Read Alouds • Shared Reading • Small Group Reading Instruction • Writing • Phonological Awareness • Word Work • Speaking and Listening • Viewing, Visualizing and Representing • Digital Literacy • Cross-Curricular Literacy • Independent Reading
OVERVIEW

Small group instruction allows for students to receive explicit instruction designed to meet their needs as a learner. Ongoing assessment and observations guide instruction. The groups can be organized by reading level or can be created based on strategy needs. Through ongoing student observation and monitoring, teachers can restructure groupings based on data and evolving student needs.

What is Guided Reading?
Guided Reading is an approach where teachers work with alternating small groups of students who demonstrate similar reading behaviors and read similar levels of texts. Teachers are able to focus on specific student needs, accelerating progress and benefiting from time to observe students as they read from texts at their instructional reading level. Guided Reading is intended to teach strategies, not focus on completing a book. The goal is to develop reading strategies (do something with this text that they can apply to other texts). The intent is to help students read progressively more complex texts, initially with support and then on their own. Guided reading lessons are short, approximately 10-20 minutes, and may feature a sequence of lessons over a number of days. Lessons feature a similar structure no matter the grade or level. (See planning template on last page).

What are Strategy Groups?
An alternative to providing differentiated instruction is to group students in small flexible groups based on areas of need. Students from different reading levels are invited to meet with the teacher to work on a common strategy. They apply learned strategies to their own independent level texts. The Daily 5 / CAFE approach is based on Strategy Groups.

SNAPSHOT:
Guided reading allows teachers to coach a group of similar readers with intentionally planned lessons tied to curriculum outcomes:

General Outcome 2:
Comprehend and respond personally and critically to oral, print and other media texts.
2.1 Uses Strategies and Cues
2.2 Responds to Texts
2.3 Understands, Forms, Elements and Techniques

**Steps to Implementing Guided Reading**

**Before instruction:**
1. Consult reading data from the previous year. If there is limited prior student data, administer a running record, DRA (Diagnostic Reading Assessment) or a complete Benchmark assessment to determine an appropriate instructional reading level.

2. Divide students into small groups based on similar reading levels, ideally no more than four students per group. Group members will shift as students progress with their reading.

3. Select an instructional level text that students will likely enjoy and that offers challenge and opportunity to learn. The text should be challenging, but not so difficult that students will become discouraged - aim for 90-95% accuracy. Each child needs his or her own copy of the book or text.

4. Organize a note-taking book for noting strategies that are taught during guided reading lessons and observations of student progress.

5. Pre-read the chosen text and plan a guided reading lesson: introduction, teaching point, comprehension questions, early finisher task(s).

**During instruction:**

1. Greet students and introduce the text.

2. Set a comprehension purpose question (CPQ) for the students to focus on as they read.

3. Assign a section of the text to be read silently.

4. Demonstration or guided teaching - As the students read to themselves (kindergarten and grade 1 students may “whisper read”), the teacher notes observations about reading behaviours, and provides coaching to those who hit a stumbling block. This guidance can take the form of asking questions, giving prompts, or providing a reading strategy.

5. Choral reading is a good strategy to use for one or two introductory pages to establish a pattern in the book or to find the answer to the comprehension purpose question. Once you have launched students into the text, they read independently with no round robin reading.

6. Students who complete their reading passage before other group members can re-read the text or complete an early finisher activity such as look for new or interesting words in the text, look for spelling patterns previously learned, retell the story to themselves or draw something from the text.

7. Discuss the CPQ. Encourage students to share and discuss their responses.

8. Have students support their opinions and reflections by returning to the text.

9. Reinforce effective actions - when you observe effective reading strategies, share this with the student. Be specific, such as “I like the way you paused for the punctuation”, rather than “Good reading”.

10. Check for comprehension - ask questions, talk about what happened in the text, draw the main ideas or write about what they read.

11. Share a specific goal or strategy for students to work on in their independent reading until you see them again.

**The Book Introduction Does:**
- Create interest in a topic or story.
- Assess students’ background knowledge so that confusions can be cleared up if needed.
- Help readers understand the text structure as a support for comprehending.
- Familiarize students with tricky language structures.
- Draw readers’ attention to key information and where they will find it.
- Draw readers’ attention to key vocabulary if needed.
- Prompt thinking in response to the text.
- Pose the readers to problem-solve their way through the text.

