### Read Aloud & Independent Reading

#### Read Aloud: Reading is Thinking!
Teacher will model how they think as they read. Teacher will think aloud throughout the read aloud (before, during, and after they read). The emphasis is on making students aware of their own reader voice through an explicit Think Aloud where the teacher models listening to their own reader voice.

Teacher might say: *Have you ever stopped to listen to the little voice in your head as you read? I call this my reader voice and this voice helps me think about and understand what I’m reading – it’s really smart! Today, I want to show you how I stop and listen to my reader voice as I read. I’ve chosen this book to share with you today, titled (fill-in name of book) and as I read it aloud to you I’m going to be stopping, listening to my reader voice, and sharing with you what this little voice inside my head is thinking and telling me.*

At the end of the read aloud, bring attention to the blank Reading Is Thinking Chart and facilitate a discussion about how it is truly impossible to read without thinking – you just can’t stop that reader voice from talking to you! Be sure to talk about how you will be building this chart together – as you each listen to your own reader voice.

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#### Independent Reading: Selecting Books and Enjoying Silent Reading
Today’s lesson will focus on introducing the system you have set-up for selecting and returning books in your classroom library and your expectations for the noise level in the classroom during independent reading. In establishing these systems, keep your own comfort level in mind. You’ll want to consider:

- How you will organize the texts in your library (genre, topics, authors, etc… divided by shelves, baskets, labels, etc…)
- How often students will be allowed to go to the library and switch-out their selections
- Will each student be responsible for returning his or her own selections?
- Are you most comfortable with silence during independent reading so that you can conduct conferences without interruption?
- Where will students be during the independent reading time – assigned seats, spots of their choice, assigned places other than their usual seats?

Be certain that there is time allotted for students to read on this first day. This will be a good time for you to walk around and spot check selections. These observations will guide your planning for Day 2. Your chart may look like this:

#### Using Our Classroom Library:
- All books are returned to the spot from which they were taken.
- Books are placed on shelves with their spine facing out.
**Read Aloud: Reading is Thinking! – Interactive Think Aloud (S)**

Teacher will refer back to yesterday’s introduction of Reading is Thinking – Listening to Our Reader Voices. Today, teachers will invite students to Think Aloud with them as they read aloud.

Teacher might say: Yesterday, we talked about the reader voice in my head and I showed you how I stop and listen to my reader voice as I read so that I can really think about what I’m reading and what it all means. Today, we’re going to do this together. I want you to listen to your own reader voice as I read aloud. We’ll be stopping from time to time to share our thoughts. I’ve chosen some places to stop, but if your reader voice is shouting out inside your head you can stop us too by raising your hand and you’ll be able to share what you’re thinking with all of us.

As students share their thoughts, be sure to label each. For example, if a student says, “When you read that part it made me wonder how (character name) felt.” You might reply by saying, “So by putting yourself in (character name’s) place your reader voice then had a question or a wondering about something that’s really important to understanding the story – the character’s feelings.” ***The IPG focus for the week is character. You will want to plan some explicit talk about character during this discussion without limiting the discussion to character analysis.***

This is also a good time to begin using Accountable talk stems, such as:
- “What I hear you saying is…”
- “What do you think about (student’s) question (student)?”
- “What did (student) just say?”
- “Asking questions is something good readers do.”

Big points to make today are:
- It is impossible to stop your reader voice
- Talking about our thinking helps all of us to understand the text more fully and to become better readers
- Add a couple of patterns of thought that have surfaced in your classroom to the Reading is Thinking! Chart

**Independent Reading: Making Good Book Choices (S)**

The focus of today’s lesson is to establish clear criteria for choosing just-right books during independent reading time. Just as important as allotting time for reading is ensuring that the books students are reading during the independent reading time are those that will benefit them most as readers. Readers should choose just right books. Because you want students to have plenty of choice, they must have specific strategies for choosing these just right books independently.

You will develop a chart with students that will clearly define what a Just Right book is in your classroom. It is important to remember that students will be able to identify and articulate these ideas if they have an explicit model of an Easy, Just-Right, and Hard book. Teachers should bring in examples of each of these types of books for themselves and read aloud small portions of each book for the students emphasizing the characteristics they want students to identify.

### Choosing a Just Right Book

**Easy Books:**
- You can read all the words.
- You understand all of the ideas.
- You have read it many time before and can read it fluently/smoothly.

**Just Right Books**:
- You can read almost all of the words.
- You understand most of the ideas, but there are some things that make you think.
- You’re interested in the book.
- You can read most of it fluently.

**Hard Books:**
- There are many words that you don’t know or understand.
- It doesn’t make sense to you.
- It’s confusing.
- You wouldn’t be able to talk to someone about what you’re reading.

For ideas for Strategies for Selecting Just-Right Books refer to Regie Routman’s Reading Essentials, pg. 93 and Appendix E, pg. A-6

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Austin Independent School District, Elementary Language Arts Department, ’08-'09
### Day 3

**Read Aloud: Reading is Thinking! – Thinking, Talking, and Writing About Your Reading (S)**  
Teacher will refer back to the Reading is Thinking! Chart that the class has been building, making note of how students and teachers have been sharing their thoughts orally. Teacher will then model using sticky notes to maintain a written record of their thinking as they read.  
Teacher might say: *Over the last two days we’ve really worked at listening to our reader voice as we read and we’ve been sharing our thoughts with each other. Today, I want to show you what I do so that I have a way to remember my thoughts. As I read and record my thoughts, I want you to be thinking about how this helps me as a reader.*

Facilitate a discussion about why it’s important for readers to record their thinking and how this helps them to build their understanding of the text. As we read we might refer back to a question, observation, prediction and adjust or confirm our initial thoughts thereby continuously and fluidly building our understanding of the text. **The IPG focus for the week is character. You will want to plan some explicit talk about character during this discussion without limiting the discussion to character analysis.***

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**Independent Reading: Recording our Thinking as We Read (S) & Storing and Maintaining our Personal Independent Reading Selections (M)**  
Teacher will introduce system for storing independent reading materials. At this point, these materials with include: selected books, sticky notes, pencil, and bookmarks. Teacher should also refer back to the Choosing a Just-Right Book criteria that were established the previous day.

