

Assess, Decide, and Guide: The Keys to Helping ALL Readers Meet the Common Core Standards

Maria Walther

www.mariawalther.com Twitter @mariapwalther

How the ASSESS-DECIDE-GUIDE Framework Supports Powerful Reading Instruction

ASSESS

- Know your students' reading habits and preferences
- Pinpoint each child's developmental word knowledge
- Understand whether a learner can comprehend in various reading (or listening) situations
- Determine the child's instructional reading level
- Identify the skills and strategies the student needs to learn in order to become a better reader

DECIDE

- Make data-based decisions
- Differentiate reading instruction

GUIDE

- Select texts that will compel readers to think
- Scaffold reading instruction to guide readers toward independence
- Incorporate word study and vocabulary instruction
- Connect reading and writing
- Motivate readers!

Why High-Success Independent Reading is ESSENTIAL

Why is it ESSENTIAL to guide children in choosing "just right" books—95% accuracy or better?

- Increases *engagement* and *on-task behavior* during independent reading time.
- Expands *vocabulary* because independent reading is the source of most vocabulary acquisition.
- Strengthens *self-monitoring* and the use of *decoding strategies*.
- Improves *comprehension* because children can read and think at the same time.
- Fosters *reading success* because enjoyment of texts is a critical factor in becoming a passionate, lifelong reader.

Research to support the above reasons can be found in Allington, R. L., McCuiston, K. & Billen, M. (In Press). *What Research Says About Text Complexity and Learning to Read. The Reading Teacher.*

A Few of My Favorite Graphic Novel Series

Name of Series/Publisher	Title, Author, Brief Summary
Babymouse/Random House	<i>Babymouse #13: Cupcake Tycoon</i> (Holm, 2010) Babymouse is determined to raise the most money and win the grand prize in the school library fundraiser.
Guinea Pig Pet Shop Private Eye/Graphic Universe/Lerner	<i>The Ferret's a Foot</i> (Venable, C. AF, 2011) In the third book of this series, Sasspants and her sidekick Hamisher are trying to solve another pet shop mystery.
Phonics Comics/Innovative Kids	<i>Teeny Genie</i> (Katschke, 2009) The Teeny Genie is helping kids who need him with one wacky wish after another.
Sticky Burr/Candlewick	<i>Sticky Burr: Adventures in Burrwood Forest</i> (Lechner, 2007) Scurvy Burr and his pals do not accept Sticky Burr until he saves the village from a pack of wild dogs. A graphic novel interspersed with pages from Sticky Burr's journal.
Toon Books/Toon Books	<i>Stinky</i> (Davis, 2008) Stinky and his pet Wartbelly enjoy their smelly days in the swamp until a kid comes along. Will Stinky and the kid become friends?

Source: *Month-by-Month Reading Instruction for the Differentiated Classroom* (Walther & Phillips, 2012)

How the ASSESS-DECIDE-GUIDE Framework Supports Next Step Guided Reading Instruction

ASSESS

- Anecdotal Notes
- Reading Records
- Writing Samples
- Word Lists
- Developmental Word Knowledge Inventories

DECIDE

- Form and reform guided reading groups based on assessment data
- Select a lesson plan that matches students' stage of reading development—Pre-A, Emergent, Early, Fluent, Transitional

GUIDE

The Three Steps to Effective Guided Reading Lessons

- Pinpoint an instructional focus
- Select an appropriate text that is slightly challenging
- Determine which teaching points will scaffold readers so they can take the next step in becoming more independent

Next Step Guided Reading

The Three Steps to Effective Guided Reading Lessons

- Pinpoint an instructional focus
- Select an appropriate text that is slightly challenging, prompt and coach
- Determine which teaching points will scaffold readers so they can take the next step in becoming more independent

Pinpoint an Instructional Focus

Monitoring—First and foremost, if the reader is not monitoring for meaning, we scaffold, prompt, and teach this foundational skill.

Decoding—If the reader stops at a tricky word, then we prompt for decoding strategies and reinforce decoding as a teaching point.

Fluency—Fluency comes next because once a reader develops automaticity with words and decoding, he or she is ready to be prompted for fluency.

Vocabulary—It is common for skilled decoders to plow right through unknown words, decode them accurately, but not use the context clues to figure out the meaning of the word. Scaffolding vocabulary is an ideal teaching point for transitional and fluent readers!

Comprehension—Comprehension appears last in the sequence because it is the *goal of every guided reading lesson* and the previous scaffolds and teaching points will support the readers' understanding of the text.

Match the Text to Your Instructional Focus

Focus	Text Features	A Few of My Favorites
Decoding	Some challenging words to decode	Scholastic Guided Science Readers (Levels A-D)
Fluency	Dialogue, few decoding challenges	Elephant and Piggie, Fly Guy
Vocabulary	Unfamiliar words with text or illustration clues (context, known parts, glossary)	Scholastic Vocabulary Readers
Retell	Straightforward storyline, supportive illustrations	<i>Frog's Lunch</i> by Dee Lillgard, <i>My Lucky Day</i> by Keiko Kasza
Main Idea	Informational texts with supportive text features like headings, diagrams, or captions	<i>Critters in Camouflage</i> by Karen Alexander, <i>Hibernation</i> by Tori Kosara both from Scholastic Common Core Text Sets
Infer	Fables, short stories, poetry, texts with surprises	Fables by Arnold Lobel <i>Teaching Struggling Readers With Poetry</i> (Walther & Fuhler, 2010)

Prompt and Coach

Focus	Sample Prompts
Monitoring	Reread and think about what would make sense and begins with that letter.
Decoding	Get your mouth ready to say the first sound.
Fluency	Reread it the way the character would say it.
Vocabulary	Look at the picture/text feature to help you better understand that word.
Retell	Tell me about what you just read.
Main Idea	What are the key ideas the author wanted you to learn?
Infer	How do you think the character feels about ____? What evidence/clues helped you to figure that out?

Source: *Next Step Guided Reading Assessment* (Richardson & Walther, 2013)

Select a Teaching Point

Stage of Reading Development	Teaching Points
Emergent (A-C)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use picture clues • Get your mouth ready • Cross-check • Monitor with know sight words
Early (D-I)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self-Monitor • Use known parts • Read in phrases • Retell/Recount
Transitional (J-M)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self-Monitor • Decode big words • Read with expression • Retell/Recount
Fluent (N+)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vocabulary • High-Level Comprehension • Summarize • Infer • Character analysis

PROFESSIONAL RESOURCES

Richardson, J. (2009). *The Next Step in Guided Reading: Focused Assessment and Targeted Lessons for Helping Every Student Become a Better Reader*. New York: Scholastic.

Richardson, J. (2013). *Next Step Guided Reading in Action*, featuring grades K-2 and 3-5 DVDs. New York: Scholastic.

Richardson, J., & Walther, M. P. (2013). *The Next Step Guided Reading Assessment, K-2*. New York: Scholastic.

Richardson, J., & Walther, M. P. (2013). *The Next Step Guided Reading Assessment, 3-6*. New York: Scholastic.

Walther, M. P., & Phillips, K. A. (2012). *Month-by-Month Reading Instruction for the Differentiated Classroom*. New York: Scholastic.