

The **First** **20** days



School is starting. Are you ready for guided reading?

Relax! Even the most experienced teachers don't run guided reading rotations during the first days of school. Instead they use this time to lay the groundwork for success. You need time to get to know your students as readers and as members of your classroom community. And your students need time to learn what is expected of them during a guided reading session—and how to work effectively and problem solve both as part of a team and on their own.

Guided Reading, after all, is part of the literacy block. While you're working with one guided reading group, the rest of your students will be busy, too. Ultimately, they must be able to work productively—without your assistance—for 20 minutes or longer. Students will be moving from activity to activity, working in centers, or reading or writing on their own or with a partner. Here's what you need to do get your classroom and your students ready!

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- **Model Literacy Activities** including close reading through interactive read-alouds, shared reading, and shared writing. Show children how to keep reader's notebooks and use graphic organizers to keep track of their reading and to help them cite textual evidence.
- **Assess Students as Readers** with running records to determine their instructional reading levels, check for fluency in both reading and writing, and use reading attitude surveys and interest inventories to help you suggest the right books for each child.
- **Get to Know Your Book Collection** —the fiction/literature and nonfiction/informational text options that sync up with students' reading levels and interests. Organize books so that students can quickly find the books they want or need for independent reading and group work.
- **Foster Teamwork** by assigning a variety of timed literacy activities and games. Watch teams as they interact and later praise them for what they did well. *For these activities, students need not be assigned according to reading level.*
- **Encourage Independence** by offering rules and routines to help children problem solve on their own as they work independently or within their assigned team for group work.
- **Get Centered and Chart It Out** by setting up areas in the classroom where students will have easy access to the resources they need to complete assigned language arts and content-area activities. Post an assignment chart and model how to use it.
- **Expand Responsibility** by using a gradual-release model, so students can work longer without your aid. Set a timer, so students know when it is time to move on to their next activity. Make time for students to report on their work and praise them for what they do well.
- **Group for Guided Reading** using the data you collect during the first few weeks. Begin working with one guided reading group a day, adding in more groups as your students become more adept at rotating from activity to activity and working on their own. Add in guided reading group assignments to your classroom chart.

Want to Know More?

Guided Reading guru Jan Richardson's *The Next Step in Guided Reading* offers step-by-step routines and procedures to build from Day One to successful guided reading implementation. Richardson and Walther's *Next Step Guiding Reading Assessment* kit is a great resource for running records and ongoing guided reading assessment. Each *Scholastic Guided Reading* program also provides running records for Benchmark Books and additional resources to help you assess students' instructional levels as they progress through the year.