Students will be asked to actively use their sticky notes to record their thinking as they read during independent reading today. This will reinforce the mini-lesson from Read Aloud. Teacher should actively check-in with students regarding both book selections and recording their thinking on sticky notes.

Some things to consider:
- How could the Independent Reading time be structured today, so that small groups of children are given time to practice choosing a Just-Right book with teacher support?
- Where in the classroom will students store their Independent Reading materials?
- How many books will each student be able to store with their Independent Reading materials?
- Can you build-in time for a few students to share how they are recording their thinking as they read?

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### Day 4

**Read Aloud: Reading is Thinking! – More Ways to Think as We Read (S)**  
Teacher will refer back to the Reading is Thinking! Chart and highlight any ideas that have been added to the chart thus far. Teacher will ask, *Do you think that my reader voice tells me the same things that your reader voice tells you? Are we all thinking the same things as we read a book together?* Teacher will then facilitate a discussion around these questions. Next, teacher might say, *Today, as we listen to our reader voices, we’ll stop to write down our own thoughts before we share. I wonder if we’ll be thinking the same things or different things?*

During the read aloud stop at predetermined placed in the text and have all students write their own thoughts before they share. Then ask several students to share their thinking. Highlight the differences in each student’s ideas and thoughts and identify the commonalities.

Big points to make today:
- We all have different thoughts as we read because of our individual schemas or backgrounds.
- Despite our individual ways of thinking as we read, there are some common patterns of thought that occur among readers, such as connections, predictions, questions, etc… **The IPG focus for the week is character. You will want to plan some explicit talk about character during this discussion without limiting the discussion to character analysis.***

For more on ways readers think refer to Fountas & Pinnell’s Teaching for Comprehension & Fluency, Chapter 3, pg. 32.

**Independent Reading: The Reading Conference – Part 1 (M, S)**  
Teacher will introduce the Independent Reading Conference protocol to students. The suggested protocol is outlined on the Informal Reading Conference Form attached. Teachers may want to enlarge this form to share it with students.

Points to make:
- During a conference we’ll check to be sure that you are choosing books appropriately based on our Choosing a Just-Right Book criteria.
- The independent reading conference is an opportunity to talk about your reading.
- During a conference we’ll talk about how you’re reading (strategies for sustaining your reading) as well as the big ideas in the texts (how you’re thinking as you read).

Things to consider:
- In order to be able to confer with 3-4 students per day, how long should each conference be?
- How will you facilitate conferences so that students are given the opportunity to show that they have chosen appropriate texts and understand what they are reading?
- Will students be responsible for setting goals during their conferences?
- How will you organize and maintain your records for conferences?
- How will you ensure that over the course of the next 2 weeks you are able to confer with all of your students?
**Read Aloud: Reading is Thinking! – Let’s think about our Thinking (S)**

The focus of today’s lesson is the meta-cognitive process. Not only do we want students to be aware of their reader voice, we want them to be able to accurately identify what strategies they are using.

Teacher might say: Today we’re going to think about our thinking. We’ve been listening carefully to our reader voice and sharing our thoughts with each other. Today, we’ll continue to do that and we’ll also think and talk about the kinds of thoughts we’re having as we read. So, if I’m reading along and I think – I wonder what (character name) will do next? – I’ll share that thought with you and then I’ll note that I had a question. As we read, I want you to think about how doing this will help us as readers.

Some things to consider as you plan for Day 5:
It is important for all readers (adults and students alike) to know which strategies they actively and easily use as they process text. This information helps readers know which strategies they must make a conscious effort to practice in order for them to become a part of their “bag of tricks”. Knowing yourself as a reader is the first step to becoming a better reader.

At the end of the week, your Reading is Thinking! Chart might look like this:

***The IPG focus for the week is character. You will want to plan some explicit talk about character during this discussion without limiting the discussion to character analysis.***

**Independent Reading: The Reading Conference – Part 2 An Example (M, S)**
Teacher will revisit the Independent Reading Conference protocol with students. Teacher will select a student with whom they can model an effective Independent Reading Conference as the rest of the class observes. Students will share what they noticed about both the teacher’s talk and the student’s talk. Teacher will facilitate a discussion that focuses on the major points outlined below.

Points to make:
- Conferences are a check-point for both the teacher and the student. We’ll check to be sure that you are choosing books appropriately based on our Choosing a Just-Right Book criteria.
- The independent reading conference is an opportunity to talk about your reading.
- During a conference we’ll talk about how you’re reading (strategies for sustaining your reading) as well as the big ideas in the texts (how you’re thinking as you read).

Things to consider:
- In order to be able to confer with 3-4 students per day, how long should each conference be?
- How will you facilitate conferences so that students are given the opportunity to show that they have chosen appropriate texts and understand what they are reading?
- Will students be responsible for setting goals during their conferences?
- How will you organize and maintain your records for conferences?
- How will you ensure that over the course of the next 2 weeks you are able to confer with all of your students?
### Read Aloud, Shared Reading, and Independent Reading

#### Read Aloud – Shortened Time: Previewing Text (S)

Today teachers will facilitate a discussion about how readers preview books before deciding to read them. This should be a whole class discussion with the students actively participating in creating a chart for how they preview books.

