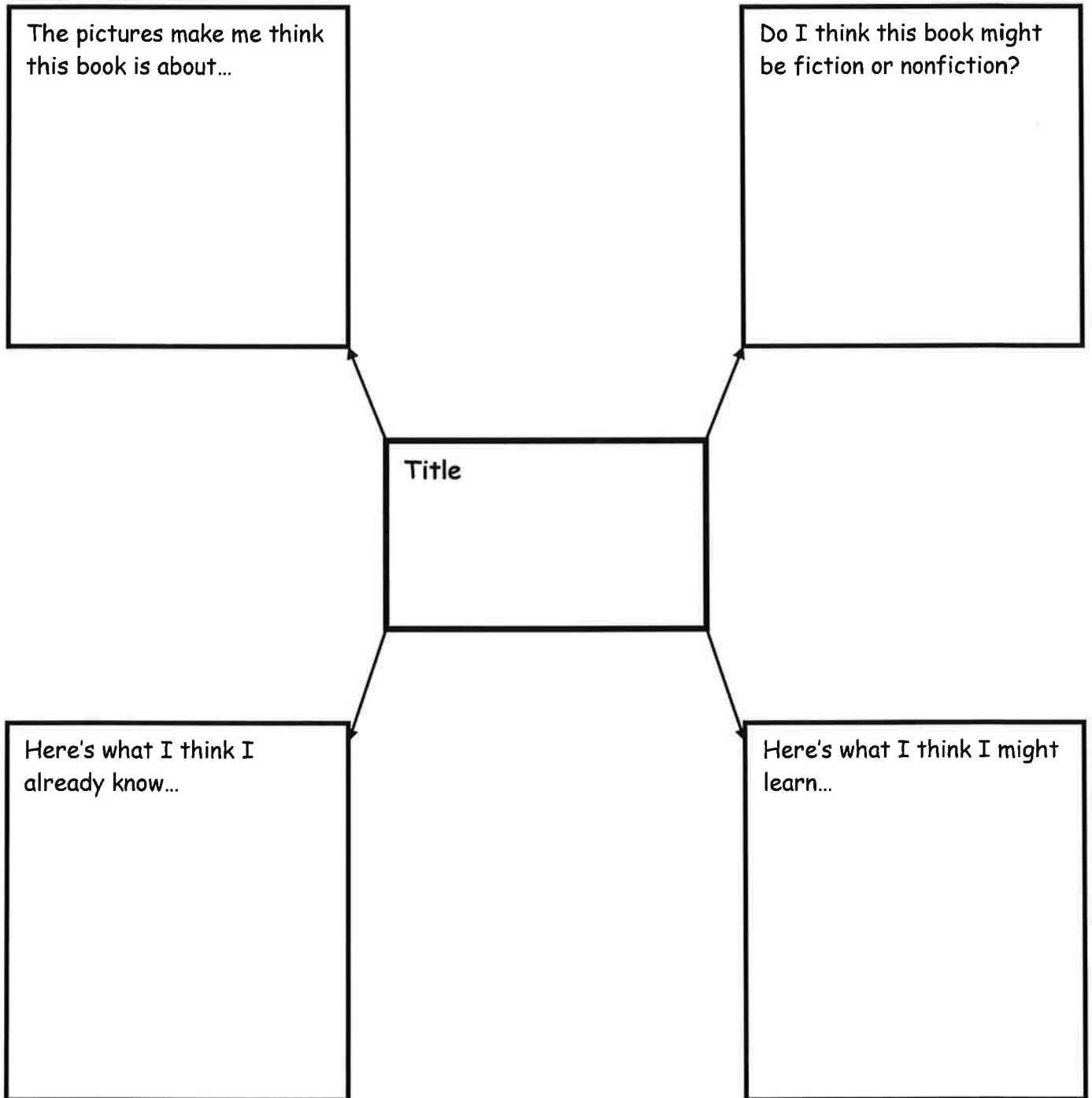
Title	Brief Description	My Rating
		<input type="checkbox"/> Thumbs Up <input type="checkbox"/> Okay <input type="checkbox"/> Thumbs Down
		<input type="checkbox"/> Thumbs Up <input type="checkbox"/> Okay <input type="checkbox"/> Thumbs Down
		<input type="checkbox"/> Thumbs Up <input type="checkbox"/> Okay <input type="checkbox"/> Thumbs Down
		<input type="checkbox"/> Thumbs Up <input type="checkbox"/> Okay <input type="checkbox"/> Thumbs Down
		<input type="checkbox"/> Thumbs Up <input type="checkbox"/> Okay <input type="checkbox"/> Thumbs Down
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		<input type="checkbox"/> Thumbs Up <input type="checkbox"/> Okay <input type="checkbox"/> Thumbs Down
		<input type="checkbox"/> Thumbs Up <input type="checkbox"/> Okay <input type="checkbox"/> Thumbs Down



