

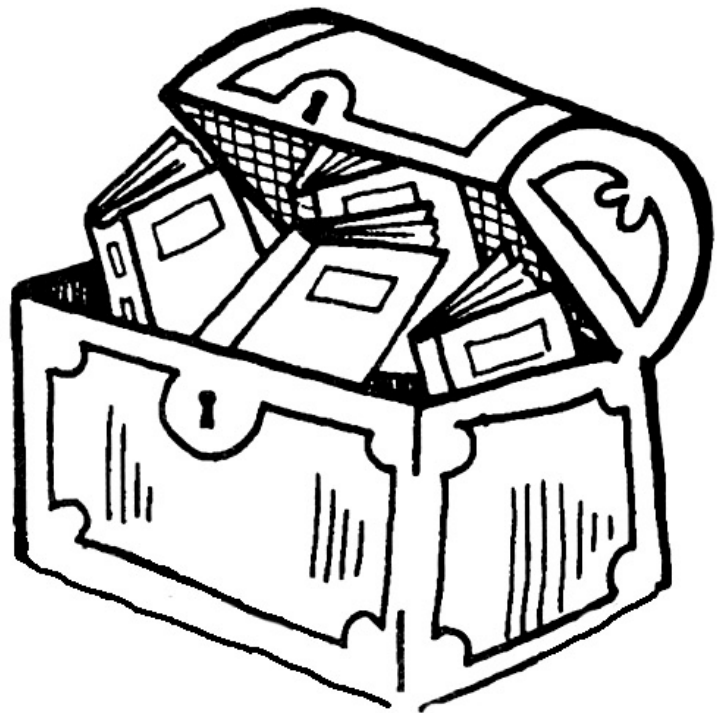
Transforming Literacy Instruction for the Common Core

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The Big Picture: Cultivating the Thinking-Learning Connection

Where will I find the time?

- Connect reading, writing, thinking, listening, and speaking instruction

How will I support striving readers to comprehend complex texts?

- Engage in comprehension conversations

"Children in the early grades—particularly kindergarten through grade 3—benefit from participating in rich, structured conversations with an adult in response to written texts that are read aloud, orally and comparing and contrasting as well as analyzing and synthesizing" (CCSS, p. 27).

- Read complex texts closely from both the reader's and the writer's point of view

How will I maintain a 50/50 balance of literary and informational texts?

- Infuse content-rich nonfiction throughout the curriculum

Read Aloud

What the Common Core Standards Say About Reading Aloud

"By reading a story or nonfiction selection aloud, teachers allow children to experience written language without the burden of decoding, granting them access to the content that they may not be able to read and understand by themselves. Children are then free to focus their mental energy on the words and ideas presented in the text, and they will eventually be better prepared to tackle rich written content on their own" (CCSS, p. 27).

A Few of My Favorite Read Alouds

DiPucchio, K. (2014). *Dog days of school*. (B. Biggs, Illus.). New York: Disney/Hyperion.

When Charlie's wish comes true and he becomes a dog, Norman, his dog, goes off to school. Charlie soon discovers that being a dog isn't as restful as he thought!

Teaching Ideas: Beginning of Year; Read Like a Writer (Days of the Week Structure)

Morris, R. T. (2014). *This is a moose*. (T. Lichtenheld, Illus.). New York: Little, Brown.

Director Duck is trying to make a film about a moose doing "moose things" but discovers that the moose has other plans.

Teaching Ideas: Read Like a Writer

Reynolds, P. H. & Reynolds, P. A. (2014). *Going places*. (P. H. Reynolds, Illus.). New York: Atheneum.

The "Going Places" contest is underway and Rafael wants to win. So, he builds his go-cart to the exact specifications. Then, he notices that Maya has taken a different approach. Together, they create their own unique vehicle.