Teacher might say: *Whenever I’m ready to read a new book, I like to take some time and choose my next book carefully. Last night, I was trying to decide what book to read next and I noticed that I have some very specific things that I do when I’m previewing a book. One of the things I do, is I read the title and this gets my reader voice going and thinking about whether or not I’d be interested in reading the book. I’m going to write that on our chart and I want to hear about some of the things you do when you preview a book.*

As students share their strategies for previewing a book, teachers will use the pre-selected texts (both fiction and non-fiction) to model and reinforce what students are sharing.

*Your chart might look like this:*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ways We Preview Text:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Think about the title</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Read the information on the back cover</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Try the beginning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Try a little from the middle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Think about genre</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Shared Reading: Previewing Text (S)

Today is the first day for shared reading. Teachers will want to take a few minutes to introduce this instructional format to students. It’s important to be explicit in your explanation so that students understand that shared reading is a time for students to actively help the teacher process text. During this time students will be given many opportunities to practice the strategies and skills they are learning during Read Aloud.

Using a non-fiction and fiction example at the overhead, the teacher will ask students to help him/her preview the text in order to decide if it is something they are interested in reading. Your selections can be one-page articles or can be overheads made from read aloud selections. Teachers will want to mark each time a student suggest previewing the text by using a strategy from the *Ways We Preview Text* Chart.

#### Independent Reading – Extended Time: Previewing Text (S)

The focus for the independent reading time today is for students to refer to the *Ways We Preview Text Chart* as they choose books to read during independent reading. The teacher will want to monitor student choices and explicitly ask students questions about how they chose their text.

Things to consider:
- How much time should be dedicated to independent reading today so that all students are able to practice making good book choices by choosing just-right books and previewing them carefully?
- How will you monitor this process?
- Should all students practice this at the same time or should you call small groups to the classroom library?

Students and teacher will also continue to work on establishing a quiet Independent Reading time so that all readers can do their best thinking.

#### Read Aloud: Distinguishing between Fiction and Non-Fiction Text (L)

Using examples of both fiction and non-fiction text from the read aloud selections, teachers will facilitate a discussion about distinguishing between fiction and non-fiction text. The discussion should focus on how text features help readers identify and distinguish between fiction and non-fiction text. It is important for students to be proficient at distinguishing fiction and non-fiction because of the distinct ways in which each text is processed. We also want to encourage students to balance their reading between fiction and non-fiction texts.

After a short discussion regarding the distinction between fiction and non-fiction texts, teacher should read aloud from a fiction text and reinforce students’ ways to identify fiction. ***Imbedded in this conversation should be a continuing conversation around character analysis.***

*Austin Independent School District, Elementary Language Arts Department, ’08–’09*
**Shared Reading: Distinguishing between Fiction and Non-Fiction Text (L)**

This will be a short lesson that will provide an additional opportunity for students to practice distinguishing between fiction and non-fiction text. Overheads of 3-4 examples should be prepared to share with students. As each piece is placed on the overhead students can work in table groups or partners to turn-and-talk about whether they think the text is fiction or non-fiction and why. Students should be asked to share their thinking.

**Independent Reading: Balancing our reading between Fiction and Non-Fiction (M)**

Today’s talk during Independent Reading builds on the Read Aloud and Shared Reading lessons. The focus will be on providing concrete reasons for balancing our reading between fiction and non-fiction texts. Some benefits to consider are:

- building your vocabulary
- establishing flexibility with language
- practicing the different ways to process text effectively by reading a variety of texts

**Read Aloud: Reading is Thinking! – Thinking about Text Features within Fiction Text (S) Extended Time**

Before reading aloud the selected fiction text for today, teacher will refer back to yesterday’s discussion regarding using text features to distinguish between fiction and non-fiction text.

After a brief “walk” through the selected text, students should be asked to identify the text as either fiction or non-fiction.

Distinguishing features for fiction include:

**Text Features**
- Illustrations
- Dialogue
- Continuous text
- Bold text

**Story Form**
- Characters
- Setting
- Plot
- Problem
- Solution

Just before reading, teacher might say: *We have already done so much thinking before we even start reading our book for today and now we know that this book titled (insert book title here) is fiction. As we read today, we want to think carefully about how the text features we’ve identified – illustrations, dialogue, etc... - help us understand the ideas and the characters in the story better. Does paying close attention to the dialogue help? Does looking closely at the illustrations support our understanding? Let’s remember that Reading is Thinking! And let’s share our thoughts as we read today.*

***The IPG focus for the week is character. You will want to plan some explicit talk about character during this discussion without limiting the discussion to character analysis.***

**Shared Reading: No Shared Reading today**

**Independent Reading: Making Public the Guidelines for Independent Reading or the Reader’s Workshop (M)**

By Day 8 of Independent Reading many of the routines have been established and practiced. Today these routines and expectations will be made public through the use of a *Our Independent Reading or Reader’s Workshop* chart.

**Our Reader’s Workshop:**
- You must always be reading a book or writing your thoughts about your reading.
- You need to work silently to enable you and your peers to do your best thinking.
- Use a soft voice when conferring with a teacher.
- Select books by thinking about what is just-right for you and previewing them carefully.
- Everyone is responsible for their own materials, that includes books, pencil, and sticky notes.

*This can be added after it is discussed:*
- Record what you are reading in your Reader’s Notebook.