## My Book Recommendations

Title	Brief Description	<b>My Rating</b> (Color the number of stars to represent how much you like the book)
		
		
		
		
		
		
		
		
		
		

## Take a Picture Walk before Reading



## Connections

<b>Connections I made...</b>	<b>How my connection helped me understand my book...</b>
To the main character	
To other characters	
To the problem	
To the setting	
To events in the story	

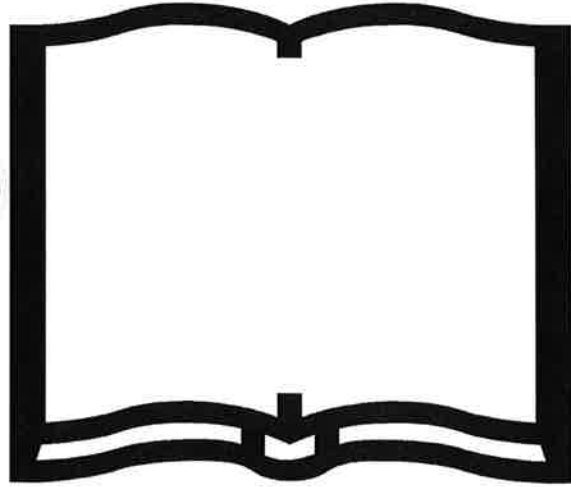
## Finding Sensory Image Words

List sensory words you found in your book. Draw or describe the images you created in your mind as you read these words.

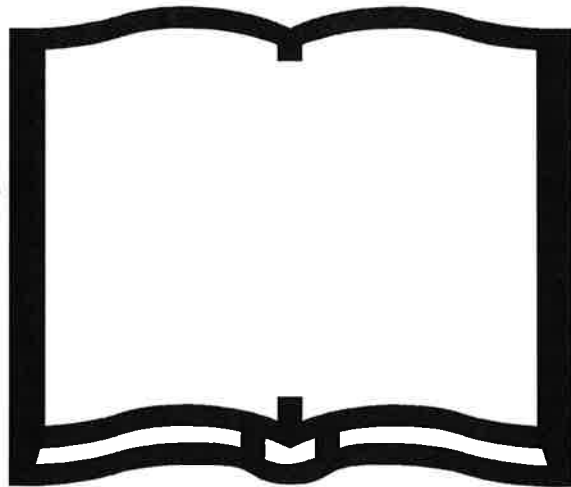
<b>Sense</b>	<b>Words I Found</b>	<b>Images in My Mind</b>
<b>See</b>		
<b>Hear</b>		
<b>Smell</b>		
<b>Taste</b>		
<b>Touch</b>		

## Monitoring Your Thinking

Stop yourself at two points while reading. Record what you are thinking about in the thought bubble when you stop each time. In the book beside the bubble, cite information from the text that sparked your thinking.