Teaching Ideas: Beginning of the Year; Inferring Big Ideas (See Mini-Lesson in *M-by-M Reading* p. 186)

BOOKS TO SPARK COMPREHENSION CONVERSATIONS

Inferring Big Ideas

Cecil, R. (2012). *Horsefly and honeybee*. New York: Holt.

A sweet story about a horsefly and honeybee that decide to nap in the same flower, have a fight, and each lose a wing. Later, when the bullfrog wants to eat them, they work together to fly away.

Teaching Ideas: Comprehension Conversations—Inferring Big Ideas (K), Social Studies—Friendship, Teamwork

Curato, M. (2014). *Little Elliot, big city*. New York: Holt.

Cupcake-loving Little Elliot is different in many ways and this makes living in the city a bit challenging. Then, he meets a mouse that is having bigger problems. Together, they tackle their problems and soon become friends.

Teaching Ideas: Inferring Big Ideas in K—friendship, working together; Pair with *Horsefly and Honeybee* (Cecil, 2012)

Rosenthal, A. K. (2013). *Exclamation mark*. (T. Lichtenheld, Illus.). New York: Scholastic.

Feeling alone in a world of periods, the exclamation mark tries everything to fit in and is about to give up when he meets the question mark. Question mark helps him discover his unique talent—exclaiming!

Teaching Ideas: Inferring Big Ideas—Accepting Differences

Woodson, J. (2012). *Each kindness*. (E. B. Lewis, Illus.). New York: Penguin.

Chloe learns a life lesson when her teacher points out the power of kindness. After this compelling lesson, Chloe wishes she would have shown kindness to the new girl, Maya, instead ignoring her because she was less fortunate and different. Unfortunately, Chloe never gets the chance to show kindness because Maya moves away.

Teaching Ideas: Comprehension Conversations—Inferring Big Ideas; Social Studies—accepting differences, friendship.

Accepting Differences Text Set Ideas: *Odd Velvet* by Mary E. Whitcomb, *The Rag Coat* by Lauren Mills.

Palacio, R. J. (2012). *Wonder*. New York: Knopf.

Ten-year old Auggie Pullman, who was born with extreme facial abnormalities and was not expected to survive, goes from being home-schooled to entering fifth grade at a private middle school in Manhattan, which entails enduring the taunting and fear of his classmates as he struggles to be seen as just another student (Library of Congress).

Asking and Answering Questions Helps Readers Infer

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

Engage in Collaborative Conversations Using Mentor Texts to Read Aloud Like a Writer

Reading aloud IS teaching writing, even if no writing activity follows the reading.
Vicki Spandel, *Creating Young Writers* (2008)

READ LIKE A WRITER: COLLABORATIVE CONVERSATIONS

Turn and Talk Teaching Tips:

Before you begin, model "turn and talk" with another adult or student. Emphasize the importance of having a two-way conversation with one person speaking at a time. Assign students a "turn and talk" partner or small group.

During read aloud, stop several times at natural breaking points and pose the following queries for students to "turn and talk" about:

- Where do you think this author got his/her ideas for this book?
- Listen to this! Let me reread the beginning of this book. Did the lead make you want to read the story?
- Did you hear any words that you want to remember and use in your writing?
- Can you picture this setting/character/event in your mind? How did the author help you do that? What words did he or she use?
- Notice the way the sentences flow. Talk about how the author did that.
- Does this writing have voice?
- Who is telling this story? How do you know that?

Source: Adapted from Routman, Regie. (2003). *Reading Essentials: The Specifics You Need to Teach Reading Well*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

We need to marinate students in literature so that, over time, it soaks into their consciousness and, eventually, into their writing.