For this lesson it is suggested that the chart be prepared ahead of time since it is based on things that have already been discussed with students. Any additional suggestions from students can be added.

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Austin Independent School District, Elementary Language Arts Department, ’08-’09
**Day 9**

**Read Aloud: Reading is Thinking! – Thinking about Character – Part 1 (S)**  
The focus of today’s lesson is Character Analysis. Understanding a primary character well enhances a reader’s comprehension of the implicit message in the text.

Before reading the selected text the teacher might say:  
**We’ve talked a lot about thinking as we read and paying close attention to the kind of thinking we’re doing. We’ve noticed that each of us has different thoughts as we read even when we’re reading the same book. Today, I’m going to ask you to focus your thinking on the main character of the story I’ll be sharing with you today. Sometimes we’re asked to think in very specific ways and today is one of those days. We’ll continue to make connections, ask questions, make predictions, etc…as well as pay special attention to what the main character is saying, doing, feeling, and thinking so that we can really understand them and the story as a whole better.**  

A Character Analysis Graphic Organizer can be used to facilitate the discussion.

Be sure to segment the text and plan for stops points with questions that will encourage students to think deeply about the main character in the story.

Because of the depth of discussion, during this lesson, it is recommended that you use the same text on Day 9 and Day 10.

**Shared Reading: Reading is Thinking! – Thinking about Character (S)**

This lesson is a continuation of the mini-lesson during Read Aloud. One or two pages from the selected text can be made into overheads and used for choral reading and thinking about Character.

**Independent Reading: The Reader’s Notebook - Keeping a Record of Your Reading (M)**  
Today you will introduce the Reader’s Notebook to students. This notebook can be organized in many ways. One suggestion is to use a pocket folder with brads and include:

- In the front pocket – A Reading Log
- In the brads – Blank notebook paper
- In the back pocket – empty for now (Later, fluency checks can be kept here.)

Using an Enlarged Reading Log or an overhead of the Reading Log (sample attached), model for students how to fill-in all the information on the log. Explain that this log will help everyone to evaluate their reading, keeping in mind that there should be a balance between fiction and non-fiction. (Later, you’ll discuss wide-reading with your students and the log will also help with this.)

**Read Aloud: Reading is Thinking! – Thinking about Character – Part 2 (S)**  
Using the text that was started on Day 9, continue reading aloud and engaging the students in a conversation about character. Today the conversation shifts from simply making observations about the character to adjusting our thoughts on the character based on their interactions with other characters and their setting. The focus is:

- Readers work to understand the characters in their books as a way to understand the larger ideas in text.
- Readers continuously revise their understanding of characters as they respond to their interactions with other characters and their setting.
- The central character in a book provides the reader with insight about the author’s message.

**Shared Reading: No Shared Reading today**

**Independent Reading: Wide Reading (M)**  
Wide Reading refers to reading a variety of text types. In the intermediate grades, many students are naturally drawn to chapter books (novels). While chapter books are an excellent choice, limiting selections to chapter books does not provide the reader with the opportunities to:

- build their vocabulary
- enhance their flexibility with language and language structure
- practice processing a variety of text effectively

Using a selection of 5-7 carefully chosen picture books from a variety of genre and 1 chapter book (novel), teacher will facilitate a discussion about reading widely.

Teacher might say:  
**I’ve noticed that many of us are choosing chapter books to read during independent reading. We do have some excellent choices in our classroom and I’m glad to see that you’ve found some to enjoy. Today, I want to talk to you about varying your selections so that you’ll have the opportunity to read many more books in our classroom. Let’s take a look at the books that I’ve chosen…**

You’ll want to point out that:

- there are certain things that you learn from each book that you read
- each author has a special way of writing and reading many different books by many different authors helps you become an expert at processing text effectively regardless of the structure of the language
- in the time that you can read 1 novel or chapter book, you could read 5-7 picture books and learn so much more

The goal for today is to come to a compromise with your students regarding the number of picture or trade books that they’ll read for every chapter book or novel that they read. A reasonable compromise is 5-7 picture or trade books for every chapter book or novel. Remember that picture books include both fiction and non-fiction and are written at many different levels. 5th graders may enjoy reading Seymour Simon non-fiction books and Chris Van Allsburg fiction books.

**Day 10**

**Read Aloud: Reading is Thinking! – Thinking about Character – Part 1 (S)**

The goal for today is to come to a compromise with your students regarding the number of picture or trade books that you’ll want to point out that:

- take a look at the books that I’ve chosen…”

Shared Reading: Reading is Thinking! – Thinking about Character (S)

This lesson is a continuation of the mini-lesson during Read Aloud. One or two pages from the selected text can be made into overheads and used for choral reading and thinking about Character.

Independent Reading: The Reader’s Notebook - Keeping a Record of Your Reading (M)

Today you will introduce the Reader’s Notebook to students. This notebook can be organized in many ways. One suggestion is to use a pocket folder with brads and include:

- In the front pocket – A Reading Log
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Shared Reading: No Shared Reading today

Independent Reading: Wide Reading (M)

Wide Reading refers to reading a variety of text types. In the intermediate grades, many students are naturally drawn to chapter books (novels). While chapter books are an excellent choice, limiting selections to chapter books does not provide the reader with the opportunities to:

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Teacher might say:  
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You’ll want to point out that:

- there are certain things that you learn from each book that you read
- each author has a special way of writing and reading many different books by many different authors helps you become an expert at processing text effectively regardless of the structure of the language
- in the time that you can read 1 novel or chapter book, you could read 5-7 picture books and learn so much more

The goal for today is to come to a compromise with your students regarding the number of picture or trade books that they’ll read for every chapter book or novel that they read. A reasonable compromise is 5-7 picture or trade books for every chapter book or novel. Remember that picture books include both fiction and non-fiction and are written at many different levels. 5th graders may enjoy reading Seymour Simon non-fiction books and Chris Van Allsburg fiction books.
Read Aloud, Shared Reading, and Independent Reading

**Read Aloud: Reading is Thinking! – Different Kinds of Fiction (L)**

Today’s lesson during the read aloud time is designed to provide time for teachers and students to explore the different kinds of fiction that are available to read from the classroom library before reading a personal narrative aloud. Plan on discussing 3-4 different types of fiction including but not limited to realistic fiction and personal narrative.