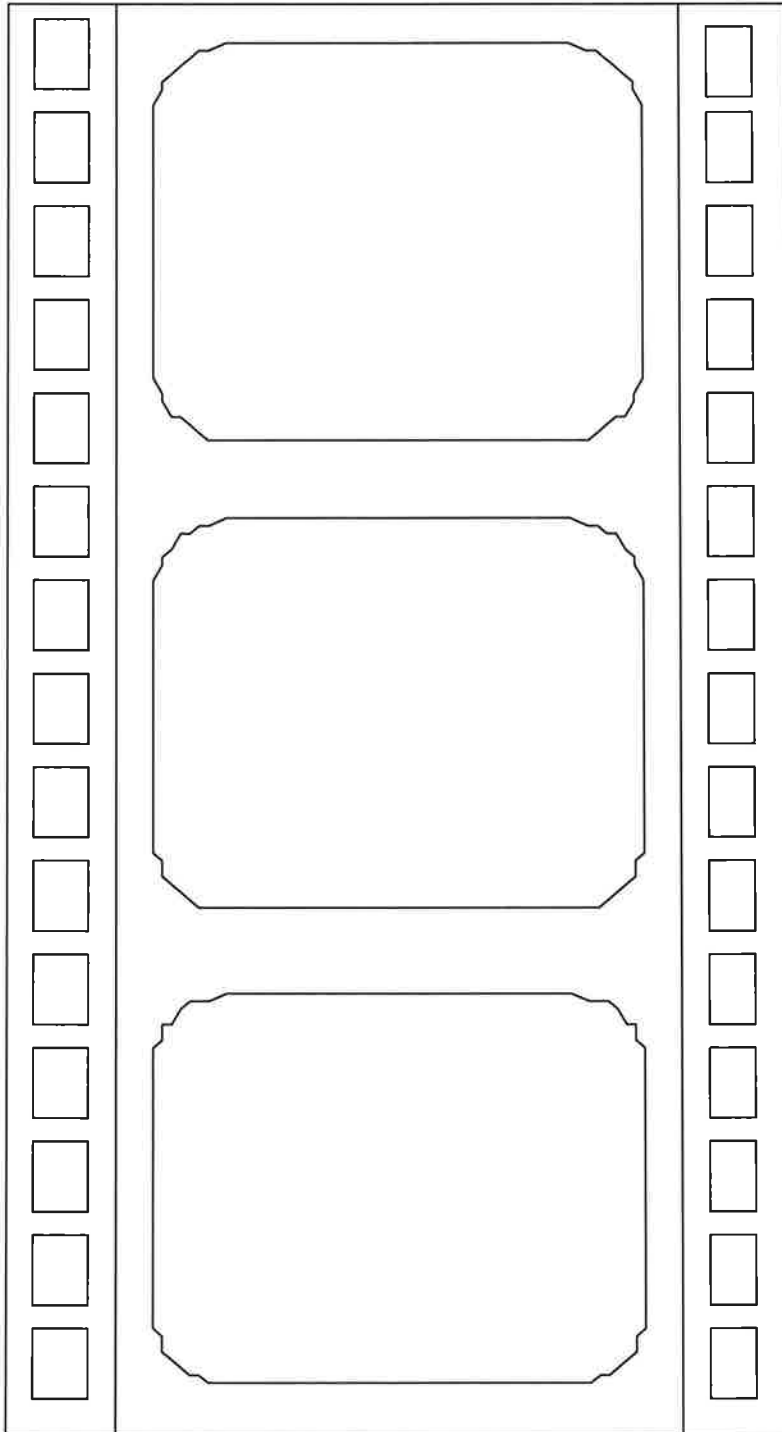
page \_\_\_\_\_



page \_\_\_\_\_

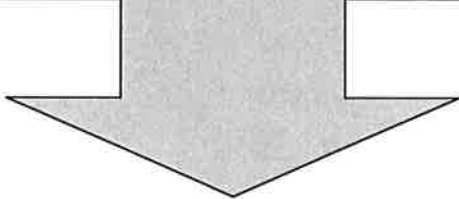
## Make a Movie in Your Mind

Draw or describe the movie playing in your mind as you read.



