

THE BALANCED LITERACY APPROACH

**Developing Readers and
Writers in K-5 Classrooms**



**Bath County Public Schools
August 2016**

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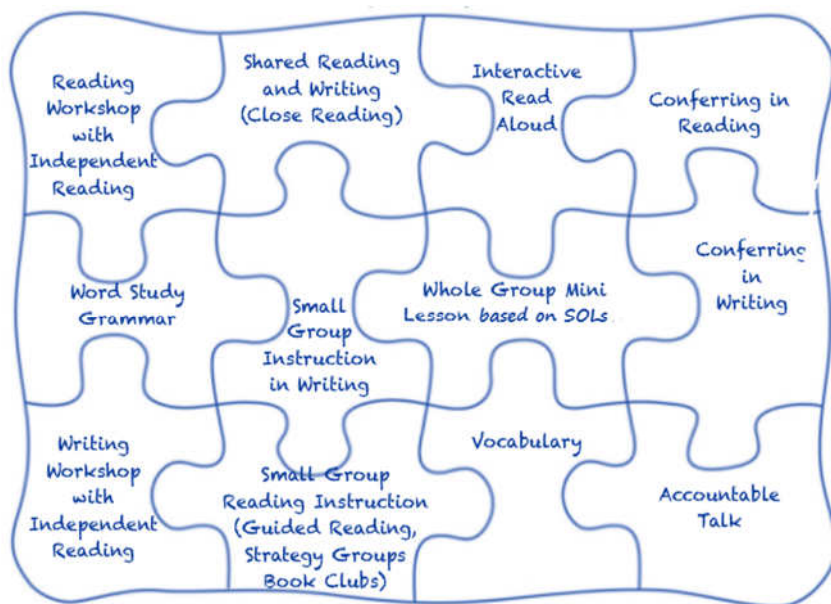
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A Balanced Literacy Program (K-5)

A literacy program that provides sufficient time and structure for students to grow into independent and strategic readers, writers, thinkers and communicators across all content areas is essential. In the pages that follow the components of a balanced literacy program are described. The guide provides a daily menu or “diet” of key components – reading aloud to students, shared reading, guided reading, independent reading, word study and writing.

It is of great importance that all students in Bath County Public Schools experience a systemic approach to literacy to ensure that explicit instruction occurs for reading, comprehension, writing and word study to provide the skills and strategies of independent readers and where a variety of reading materials from different genres – fiction and nonfiction – are provided for instructional and independent reading.

In the recent past professional development has been linked to the components of a balanced literacy program. Future opportunities will continue to support teachers’ literacy efforts in improving student learning.

Sincerely,

Sue Hirsh

Sue Hirsh

Division Superintendent

THE PUZZLE OF LITERACY EDUCATION

Learning to read provides the framework by which nearly all other academic learning takes place, and enables the reader to experience the pleasure of the many genres of literature. It requires training and practice to become literate. Reading is a complex set of interrelated skills that can be compared to the experience of assembling the pieces a jigsaw puzzle.

It is nearly impossible to put together a puzzle without first looking at the picture on the front of the box. It is necessary to know what the end product should be like before beginning to assemble the pieces. So it is with reading. The first step in reading education begins with the child being read to, preferably at home before they enter school, and during each school day. When children hear stories read aloud to them, they begin to experience the pleasure and rhythm of reading. They begin to understand story structure and develop new words in their vocabulary. Thus by hearing stories, they begin to see the 'picture' of what reading is about.



Once the basic foundation is laid using literature read aloud, children are ready to begin using the components of reading that will enable them to become independent readers. First, children need to learn the alphabet and develop phonemic awareness. This is best achieved by years of playing with letters and using the child's natural curiosity and inquisitiveness about them, and by singing songs, listening to nursery rhymes and playing with the sounds in words. Research has shown that these skills are prerequisites for other reading instruction. If children come to school without these experiences, then we need to provide them with activities to develop and nurture this knowledge. These skills form the border of the puzzle, by providing the frame which contains all of the other pieces.

Finally, when the outline is in place, the remaining pieces may be fit together to fill in the picture. When putting together a puzzle, we use similar colors or patterns to help us create the pictures. In reading, the colors become the other components of reading instruction such as phonics, vocabulary, fluency and comprehension. We teach these skills in concert with one another so that they may blend together to create the whole and complete act of reading the words and understanding the text. With all of the pieces in place, we are able to successfully create the picture that we viewed on the front of the puzzle box and enjoy the final product.

In the same way, a balanced literacy program pulls together the components of literacy to make a complete picture of how students use and apply language in their lives. Reading instruction is integrated with authentic reading and writing experiences so that students learn to use literacy strategies, and have opportunities to apply them to all learning. When our children learn to read and write, they have all of the pieces they need to venture into the world of knowledge and pleasure.

Teaching is a profession steeped in best practices and high standards, especially in the current world of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), SOLs and Annual Measurable Objectives (AMO). As reading educators, we must strive to keep our focus on ensuring that first our children see 'the picture on the box,' followed by teaching and integrating the components, with the ultimate goal of developing a lifelong love of reading, writing, and learning.

BATH COUNTY MISSION STATEMENT

Bath County Public Schools will meet the educational needs of our diverse student population with the highest standards possible and be the schools of choice for Bath County citizens.