Things to consider in planning for today’s lesson:
- What characteristics of each kind of fiction discussed today do you want students to be familiar with at the end of the lesson?
- How will you make these characteristics public?
- Is your library organized in a way that supports this discussion?
- Do you want to label these genres in your classroom library?

It is suggested that the personal narrative that is read aloud today also be the resource for Shared Reading. One to two pages can be made into overheads in order to continue the conversation regarding characteristics of different kinds of fiction.

***The IPG focus for the week is sequence. You will take a close look at sequence later in the week, but you will want to plan some explicit talk about sequence as you look at fiction.***

**Shared Reading: Different Kinds of Fiction – Personal Narrative (L)**

This shared reading lesson is an extension of today’s read aloud lesson. It is suggested that the personal narrative that is read aloud today also be the resource for Shared Reading. One to two pages can be made into overheads in order to continue the conversation regarding characteristics of different kinds of fiction.

Points to reinforce prior to or during choral reading and discussion of the text:
- A Personal Narrative is characterized by an event, incident, or experience in the writer’s own life or in the life of a fictional character.
- Personal Narratives can be categorized under both fiction and non-fiction, depending on the artistic license the writer has taken in conveying the story

Teacher might say:  A personal narrative is a very interesting genre or text type because it can be either fiction or non-fiction. It is fiction when the author has written the story in first person, using I, from the perspective or point of view of a made-up character. It’s non-fiction when the story is from the writer’s own life. Today we are looking at a fiction personal narrative.

**Independent Reading: Writing Responses to Your Reading (M)**

Today teachers will introduce students to the Reader’s Response Letter that they will be writing each week. Students will have a first try at writing their own letter after reading an example from the teacher. This letter will be written on notebook paper in the Reader’s Notebook each week.

Fountas & Pinnell suggest that the teacher might say something like this: **Together we have shared our thinking by talking about books I have read aloud to you and by talking about the books you have chosen to read during independent reading. You have talked about your thinking with your friends and during our conferences and you have kept a record of your thinking using sticky notes as you read. Now, instead of just talking about our reading and writing quick notes on stickies, you’re going to put your thinking on paper. When you write about your thinking, you can remember it and share it with others who read it. In our class this year, you’re going to share your thinking by writing your thoughts in a letter to me in your reader’s notebooks. Each week you are going to write one letter to me, sharing what you are thinking about the book you are reading. I will read your letter and write a letter back to you. I have written a letter to you today to share my thinking about a book I’m reading.**

Teachers will share their letter with the class and then ask, **What do you notice about the letter I wrote?** After students make observations, teacher might say, **This is how I will expect you to write your letters to me. You will write your best thinking in your best writing of a personal letter. Our letters will be a conversation between two readers. Today you will work on your first letter to me during our independent reading time. Use the blank paper in your reader’s notebook and place your notebook in the basket when you are finished. At the end of our independent reading time, I will ask a few students to share their letters with the class.**

For ideas on a teacher letter to share with your class and facilitating this conversation, see Fountas & Pinnell’s Guiding Readers and Writers, Chapter 9, pg. 153.
**Read Aloud: Thinking about Reading through a Genre Study – Book Flood (L)**

Today teachers will begin a genre study of Personal Narrative Text. It will be important to gather many examples of Personal Narratives (both fiction and non-fiction) for this study before you introduce it to the students.

As a way to introduce students to this genre study, teacher may want to give students some time (10 minutes or so) to look through the collection of Personal Narratives they have gathered. Students can work with partners to look through the texts and write down any of their observations regarding the text features or text structure. These observations can be shared and recorded on a Personal Narratives Chart.

Teacher will then read aloud from one Personal Narrative and reinforce all of the students’ observations and adjust ideas if necessary.

It will be important to make the following points during today’s lesson:

- Recognizing a specific genre prepares a reader for processing the text effectively because they have an idea about the type of writing they will be reading, the story structure, and even the type of plot lines that are followed in that genre.
- The Personal Narrative Genre tells the story of one event in the author’s life or in the life of a fictional character created by the author.

**Please note:** 3rd Grade Teachers may want to switch personal narratives for memoir to match the writing IPGs. The strategies and instructional practices outlined would still apply.

***The IPG focus for the week is sequence. You will take a close look at sequence later in the week. You will want to plan some explicit talk about sequence as you look at personal narratives.***

**Shared Reading: No Shared Reading Today**

**Independent Reading: Writing Letters in Your Reader’s Notebook Each Week (M & S)**

This lesson is a follow-up to yesterday’s introduction of the Reader’s Response Letters the students will be writing in their Reader’s Notebooks.