# Story Solution

**Problem**

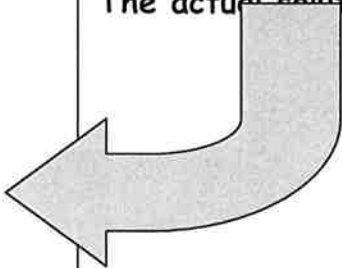


**Solution**

I predict the solution will be...

This solution makes me feel...

The actual solution was...

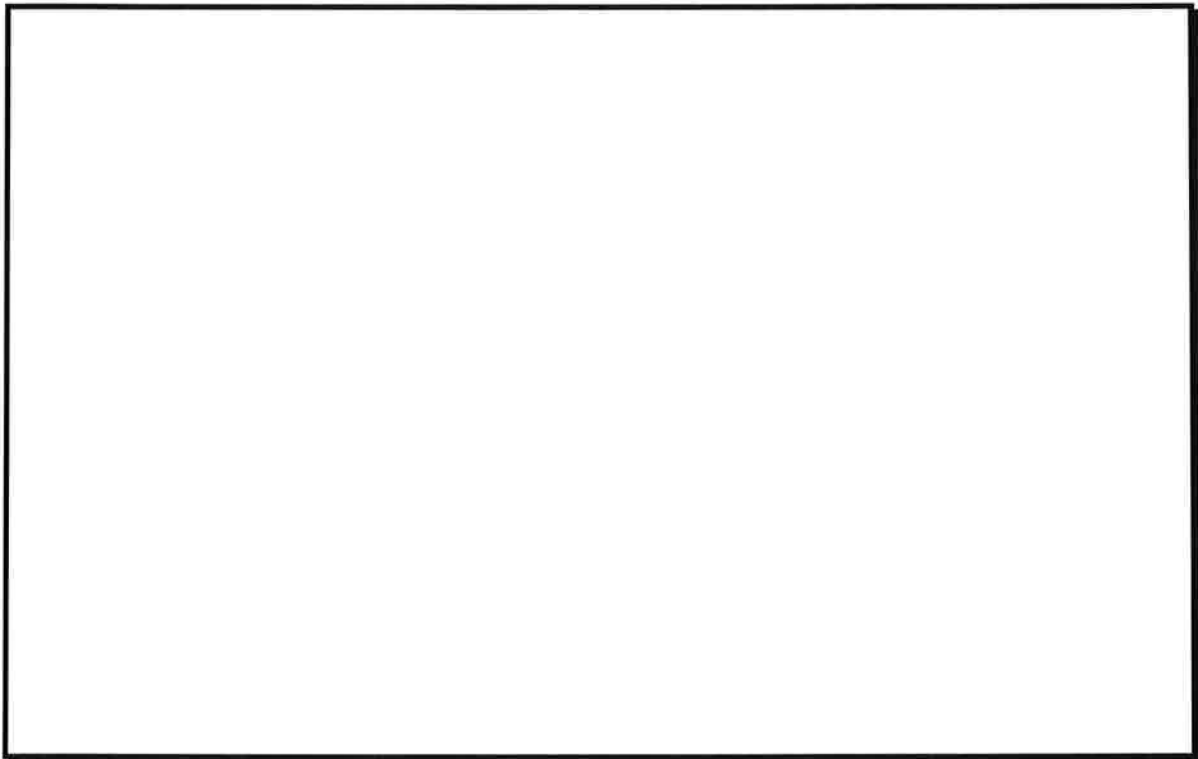




### **Snap a Photo**

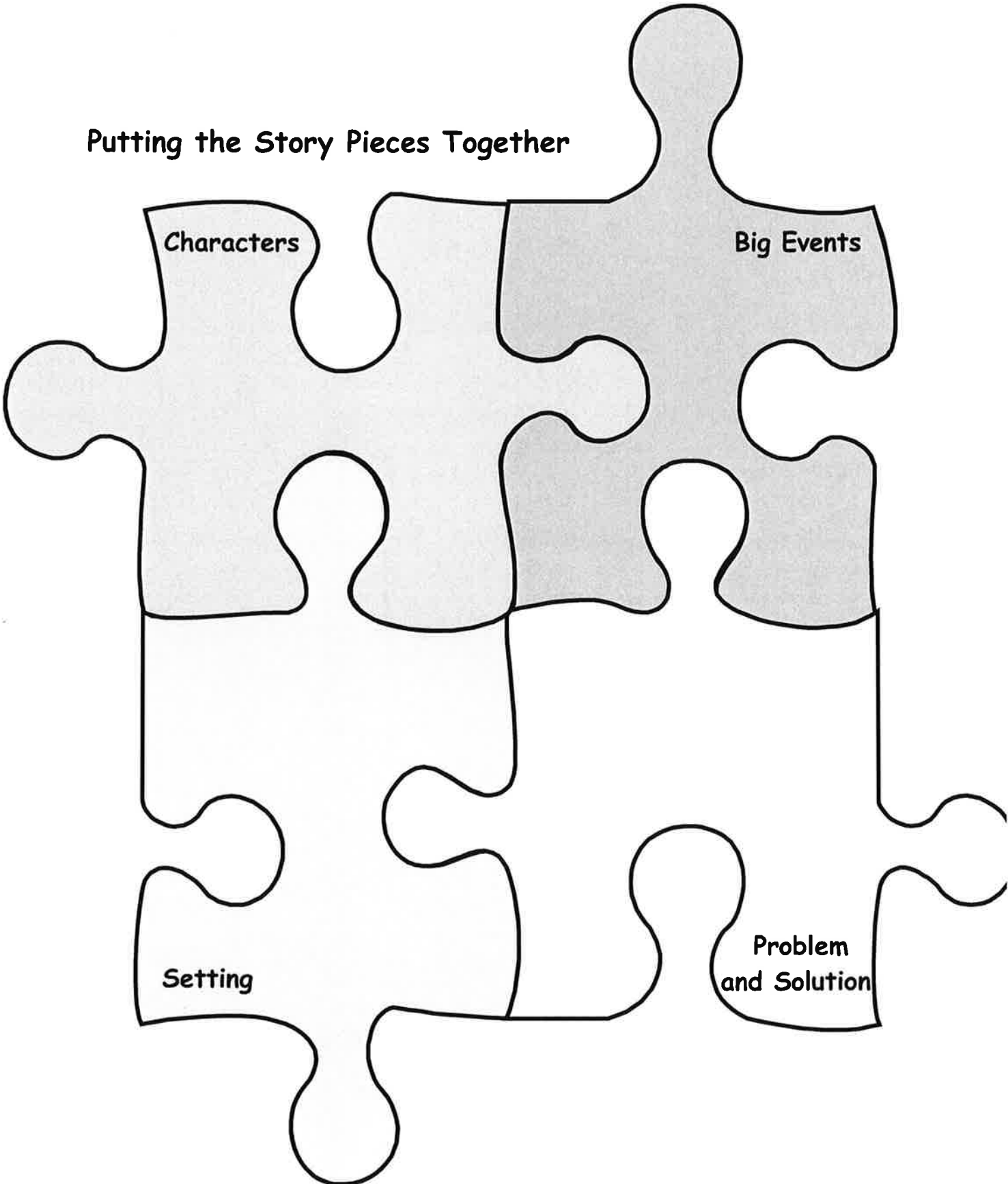
Imagine you are taking a photo of an important event in the story. Show your photograph below. Think about the following as you snap your photo:

- Which characters are in the photo?
- What setting is in the background of the photo?
- What important events are happening in the photo?





**Putting the Story Pieces Together**



## Book Marks

### Book Buddies

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Buddy \_\_\_\_\_

Title \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Today I started on page \_\_\_\_\_ and read to page \_\_\_\_\_ which is a total of \_\_\_\_\_ pages.

One part I want to discuss is

\_\_\_\_\_ .

### Book Buddies

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Buddy \_\_\_\_\_

Title \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Today I started on page \_\_\_\_\_ and read to page \_\_\_\_\_ which is a total of \_\_\_\_\_ pages.

