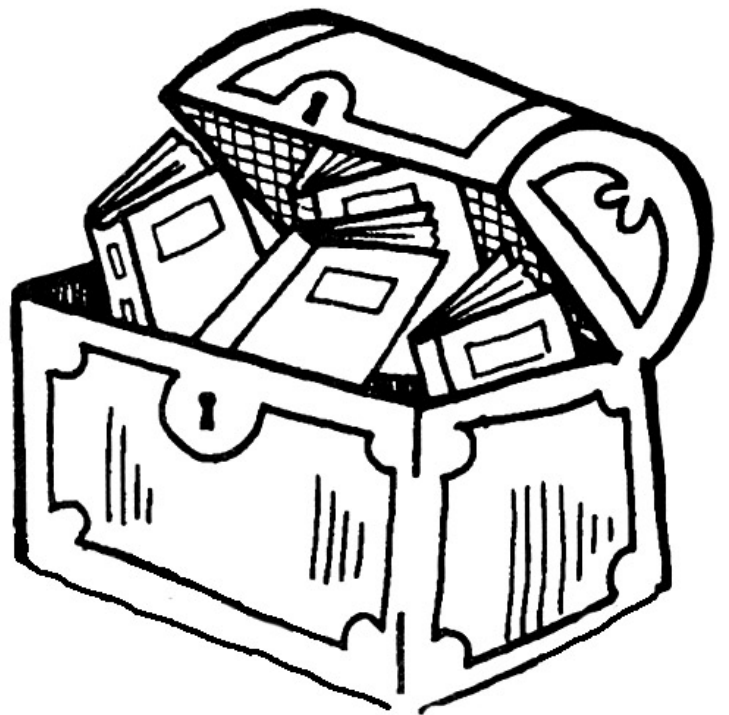


# Spark the Reading-Writing Connection

Presented by:  
Maria Walther  
1<sup>st</sup> Grade Teacher  
Gwendolyn Brooks Elementary  
2700 Stonebridge Blvd.  
Aurora, IL 60502  
(630) 375-3244  
[www.mariawalther.com](http://www.mariawalther.com)  
Twitter: @mariapwalther  
[maria\\_walther@ipsd.org](mailto:maria_walther@ipsd.org)



# Read Aloud!

## A Few of My Favorites

Swanson, M. (2017). *Everywhere, wonder*. (R. Behr, Illus.). New York: Imprint.

Through the magic of reading, a boy is transported to breathtaking locations around the world. Then, back in his neighborhood he takes time to wonder about commonplace occurrences in his everyday life. Finally, he uses what he has learned from these experiences to write a story to share with the world.

**Teaching Ideas:** Launching Writing Workshop; Ideas

Higgins, R. T. (2017). *Bruce's big move*. New York: Disney/Hyperion.

Bruce, the grumpy bear, is tired of his "crowded, chaotic, and loud" house so he decides that he and the geese are going to move away from the three pesky mice. In their new, quiet home by the lake, Bruce realizes how much the geese miss the mice. Luckily, for the geese (but not for Bruce), the mice decide to join the family again.

**Teaching Ideas:** Read to laugh; Notice details in the illustrations

**BOOK TRAILER:** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=t6IrGrPZOI4>

Kraegel, K. (2017). *Green pants*. Somerville, MA: Candlewick.

Jameson only wears green pants. In fact, he believes that wearing green pants gives him the power to do just about anything. When his cousin's fiancée, Jo, who he adores, invites him to be in their wedding he enthusiastically agrees. Then, his mother informs him he will have to wear a tuxedo with black pants. He eventually agrees after seeing Jo's excitement about her big day.

**Teaching Ideas:** Making Meaningful Connections; Decision Making and Social Skills

**BOOK TRAILER:** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=n30YO7XAGSs>

Krall, D. (2015). *Sick Simon*. New York: Simon & Schuster.

Do your students sneeze and cough all over the classroom? If so, then this book is perfect for them! Watch your kids' faces as you read about Sick Simon's "best week ever!" The illustrations are disgusting, but they get the point across.

**Teaching Ideas:** Science—Healthy Body

Reynolds, A. (2017). *Creepy pair of underwear!* (P. Brown, Illus.). New York: Simon & Schuster.

Older and braver, Jasper Rabbit from the book *Creepy Carrots* (2012) is back. When shopping for underwear, he convinces his unwilling mom to buy him one pair of Creepy Underwear. When he discovers that they glow in the dark, he makes many attempts to get rid of them but they keep coming back. After burying the underwear deep underground, he realizes that their "gentle, greenish glow" helped him sleep. What do you predict he will do next?

**Teaching Ideas:** Predicting (See M-by-M Reading p. 116-119)

**BOOK TRAILER:** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RGuhRYoOB9M>

### Note about Teaching Ideas References:

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

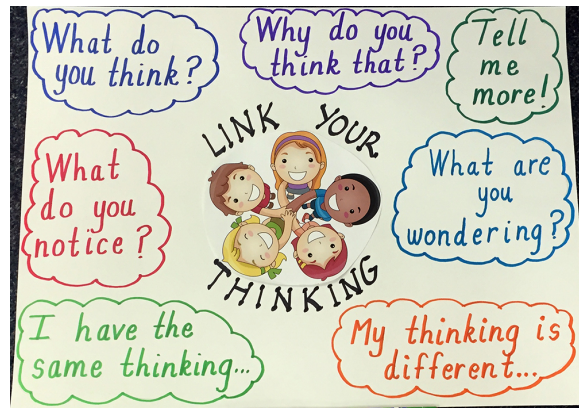
M-by-M Reading = *Month-by-Month Reading for the Differentiated Classroom* (Walther & Phillips, 2012)