VISION FOR ENGLISH INSTRUCTION

Bath County Public Schools will help each student reach his/her potential in literacy by providing a balanced literacy program including oral language, reading, word study, and writing. To achieve this objective, the school division will

- ◇ use the Virginia Standards of Learning and the five components of reading instruction (phonemic awareness, phonics, vocabulary, fluency, and comprehension) to build the literacy program
- ◇ motivate students by teaching with a variety of texts and genres
- ◇ help students increase stamina as they become independent learners
- ◇ plan instruction that is strategic, explicit, and based on students' needs
- ◇ provide differentiated instruction that is relevant, meaningful, and student-centered
- ◇ provide opportunities for teacher collaboration and professional development
- ◇ utilize diagnostic assessments that are aligned with research-based instruction
- ◇ make available technology to enhance and support literacy development
- ◇ provide administrative leadership to support staff in attaining district/school literacy goals

GOALS FOR BALANCED LITERACY INSTRUCTION:

- ◇ Language arts instruction will occur during a continuous block of instructional time
- ◇ Classrooms will include relevant text resources including fiction and nonfiction books for instructional and recreational/independent reading
- ◇ Lesson plans will evidence planning for all components of balanced literacy—read alouds, shared reading, small group differentiated instruction, guided reading, literature circles, word study, independent reading, shared/interactive writing, guided writing, and independent writing
- ◇ Groups will be flexible and based on formal/diagnostic assessments and teacher observations
- ◇ Explicit instruction will occur for reading, comprehension, writing and word study skills and strategies
- ◇ Meaningful independent reading will occur daily
- ◇ A variety of resources will be used to teach reading
- ◇ Reading and writing will occur across all content areas as appropriate
- ◇ Parents and community members will be involved to support and celebrate the literacy program

BEST LITERACY PRACTICES

ENGLISH STANDARDS OF LEARNING

The Virginia Department of Education provides minimal standards for teaching students to read, write, communicate effectively, and to participate in society as literate citizens. The strands, within the standards, are oral language, reading, writing, and research.



RESEARCH-BASED PRACTICE

The National Reading Panel provides a summary of empirical research, identifying key areas of reading instruction:

- **Phonemic awareness**-the knowledge that words are made up of a combination of individual sounds or phonemes. It includes not only recognizing the sounds within a word, but also the ability to blend the sounds together to form the word, and manipulate and separate the sounds within the word.
- **Phonics**-the relationship between a specific letter and its sound, as it relates to the written word. Using phonics, a reader can read a word by focusing on the specific sound of each letter or group of letters, and combine the sounds to create a word.
- **Fluency**-reading at an appropriate rate and with pausing, phrasing, intonation/rhythm, stress, pace, and integration. Fluency/prosody facilitate comprehension and enhance overall reading achievement.
- **Vocabulary**-the knowledge of words and their meanings. Vocabulary can be developed through multiple exposures to words within the context of authentic speaking, reading, and writing opportunities.
- **Comprehension**-the act of making meaning from reading. It is the goal of all reading experiences. Readers learn to use specific reading strategies to construct meaning.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR BEST LITERACY PRACTICE

Literacy learning is

- ◇ focused on making meaning
- ◇ acquired through explicit instruction and modeling of skills, strategies, processes, and student-centered activities
- ◇ scaffolded through modeling, guided practice and independent practice
- ◇ informed by assessment and teacher observation
- ◇ achieved through immersion in a variety of high-quality texts for differing purposes
- ◇ guided by prior knowledge
- ◇ differentiated for each student
- ◇ acquired through social collaboration
- ◇ accomplished through active engagement
- ◇ developed through a community of readers and writers
- ◇ accomplished as students read a large quantity of various texts
- ◇ enhanced as students hear many texts read aloud

UNDERSTANDING BALANCED LITERACY

Balanced literacy is an organizational framework that allows teachers to cultivate in all students the skills and strategies of reading, writing, thinking, speaking, and listening. This framework acknowledges the complex nature of literacy development by focusing on specific components while also recognizing their interdependency. This multidimensional approach honors the individual learner and respects cultural, ethnic and academic diversity.

Balanced literacy effectively integrates key elements of literacy: shared reading, guided reading, independent reading, writing and word study. **Curriculum, instruction and assessments** anchor and guide literacy development.

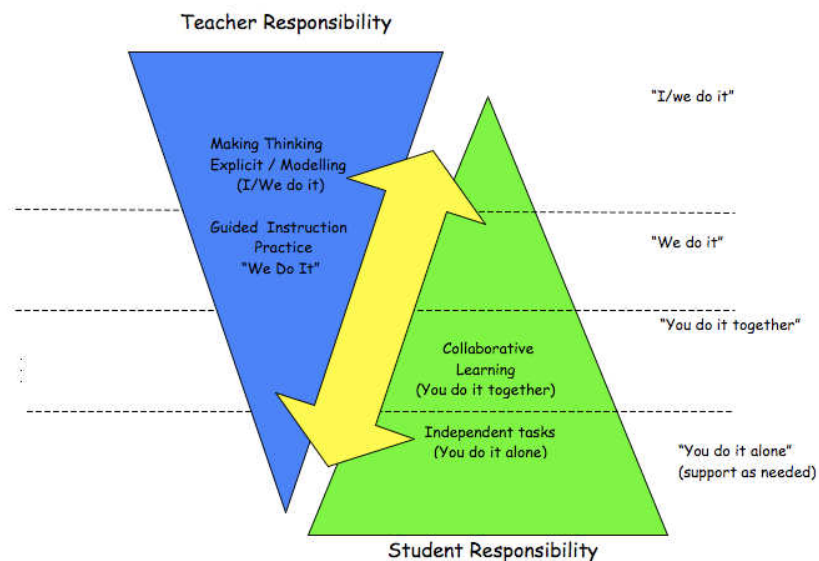
Curriculum anchors the state standards and key research findings into what is taught.

Instruction guides how teachers plan and deliver lessons using a variety of methods to meet the diverse needs of all students.

Assessment provides a means by which learning is evaluated to determine where growth has taken place and to plan for future instruction.

SCAFFOLDING THE TEACHING/LEARNING PROCESS

Through whole group instruction (explicit instructional modeling), small group instruction (guided practice), and independent practice, teachers gradually release their level of support as students master the concepts and take responsibility for their own learning. Using the Gradual Release of Responsibility (GRR) model (Pearson and Gallagher 1983), initial support is given by the teacher while students are learning a new concept or strategy, and the support gradually diminishes as students gain responsibility for their learning. The framework moves from teacher instruction (“I do it”), to sharing (“We do it”), to guiding (“Do it together”), to self-sufficiency (“You do it”). Students will vary in their pace of progressing through this continuum. Struggling students may need repeated guided practice in the form of small group or one-on-one instruction, requiring flexibility of the instructional design within the classroom to be responsive to individual learner needs (Fisher and Frey 2009).



