

**Assess, Decide, and Guide**  
**The Keys to Helping Students Meet the Common Core Standards**  
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**A Portrait of a Student Who Meets the Common Core Standards**

- Becomes a self-directed, independent learner
- Builds strong content area knowledge
- Adjusts communication based on audience, task, purpose, and content
- Comprehends as well as critiques
- Seeks to understand other perspectives and cultures
- Evaluates other points of view critically and constructively
- Values evidence
- Uses technology and digital media strategically and capably

Source: CCSS, p. 7

**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!

## 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)

## A Few of My Favorite Complex Texts for Comprehension Conversations

### Thinking About Point of View

Neubecker, R. (2013). *Winter is for snow*. New York: Disney/Hyperion.

A winter-loving brother is trying to convince his reluctant sister to join him outside for a fun-filled time in the snow. The text is written in two different colors, making it clear who is speaking at different points in the story. This book could also lead to opinion writing about winter!

**Teaching Ideas:** Fluency Fun! Seesaw Reader's Theater (*M-by-M Reading* p. 98); RL.6 Point of View

### Asking and Answering Questions

Javaherbin, M. (2010). *The secret message*. (B. Whatley, Illus.). New York: Disney/Hyperion.

Based on an ancient Persian poem, "Parrot and the Merchant" by Rumi, this is a tale of a wealthy merchant who keeps a parrot in his shop to attract customers. When he asks the parrot what he wants from India, the parrot requests that the merchant tell his wild bird friends about him and their secret message leads to his freedom.

**Teaching Ideas:** Comprehension Conversation—Predicting (*M-by-M Reading* p. 121) or Questioning (*M-by-M Reading* p. 172); Multicultural Literature

### Comparing and Contrasting Traditional Tales

Kostecki-Shaw, J. S. (2011). *Same, same but different*. New York: Holt.

Elliot lives in America and Kailash lives in India, by exchanging letters and pictures the two boys discover that their lives are similar yet different.

**Teaching Ideas:** Comprehension Conversations—Discovering Connections; Pair with *Mirror* (Baker, 2010)

Hopkins, J. M. (2013). *Prairie chicken little*. (H. Cole, Illus.). Atlanta, GA: Peachtree.

Mary McBlicken the prairie chicken thinks a stampede is coming, so she and her friends run off to tell Cowboy Stan and Red Dog Dan until they're spotted by a sly coyote.

**Teaching Ideas:** Traditional Tales, CCSS RL9 - Compare & contrast two versions of same story (*M-by-M Reading* p. 142)

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

## ASSESS

- Anecdotal Notes
- Running 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

<p><b>Emergent Readers</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Concept of word</li> <li>• Decoding strategies               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Picture clues</li> <li>○ Beginning sound clues</li> <li>○ Cross-checking/Self-Monitoring</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Sight words</li> <li>• Comprehension               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Retelling</li> <li>○ Building background</li> <li>○ Making predictions</li> <li>○ Making connections</li> <li>○ Noticing text patterns</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p><b>Early Readers</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Decoding strategies               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Rereading</li> <li>○ Using context clues</li> <li>○ Looking for chunks</li> <li>○ Self-monitoring</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Sight words</li> <li>• Fluency</li> <li>• Vocabulary</li> <li>• Retelling</li> <li>• Comprehension Conversations               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Comparing/Contrasting Texts</li> <li>○ Inferring Big Ideas</li> <li>○ Stating/Defending Opinions</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p><b>Transitional Readers</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Integrating decoding strategies</li> <li>• Self-monitoring</li> <li>• Word Analysis</li> <li>• Fluency</li> <li>• Vocabulary</li> <li>• Retelling</li> <li>• Comprehension Conversations               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Comparing/contrasting texts</li> <li>○ Inferring big ideas</li> <li>○ Stating/defending opinions</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p><b>Fluent Readers</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Self-monitoring with automaticity</li> <li>• Word analysis</li> <li>• Fluency</li> <li>• Vocabulary</li> <li>• Returning to text/Text-based evidence</li> <li>• Comprehension Conversations               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Reading critically</li> <li>○ Discussing plot and purposes of different texts structures</li> <li>○ Discussing various interpretations of text</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

## 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

## **A Logical Sequence for Scaffolding Readers and Selecting Teaching Points**

**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.

## **How the ASSESS-DECIDE-GUIDE Framework Supports Writing Instruction**

### **ASSESS**

- Learn about your students' interests, passions, experiences
- Pinpoint each child's developmental word knowledge
- Determine whether the writer can adjust his or her writing based on task, audience, and purpose
- Identify the skills and strategies the student needs to learn in order to become a better writer

### **DECIDE**

- Make data-based decisions
- Differentiate writing instruction

### **GUIDE**

- Select mentor texts that will compel writers to notice and apply craft techniques
- Scaffold writing instruction to guide readers toward independence
- Incorporate word study and vocabulary instruction
- Connect writing and reading
- Motivate writers!

