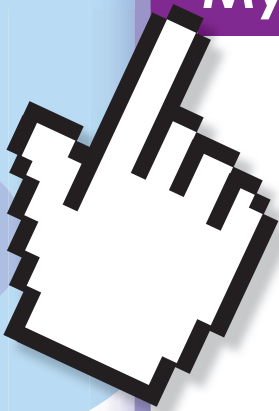


# Myths About Guided Reading



The guided reading program, "offers small-group support and explicit teaching to help students take on more challenging texts. As they read texts that are organized along a gradient of difficulty from A-Z, students expand their systems of strategic actions by meeting the demands of increasingly complex texts."

—Fountas and Pinnell, 2007

"Inherent in the concept of guided reading is the idea that students learn best when they are provided strong instructional support to extend themselves by reading text that are on the edge of their learning"

—Fountas and Pinnell, 2012

## Dear Ms. Instruction

### Dear Ms. Instruction:

Our school is looking to adopt a guided reading program. Doesn't that mean that the teacher will be working with the whole class, all reading the same book in the same amount of time, regardless of reading abilities?

*A Concerned Citizen*

### Dear Concerned:

Guided reading instruction involves a teacher working with several small groups of students with similar interests and abilities. *Scholastic Guided Reading* programs contain leveled books categorized by genre and level of difficulty, based on a number of factors. Each group may be reading a different book. With teacher support and appropriate prompting, the groups will, throughout the year, read through various types of books of ever-increasing complexity.

*Ms. Instruction*

### Dear Ms. Instruction:

My child is very smart. In his reading class, he will be put into a group for guided reading. I'm afraid he will not be challenged and will become bored reading easy books while the teacher sees to the needs of the other kids (in other words, the lowest common denominator). Should I be worried?

*A Proud Parent*

### Dear Proud:

Don't worry. Be happy. Groups in guided reading are made up of students with similar interests, behaviors, and abilities. The books your child will be reading will be at his instructional reading level, challenging enough that he will need some scaffolded support from his teacher, but will motivate him to move to the next level. In addition, he will have lots of opportunities to choose his own books to read independently.

*Ms. Instruction*

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**Dear Ms. Instruction:**

My daughter is shy. She is a good reader but becomes reluctant when she has to read aloud. I'm afraid that "round-robin" guided reading will make her think of reading as a chore and will impede her learning progress.

*A Protective Parent*

**Dear Protective:**

While "round-robin" reading may have been widely used when you learned to read, that is not the case in guided reading classes today. The small-group instruction in *Scholastic Guided Reading* programs focuses not only on learning to read better but also building confidence and enjoyment. Such techniques as rereading, fluency practice, paired reading, or reading an easier book help develop confident readers. Once your daughter becomes more confident, she may lose her "shy" label.

*Ms. Instruction*

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**Dear Ms. Instruction:**

I understand that guided reading is essential to developing good readers in early levels. I am wondering if guided reading is necessary at later levels. I'd like to encourage students to read independently instead of just depending on the time we're reading together.

*A Curious Teacher*

**Dear Curious:**

Most students need expert teaching to develop higher-thinking skills and expertise. Guided reading is just one part of your reading program. You will want to set up learning centers in your classroom that encourage independent reading and activities, such as an independent reading library, a listening station, a writing corner, a technology station, and so on. In addition, you should interview your students to learn about their interests so you can guide them in choosing books to read on their own. And don't forget—your enthusiasm can be catching!

*Ms. Instruction*

"Students are engaged in conversation that is grounded in a variety of texts—those that students read, hear read aloud, or write—and that expands their ability to comprehend and use language."

—Fountas and Pinnell, 2007

The standards also require the progressive development of reading comprehension so that students advancing through the grades are able to gain more from whatever they read."

—NGA Center/CCSSO, 2010