Adapted from: Frey, Fisher, Everlove (2009)

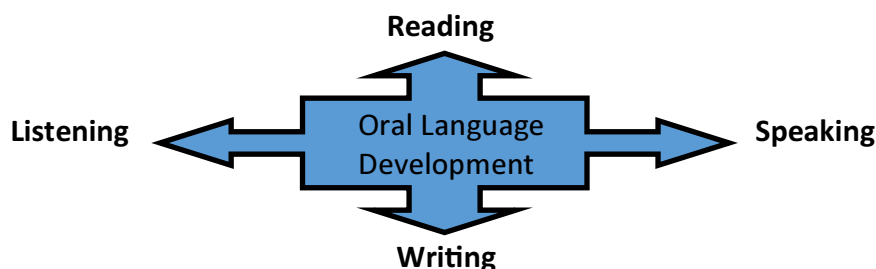
ORAL LANGUAGE

Oral language is the foundation for the development of all literacy skills. Students' oral language and vocabulary development are supported through daily opportunities for listening, speaking, reading and writing.



BEST PRACTICES FOR ORAL LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT

- ◇ Integrate language developing strategies during all aspects of the school day
- ◇ Model effective communication skills
- ◇ Set high expectations for purposeful conversations throughout the day
- ◇ Allow time for and encourage students to elaborate on oral responses
- ◇ Provide opportunities for students to assimilate new words into their oral vocabulary



DEVELOPING ORAL LANGUAGE THROUGH BALANCED LITERACY

<i>Reading Workshop</i>	<i>Writing Workshop</i>	<i>Words Workshop</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • read alouds • choral readings • readers' theater • dramas • songs, poems, chants • book clubs, literature circles • retellings • buddy readings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • presentations • peer editing • oral storytelling read aloud (mentor text) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • peer discussion • vocabulary hunts • songs, poems, chants

BENEFITS OF DAILY READ ALOUDS

Teachers should read aloud to students at various times throughout the day. Reading aloud daily provides a good model for language development, expands background knowledge, improves comprehension and vocabulary, models fluency, builds confidence and motivation, and promotes interest in different genres. Read alouds expose students to rich content which can be analyzed and compared. Verbal interactions are encouraged as students make connections with the text, with peers, and with the teacher.

INSTRUCTIONAL COMPONENTS OF BALANCED LITERACY

The balanced literacy model of Bath County Public Schools contains three key components: reading workshop, writing workshop and words workshop. Minimum recommended daily instructional time is 2.5 hours for grades K-2 and 2 hours for grades 3-5. Additional literacy instruction should be integrated in all content areas throughout the day. Teacher lessons should be authentic, reflect student progress, and be targeted toward student performance. Questioning and prompting to help students reach higher order thinking should be included to promote context interpretation, synthesizing, and evaluation skills.

Reading Workshop (60-90 minutes)

Read Alouds, Shared/Interactive Reading (Whole group)

Read alouds model fluent reading, engage students in discussion, and demonstrate thinking for comprehension strategies. During shared reading, teachers provide explicit instruction in the reading process and strategies used by readers. Through modeling and guided practice, teachers demonstrate and assist students as they learn how proficient readers make sense of text before, during and after reading. This daily instruction allows teachers to build a community of readers who are actively engaged in intentional, thoughtful interactions with text while mastering reading strategies and skills. During interactive read alouds, teachers read the text to students, and stop to pose questions that encourage deep thinking.

Guided Reading (Small group)

Guided reading enables the teacher to observe, teach, and support a small group of students as they develop an understanding of the reading process and practice their literacy skills. Students read a book that has been carefully selected based on their strengths and needs. The teacher facilitates learning and guides and directs the readers. Reading instruction on specific skills or strategies may be provided based on instructional need/level as identified by formative assessment. Groups may be based on reading level, or a common instructional need.

Independent Reading

Independent reading provides students with an opportunity to apply reading strategies in a text of personal interest. Time should be devoted daily for independent, self-selected reading. Students read independently to practice and refine reading strategies and skills learned during shared and guided reading. Structured independent reading helps students build stamina for longer texts and develop the habit of lifelong reading.

Writing Workshop (30-45 minutes)

Instruction in writing occurs daily and is framed by the writing workshop model. Students have an opportunity to apply phonetic principles, understand the basics of written communication, and learn about the writing process. The workshop begins with a teacher-directed lesson, followed by time for students to write as the teacher confers with students and guides their writing development. It includes opportunities for shared, interactive, guided and independent writing. The workshop ends with students sharing their writing and responding to the writing of others. This model is designed to build a community of writers in a safe and supportive environment.

Words Workshop (15-30 minutes)

The goal of working with words is to guide students in building word knowledge that will enable them to read and write fluently. Teachers use phonemic awareness and phonics to help the youngest students learn sound and letter relationships. Building on this basic knowledge, students analyze word patterns, learn high frequency words, and extend their vocabulary in order to apply this knowledge in the context of reading and writing.

READING WORKSHOP

Goal—to develop strategic, independent readers and instill a lifelong love of reading

Reading workshop is a framework for teaching the complex process of reading. It incorporates multiple instructional methods including shared/interactive reading, guided reading, small group differentiated instruction, and independent reading. Teachers explicitly teach and model good reading and actively involve students in the process. Throughout the workshop, students are given many opportunities to practice and apply reading strategies and skills, build vocabulary knowledge, develop fluency, and internalize the habits of good readers.

BEST PRACTICES FOR READING

- ◇ Engage students in authentic, meaning-making reading experiences
- ◇ Focus instruction on reading strategies to build comprehension
- ◇ Incorporate guided practice with strategies
- ◇ Provide opportunities for students to read a variety of genres for a variety of purposes
- ◇ Build fluency by modeling fluent reading and providing time for rereading text
- ◇ Differentiate reading instruction based on the level of the reader
- ◇ Allow daily time for students to engage in reading
- ◇ Weave reading experiences into all content areas throughout the day
- ◇ Provide explicit teaching of all skills and strategies

“Reading out loud, and showing how readers think when they read is central to reading instruction.”

*~Stephanie Harvey, Anne Goudvis
(Strategies That Work, 2007)*

COMPREHENSION STRATEGIES

Comprehension is the act of making meaning. Comprehension is the goal of all reading experiences. Readers use strategies to construct meaning.

