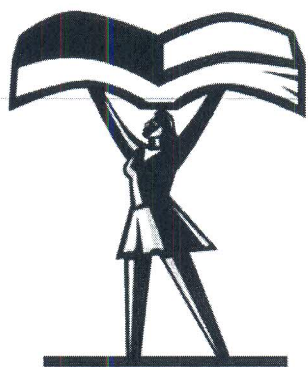
TEACHER RESOURCE FOR READING WORKSHOP GRADES 3 - 5

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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Section X: READER RESPONSE TOOLKIT

from Wachusett Regional School District

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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	**Whole Class & Small Group** Phonological Awareness Phonics/ Spelling High- frequency Word Study Structural Analysis Interactive Edit *	45-90 minutes	***Reading Workshop:*** Focus Lesson (10-15 min.) Independent Reading (30-45 min.) Conferring Group Share (5 min.) ***Small Group Instruction:*** Guided Reading Strategy Groups Book Clubs/ Literature Circles Independent Literacy Work/ Centers	45-60 minutes	***Writing Workshop:*** Focus Lesson (10-15 min.) Independent Writing/Conferring (25-45 min.) Conferring Group Share (5 min.) ***Small Group Instruction:*** Strategy Groups Interactive Writing
				Whole Class, Shared Experiences		
			30-45 minutes	***Reading:*** Read Aloud Literature/ Info Text Study Storytelling Shared Reading/Choral Reading Readers' Theater/ Dramatization		***Writing:*** Shared Writing Interactive Writing Interactive Edit* Handwriting
Grades Three-Five	15-20 minutes	**Whole Class & Small Group** Phonics/ Spelling High- frequency Word Study Vocabulary Structural Analysis Interactive Edit * Grammar*	60 minutes	***Reading Workshop:*** Focus Lesson (10-15 min.) Independent Reading (40-45 min.) Conferring Group Share (5 min.) ***Small Group Instruction:*** Guided Reading Strategy Groups Book Clubs/ Literature Circles Independent Literacy Activities	60 minutes	***Writing Workshop:*** FocusLesson (10-15 min.) Independent Writing & 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) Confering Group Share (5 min.) ***Small Group Instruction:*** Strategy Groups
				Whole Class, Shared Experiences		
			30-45 minutes	***Reading:*** Read Aloud Literature/ Info Text Study Current Events Shared Reading/Choral Reading Readers' Theater Test Reading & Writing Poetry Reading, Writing, Sharing & Response		***Writing:*** Shared Writing Interactive Writing Interactive Edit* Grammar Handwriting

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 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.

Esssential Characteristics of the Reading Workshop

- ❖ A community of learners.
- ❖ Genuine talk, reading, and writing.
- ❖ Individual strengths and needs.
- ❖ Individual and group responsibility.
- ❖ High expectations for achievement.
- ❖ High level of engagement.

Figure 4–2. Essential Characteristics of Reading Workshop

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.

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

What Matters: Variation in Amount of Independent Reading

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	8000	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

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

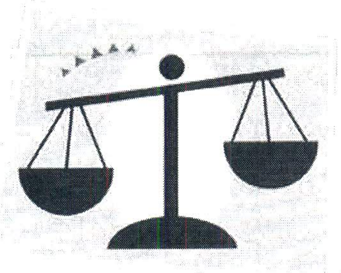
Reading workshop enables students to bring their own experiences and interests to the act of reading. In guided reading, you prompt them to share things in their background that relate to the text you have chosen for the group to read. In independent reading, even though students make their own choices 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

SSR- Sustained Silent Reading D.E.A.R.- Drop Everything And Read	Independent Reading
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

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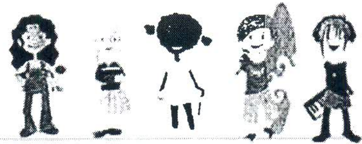
Book Talks



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	
Connection *1-3 min.*	*Yesterday we…*
Teaching Point *Repeat often throughout the teaching*	*Today I am going to teach you…* *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.*
Explicit Instruction *5-10 min.*	*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'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.*
Active Engagement: Guided Practice *3-5 min.*	*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.* *Now, I'll read it again and ask you to sketch your image in your Reader's Notebook.*
Link: Send off for Independent Reading *1 min.*	*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!*
Share	*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.*

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.)