**The Book Introduction Does Not:**
- Laboriously preview every page.
- Pre-teach vocabulary words.
- Consist of a “picture walk” in which students look through the text and examine the pictures either individually, or as a group with the teacher.
- Remove the challenges from the text by communicating all information in advance.
- Tell readers what to think during and after reading the text.
- Take longer than it takes to read the text.

CONSIDERATIONS – PLANNING TIPS – CLASSROOM DESIGN

- Build in time to conference with a number of students every day. Aim for short, frequent touch points rather than an extended session with one child every few weeks.
- Create a space where small groups can sit with teacher, e.g., kidney shaped table
- Establish routines, a positive classroom climate, and meaningful options for tasks so that all students are actively engaged.
- Centers or using the Daily 5 structure are invaluable because they allow time for the rest of the class to practice and reinforce skills while the teacher works with small groups and provides targeted instruction. Centres should be purposeful, not just busy work (e.g., literacy centres, independent reading, word work, listening to reading, partner reading, grammar, writing and inquiry projects).
- Preserve the integrity of guided reading materials. Levelled texts are typically packaged in multi-packs with 6 copies of each book and should be stored in a central book room. They should not be used for whole class instruction.
- Be critical in the selection of guided reading materials. Aim for texts that will connect to student interests and backgrounds. You do not need to limit the reading to books, you may use other materials such as: posters, brochures, and news articles.

- Become familiar with available titles/genres in your guided reading series, text features used in the books and reading behaviours to develop at each level:
  - Scholastic Behaviours to Notice and Support Levels A-J and Levels M-U
  - Fountas & Pinnell Reading Assessment Checklist – Behaviors to Notice, Teach and Support Levels A-Z
- Do not overlook stronger readers when forming small groups. All children need support enhancing their reading skills as texts become more complex.
- Regularly revisit groupings and consider numerous factors when deciding to move students to a new reading group: results of running records and observations, reading strategies observed in use, evidence of fluency and appropriate reading rates, comprehension, stamina, reading behaviours and overall enjoyment. Students should feel confident at their current level, having successfully mastered a number of books at their level, before we increase the level of challenge.

RESOURCES


Sample Guided Reading Lessons - Elk Island Public Schools: http://is.eips.ca/resources#category/1151

Jamison Rog, L. (2012) Guiding Readers: Making the most of the 18 minute guided reading lesson. Markham, ON: Pembroke


Dibels (Screening Tool) http://dibels.uoregon.edu/assessment/index/material/


A-Z Reading (Raz Kids) - www.raz-kids.com


Pearson Canada - Aboriginal Resources (e.g. Turtle Island Voices): http://www.pearsoncanadaschool.com/index.cfm?locator=PS1kXy

Daily 5 Resources (Strategy Groups - see menu on next page): www.thedailycafe.com
# The CAFE Menu

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Comprehension</th>
<th>Accuracy</th>
<th>Fluency</th>
<th>Expand Vocabulary</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I understand what I read</td>
<td>I can read the words</td>
<td>I can read accurately, with expression, and understand what I read</td>
<td>I know, find, and use interesting words</td>
</tr>
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</table>

### Strategies

- **Comprehension**
  - Check for understanding
  - Back up and reread
  - Use prior knowledge to connect with text
  - Make and adjust predictions; use text to confirm
  - Infer and support with evidence
  - Make a picture or mental image
  - Monitor and fix up
  - Ask questions throughout the reading process
  - Use text features (titles, headings, captions, graphic features)
  - Summarize text; include sequence of main events
  - Use main idea and supporting details to determine importance
  - Determine and analyze author’s purpose and support with text
  - Recognize literary elements (genre, plot, character, setting, problem/resolution, theme)
  - Recognize and explain cause-and-effect relationships
  - Compare and contrast within and between text

- **Accuracy**
  - Strategies
    - Abundant easy reading
    - Look carefully at letters and words
    - Cross checking . . .
    - Do the pictures and/or words look right?
    - Do they sound right?
    - Do they make sense?
    - Flip the sound
    - Use the picture . . .
    - Do the words and pictures match?
    - Use beginning and ending sounds
    - Blend sounds; stretch and reread
    - Chunk letters and sounds together
    - Skip the word, then come back
    - Trade a word/guess a word that makes sense
    - Recognize words at sight

- **Fluency**
  - Strategies
    - Voracious reading
    - Read appropriate-level texts that are a good fit
    - Reread text
    - Practice common sight words and high-frequency words
    - Adjust and apply different reading rates to match text
    - Use punctuation to enhance phrasing and prosody (and marks, commas, etc.)
    - Read text as the author would say it, conveying the meaning or feeling