Making connections — using background knowledge and experiences to bring meaning to the text

Visualizing — creating pictures in the readers’ minds using their senses

Predicting — using clues from the text to think ahead about what might happen

Questioning — generating questions to guide thinking

Drawing inferences — combining clues from the text with what is known to figure out what the author did not explicitly state

Determining importance — identifying the most essential information and themes in the text

Synthesizing/summarizing — sifting and sorting to find important information and form new interpretations

Clarifying/fix-up — monitoring understanding of text and applying appropriate corrective actions when meaning breaks down

UNDERSTANDING SKILLS AND STRATEGIES

Skills are tasks that require low-level thinking. When using skills, readers passively receive and produce the stated ideas from text. Example: identify story elements, details, facts and opinions, etc.

Strategies are complex, interconnected decisions that require high-level thinking. Readers are actively involved with the author and the text to create meaning. Using strategies enables readers to develop metacognition, which kindles their ability to understand at a deeper level and form original ideas and interpretations of the text.

INSTRUCTIONAL MODEL FOR READING WORKSHOP

Whole Group—Read Alouds

Read alouds occur during reading workshop as a whole group instructional method, as well as, at various times throughout the day across the curriculum. Teachers read to the entire class from a single text. It provides opportunities to foster interest and motivation, model fluent reading, engage students in discussing and analyzing text, expand vocabulary, demonstrate comprehension strategies, and an opportunity to create a community of readers. Verbal interactions are encouraged as students make connections with the text, with peers, and with the teacher. Variation of genre and curriculum goals should be considered when selecting text.

BEST PRACTICES FOR READ ALOUDS

- | | |
|---|---|
| ◇ Read aloud has a specific teaching objective | ◇ Teacher models fluent and expressive reading |
| ◇ Lesson objective is based on student needs or curriculum requirements | ◇ Lesson develops vocabulary and background knowledge |
| ◇ Goals and vocabulary are planned ahead | ◇ Lesson promotes interest of different genres |
| ◇ Lesson promotes oral language development | ◇ Text can be above student instructional levels |
| ◇ Students do not have copies of the text | ◇ Types of text includes chapter books, nonfiction, magazines and newspaper articles, and picture books |
| ◇ Teacher models comprehension skills and strategies to construct meaning | ◇ Connections are made to independent reading and writing |
| ◇ Teacher models using think alouds | |
| ◇ Teacher stops to ask questions | |

SKILLS DEVELOPED DURING READ ALOUDS

Background Knowledge and Vocabulary—Read alouds can be a perfect forum to build knowledge about specific subjects or content areas. Fiction and nonfiction texts can be selected that will scaffold the teaching and learning of the specific content area subject. The intentional sequence of texts can allow concepts to build upon each other. To facilitate word learning, teachers' selection of target vocabulary is strategically planned, and then appropriate strategies are selected to support vocabulary development.

Comprehension—Reading aloud provides a means for the teacher to demonstrate ways to make connections: text-self, text-text, text-world. Questions and comments can be woven in as the text is read to set the stage for explanations, connections, and questions to be modeled through a think aloud by the teacher. Before Reading strategies (identifying the purpose for reading, predicting, introducing critical vocabulary), During Reading strategies (KWL, making connections, questioning, making inferences, self monitoring), and After Reading strategies (retelling, summary, reviewing/extending vocabulary) can be used.

Text Structure and Literacy Language—Students develop literary knowledge and a shared language as they experience a variety of texts. They begin to understand concepts of print and story structure while exposed to writer's language, providing concrete models that can be used as anchor texts as students develop a sense of plot, characterization, mood, and theme. Narrative texts provide a framework for retelling, story sequence and comparing/contrasting story elements. Expository texts provide examples of cause/effect, problem/solution, as well as text features.

INSTRUCTIONAL MODEL FOR READING WORKSHOP

Whole Group—Shared/Interactive Reading

Shared and Interactive reading instruction also focuses on comprehension strategies and skills. The teacher models how good readers draw meaning from the text and involves the students in the process. For primary grades, the same text may be read repeatedly but with a different purpose to model different reading strategies and skills. At the elementary level, students may read a longer piece of text to practice the same strategy over time. Group interaction enables students to learn from one another and expand thinking to higher levels. Through the share/interactive reading experience students learn new strategies to practice during guided and independent reading.

BEST PRACTICES FOR SHARED/INTERACTIVE READING

- | | |
|---|---|
| ◇ Lesson is typically conducted whole group | ◇ Teacher models comprehension strategies within the context of a variety of texts |
| ◇ Group is most often heterogeneous | ◇ Teacher chooses and models the use of a graphic organizer to guide students' thinking |
| ◇ Teacher chooses a focus for instruction | ◇ Teacher provides opportunities for students to respond to the text in a variety of ways |
| ◇ Lesson builds a community of readers through the use of a common text | ◇ Teacher provides guided practice to scaffold learning experiences |
| ◇ All students have access to text | ◇ Students have opportunity to apply skills or strategies |
| ◇ Teacher plans for intentional, thoughtful interactions | ◇ Teacher monitors progress using assessments |
| ◇ Teacher models using explicit instruction of skills and strategies | |

SHARED/INTERACTIVE READING LESSON OUTLINE

Teach/Model (10-20 minutes)

Teacher

- Models reading strategies and skills for the whole class
- Uses a common text to anchor students' thinking and learning
- Thinks aloud while reading aloud to the class
- Models how to use a graphic organizer to show thinking
- Uses interactive read alouds
- Exposes students to a variety of text
- Helps students gain a deeper understanding of what is read
- Reteaches and reviews previously taught strategies and skills

Students

- Listen actively
- Respond to the teacher's questions
- Engage in discussions about the text

Practice/Apply (10-15 minutes)

Teacher

- Provides opportunities for students to show their thinking in a variety of ways
- Gives support and encouragement
- Clarifies and redirects any misconceptions

Students

- Work in small groups, in pairs, or individually to practice the strategy modeled
- Respond to text orally, in writing, and in a variety of meaningful ways

Reflect/Share (2-5 minutes)

Teacher

- Selects students to share thinking with the class and restate lesson focus
- Summarizes the lesson objective

Students

- Provide feedback and support to peers
- Restate strategy focus and tell how the strategy helped them as readers

INSTRUCTIONAL MODEL FOR READING WORKSHOP

Small Group—Guided Reading

Guided reading allows teachers to observe, teach, and support students at varying stages of reading development as they gain an understanding of the reading process. Guided reading provides opportunities for students to practice strategies learned in shared reading. The teacher works with small groups of students who are similar in their reading development as determined by ongoing assessments. The teacher supports readers by guiding and directing them through text that has been carefully selected to match their instructional reading levels. Since instruction is based upon reading level, strategy need, and word work, the teacher provides instruction for a range of strategic actions: word solving, searching for and using information, self-monitoring, and comprehension strategies. Instruction within guided reading changes as students become more proficient with strategies and skills at each stage of development. The instructional model used is based upon Jan Richardson's *Next Steps in Guided Reading*, and instruction is designed to occur over a two to three day period. Guided reading lesson plans may also follow similar formats developed by PALS, Fountas and Pinnell, or Beth Estill.