Fountas & Pinnell suggest saying something like this: **Yesterday we talked about how each week you will be writing a letter about the book you are reading or have just finished. Many of you were able to complete your letter yesterday and some of you shared what you had written. Inside your Reader’s Notebooks today, all of you have a typed letter from me about how you will be sharing your thinking about books in writing this year. Please turn to that page.**

Teacher will read the letter aloud to all students. Then say, **This letter is glued into your notebook to remind you about the writing you are doing. You can reread it or refer to it when you need reminding of what you should be writing. If you finished your letter last time, you will notice that I have also written a letter back to you. (Typically, this is a hand written letter in response to the student’s letter.) You can begin today’s quiet reading time by reading my letter. Next week, when you write to me, you will want to review the letter to be sure you respond to what I wrote. If you did not finish your letter yesterday, you will need to do that first today and put your notebook in the completed basket.**

Things to consider and clarify for students on this day:

- Do you want all of your students to write their letters on the same day or do you want to stagger them throughout the week?
- Will you write individual letters to each student specifically addressing some of the things they wrote about or will you write one letter to all students and place a copy in each student’s notebook after reading all of the letters for that week?
- Will students be writing their letters in the classroom during the independent reading time or will they write their letters for homework?

For more ideas on today’s lesson see Fountas & Pinnell’s *Guiding Readers and Writers*, pg. 153 - 155.
Read Aloud: Thinking about Reading through a Genre Study – Connecting with the Author (S)

For today’s lesson, teacher will highlight one of the most common comprehension strategies – Making Connections. Making connections to the text you are reading may have already been discussed and charted on your Reading is Thinking! chart or it may not have. In either case, this will be your opportunity to discuss and explore this important strategy with you students – whether you are revisiting or introducing it today.

Readers naturally make connections as they read. These connections can be categorized as: text-to-self, text-to-text, and text-to-world. Fountas & Pinnell say: These connections create a rich fabric for expanding one’s thinking. [When readers make connections they]:

- Bring background knowledge to the reading of the text.
- Understand purposes for reading texts.
- Interpret texts using personal experiences and knowledge of the world.
- Connect the topic, characters, plot, and setting to personal experience, knowledge of the world, and knowledge of other texts.
- Make connections between and among texts, noticing similarities and differences.
- Relate words to visual images.
- Search for relationships among texts using a wide range of criteria – the same genre, author, illustrator, topic, theme, issue, setting, historical period, character, culture, ethnic group, or age group.

Before reading the selected text the teacher might say: Today we’re going to continue our conversation about how Reading is Thinking! I’m sure that like me, you have found that it is impossible to stop the reader voice in your head as you read. We talked last week about how it is important sometimes to think in very specific ways and today is another one of those days. As always, we’ll continue to do all the great thinking we always do – I can’t imagine not asking questions while I read – but we will be listening closely to when our reader voice makes a connection to what we are reading. I want you to also think about why it is important to make connections as we read – how does this help us become better readers?

Be sure to segment the text and plan for stops points with questions that will encourage students to make connections to the text. After reading the text, facilitate a discussion about the important role making connections plays in understanding what we are reading.

For more on Making Connections as a Comprehension Strategy see Fountas & Pinnell’s Teaching for Comprehension & Fluency, Chapter 5, pgs. 54 – 55.

***The IPG focus for the week is sequence. You will take a close look at sequence later in the week. You will want to plan some explicit talk about sequence as you look at personal narratives.***

Shared Reading: Thinking about Reading through a Genre Study – Connecting with the Author (S)

This shared reading lesson is an extension of today’s read aloud lesson. It is suggested that the personal narrative that is read aloud today also be the resource for Shared Reading. One to two pages can be made into overheads in order to continue the conversation regarding making connections to the author’s ideas as you read.

Teacher will facilitate choral reading and discussion of the text throughout the shared reading time. Special attention should be given to the connections students make throughout the reading and how these connections support a reader’s understanding of the text.

Independent Reading: Topics for Your Reader’s Notebook

Before students begin to read silently today, teachers and students will generate of list of possible topics to write about in their Reader’s Response Journal Letters to the teacher. This chart will become an instructional anchor for students.

Your chart might look like this:

**Topics for Your Reader’s Notebook**

- What the book is about
- How the book reminds you of another book
- How the book makes you feel
- How the author describes things
- Why you think the author wrote the book
- What you would do if you were the main character
-
Day 14

**Read Aloud: Thinking about Reading through a Genre Study – Sequence – Part 1 (S)**

For today’s lesson, teachers will revisit the text selection from day 14 and focus the conversation on the sequence of events.

Things to consider as you plan for today:

- What events can I pull from the story to discuss sequence?
- How will students be able to manipulate the events to put them in correct order?
- Will I have students work with a partner or in small groups?
- How will students make their thinking public?

A Sequence graphic organizer may be used to facilitate the discussion.

Points to make today:

- The order of events in a personal narrative provides an active picture of the story for the reader.
- Understanding text-sequence is strongly related to comprehension of text.

**Shared Reading: No Shared Reading Today**

**Independent Reading: Using our Sticky Notes to Guide Our Reader’s Response Letter (S)**

For today’s lesson, teachers will model using sticky notes to generate a complete Reader’s Response Letter. Teachers may want to consider having the beginning of the letter posted on chart paper and modeling writing the end of the letter as they refer back to the quick notes they have written for themselves in a book they are reading. This will shorten the mini-lesson and still allow for silent reading.

Teacher may say, *Since the first week of school we’ve been talking about our thinking as we read and using sticky notes to write quick notes that will remind us of what we were thinking as we read. Today, I want to show you how I use these sticky notes to help me as I write a Reader’s Response Letter. I like to take all my sticky notes and reread them carefully, thinking about my thinking as I wrote these notes and trying to find a connection between my thoughts or a pattern in the way I was thinking.* (Read your notes aloud here.) *From my notes on this book I can see that I was really thinking about why certain things were happening in the story and how the main character was connected to those events. (Or, insert your own ideas here based on your own sticky notes.) So I want to focus my writing on that idea. I’ll start by…*

Teacher will model writing the letter as they refer back to their sticky notes and will think aloud for students.