Ralph Fletcher, *Roots and Wings: Literature and Children's Writing* (1993)



What to look for . . .	What to say. . .
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Various Text Structures • Sensory Language • Creative Conventions • Repetition • Word Play • Onomatopoeia • Interjections • Illustration Techniques 	<p><i>Source: Choice Words by Peter H. Johnston (Stenhouse, 2004)</i></p> <p>"Oh, I love that line!"</p> <p>"Did anyone notice *any interesting words? *any new punctuation? *any new ways of arranging the words on the page?"</p> <p>"Are there any favorite words or phrases, or ones you wish you had written?"</p> <p>"Why would an author do something like that?" "How else could the author have done that?"</p> <p>"Why did the author choose that word?"</p>

A Few of My Favorite Mentor Texts for Narrative Writing

(CCSS Writing Standard 3)

Byrne, R. (2014). *This book just ate my dog!* New York: Holt.

When Bella takes her dog for a "stroll across the page," he disappears into the gutter of the book along with her friend, the rescue squad, and Bella herself. Quick-thinking Bella writes a note to the readers asking them to shake the book and get everyone out.

Teaching Ideas: Parts of a Book—gutter (See morning message in *M-by-M Reading* p. 40); Reading-Writing Connection

Deacon, A. (2013). *Cheese belongs to you!* (V. Schwarz, Illus.). Somerville, MA: Candlewick.

"This is rat law: Cheese belongs to you." Unless a gang of big, quick, strong, scary, hairy, dirty rats wants it. Filled with adjectives, this book is sure to inspire your writers!

Teaching Ideas: Read Like a Writer (Video clip found in *T. L. T*); Grammar—Adjectives

LaRochelle, D. (2012). *It's a tiger!* (J. Tankard, Illus.). San Francisco, CA: Chronicle.

Begin reading this boldly illustrated picture book on the front flap and continue to read, notice, and laugh at the young narrator's adventures as he narrowly escapes a tiger again and again!

Teaching Ideas: Read Like a Writer

Infuse Informational Text

Pair and Compare Fiction and Informational Texts

CCSS RL5.1 Explain major differences between books that tell stories and books that give information, drawing on a wide reading of a range of text types.

FICTION	INFORMATIONAL
ANIMALS	
<i>Chicken Big</i> (Graves, 2010)	<i>The Chicken or the Egg</i> (Fowler, 1993)
<i>Diary of a Worm</i> (Cronin, 2003)	<i>Wiggling Worms at Work</i> (Pfeffer, 2004)
<i>Moo Who?</i> (Palatini, 2007)	<i>Clarabelle: Making Milk and So Much More</i> (Peterson, 2007)
<i>The Perfect Nest</i> (Friend, 2007)	<i>Chickens Aren't the Only Ones</i> (Heller, 1981)
<i>Scaredy Squirrel</i> (Watt, 2006)	<i>Flying Squirrels</i> (Jango-Cohen, 2004)
<i>Shark vs. Train</i> (Barton, 2010) <small>*See M-by-M Reading p. 119 for Mini-Lesson</small>	<i>Let's Look at Sharks</i> (Nelson, 2010)
BUGS	
<i>Aaaarrgghh! Spider</i> (Monks, 2004)	<i>Nic Bishop Spiders</i> (Bishop, 2007)
<i>The Bee Tree</i> (Polacco, 1998)	<i>Are You a Bee?</i> (Allen, 2004)
<i>Butterfly Tree</i> (Markle, 2011)	<i>A Butterfly Is Patient</i> (Hutts Aston, 2011)
<i>Hey! Little Ant</i> (Hoose, 2004)	<i>Ant Cities</i> (Dorros, 1989)
<i>Insects are My Life</i> (McDonald, 1995)	<i>Bugs are Insects</i> (Rockwell, 2003)
<i>Velma Gratch and the Way Cool Butterfly</i> (Madison, 2007) <small>*See M-by-M Reading p. 210 for Three Read-Aloud Words</small>	<i>From Caterpillar to Butterfly</i> (Heiligman, 1996)
<i>What the Ladybug Heard</i> (Donaldson, 2010)	<i>Hungry Ladybugs</i> (Jango-Cohen, 2002)
FALL	
<i>Bats at the Library</i> (Lies, 2008)	<i>Zipping, Zapping, Zooming Bats</i> (Earle, 1995)
<i>The Biggest Pumpkin Ever</i> (Kroll, 1987)	<i>It's Pumpkin Time</i> (Hall, 1994)
<i>The Little Yellow Leaf</i> (Berger, 2008)	<i>Why Do Leaves Change Colors</i> (Maestro, 1994)
WEATHER	
<i>Cloudette</i> (Lichtenheld, 2011) <small>*See M-by-M Reading p. 206 for Comprehension Conversation</small>	<i>Clouds</i> (Rockwell, 2008)
<i>The Rain Came Down</i> (Shannon, 2000)	<i>Down Comes the Rain</i> (Branley, 1997)
<i>The Wind Blew</i> (Hutchins, 1974)	<i>Can You See the Wind</i> (Fowler, 1999)