BEST PRACTICES FOR GUIDED READING

- | | |
|--|--|
| ◇ Assess students to determine reading levels and establish groups | ◇ Extend strategy and skill focus from shared reading |
| ◇ Keep groups flexible and dynamic | ◇ Plan rereading of text for a variety of purposes and to build fluency |
| ◇ Select appropriate focus for instruction | ◇ Frequently monitor progress using anecdotal notes and/or running records |
| ◇ Select appropriate text to support reading growth | |

GUIDED READING LESSON OUTLINE

Before Reading (5-15minutes)

Teacher

- Matches students to books based FP levels, student interest and developmental needs
- Assists them with thinking through the text
- Shows the text and sets a purpose for reading
- Connects shared reading objectives to lesson
- Activates and builds students' background knowledge
- Introduces specific vocabulary that may be difficult for students
- Extends students' thinking

Students

- Share prior knowledge
- Preview and predict

During Reading (5-15 minutes)

Teacher

- Provides support as students read
- Prompts for effective use of strategies, including fix-up strategies

- Prompts for fluency and phrasing
- Observes students for evidence of accurate reading

Students

- Read the text independently
- Employ strategies
- Record their thinking

After Reading (5-15 minutes)

Teacher

- Helps students gain meaning from text
- Extends students' understanding
- Revisits the text to demonstrate or reinforce reading strategies
- Prompts students to reflect on their learning

Students

- Respond to the text
- Revisit the text
- Share noticings and thinking

We are not going to "do" guided reading. We are going to USE guided reading and teach children how to think like readers. #ILA16 #FPLiteracy

INSTRUCTIONAL MODEL FOR READING WORKSHOP

Small Group—Literature Circles/Book Clubs

The goal of Literature Circles/Book Clubs is to help students learn to talk with others about texts and to benefit from the thinking of others, while building a deeper understanding of text and stretching their thinking. This is a time for application of skills and strategies learned in whole or small group through tasks specifically planned by the teacher. Context, interpretation, synthesizing, and evaluation of skills through questioning and prompting is promoted through higher-order thinking as groups select a book or topic to read and discuss. Each member of the group takes specific responsibilities in the discussion, and everyone comes to the group with the notes needed to help perform that job. This instructional model is based upon the work of Harvey Daniels (Daniels, 2002, 2008).

BEST PRACTICES FOR LITERATURE CIRCLES/BOOK CLUBS

- | | |
|--|--|
| ◇ Groups are temporary and are based upon book choice or topic | ◇ Discussions or written conversations capture students' responses |
| ◇ Groups meet on a regular, predictable schedule to discuss their reading or topic | ◇ Students use written or drawn notes to guide both their reading and discussions |
| ◇ Teachers explicitly teach social skills and group rules/etiquette | ◇ Discussion topics come from the students or the teacher in the form of open-ended responses to foster discussion |
| ◇ Reading consists of short text (stories, poems, articles) or novels | ◇ Evaluation is by teacher observation and student self-reflection |
| ◇ Students choose their own reading materials | ◇ Readers share with their classmates when text/topics are finished, and then new groups are formed |
| ◇ Students focus on books or topic | |
| ◇ Teacher serves as a facilitator, not a group member or instructor | |

LITERATURE CIRCLE/BOOK CLUB LESSON OUTLINE

1. Divide your class into groups of 4-7 students
2. Allow the students to pick their own text (either from previous book talks, the curriculum, or a list you provide for them)
3. Have each student choose a role. This may be done in several ways: rotating schedule or students' choice. Not all of these rolls are required, but Daniels suggests to always use the first four
 - ***Discussion Director:** this student is responsible for generating good discussion questions to create conversation about the piece. These may be questions about characters, plots, themes, etc. It is also the D.D.'s job to keep group members on task.
 - ***Literary Luminary:** this student will highlight memorable, interesting, or valuable quotes and passages from the reading and bring the members back to these specific moments.
 - ***Connector:** the connector's job is to relate this text to the real world, either through pop culture, history, or other literature.
 - ***Artful Artist:** this role provides creative freedom for the student, who must present the novel in a graphic way. (S)he may create a poster, movie, dolls, sculptures...etc.
 - ***Character Captain:** the student will choose one character to follow throughout the novel. (S)he will select quotes or scenes that depict the journey the character goes through during the text.
 - ***Word Wizard:** the Word Wizard will go through the text and select unfamiliar words (difficult vocabulary words or words specific to the novel) and define these words and explain a few (5-10) to the group.
 - ***Researcher:** this student will research history about the book, the author, the time period, etc.
4. After the roles are assigned, students will have meetings on designated class periods to discuss their reading section by section.

INSTRUCTIONAL MODEL FOR READING WORKSHOP

Independent Reading

Independent reading provides students with an opportunity to apply reading strategies in a text of personal interest or teacher chosen text. Time should be devoted daily for independent, self-selected reading, which could occur in conjunction with reading workshop. During this time, students read independently to practice and refine reading strategies and skills learned during shared and guided reading. Structured independent reading helps students build stamina for longer texts and helps to develop the habit of lifelong reading. Through the process of choice, students learn the joy of reading as they develop preferences based upon genre, topics, styles of writing, and interests.