<u>ACTIVE ENGAGEMENT</u> ***<u>(2-3 minutes)"Let's try it!"</u>***

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.)*

<u>LINK</u> ***<u>(1-2 minutes)"Wrap up & remind"</u>***

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

Focus Lesson Topic	**Giving a Book Talk**
Materials	A book to use during the focus lesson for which to give a book talk Independent reading bag with 3-5 titles, including several fiction books.
Connection 1 minute	*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 think 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.*
Explicit Instruction 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	*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: *First I will tell you the title ____________* *Then I will you the author ______________* *Now I will retell the story. I will tell you the name(s) of the main character(s). ___________* *I will tell you the setting. __________* *I will tell you about the problem. _______________* *I will tell you about the important things that happen in the story as the problem is worked out. ______________________* **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. __________________* *Finally, I will tell you why I liked this story and why I wanted to tell you about it. __________________________*

Guided Practice 5 minutes	*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.*
Send Off [for Independent Practice] 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.	*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.*
Group Share	Choose one student (perhaps while you are conferring) to give a book talk about the story he/she read during IR.

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: <u>How To Give A Book Talk</u>

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.

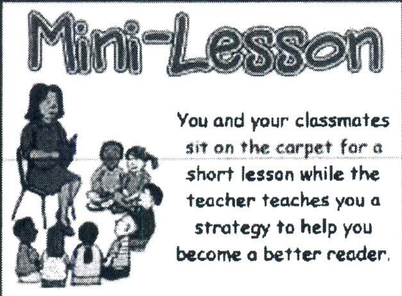
Launching the Reading Workshop

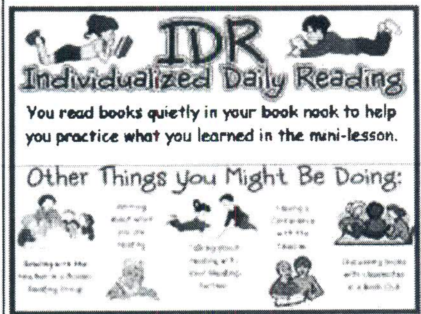
We spend the first month of school learning the rules and procedures for reading workshop in our classroom. Below are some of the rules, routines, and mini-lessons that have been introduced to readers on Planet 13.

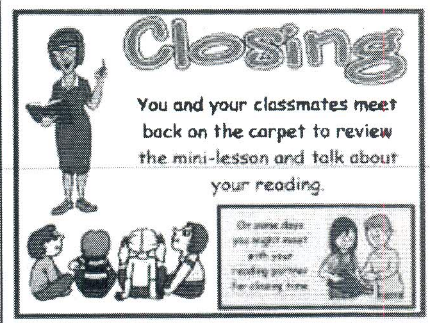
First students learned about the 3 parts of Reading Workshop: Mini-Lesson, Individualized Daily Reading, and Closing.

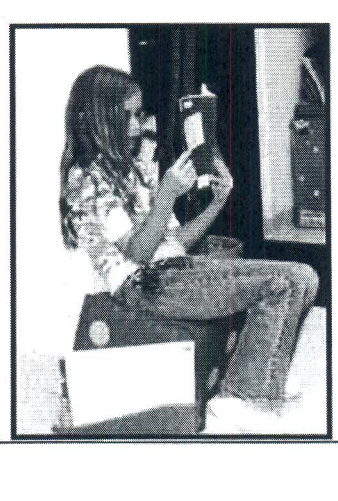
This helped them understand that reading workshop follows the same predictable structure everyday.

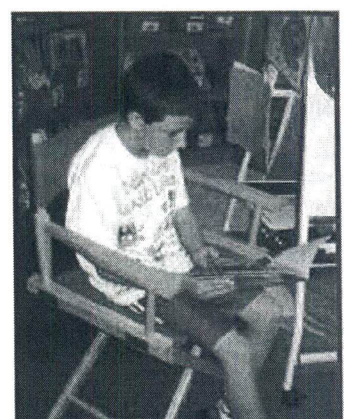
Learn more about the structure of Reading Workshop.