Source: Adapted from *Literature Is Back* (Fuhler & Walther, 2007); *Month-by-Month Reading Instruction for the Differentiated Classroom* (Walther & Phillips, 2012)

Questions to Spark Conversations or Responses to Reading:

- Who are the authors and illustrators of each text? What is their job?
- How are these two texts the same? How are they different?
- What was the author's purpose for writing each text?
- Why do you think he or she chose this particular approach to the topic?
- Which text did you prefer? Why? Does anyone have a different opinion?
- How can you use what you've learned from reading and thinking about these texts in your own writing?

Informational Text Questions

- What did you learn from the pictures/illustrations and what did you learn from the words?
- What question(s) did the author want to answer? What did he or she explain or describe?

Discover Connections

Meltzer, B. (2014). *I am Abraham Lincoln*. (C. Eliopoulos, Illus.). New York: Dial.

This is one of the biographies in the "Ordinary People Change the World" series. These books are ideal for young readers because they are told in an engaging manner that connects with children, while also clearly illustrating the lasting importance of the accomplishments of each individual.

Teaching Ideas: Writing Genres—Biography (For more information on writing a biography see M-by-M Writing p. 124 & M-by-M Reading Chapter 6); Social Studies—Inspiring Individuals (For more books & ideas see M-by-M Reading Chapter 6)

Bunting, E. (2013). *The cart that carried Martin*. (D. Tate, Illus.). Watertown, ME: Charlesbridge.

Bunting's carefully crafted, poetic text captures the mood of the country the day "the humble cart" carried Dr. King's body through Atlanta in April, 1968.

Teaching Ideas: Social Studies—Black History; Pair with *Rosa's Bus: The Ride to Civil Rights* (Kittinger, 2010) or *Abraham Lincoln Comes Home* (Burleigh, 2008) about Lincoln's funeral train to discuss historical events told from unique perspectives.

McGinty, A. B. (2013). *Gandhi: A march to the sea*. (T. Gonzalez, Illus.). Las Vegas, NV: Amazon.

You can almost hear their footsteps in the rhythm of McGinty's words as you travel with Gandhi and his fellow protestors on their March to the Sea. Create a text set with books about other peaceful protests like *We March* (Evans, 2012), *A Sweet Smell of Roses* (Johnson, 2007), *Freedom on the Menu: The Greensboro Sit-Ins* (Weatherford, 2007).

Teaching Ideas: Social Studies—Inspiring Individuals (For more books & ideas see M-by-M Reading Chapter 6)

Review Books

(CCSS Writing Standard 1)

- Introduce the book to your readers—Don't give away the ending!
- Talk about what you liked (or didn't like) about the book. Explain your reasons.
- Recommend this book (if you liked it) to your readers.

Connecting Words and Phrases that Help Writers Explain More Than One Reason

For example,	For instance,	Also,	In addition,	Furthermore,
Similarly,	Likewise,	Lastly,	Finally,	

Sources:

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

Transforming Literacy Teaching in the Era of Higher Standards (Walther, 2015)

Mentor Texts for Book Reviews

<http://www.spaghettibookclub.org>

Reading Rainbow Book Reviews

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A Few Professional Books That Have Shaped My Thinking

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