Teacher can wrap-up by saying, *When you are ready to write your letters each week, you can also use your notes to help you remember the parts you want to write about. We will also continue to talk about your notes when we confer during independent reading. This should help you write letters that show your best thinking.*
**Read Aloud: Thinking about Reading through a Genre Study – Sequence – Part 2 (S)**

Today’s lesson is a continuation of the Day 14 Read Aloud Lesson on Sequence. A new text selection should be used and students should be asked to think about the order of events as they are reading so that they are actively constructing a time-line of events that acts as a “frame” for the story.

Things to consider as you plan for today:

- How does having a mental time-line of the events in a story support comprehension?
- How can students actively participate in constructing this time-line as we read the story? (white boards?)
- How will students make their thinking public?

A Sequence graphic organizer may be used to facilitate the discussion.

Points to make today:

- The order of events in a personal narrative provides an active picture of the story for the reader.
- Understanding text-sequence is strongly related to comprehension of text.
- Thinking about the order of events as you read provides a time-line of the story and supports your understanding.

At the end of the week, your Reading is Thinking! Chart might look like this:

**Shared Reading: Thinking about Reading through a Genre Study – Sequence – Part 2 Continued (S)**

This shared reading lesson is an extension of today’s read aloud lesson. It is suggested that the personal narrative that is read aloud today also be the resource for Shared Reading. One to two pages can be made into overheads in order to continue the conversation regarding thinking about sequence as you read.

Teacher will facilitate choral reading and discussion of the text throughout the shared reading time. Special attention should be given to the order of events throughout the reading and how understanding sequence supports a reader’s understanding of the text.

**Independent Reading: Proofreading Your Letter**

Today’s lesson is a short conversation about proofreading your reader’s response letters to be sure they are your best thinking and writing.

Fountas & Pinnell suggest saying something like this: I am really enjoying reading your letters to me about your reading. You are asking good questions, sharing what surprises you, thinking about the characters carefully, and writing about how your book reminds you of something in your life or in another book you’ve read. Today, we’re going to talk briefly about how you read over – or proofread – your letter to be sure it is your best work. To make sure your letter is your best work, what are a few things you need to check for? I’ll write them down on this chart.

Things to consider:

- Do you want students to respond to your letter when they write to you or will they start from scratch each time?
- Or, will this vary depending on the book they are reading?
- Do you want to connect these expectations to the writing students are doing during Writer’s Workshop?
- Should there be a balance between proofreading for conventions and proofreading for meaning?

Your chart might look like this:

![Diagram of Reading is Thinking! Chart]

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**Proofreading Your Letter**

- Reread your letter with a critical eye to make sure it makes sense.
- Check for letter-writing format that includes: date, greeting, body, and closing.
- Check all word wall words for correct spelling.
- Etc…
# Read Aloud, Independent Reading, and Shared Reading

## A Note about the Lessons for Week 4:

You will notice that the lessons for Week 4 look different than those for Weeks 1 – 3. Rather than scripted lessons, ideas for you to consider as you plan and script your own lessons have been provided. You will also find references to professional resources that should prove helpful as you think about and plan for Week 4. These resources should be available in your school’s professional library.

## Day 16

### Read Aloud: Reading is Thinking – Checking for Understanding as You Read – Part 1 (S)

**Things to consider:**
- Based on your discussions thus far on thinking as you read, how can you introduce the idea that readers notice when a text isn’t making sense to them?
- What will be the most effective way to make this idea public? Will you model this for students?
- How will students transfer what you’re discussing to their own reading?

**Remember these important learning outcomes:**
- Readers notice when the text doesn’t make sense to them.
- Students learn to check on their understanding as they read.
- Students learn ways to make sure they understand as they read.

***The IPG focus for the week is cause and effect. You will take a close look at cause and effect later in the week. You will want to plan some explicit talk about cause and effect as you read aloud from a personal narrative.***

See Regie Routman’s *Reading Essentials*, pgs. 124-126 for an explicit lesson on Checking for Understanding and Ways students check for meaning as they read.

### Shared Reading

No Shared Reading Today

### Independent Reading: Abandoning Books (M)

**Things to consider:**
- How can you ensure that students are not routinely abandoning books, but rather have strategies for deciding if a book truly isn’t right for them after they have read some of it?
- How will these strategies be made public?
- What are some things that might make a reader want to abandon a book?
- Could you provide an example of when you abandoned a book?

For more on abandoning books, see Fountas & Pinnell’s *Guiding Readers and Writers*, pg. 148

## Day 17

### Read Aloud: Reading is Thinking – Checking for Understanding as You Read – Part 2 (S)

This is a continuation of yesterday’s lesson. An important shift to note is:
- The discussion today should focus on the importance of understanding what is causing the breakdown in comprehension.

**The corresponding learning intention is:**
- Students learn that identifying when and why their understanding breaks down helps them know what to do to regain understanding.

**Things to consider:**
- How can this be connected to the larger idea that Reading is Thinking?
- How can students be actively participating in figuring our why comprehension is breaking down as you read aloud?

***The IPG focus for the week is cause and effect. You will take a close look at cause and effect later in the week. You will want to plan some explicit talk about cause and effect as you read aloud from a personal narrative.***

### Shared Reading: Reading is Thinking – Checking for Understanding as You Read – Part 2 Continued (S)

This shared reading lesson is an extension of today’s read aloud lesson. It is suggested that the personal narrative that is read aloud today also be the resource for Shared Reading. One to two pages can be made into overheads in order to continue the conversation regarding thinking about Checking for Understanding as you read.