Name \_\_\_\_\_

### Conferring Notebook "Kid Page"

	<b>Family</b>
<b>Pets</b>	<b>Interests</b>
<b>Hobbies/Sports</b>	<b>Special Happenings</b>

1.	I	2.	I	3.	I	4.	I
	O		O		O		O
	C		C		C		C
5.	I	6.	I	7.	I	8.	I
	O		O		O		O
	C		C		C		C
9.	I	10.	I	11.	I	12.	I
	O		O		O		O
	C		C		C		C
13.	I	14.	I	15.	I	16.	I
	O		O		O		O
	C		C		C		C
17.	I	18.	I	19.	I	20.	I
	O		O		O		O
	C		C		C		C
21.	I	22.	I	23.	I	24.	I
	O		O		O		O
	C		C		C		C

I= Ideas, O=Organization, C=Conventions

## Honeybee Conferring: Anecdotal Notes

<p>1. Katie          labored writing          detailed, expressive          illustrations          unique ideas          pre-phonetic speller</p>	<p>2. Lenny          limited topics          attempting          conventions          transitional speller</p>	<p>3. Moriah          begins pieces with          original ideas has          difficulty with middle          and end          phonetic speller</p>	<p>4. Dan          Needs 1:1 assistance          to sustain          independent writing          unique ideas          pre-phonetic speller</p>
<p>5. Jordan          a lot to share during          whole class          conversations          spends much of          writing time "thinking"          about ideas</p>	<p>6. Jake          able to write quickly          and fluently            repeats similar ideas            transitional speller</p>	<p>7. Brynne          varied topics          unique voice          uses a variety of          conventions          transitional speller</p>	<p>8. Robert          varied topics          detailed illustrations          advanced knowledge          of conventions          conventional speller</p>

9. Chelsea Needs 1:1 assistance to match letters/sounds illustrations contain voice	10. Larry limited ideas writing seems labored advanced use of conventions transitional speller	11. Jennifer ideas are original but conventions of writing make it difficult to read voice-filled illustrations	12. Matt varied topics creative writer writes easily transitional speller
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### Guided Writing Groups

Use information from anecdotal notes to form temporary small groups

Source: *Month-by-Month Trait-Based Writing Instruction* (Walther & Phillips, 2009)

<p>Strategies for Developmental Spelling Katie, Chelsea Dan, Jennifer</p> <p>The students in this group have a wealth of ideas but lack the sound-letter knowledge or attention to task to put their thoughts into written words.</p>	<p>Idea Development Lenny, Larry Jordan</p> <p>This is the "I don't have any ideas!" group. We'll talk about their interests and backgrounds to uncover ideas for writing.</p>
<p>Elaboration Moriah, Jake</p> <p>This is the "I'm done!" group. The students have the ability to elaborate and add details; they simply need encouragement to apply their talents.</p>	<p>Enrichment of Ideas/Writing Techniques Bryenne, Robert Matt</p> <p>This group quickly picks up on the techniques and ideas shared in mentor texts and mini-lessons and can learn from each other as they write.</p>

### What Do I Say When I'm Conferring?

Writing IS Thinking: Language to Guide Young Writers

Compiled by Maria Walther from  
*Choice Words* by Peter H. Johnston (Stenhouse, 2004)  
*Creating Young Writers* by Vicki Spandel (Pearson, 2008)  
*Writing Essentials* by Regie Routman (Heinemann, 2005)

**Opening comments...**

- "What are you doing as a writer today?"
- "Where are you going with this piece of writing?"

**Start with what the writing does, and then move to what the writing has (Routman, 227).**

- "Your story reminded me of . . ."
- "I could picture exactly how . . ."
- "When you said \_\_\_\_\_, I felt . . ."
- "You write as if you love words . . ."
- "I could follow your story from beginning to end—I never felt lost!"
- "Your ending was a real surprise!"



"I notice that you chose to write about this as a poem. How come?"  
 "I notice that your lead is like \_\_\_\_\_ in the book \_\_\_\_\_."  
 "I notice that you used the word \_\_\_\_\_ instead of \_\_\_\_\_."  
 "I notice that you began this sentence a different way. That's what writers do!"

**Use language that encourages and clarifies . . .**

"Can you say more about . . ."  
 "If you were to add information about the \_\_\_\_\_, where would you put it?"  
 "How are you planning to go about this?"  
 "You might want to . . ."  
 "Think about . . ."  
 "Perhaps you could try . . ."  
 "You really have me interested in this character [in your writing] because of the things he says, **AND** if you show me how he says them and what he looks like, I will get an even stronger sense of him."