To monitor independent reading, students can respond to books they are reading in reading logs, in journals, through book talks, or in conferences. Journaling creates a means for ongoing conversations between the student and the teacher, so through journaling and conferencing the teacher is able to monitor reading strategies utilized by the student and gain insights into their thinking.

Since it is critical that students are able to read the books they have selected, students must be taught how to choose appropriate books to read that will support and scaffold reading development. They can be taught strategies such as the Five Finger Rule, I PICK or the Goldilocks strategy. Conferencing with the teacher about their selections can also provide an opportunity to council students about their choices.

VOCABULARY

Knowledge of word meanings is critical to reading acquisition. Vocabulary can be developed through direct and indirect instruction. They may learn vocabulary indirectly when they hear and see words used in a variety of contexts, and directly when they are explicitly taught both individual words and word-learning strategies. Repeated and multiple exposures to words within the context of authentic speaking, reading and writing opportunities aid in vocabulary development. Through active engagement with words, students learn word meanings and begin making word concept connections, which is key to vocabulary acquisition. Vocabulary is also very important to reading comprehension. As students learn to read more advanced texts, they must learn the meaning of new words that are not part of their oral vocabulary.

FLUENCY

Fluency is the bridge between word recognition and comprehension. It is the ability to read accurately at an appropriate rate and with good expression and phrasing. Fluency practice builds reading confidence, facilitates comprehension, and enhances overall reading achievement. To build fluency, teachers provide a variety of practice formats including modeling during read alouds, student-adult reading (echo reading), choral reading, paired/partner reading, recorded readings and readers' theater.

READING ASSESSMENTS

STATE/DISTRICT

- SOL English test (grades 3-5)
- PALS (grades K-3)
- Fountas and Pinnell Benchmark Assessment
- Power School OnTrac

CLASSROOM

- Running records
- Teacher observation/anecdotal notes
- Self-assessments
- Response journals/learning logs
- Graphic organizers
- Presentations/reports
- PALS Quick Checks

WRITING WORKSHOP

Goal—to help students develop as effective communicators of written language, provide an authentic context for students to apply their knowledge of phonics, spelling, grammar and mechanics and to instill an appreciation of the power and beauty of the written word

Writing workshop is a time when students develop writing strategies and skills and learn the craft of good writers. The teacher models effective writing techniques and correct usage of the English language. Students engage in writing for a variety of purposes. Teachers confer with students to guide and encourage writing development. Students share their writing within a community of writers allowing them to learn from one another. Writing workshop provides a safe and supportive environment, which fosters self-directed learners who produce authentic pieces of writing.

Handwriting is a convention of writing that is taught throughout the grades. Letter formation is emphasized in kindergarten and first grade. Cursive instruction begins in second grade and is refined in third grade. Both manuscript and cursive handwriting are reinforced in fourth and fifth grades through authentic writing experiences. All handwriting instruction should be applied in the context of frequent, purposeful writing.

BEST PRACTICES FOR WRITING
◇ Set a daily time for students to write
◇ Allow students to have choice in their writing
◇ Model and think aloud about the qualities and elements of good writing
◇ Teach writing conventions within the context of authentic writing experiences
◇ Hold conferences with students to praise what they do well and make suggestions for improvement
◇ Provide opportunities for students to share their writing
◇ Expect students to apply writing strategies in all content areas

SOL Writing Domains	Six Trait Correlation
Composing ◇ Central ideas ◇ Elaboration ◇ Organization ◇ Unity	Ideas Organization
Written Expression ◇ Vocabulary ◇ Information ◇ Voice ◇ Tone	Word Choice Voice Sentence Fluency
Usage and Mechanics ◇ Grammar ◇ Spelling ◇ Punctuation ◇ Capitalization ◇ Sentence formation	Conventions

The Writing Process



“Teachers need to be careful to be writing TEACHERS, not just writing EDITORS who fix writing errors.”

~Chris Lehman
 VSRA Conference 2014

INSTRUCTIONAL MODEL FOR WRITING WORKSHOP

Whole group—Shared Writing

Teacher and students work together to compose messages and stories. The teacher supports and models the process as a scribe. Writing is teacher-directed with lessons focused on the writing process and how written language works.

BEST PRACTICES FOR SHARED WRITING

- | | |
|--|--|
| ◇ Lesson is typically conducted whole group | ◇ Students are active participants in the process |
| ◇ Lesson is based on a specific, targeted teaching point | ◇ Think alouds are used to model the qualities and elements of good writing |
| ◇ Teacher provides support for and models the learning objective and the writing process | ◇ Anchor text may be used to support the lesson |
| ◇ Teacher is the scribe | ◇ Writing conventions are taught within the context of authentic writing experiences |
| ◇ Teacher and students compose the text together | |

Whole group—Interactive Writing

Teacher and students compose messages and stories that are written using a shared pen technique that involves the children in the writing. Interactive writing is teacher-directed with lessons focused on the writing process and how written language works.

BEST PRACTICES FOR INTERACTIVE WRITING

- | | |
|--|---|
| ◇ Lesson is typically conducted whole group | ◇ Students are active participants in the process |
| ◇ Lesson is based on a specific, targeted teaching point | ◇ Students build more ownership of process over time |
| ◇ Teacher provides support for and models the learning objective and the writing process | ◇ Spelling may be a point of discussion during the lesson, but is not the purpose of the lesson |
| ◇ Think alouds are used to model the lesson objective | ◇ The interactive writing created by the group becomes anchor text that children can read and to which they can refer, and may become text in classroom libraries |
| ◇ Teacher shares the pen with students to compose text | |

Small group—Guided Writing

Students are constructing individual pieces of writing with teacher guidance, assistance, and feedback. The teacher guides the process and provides instruction through mini-lessons, extensions of the shared/interactive writing, and conferences. Guided writing bridges the gap between whole group writing and independent writing.