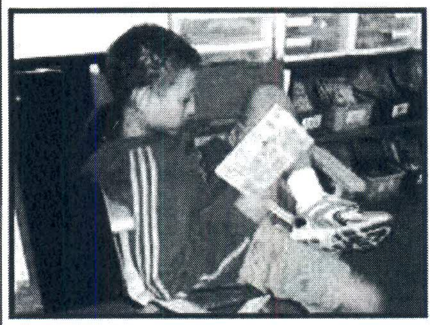




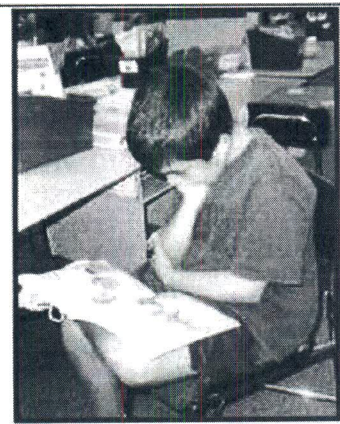




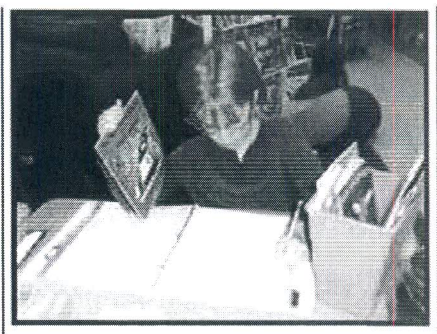




Students were then introduced to the concept of Book Nooks. Readers began trying out different places in the room in hopes of discovering the "best place" to read.

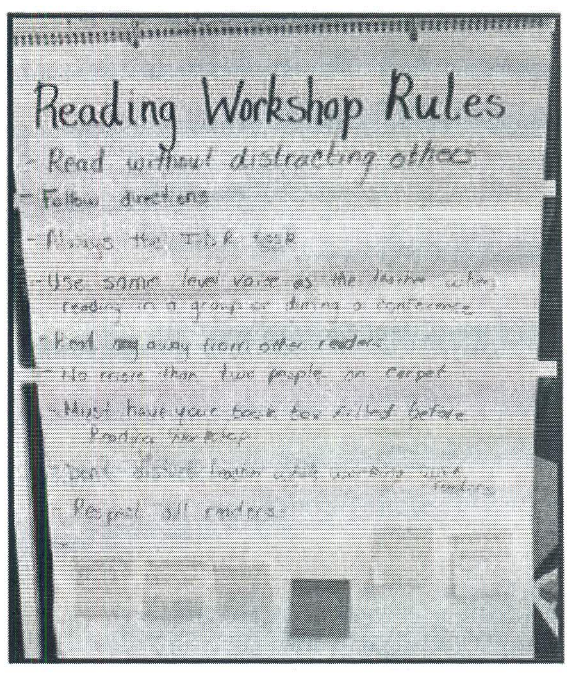


Students selected new books from the class library and learned how to record books in their reading logs.



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.

