

Guided Reading

The Nuts and Bolts

Guided Reading is an important part of your reading program. You are a critical part of helping your students move forward and process increasingly challenging texts with understanding and fluency.

Here are the basic steps:


1

Select a Book. Depending on the interest and abilities of students, choose a book for a group of four to six (the younger the students, the smaller the groups). Generally, this will be a book from the level that students read with some fluency but is still challenging (approximately 94% accuracy). Allow for 20-minute sessions. Groups may read one or two books a week. Older readers may read a chapter book a week or several shorter selections. Your ongoing assessment of students will determine different groupings or different texts.

2


Introduce the Book. Give a book to each student in the group. Students will be reading the book, or a part of it, on their own but this is your chance to scaffold learning for your students. You can quickly model connecting to background knowledge and demonstrate the kinds of questions the reader can ask when reading. In this way, you enable students to take on new challenges. Ideally, you should not introduce every page or pre-teach words. The idea is to help students move through the book on their own and to encourage them to problem solve. As you talk about the book, it is important not to give away key details. You might do the following:

- ✓ **Prompt readers to think about what they will be reading.**
- ✓ **Help students connect the text** to what they already know about the subject.
- ✓ **Discuss genre or author's purpose** and some important features of the text.
- ✓ **Point out any unusual or unique language** or the use of headings and captions in informational text.
- ✓ **Give instructions on how much to read**, what you want students to pay special attention to, and what to do when finished.



Read the Book. If you think the whole group will have difficulty problem solving a certain element, you may pre-teach the element, such as pointing out inflectional endings or consonant digraphs. Instruct students to read the entire book or a carefully selected part of the book. Observe reading behaviors and provide support when necessary and praise when students use a strategy successfully. You can sample oral reading by asking students to lift their voices while others read silently.

- ✓ **Each student reads independently** and problem solves on his or her own.
- ✓ **Most often, reading will be done silently or in a soft whisper**, depending on level and skill.



Assess Behavior. Each day, observe and interact with students. Help them develop strategies and apply them to independent reading. Keep notes about your observations. The day after a new text is read, record the ability level of one student and note any progress.



Respond to the Book and Learn

About Reading. After reading, invite students to talk about what they've read. Give them a chance to note facts or ideas they have read about and learned. Then, focus on one or two teaching points, such as character interpretation, how the author structured the text, or some aspect of word solving. In focusing on different parts of the text, you are helping students learn the "how to" of reading and develop strategies they can apply to other reading. For example, you might do the following:

- ✓ **Promote fluency and phrasing** by asking students to read aloud portions of the text.
- ✓ **Focus on key ideas** and language by having students find a turning point in the story, a point of information, or a particular description.
- ✓ **Help students figure out new, longer words** by having them focus on word parts or context clues.
- ✓ **Engage students in exploring how words work** by building words, changing words, and noticing their features.
- ✓ **Help students interpret information** provided in informational text features such as maps, chart or graphs.