

Creating Classrooms Where Readers Flourish

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Core Idea #1: Carve out more reading time for students.

- Set aside time to read in class.
- Eliminate bell ringers and fast finisher activities.
- Recapture wasted instructional time and wait time.

Core Idea #2: Surround children with reading role models.

- Evaluate your reading experiences.
- Commit to reading more.
- Bring your reading life into the classroom.

Core Idea #3: Increase access and exposure to books.

- Create classroom libraries.
- Visit the school library on a regular basis.
- Introduce authors and books through read alouds.
- Provide frequent opportunities for students to preview, select, and share books.

Core Idea #4: Reconsider whole class novel units.

- Whole Class Novel Benefits
 - Provides a common text for instructional purposes and reference.
 - Assures students read at least a few books.
 - Exposes students to works with cultural, historical or literary significance.
 - Builds community.
- Whole Class Novel Concerns
 - No single text can meet the reading levels or interests of the wide range of readers in a classroom.
 - Novel units take too long. Students cannot read enough to develop strong literacy skills.
 - Extensions and fun activities reduce authentic reading, writing, and thinking and send the message that reading is not innately valuable.

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- Streamlining Whole Class Novels
 - Shorten the amount of time you spend reading one book.
 - Strip units of activities like projects and vocabulary work.
 - Alternate whole class novel units with independent reading units.
 - Use read alouds and shared reading, particularly with difficult text.
 - Provide students time to read in class and receive support from you.

- Reposition Instruction Around Independent Reading
 - Design instruction around genres, themes, literary elements, or comprehension strategies, not specific books.
 - Create guiding questions or independent practice that can be used with any book.
 - Use common texts like short stories, articles, and the first chapters of books for modeling and teaching.
 - Ask students to apply what they have learned to their independent books.
 - Select books from a range of reading levels.

Core Idea #5: Validate students' reading choices.

Lifelong readers sometimes...

- Read deeply from one author or genre.
- Read books that are too easy or too challenging.
- Prefer fiction to nonfiction and vice versa.
- Follow series.
- Read graphic novels, magazines, and Internet content.

Core Idea #6: Encourage students' authentic reading responses.

- book commercials
- response entries
- book reviews
- book clubs
- technology applications: book trailers, Glogster posters, podcasts, discussion boards