Teacher will facilitate choral reading and discussion of the text throughout the shared reading time. Special attention should be given to Checking for Understanding throughout the reading.
### Independent Reading: The Reading Conference – Part 3 (M, S)

This lesson is meant to provide some time to revisit the Independent Reading Conference in order to ensure that this is a purposeful and useful instructional format in your classroom.

Some things to consider as you plan:
- What is going well during Independent Reading conferences?
- What still needs some work during Independent Reading conferences?
- Do you think that students are aware of these things?
- Could they add to the conversation?
- Would setting goals be helpful?
- How can the observations and suggestions made during this conversation be made public?

### Read Aloud: Reading is Thinking – Cause and Effect – Part 1 (S)

Things to consider:
- What would be the most effective way to introduce cause and effect? Could it be related to the students’ daily lives?
- Which personal narrative selection would best support a discussion of cause and effect?
- Are there at least 2-3 places in the text that would allow students to actively consider cause and effect and notice how events are related to each other?
- How will students make their thinking public?

Remember the intended learning outcomes:
- Students learn that a *cause* is something that makes something else happen and an *effect* is what happens as a result of the cause.
- To determine the cause, ask the question "Why Did it Happen?"
- To determine the effect, ask the question "What Happened?"

### Shared Reading

No Shared Reading Today

### Independent Reading: The Reading Conference – Part 4 (M, S)

This lesson is a continuation of yesterday’s lesson on Independent Reading Conference in order to ensure that this is a purposeful and useful instructional format in your classroom. This is a lesson that may have to be revisited throughout the year.

Teachers will want to refer back to the goal that was set during yesterday’s discussion.

Things to consider as you plan:
- What is going well during Independent Reading conferences?
- What still needs some work during Independent Reading conferences?
- Do you think that students are aware of these things?
- Could they add to the conversation?
- Would setting goals be helpful?
- How can the observations and suggestions made during this conversation be made public?

### Read Aloud: Reading is Thinking – Cause and Effect – Part 2 (S)

This is a continuation of yesterday’s lesson. An important shift to note is:
- The discussion today should focus on how the relationship between events helps readers to understand the plot of a story and/or the author’s message.

Remember the intended learning outcomes:
- Students learn that a *cause* is something that makes something else happen and an *effect* is what happens as a result of the cause.
- To determine the cause, ask the question "Why Did it Happen?"
- To determine the effect, ask the question "What Happened?"

Things to consider:
- How can this be connected to the larger idea that Reading is Thinking?
- What will students be asked to do or think about during the read aloud?
- How can students transfer what they have learned to their own reading?
**Shared Reading: Reading is Thinking – Cause and Effect – Part 2 Continued (S)**

This shared reading lesson is an extension of today’s read aloud lesson. It is suggested that the personal narrative that is read aloud today also be the resource for Shared Reading. One to two pages can be made into overheads in order to continue the conversation regarding cause and effect as you read.

Teacher will facilitate choral reading and discussion of the text throughout the shared reading time. Special attention should be given to cause and effect throughout the reading.

**Independent Reading: Making Public the Guidelines for the Reader’s Workshop – Part 2 (M)**

Today’s lesson revisits the Guidelines for the Reader’s Workshop or Independent Reading time. Again, this is a lesson that you will revisit many times over the course of the year.

Consider:

- What is going well during Independent Reading?
- What still needs some work during Independent Reading?
- Do you think that students are aware of these things?
- Could they add to the conversation?
- Do any expectations need to be adjusted/added to/deleted?

**Read Aloud: Reading is Thinking – Cause and Effect – Part 3 (S) and Checking for Understanding as You Read – Revisited**

Today during the read aloud teachers will be bringing both a comprehension strategy and strategy for sustaining your reading together. It is important to remember that as readers, we simultaneously rely on a variety of strategies to process text.

Some things to consider as you plan for today’s lesson:

- How can today’s lesson connect to the larger discussion of Reading is Thinking?
- How will the idea of simultaneously relying on a variety of strategies to process text be discussed with students?
- Should this be modeled for students?
- How can they actively participate during this read aloud?
- How will they transfer what they have learned to their own reading?

For more on the variety of strategies readers use to process text, see Fountas & Pinnell’s Guiding Readers & Writers, pgs. 309-320

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**At the end of the 4th week, your Reading is Thinking! chart might look like this:**

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**Shared Reading**

No Shared Reading Today

**Independent Reading: Writing Letters in Your Reader’s Notebook Each Week (M & S) & Using our Sticky Notes to Guide Our Reader’s Response Letter (S)**

Today you will revisit using sticky notes to write your Reader’s Response Letter. If you have chosen to have your students turn in their letters on a staggered schedule you will want to move this lesson to an earlier day and adjust the schedule accordingly.
This pacing guide is intended to be extended, condensed, or modified according to your students’ needs. Please continue to revisit and support all skills and concepts that are introduced in the first few weeks through the balanced literacy model (See below). Our ultimate goal is for students to become proficient in using these skills independently.

Many of the Independent Reading lessons are based on the work of Fountas & Pinnell and come from their book titled, Guiding Readers and Writers. This professional resource has been cited throughout the First 20 days of Reading in the Intermediate Grades.

As you prepare to implement the First 20 Days of Reading, please keep in mind that it will be necessary to be flexible with your 90-minute reading block. Based on each day’s lessons, you may find you need extended time for one component as you put systems in place. Use your judgment, based on your students’ needs to adjust instructional time dedicated to each balanced literacy component.