

Assess, Decide, and Guide: The Keys to Changing Readers' Lives

Maria Walther

maria_walther@ipsd.org 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 proficient independent 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!

Benefits of Collecting Whole Class Data

- Collect valuable data about EVERY child in the class.
- Identify students who are struggling or those who will benefit from enrichment.
- Obtain a more well-rounded view of each reader.
- Gather usable data to drive comprehensive, balanced literacy instruction.

Promoting Books in the Intermediate Grades and Beyond

- Teacher Book Talks
- Student Book Commercials
- Book Teasers—Read the First Chapter
- Book Trailers—*BLOG: Watch. Connect. Read. Exploring Children's Literature through Book Trailers*
<http://mrschureads.blogspot.com> Twitter @MrSchuReads

Next Step Guided Reading

The Three Steps to Effective Guided Reading Lessons

- Pinpoint an instructional focus
- Select an appropriate text that is slightly challenging, matches students' interests, and helps students practice instructional focus
- Prompt, coach, and 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 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	<i>Scholastic Guided Science Readers (Levels A-D)</i>
Fluency	Dialogue, few decoding challenges	<i>Elephant and Piggie, Fly Guy</i>
Vocabulary	Unfamiliar words with text or illustration clues (context, known parts, glossary)	<i>Scholastic Vocabulary Readers</i>
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 <i>Scholastic Common Core Text Sets</i>
Infer	Fables, short stories, poetry, texts with surprises	<i>Fables</i> 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"> • 1:1 Matching • Use picture clues • Use known words • Get your mouth ready • Cross-check 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Blend little words • Phrasing and expression
Early (D-I)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self-Monitor • Check the ending • Use known parts • Look for chunks • Read in phrases • Retell/recount 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Infer • Predict • Character Analysis - How does character respond to major events/challenges?
Transitional (J-M)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self-Monitor • Reread and think: What makes sense? • Look for chunks • Use an analogy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • B-M-E Retell • Five Finger Retell • STP (Stop, Think, Paraphrase) • Track the character's feelings
Fluent (N+)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Retell • Visualize • Predict • Connect • Ask questions • Determine importance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Main idea and details • Summarize • Cause/Effect • Character analysis • Infer • Visual literacy

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

Picture Books Highlighted in Presentation

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

Cleary, B. P. (2015). *Ode to a commode: Concrete poems*. (A. Rowland, Illus.). Minneapolis, MN: Millbrook.

A clever collection of concrete poems about everything from toilets to Christmas trees. Includes explanation of concrete poems and idea starters.

Teaching Ideas: Poetry (See T. L. T. pp. 149-150, M-by-M Reading Chpt. 7, M-by-M Writing Chpt. 7)

Messner, K. (2015). *How to read a story*. (M. Siegel, Illus.). San Francisco, CA: Chronicle

This clever step-by-step guide to reading a story includes tips for reading with fluency, predicting, talking about the story, and much more!

Teaching Ideas: Launching Reading Workshop; Reading to Families on Curriculum Night or Literacy Night

Nelson, K. (2015). *If you plant a seed*. New York: HarperCollins.

Rabbit and Mouse plant seeds, but their selfishness leads to trouble. They discover that planting a seed of kindness is much sweeter.

Teaching Ideas: Spring, Plants, Inferring Big Ideas, (See M-by-M Reading p. 186), Pair with *Each Kindness* (Woodson, 2012)

Nesbitt, K. (2007). *The revenge of the lunch ladies: The hilarious book of school poetry*. (M. Gordon & C. Gordon, Illus.). New York: Simon & Schuster.

A kid-appealing book with 44 funny poems and songs including "What I Told Mrs. Morris When She Asked How I Was Feeling Today" (p. 24) that is great for highlighting adjectives.

Torrey, R. (2015). *Ally-saurus & the first day of school*. New York: Sterling.

During lunch, Ally, who loves dinosaurs, is turned away by a group of princesses but finds another group of friends—each with their own unique interest. At the end, the teacher takes the class to the library where they all select books to match their interest.

Teaching Ideas: Social Studies—Accepting Differences; Reading Workshop—Reading Interest Survey

PROFESSIONAL RESOURCES

Atwell, N., & Merkel, A. (2016). *The Reading Zone: How to Help Kids Become Skilled, Passionate, Habitual, Critical Readers*. (2nd Ed). Scholastic.

Biggs-Tucker, K., & Tucker, B. (2015). *Transforming Literacy Teaching in the Era of Higher Standards, 3-5*. Scholastic.

Fuhler, C. J., & Walther, M. P. (2007). *Literature Is Back! Using the Best Books for Teaching Readers and Writers Across Genres*. Scholastic.

Miller, D., & Moss, B. (2013). *No More Independent Reading Without Support*. Heinemann.

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

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

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

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

Richardson, J. (2016). *The Next Step Forward in Guided Reading: An Assess-Decide-Guide Framework for Supporting Every Reader*. Scholastic.

Walther, M. P. (2015). *Transforming Literacy Teaching in the Era of Higher Standards, K-2*. Scholastic.

Walther, M. P., & Fuhler, C. J. (2010). *Teaching Struggling Readers With Poetry: Engaging Poems With Mini-Lessons That Target & Teach Phonics, Sight Words, Fluency & More—Laying the Foundation for Reading Success*. Scholastic.

Walther, M. P., & Phillips, K. A. (2009). *Month-by-Month Trait-Based Writing Instruction*. Scholastic.

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