BEST PRACTICES FOR GUIDED WRITING

- | | |
|--|---|
| ◇ Teacher conducts small-group mini-lessons based upon writing process, strategies/skills, or writer's craft | ◇ Students construct individual pieces of writing with teacher guidance, assistance, and feedback |
| ◇ Flexible groups are based on student need | ◇ Teacher conferences with students |
| ◇ Lesson is based on a specific, targeted teaching point | ◇ Students are active participants in the process |
| ◇ Grammar skills are embedded within lessons | ◇ Connections are made between reading and writing |

INSTRUCTIONAL MODEL FOR WRITING WORKSHOP

GUIDED WRITING LESSON OUTLINE

Teach/Model (5-15 minutes)

Teacher

- Works with the whole class modeling procedures, skills and strategies for writing (mini-lesson)
- Thinks aloud while writing in front of the class
- Uses interactive writing
- Teaches the stages of the writing process
- Reads literature (mentor text) to show a specific craft of writing
- Teaches grammar and mechanics within the context of authentic writing
- Reteaches skills and strategies as needed

Students

- Listen actively
- Respond to the teacher's questions

Practice/Apply (10-20 minutes)

Teacher

- Confers with students to guide writing development
- Works with small groups

Students

- Apply skills and strategies taught during mini-lessons
- Use the writing process
- Work on an individual piece of writing for several days
- Have free choice of topics most of the time; focused writing selections occasionally
- Talk about their writing with the teacher and peers

Reflect/Share (5-10 minutes)

Teacher

- Selects students to share writing with the class
- Provides support, encouragement and feedback to students

Students

- Share their writing at various stages of the writing process
- Provide positive feedback and support to peers

"There is great teaching potential in picture books. We can use them to model the writer's craft. By analyzing the text....students see how all the pieces of the writing puzzle fit together to make stories and informational texts clear and enjoyable."

~Ruth Culham, 2008



Independent Writing

Generated by the student, independent writing requires very little teacher support. Ideas for independent writing may come out of group sessions. It is a time for students to complete their own writing through the use of knowledge and skills that have been the focus of previous writing instruction. Time should be set aside daily for students to write, to explore, to respond to text. Students may select writing genre (with guidance from the teacher), and work on a variety of genres throughout the year. A variety of anchor texts may be available for students to use as models. Writing should occur not only during Writing Workshop, but in any content area or in conjunction with reading (response journals).

WRITING ASSESSMENTS

DISTRICT

- ETS Criterion Online Writing Evaluation (grades 4-5)
- Quarterly writing samples for writing folder

CLASSROOM

- Writing samples at various stages of the writing process
- Writing journals and notebooks
- Prompts/focused writing samples
- Portfolios


INSTRUCTIONAL MODEL FOR WRITING WORKSHOP


Types of writing based on the Standards of Learning


- ◇ Narrative—a story that shares and experience or recounts events
- ◇ Expository—an informational piece about a topic or an explanation of an idea
- ◇ Descriptive—a detailed description of a person, place, or thing
- ◇ Persuasive—a presentation of reasons and ideas in a way that will influence an audience
- ◇ Reports—a document containing facts about a topic that has been researched
- ◇ Letters—a message that is addressed to another individual
- ◇ Poems—lines of text that express an emotion or idea, sometimes with a specific rhythm or rhyme


WHAT ARE THE TRAITS OF WRITING?


The traits of writing model is a well-established and accurate formative assessment tool that aids in planning and carrying out writing instruction.


 **Ideas:** the writing piece's content—its central message and details that support that message.

 **Organization:** the internal structure of the writing piece—the thread of logic, the pattern of meaning.


 **Voice:** the tone and tenor of the piece—the personal stamp of the writer, which is achieved through a strong understanding of purpose and audience.

 **Word choice:** the vocabulary the writer uses to convey meaning and enlighten the reader.

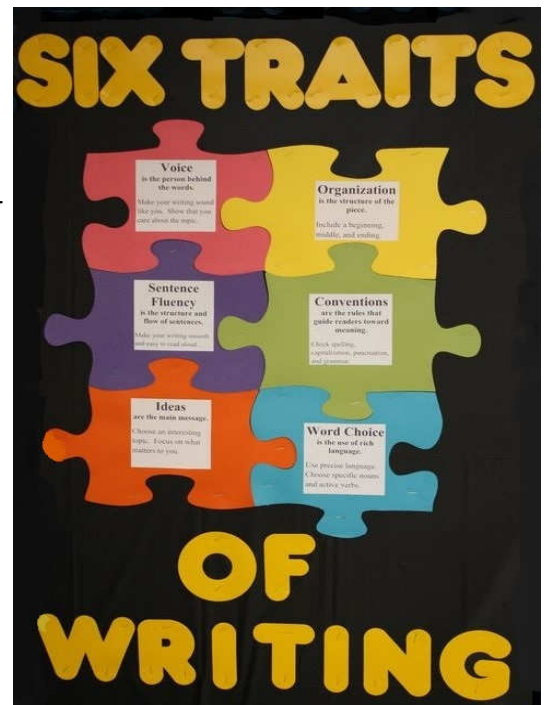
 **Sentence fluency:** the way words and phrases flow through the piece. It's called the auditory trait because it's 'read' with the ear as much as the eye.

 **Conventions:** the mechanical correctness of the piece. Correct use of conventions (spelling, capitalization, punctuation and basic grammar) guides the reader through the text easily.

+1

 **Presentation:** the physical appearance of the piece. A visually appealing text provides a welcome mat. It invites the reader in.

(Scholastic, Traits of Writing by Ruth Culham)



WORDS WORKSHOP

Goal— to help students identify patterns within our written language system, master the recognition, spelling and meaning of specific words, and transfer word knowledge to reading and writing, which ultimately enhances comprehension

Words workshop focuses on students’ word knowledge. Teachers use activities that develop phonemic awareness, phonics, automaticity with high-frequency words, an awareness of word structure, and vocabulary. In the primary grades, teachers engage students in activities to build sound symbol relationships, sort words by sound and pattern, and read and write high-frequency words. In the upper elementary grades, teachers build word knowledge by emphasizing word structure through a continuation of word sorting and word building activities that deepen and extend vocabulary.

Word Study

In word study, students are engaged in comparing and contrasting words by sound and spelling patterns as well as categorizing words by meaning, use, and part of speech. Word study is based on this developmental sequence:

Emergent stage — Students learn to recognize and write the letters of the alphabet, play with beginning sounds in words, and recognize rhyme.

Letter Name stage — Students learn consonant sounds, short vowel patterns, and consonant digraphs and blends.

