


Four Blocks -Self-Selected Reading

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- Self-Selected Reading is the part of a balanced literacy program during which children get to choose what they want to read and to what parts of their reading they want to respond. Opportunities are provided for children to share and respond to what is read. Teachers hold individual conferences with children about their books. (p. 21)

Goals of Self-Selected Reading

- Share different kinds of literature through a teacher read-aloud
- Encourage children's reading interests
- Provide instructional-level materials
- Build an intrinsic motivation for reading




How Self-Selected Reading Increases Reading Proficiency

- The more you read, the better you read
- Reading makes you smarter
- Everyone benefits, but struggling readers benefit the most
- Self-selected reading builds motivation to read



Preparing for Self-Selected Reading

- Time
- Materials
- Classroom libraries
- Expectations
- Procedures
- Book repair



Self-Selected Reading (30 minutes)

- Teacher Read-Aloud-Reading to children from a variety of literature (5-10 minutes)
- Children reading/teacher conferencing- A wide variety of books and levels available, teacher conferences with 4-5 children daily (15-20 minutes)
- Sharing-Opportunities for children to share what they are reading with their peers (5 minutes)

Teacher Read-Aloud (5-10 minutes)

- *Becoming a Nation of Readers* (Anderson, Hiebert, Scott & Wilkinson, 1985) asserts that reading aloud to children is the single most important activity for creating the motivation and background knowledge essential for success in reading. It is hard to imagine any other activity that is so simple to do yet has so many benefits, such as:

- Building motivation for becoming life long readers
- Increasing background knowledge on many topics
- Developing listening and speaking vocabularies
- Teaching about story element and structure
- Getting ideas for writing from books they have heard
- Providing vicarious experiences for children with limited firsthand experiences
- Model comprehension/decoding strategies
- Talk about your own thinking

Variations in Read-Aloud Material

- Fiction/Nonfiction
- Story Books
- Beginning Chapter Books
- Chapter Books
- Scary/Mystery Books
- Biography
- Alphabet Books
- Poetry
- Information-Math, Science, Social Studies
- Classics
- Favorite Authors

Children Read and Conference With the Teacher (15-20 minutes)

Variations in where children read

- Tables with book crates
- Centers
- Book crates and centers combined
- Classroom Libraries
- “NO Wandering” rule

At this time students are practice the strategies they learned in Guided Reading

Variations in How Children Read

These variations are used only in kindergarten and early first grade

- “Pretend read”
- “Picture read”
- Read the words (this should happen at ALL grade levels)

Conferences

- Children are ready to conference when they know where they are to go and how they are to read
- Provides one-on-one individual time (3 to 5 minutes)
- Specific meeting place or teachers go to where the children are reading
- Conversations
- Focused Conference
- Encourage, help, and support children's independent reading

Conferences

- Bookmarks-mark interesting spots or a story element
- Schedules-assign children specific days
- Book Choices-teachers sometimes suggest books and authors
- Assessments-occasionally used to assess the students' progress
- Address individual needs
- Opportunity for each reader to learn and practice what is most relevant to him/her
- Take notes that reflect the conversation and learning
- 3-5 minutes with struggling readers
- 1-3 minutes with proficient readers

Sharing (5 Minutes)

- Brings closure
- "Reader's chair"-one or two children get to do a book talk, two to three minutes each
- Microphone
- Replica of TV screen
- "Reading parties"
- Reading to younger children


Incentives

- Gives students the impression that reading is a chore not worth doing unless it is rewarded
- Rewards directly related to reading are effective (books, bookmarks, more time to read)
- Long-term research on rewards



Making Self-Selected Reading Multi-Level

- Include all types of materials in teacher read aloud
- Let children choose what they read
- Make all levels and types of materials available and acceptable
- During, conferences help children select books they can read and will enjoy



Connecting Self-Selected Reading to the Other Blocks and the Rest of the Curriculum

- Reading aloud to children, during the first part of Self-Selected Reading, a selection which "sets them up" for an author, genre or topic they will soon be reading during Guided Reading
- Making books read during Guided Reading book club groups available for children to choose during Self-Selected Reading
- Choosing a topic for the writing mini-lesson which relates to something read during the teacher read-aloud portion of Self-Selected Reading
- Choosing materials for the teacher read-aloud that fit the theme or relate to a science, health, or social studies topic
- Making available during Self-Selected Reading a variety of materials on different levels which fit science, health, and social studies topics



Resources

- *The Teacher's Guide to the Four Blocks* by, Patricia M. Cunningham, Dorothy P. Hall, and Cheryl M. Sigmon