M-by-M Writing = *Month-by-Month Trait-Based Writing Instruction* (Walther & Phillips, 2009)

Poetry = *Teaching Struggling Readers With Poetry* (Walther & Fuhler, 2010)

L. I. B. = *Literature Is Back!* (Fuhler & Walther, 2007)

# Engage in Collaborative Conversations



Mini-Lesson found on pages 52-53 of *Month-by-Month Reading Instruction for the Differentiated Classroom* (Walther & Phillips, 2012)

Also see Blog Post by Lois Bridges: The Having of Grand Conversations  
<http://frizzleblog.scholastic.com/post/having-grand-conversations>

## BOOKS TO SPARK COMPREHENSION CONVERSATIONS

### Predicting

Smith, L. (2010). *The inside tree*. (D. Parkins, Illus.). New York: HarperCollins.

Mr. Potter's house is warm and comfortable until he decides to invite a dog and a tree inside.

**Teaching Ideas: Peek and Predict (See *M-by-M Reading* p. 116)**

Deedy, C. A. (1991). *Agatha's feather bed: Not just another wild goose story*. Atlanta, GA: Peachtree.

I've introduced this story to many teachers and they either like it or they think it is a little odd. Either way, it is ideal for predicting. Agatha is an old woman who believes "everything comes from something." When a gaggle of naked geese appear on her windowsill, she makes them warm cloaks to replace their feathers, which make up her bed. In a surprise ending, we find out that the cloaks were made from her long white hair.

**Teaching Ideas: Predict the Title (See *M-by-M Reading* p. 109)**

Seeger, L. V. (2010). *What if?* New York: Roaring Brook.

Laura Vaccaro Seeger uses only 6 words in varying combinations to tell a tale three different ways. This book will spark a conversation about friendship and considering the feelings of others. It is also ideal for pointing out the difference between predicting and inferring.

**Teaching Ideas: Beginning of Year; Social Studies—Friendship; Inferring (See Predicting vs. Inferring Mini-Lesson in *M-by-M Reading* p. 185)**

### Inferring

Boelts, M. (2007). *Those shoes*. (N. Z. Jones, Illus.). Cambridge, MA: Candlewick.

Jeremy really wants "those shoes"—the pair of high-tops that everyone else has, but Grandma can't afford them. Later, Jeremy finds a pair in a thrift store that are much too small, but gets them anyway. After much debate, Jeremy ends up giving his too-small shoes to another boy in need.

**Teaching Ideas: Inferring Big Ideas (See *M-by-M Reading* p. 186)**

Boelts, M. (2016). *A bike like Sergio's*. (N. Z. Jones, Illus.). Somerville, MA: Candlewick.

Ruben is longing for a bike just like his friend Sergio's but his family can't afford one. While he and his friend are shopping, a woman drops some money. Ruben, thinking it's a dollar bill, puts it in his pocket. When he gets home, he realizes it is a \$100 bill. In the end, Ruben does the right thing and returns the money to the woman.

**Teaching Ideas: Inferring Big Ideas (See *M-by-M Reading* p. 186); Pair with *A Dog Wearing Shoes* (Ko, 2015) as examples of characters who feel empathy.**

## Read Like a Writer: Collaborative Conversations

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

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:

- **WHAT DO YOU NOTICE?**
- **WHAT ARE YOU WONDERING?**
- **HOW MIGHT YOU CHOOSE TO DO THIS IN YOUR OWN WRITING?**
- 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.

What to look for . . .	What to say. . .
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Various Text Structures</li> <li>• Sensory Language</li> <li>• Creative Conventions</li> <li>• Repetition</li> <li>• Word Play</li> <li>• Onomatopoeia</li> <li>• Interjections</li> <li>• Illustration Techniques</li> </ul>	<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

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

Byrne, R. (2015). *We're in the wrong book.* New York: Holt.

Bella and Ben, the characters from *This Book Just Ate My Dog* (2014), get bumped off the page and end up on a journey through books of different genres including comic books, fairy tales, and more.

**Teaching Ideas:** Read Like a Writer; Introduction to different writing genres

Dotlich, R. K. (2015). *One day, the end: Short, very short, shorter-than-ever stories.* (F. Koehler, Illus.). Honesdale, PA: Boyds Mills.

"For every story there is a beginning and an end, but what happens in between makes all the difference." So begins this one-of-a-kind book where the middle of each story is told solely with illustrations.

**Teaching Ideas:** CCSS Standard 7—Use illustrations to understand characters, setting, or plot; Launching Writing Workshop—Little Book Ideas

Hanlon, A. (2012). *Ralph tells a story.* 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 Idea:** Launching Writing Workshop—Little Book Ideas

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

# A Few Professional Books That Have Shaped My Thinking

- Atwell, N. (2007). *The Reading Zone: How to Help Kids Become Skilled, Passionate, Habitual, Critical Readers*. 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.
- Fountas, I. C., & Pinnell, G. S. (1996). *Guided reading: Good first teaching for all children*. Heinemann.
- 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.
- Ray, K. W., & Cleaveland, L. B. (2004). *About the Authors: Writing Workshop with our Youngest Writers*. Heinemann.
- Richardson, J. (2016). *The Next Step Forward in Guided Reading*. 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.
- 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. (In Press). *The Revved-Up Read Aloud: What to Notice as You Turn the Page*. Corwin.
- Walther, M. P. & Biggs-Tucker, K. (In Press). *Blurring the Lines: An Integrated Reading and Writing Workshop*. Stenhouse.
- 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*. 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.