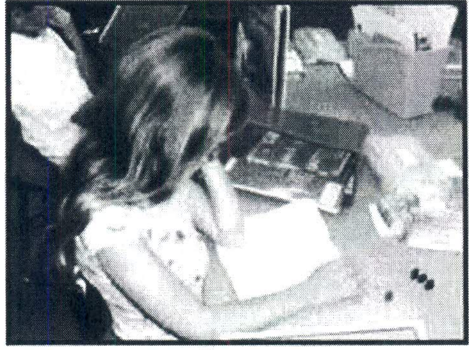


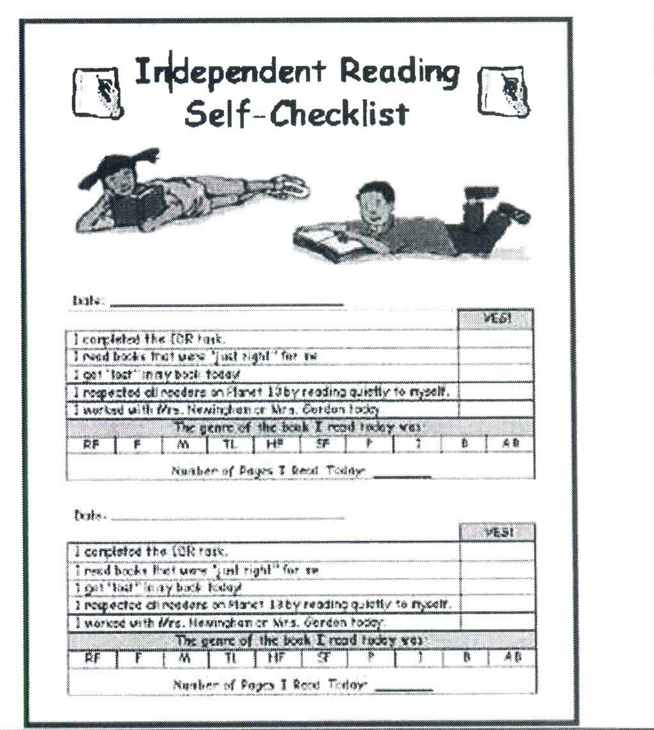
When recording books in their reading log, students are asked to indicate the genre of the book with a genre code. To help them understand how to do this accurately, students were introduced to the different genres in three consecutive mini-lessons.

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."

<u>Learn more about studying genres in the reading workshop.</u>

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: ____________________

	YES!
I completed the IDR task.	
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: ____________________

	YES!
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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.	*What kinds of books do you like to read?* *Is this a "just right" book?* *Is this a "vacation" book?* *Is this a "dream" book?* *Did you use the 5-finger test to choose a book?*
Reader spends more time browsing than reading.	Teacher assists with book choice and closely monitors initial reading of text.	*Let me help you choose a book.* *Let's take a few minutes together while you read this book.* *Read this page and then stop and tell me what happened.*
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.	*I can tell you are interested in reading about ________.* *This book may be a little difficult, but I can help you find another book on ________.* *Is this a book you want to read <u>with</u> someone?* *Let me tell you what I do to choose a book* • *5-finger test* • *read first page and then read in middle of the book*
Student sounds like a reader but demonstrates little comprehension of text.	Points to ponder: • interest level • prior knowledge • ask to think /pause/retell • determine where comprehension breaks down (sentence, paragraph, page)	*What do you know about this subject?* *Is this a topic that interests you?* *Stop here and think about what you just read.* *Are there any words that confused you?*
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.	*This looks like another "vacation" book.* *It looks like you are interested in ________.* *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.*
Reader doesn't plan before reading.	Teacher models effective strategies such as: previewing, listing, mapping, asking questions, recalling prior knowledge.	*Before I start reading, I think about what I already know about the topic.* *I ask myself questions that I want answered in the book.* *If there's a book jacket, I read it to try to figure out what the book might be about.*
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.	*Why do you think the author wrote this book?* *Do you think this book will inform, entertain, or persuade you?* *Before I start reading, I think of why I'm reading this book—interest, assignment.*

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.	*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).*
Reader has inadequate background knowledge to be successful with text.	Teacher needs to provide background information (e.g. artifacts, maps, videos, experiences).	*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 ______.*
Reader doesn't ask questions.	Teacher models questioning strategy showing how to question before, during, and after reading.	*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.*
Reader doesn't make predictions.	Teacher shares how to make predictions based on pictures, prior knowledge, and experiences. Also shows how to revise predictions.	*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.*
Reader reads literally, doesn't make inferences.	Teacher models strategy for making inferences based on prior knowledge and from information in text.	*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.*
Reader doesn't visualize.	Teacher models a think aloud explaining what she visualizes based on descriptions from text.	*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.*
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.	*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.*
Reader doesn't reflect on passage.	Teacher models a think aloud demonstrating her reflections on text.	*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.*
Reader has difficulty remembering and summarizing.	Teacher models responding in a journal. Also provides opportunities for relating the new material to known material.	*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.*

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.

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

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'llwant 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

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.'

"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 stars 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?

"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

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

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.