- **Expand Vocabulary**
  - Strategies
    - Voracious reading
    - Tune in to interesting words and use new vocabulary in speaking and writing
    - Use prior knowledge and context to predict and confirm meaning
    - Use pictures, illustrations, and diagrams
    - Use word parts to determine the meaning of words (prefixes, suffixes, origins, abbreviations, etc.)
    - Ask someone to define the word for you
    - Use dictionaries, thesauruses, and glossaries as tools

### Behaviors That Support Reading

- Get started right away
- Stay in one spot
- Work quietly
- Read the whole time
- Increase stamina
- Select and read good-fit books

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CONSULTANT TIPS

- **Basic implementation would look like this**
  ...pre-assessment, decide how students will be grouped, instruction of guided reading, progress monitoring, post assessment

- **A more impactful implementation would look like this**
  ...focused strategies while instructing groups, selecting strategies to coach based on formative data; frequent, scheduled meetings with groups; and personalizing responses to students within groupings (by student abilities, by outcome, by interest, etc.)

- Create manageable groups. Aim for 4 or 5 groups. Groups may consist of students across a few reading levels. Target number of students per group is 3-5. It is not necessary to meet with every group every day. Higher level groups may receive less frequent support.

- Keep a selection of easier and more challenging books on hand in case you find the one you were planning on using does not appear to be a good match to student needs and interests.

- Provide flexible reading spaces - allow students to opt for low stools, high stools or under the table once they start reading. A physical separation can help students read independently and not focus on what their peers are doing or coaching support you may be providing to other individuals.

- Have a variety of tools on hand to support guided reading: pointer tools, post-its, highlighting tape, magnetic letters, whisper phones, rubber fingers, lasers, anchor charts describing the comprehension strategy (What is it? What does it look like?) and reading rulers (Return Sweep E.Z.C. Reader) *See images in top right hand corner of page.

www.reallygoodstuff.com

SEE IT IN ACTION

Youtube Channel - Guided Reading - 63 videos of classrooms:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=txC-Qo_8GiU&list=PLB556418715BE1A76

Youtube Channel - Guided Reading - 200 videos of classrooms:  https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLHNhtapAjqPq5E2mtP83jAzP49Z5bGc6w

SELECTING GUIDED READING TEXTS

- How many challenging words is the reader likely to struggle with?
- Is the reader likely to have the necessary background knowledge to understand the material?
- Are the text structure and features likely to add an additional challenge for this reader?
- Is the reader likely to be interested in the topic and motivated to read this material?
- Levelled or non levelled materials?

DEVELOPING FLUENCY

Reading fluency is an important skill that can be developed through small group instruction. Fluency refers to the ability to read accurately at a rate where decoding is relatively effortless; proficient oral reading should be smooth, accurate and expressive (prosody). The primary benefit of fluency is that readers are able to allocate more attention to comprehension. (Wolf & Katzir-Cohen, 2001)

**Six Dimensions of Fluency**

**Pausing** - the reader's voice, pauses and breathing is guided by punctuation, e.g. short breath at a comma; full stop with periods and dashes.

**Phrasing** - the way readers put words together in groups to represent meaningful units of language. Phrasing involves pausing at punctuation as well as chunking groups of words that should be read together.

**Stress** - the emphasis readers place on particular words (louder tone) to reflect the meaning of the text as speakers would do in oral language.

**Intonation** - the way the reader varies tone, pitch, and volume to reflect the meaning of the text and to mark punctuation such as periods (falling inflection) and questions marks (rising inflection).

**Rate** - the pace at which the reader moves through the text. An appropriate rate moves along rapidly with a few slowdowns, corrections or long pauses to solve words. The pace is also appropriate to the text and purpose of the reading—not too fast and not too slow.

**Integration** - the way the reader consistently and evenly orchestrates pausing, phrasing, stress, intonation, and rate. The reader moves smoothly from one word to another, from one phrase to another, and from one sentence to another, incorporating pauses that are just long enough to perform their function. There is no space between words except as part of meaningful interpretation. When all dimensions of fluency--pausing, phrasing, stress, intonation, and rate--are working together, the reader will be using expressions in a way that clearly demonstrates that he understands the text and is even thinking beyond the text.