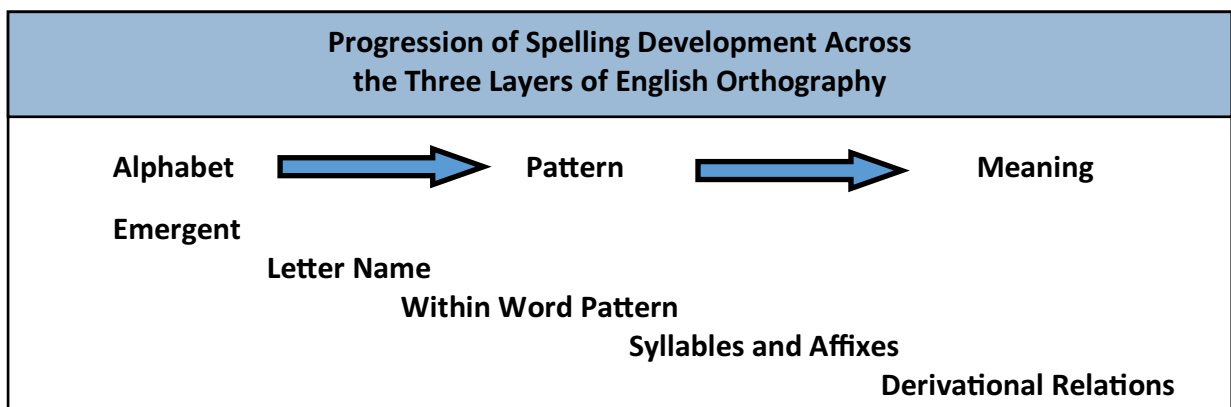
Within Word Pattern stage — Students move away from sound-by-sound relationships and learn to use word patterns and chunks. This includes long vowel patterns, r-controlled vowels, triple blends, and complex consonant units.

Syllables and Affixes stage — Students focus on multisyllabic words and patterns including open and closed syllables, vowel patterns in accented and unaccented syllables, prefixes, and suffixes.

Derivational Relations stage — Students learn prefixes, suffixes, and the meaning of bases and Greek and Latin roots.

BEST PRACTICES FOR DEVELOPING WORD KNOWLEDGE

- ◇ Assess to determine each student’s level of development and differentiate instruction accordingly
- ◇ Provide many opportunities for students to examine words and word patterns
- ◇ Engage students in hands-on, learner-centered activities
- ◇ Link explicit, sequenced instruction to authentic reading and writing experiences



INSTRUCTIONAL MODEL FOR WORDS WORKSHOP

Phonemic Awareness is the ability to hear and manipulate sounds in spoken words. Phonemic awareness tasks include rhyming, segmenting, blending, substituting, counting, adding, isolating, and deleting.

Phonics incorporates an understanding of the relationship between spoken sounds and written language. Both phonemic awareness and phonics are embedded within the weekly activities of word study.

WORD WALL LESSON OUTLINE

(5-10 minutes for grades K-2)

Teach/Model

- Introduce new words each week

Practice/Apply

- Practice reading and spelling new words
- Reinforce previously introduced words

Reflect/Close

- Remind students to use the word wall when reading and writing high-frequency words

SAMPLE SCHEDULE FOR WORD STUDY

Day 1 — Students cut out the sorts and work with the teacher as s/he demonstrates the features to be studied.

Day 2* — Students work individually or with a buddy to sort and check the features/patterns.

Day 3* — Students extend their knowledge of the features/patterns by finding words in authentic text.

Day 4* — Students apply word knowledge through writing.

Day 5 — Students complete an assessment on the weekly sort and review generalizations learned by participating in word games.

* On these days, students may complete word study activities during guided reading. Additional phonemic awareness and phonics lessons may be taught during words workshop.

WORD STUDY LESSON OUTLINE

(15-20 minutes for grades K-5)

Teach/Model

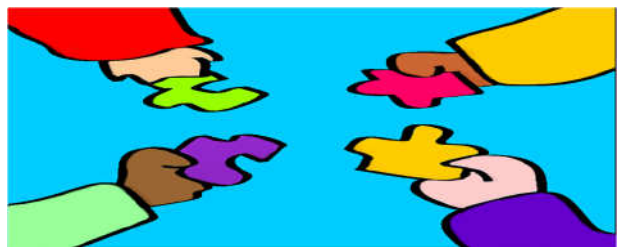
- Introduce weekly word sorts
- Guide students as they look for generalizations (Do not give them the headers at first)

Practice/Apply

- Sort the pictures or words
- Participate in word games and activities to supply targeted patterns
- Use phonemic awareness and phonics skills to study words
- Write the sort
- Locate the feature/pattern in other text
- Apply word knowledge to writing

Reflect/Close

- Restate the generalization that explains the sound, pattern or meaning of the words sorted



WORD KNOWLEDGE ASSESSMENTS

STATE/DISTRICT

- SOL English test (grades 3-5)
- PALS (grades K-3)
- Ganske Developmental Spelling Assessment

CLASSROOM

- Word sort/spelling tests
- Writing samples
- PALS Quick Checks

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Balanced Literacy Approach documents from Chesterfield County Public Schools and Frederick County Public Schools were used in the development of this booklet

ONLINE RESOURCES

<http://kbumreading.com/>

<http://www.janrichardsonguidedreading.com/home>

<http://wiseowlcathy.blogspot.com/>

<http://stephanieharvey.com/blog/4>

<http://www.adventuresinliteracyland.com/>

<http://www.comprehensionconnection.net/>

<http://www.readingrockets.org/>

SUPPLEMENTAL DOCUMENTS

- ◇ K-2 Reading Workshop Schedules
- ◇ 3-5 Reading Workshop Schedule
- ◇ Jan Richardson Guided Reading Lesson Plans (adapted by Martha Reish)
 - Pre-A
 - Emergent
 - Early
 - Transitional
 - Fluent
- ◇ Beth Estill Guided Reading Lesson Plans
 - Emergent
 - Early
 - Transitional
 - Instructional/Fluent
- ◇ Running Record-Beginning Reader
- ◇ Running Record-Transitional Reader
- ◇ Creating Classrooms Where Readers Flourish (Donalyn Miller)