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\_\_\_\_\_ .

### Book Buddies

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Buddy \_\_\_\_\_

Title \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Today I started on page \_\_\_\_\_ and read to page \_\_\_\_\_ which is a total of \_\_\_\_\_ pages.

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\_\_\_\_\_ .

### Book Buddies

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Buddy \_\_\_\_\_

Title \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Today I started on page \_\_\_\_\_ and read to page \_\_\_\_\_ which is a total of \_\_\_\_\_ pages.

One part I want to discuss is

\_\_\_\_\_ .

**Bookmark**

**Wonder Words**

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**Questions**

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**Bookmark**

**Wonder Words**

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**Questions**

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**Bookmark**

**Wonder Words**

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**Questions**

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## Journal Prompt Bookmark

*Respond to your independent reading in your journal.*

*Begin each response with the book title and the date of your journal entry.*

- Retell the events in the story.
- Ask questions about things that confuse you or that you wonder about.
- Describe your feelings about the events.
- Describe your feelings about characters.
- Copy down a quote from a character and tell why you think it's meaningful.
- Describe your favorite part.
- Make a prediction about what will happen next.
- Tell how you would react if you were one of the characters in the story.
- Describe a part that surprised you.
- Does the author use any strong imagery in the story (similes, metaphors, etc.)? Give examples.
- Write a letter to the author or a character.
- Draw pictures or create graphic organizers.



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- Write a letter to the author or a character.
- Draw pictures or create graphic organizers.



## Nonfiction Literature Circle Ideas

Come to your literature circle to talk about...

### Main Ideas

What are the main ideas of the book? How can you summarize these ideas when talking with your group?

### My Questions

Make a list of questions to discuss about the book with your group. Put a star next to the most interesting questions. Highlight a question that doesn't seem to be answered in the text.

### My Favorite Part

Cite the page number of your favorite part. Describe why you liked it.

### My Reflections

What surprised you? What is the most important things you learned? How could this information be useful to you? Would you recommend this book?



## Nonfiction Literature Circle Ideas

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What surprised you? What is the most important things you learned? How could this information be useful to you? Would you recommend this book?



# Literature Circle Reflections

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Book Title \_\_\_\_\_

Discussion Prompt:

Before: Respond to the prompt before meeting with your literature circle group.

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After: Respond to the prompt after meeting with your literature circle group. Did you change your thinking in any way? If so, why?

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## Literature Circle Bookmark

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Read to page \_\_\_\_\_ by \_\_\_\_\_ (date).

My Question:

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Write a short summary on the back of this slip of paper. Include only the most important events.

## Literature Circle Bookmark

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Read to page \_\_\_\_\_ by \_\_\_\_\_ (date).

My Question:

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Write a short summary on the back of this slip of paper. Include only the most important events.

## Literature Circle Bookmark

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Read to page \_\_\_\_\_ by \_\_\_\_\_ (date).

My Question:

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---

Write a short summary on the back of this slip of paper. Include only the most important events.

## Literature Circle Bookmark

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Read to page \_\_\_\_\_ by \_\_\_\_\_ (date).

My Question:

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---

Write a short summary on the back of this slip of paper. Include only the most important events.

## Literature Circle Discussion Log

Title and Author:

For Discussion Date:

Reading Assignment:

A part that I would like to share with my group:

(Include the page number.)

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One question that I have about the reading:

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Wonder Words: Write three words from your reading that you wonder about and want to discuss with your group.

(Include page numbers.)

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## Literature Circle Discussion Log

Title and Author:

For Discussion Date:

Reading Assignment:

I'd like to talk to my group about...

I'd like to ask them...

I've been wondering why...

## Discussion Ideas for Literature Circle Meetings

Respond to a part of the book that . . .

- Makes you laugh
- Makes you wonder
- Surprises you
- You don't understand
- Has interesting words
- Reminds you of another book
- Reminds you of something that has happened in your life
- Makes you sad or upset
- Was your favorite part

In all cases, cite the text!