**Closing comments . . .**

"What a talented young poet [nonfiction writer, story writer] you are."  
 "How does it feel to have written a piece like that?"  
 "What would you like to learn next as a writer?"

**Mentor Texts to Spark Ideas**

Hallinan, P. K. (2009). *The looking book*. (P. Barton, Illus.). Nashville, TN: Ideals Children's Books. Kenny and Mikey don't want to go outside until mom gives them some "lookers" (eye glasses without lenses). Once outside, they discover all kinds of new things to see and experience. Read this book, and then take your class on a walk around the school to see all the possible ideas for writing.

**Teaching Ideas: Writing Workshop—Ideas come from the world around you.**

Hanlon, A. (2012). *Ralph tells a story*. Las Vegas, NV: Amazon. Ralph can't think of any ideas for his story. After trying everything, including roaming the hallways, he writes his first story. Notice all of Ralph's stories on the back end papers.

**Teaching Ideas: Launching Writing Workshop, Writing Traits—Ideas, Encouraging Reluctant Writers**

**Mentor Texts to Strengthen Organization**

Mentor Texts with a List Structure	
Fiction	Informational
<i>Beetle Bop</i> (Fleming, 2007)	<i>Move!</i> (Jenkins & Page, 2006)

<i>Chicken Cheeks</i> (Black, 2009)	
<i>I Like Books</i> (Browne, 1989)	
<i>Lots of Dots</i> (Frazier, 2010)	
<i>Things I Like</i> (Browne, 1989)	
<b>Mentor Texts With a Question-Answer Structure</b>	
<i>Does a Kangaroo Have a Mother, Too?</i> (Carle, 2000)	<i>What Do You Do With a Tail Like This?</i> (Jenkins & Page, 2003)
<i>Where Is the Green Sheep?</i> (Fox, 2004)	
<i>Yes Day!</i> (Krouse Rosenthal, 2009)	
<b>Mentor Texts With a Days of the Week Structure</b>	
<i>Always in Trouble</i> (Demas, 2009)	
<i>Cookie's Week</i> (Ward, 1988)	
<i>Pigs to the Rescue</i> (Himmelman, 2010)	
<b>Mentor Texts With a See-Saw Structure</b>	
<i>Fortunately</i> (Charlip, 1964)	<i>First the Egg</i> (Seeger, 2007)
<i>Good News Bad News</i> (Mack, 2012)	
<i>That's Good! That's Bad!</i> (Cuyler, 1991)	
<i>Tough Boris</i> (Fox, 1994)	
<b>Cumulative or "Add-On" Stories</b>	
<i>The Book That Zack Wrote</i> (Long, 2011)	
<i>My Friend Rabbit</i> (Rohmann, 2002)	
<b>Circular Stories</b>	
<i>When a Monster Is Born</i> (Taylor, 2006)	

## Professional Books That Have Shaped My Thinking

Allen, P. (2009). *Conferring: The keystone of reader's workshop*. Portland, ME: Stenhouse.

Calkins, L., Ehrenworth, M., & Lehman, C. (2012). *Pathways to the common core: Accelerating achievement*. Heinemann.

Fountas, G. S., & Pinnell, I. C. (1996). *Guided reading: Good first teaching for all children*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

Atwell, N. (2007). *The Reading Zone: How to Help Kids Become Skilled, Passionate, Habitual, Critical Readers*. Scholastic.

Johnston, P. H. (2004). *Choice Words: How Our Language Affects Children's Learning*. Stenhouse.

Johnston, P. H. (2012). *Opening Minds: Using Language to Change Lives*. Stenhouse.

Keene, E. O. (2012). *Talk About Understanding: Rethinking Classroom Talk to Enhance Comprehension*. Heinemann.

Miller, D. (2013). *Reading With Meaning: Teaching Comprehension in the Primary Grades* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). Stenhouse.

- Nichols, M. (2009) *Expanding Comprehension With Multigenre Text Sets*. Scholastic.
- Ray, K. W., & Cleaveland, L. B. (2004). *About the Authors: Writing Workshop with our Youngest Writers*. Heinemann.
- Richardson, J. (2009). *The Next Step in Guided Reading*. Scholastic.
- Richardson, J., & Walther, M. (2013). *Next Step Guided Reading Assessment*. Scholastic.
- Routman, R. (2005). *Writing Essentials*. Heinemann.
- Spandel, V. (2007). *Creating Young Writers (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.)*. Allyn & Bacon.
- Taberski, S. (2011). *Comprehension From The Ground Up*. Heinemann.
- Walther, M. P., & Fuhler, C. J. (2010). *Teaching Struggling Readers With Poetry*. Scholastic.
- Walther, M. P. & Phillips, K. A. (2009). *Month-by-Month Trait-Based Writing Instruction*. Scholastic.
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