**SUCCESS LOOKS LIKE...**

- clear improvement in reading comprehension
- students using strategies independently
- students self-monitoring: self-correcting, rereading
- students moving up levels (able to handle more challenging levels of texts)
- students are engaged

**STUDENTS...**

- know their strengths and know what they are working on
- can describe what they are doing as a reader (reading behaviors)
- use reading strategies and can describe what they did to make sense of text
- enjoy reading

**CHALLENGES/PITFALLS**

- If students are disengaged (not focused, attentive, etc.)
  - check reading levels
  - keep lesson short
  - pick more motivating content geared to their interests - read more widely than little 16 page leveled books.
  - “sell the book” during the introduction
  - have options for alternative seating
  - provide fidgets

- If lesson is taking too long:
  - plan lessons so they progress efficiently and you do not have to rush closing the lesson

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Six Dimensions of Fluency Rubric: [http://www.dps.k12.oh.us/content/documents/Fluency-rubic.pdf](http://www.dps.k12.oh.us/content/documents/Fluency-rubic.pdf)

• explore which part of the lesson is taking too long - lesson should be approximately 20 minutes long; most components should only take 2 or 3 minutes. (Refer to planning template at end of this document).
• avoid pitfalls: spending too much time on building background knowledge, doing round robin reading or getting sidetracked by student behaviours. Prompt less.
• have positive routines in place
• videotape lesson
• have a timer on table

Unclear what to coach students on:
• use Fountas & Pinnell Prompting Guide
• consult CAFE strategies
• preview chosen book - look at text features, vocabulary, and which strategies might naturally evolve from the text and gear book talk/mini-lesson towards students’ abilities
• take anecdotal notes to inform next lesson
• collaborate with colleagues, discuss specific students and strategies you are focusing on.
• use a Guided Reading lesson plan that lists reading strategies, e.g. help students break inefficient reading habits.

Students do not seem to be making progress:
• are you focusing on a superficial level of understanding (asking ‘right there’ questions, not inviting thinking about or beyond the text) ?
• are you challenging kids to go deeper in their thinking (inferring, synthesizing)?
• are you overteaching one strategy?
• is instruction overly focused on phonological awareness and patterns rather than making sense of text?
• is instruction focused on understanding a specific text, rather than development of transferrable reading strategies?

• are students prompted to use strategies during independent reading?
• are you holding one-on-one conferences as needed to see what students are integrating and where they still need support?
• have you recently done a running record to confirm appropriate reading level?
• is it time to explore a more intensive level of intervention and get additional support?

MODIFICATIONS, SUPPORTS AND TECHNOLOGY TOOLS

• Some students might benefit from pre-teaching before going into a guided reading group, e.g., reading the chosen story with an educational assistant prior to the lesson so they already have some experience with it
• Provide visual vocabulary supports (English Language Learners), e.g., have an iPad on hand for quickly accessing images
• Read digital texts and model how you read them, e.g., A-Z reading projectable books/activities
• Tar Heel Reader has been designed to allow students to use a variety of alternative access methods to choose and read simple books on a range of topics. Accessibility options include mouse, touch screen, alternative pointing devices, AAC devices with serial output, IntelliKeys and switches. http://tarheelreader.org/
• Use technology tools to digitize texts, simplify reading levels, clear out extra distractions on the page, and enlarge font, e.g. Simple English, Too Long Didn’t Read - TLDR, Clearly, and Readability
**Planning for Guided Reading and Taking Observational Notes**

**Group:** 

**New Text and Level:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Introduce the Text</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Engage student interest.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Establish the overall meaning of the text.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Talk about the meaning.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Introduce new language structures.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Call attention to a few new and important words if needed.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Point out aspects that are new or may cause confusion.</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Students Read the Text</th>
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<tr>
<td>• Notice the behaviors of individual readers.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Prompt for problem solving actions.</td>
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<tr>
<th>Discuss and Revisit the Text</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Begin in an open-ended way.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Have students talk about their thinking ([<strong>within</strong>, <strong>beyond</strong>, and <strong>about</strong> the text]).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Revisit to clarify, locate information, or provide evidence for statements.</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teaching Points</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Teach for one or two aspects of the reading process—<strong>within</strong>, <strong>beyond</strong>, <strong>about</strong> the text.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Ground teaching in text.</td>
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<tr>
<th>Work with Letters/Words</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Provide 2-3 minutes active, inquiry-based word work.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Focus on any aspect of word solving.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Help readers develop quick recognition and flexibility</td>
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<tr>
<th>Write About Reading</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Talk/write about the text.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Use interactive, shared, independent, or dictated writing.</td>
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