



**Key Question 2:
What does a "ready" early literacy
classroom look like?**

Prepared vs. Ready

SKILLS-BASED COMPETENCIES

ability to hear and work with spoken sounds

concepts about print

word reading

alphabet knowledge

fluency

spelling



KNOWLEDGE-BASED COMPETENCIES

ability to understand and express complex ideas

oral language skills

vocabulary

concepts about the world

A Tale of Two Classrooms

Same Focus, Different Approach

Picture a first grade classroom at the start of the reading block. Students are gathered in front of the teacher who is quickly

cycling through cards showing the initial consonant digraphs /sl/, /sn/, and /st/ written on them. As the teacher displays each card, students practice making the sounds. After just a minute or two of practice, the teacher drops off materials at small group workstations around the room and says, "Today, for reading, we will be working in centers." The teacher reminds students of the different center activities and of the rotation schedule and dismisses students to their assigned spots, setting a timer for fifteen minutes. One student settles at a desk situated in the back corner of the room. She slides her fingers into the red plastic holes of a pair of scissors and begins cutting out words from a worksheet. Soon, she is staring down at 18 strips of paper, each one containing a word that starts with either /sl/, /sn/, or /st/. "Those look the same," she mutters as she begins grouping words that begin with the same initial consonant digraph together. The student does not attempt to decode the words, but rather sorts based on visual appearance. As the 15-minute timer rings, the teacher calls out, "Move to your next center, please!" The student shoots up from her seat and heads to a rectangular table in the back of the room. Looking at a different worksheet with another 18 words, she grabs three different colored highlighters and begins coding words based on the visual appearance of the initial letters in the words. When the teacher who has been circulating among the stations arrives at the rectangular table, the student proudly waves her paper full of yellow, orange, and green marks in the air. "Good job!" the teacher says, quickly scanning to ensure that words had been sorted correctly. Just then, the timer buzzes sounding the end of the second center rotation and the literacy lesson for that day.

Now imagine another active first grade classroom at the start of the reading block. But, instead of quickly drilling a few sounds and then sending students into centers, the teacher calls students over to a large, multi-colored rug. The teacher raises the first card in a stack of cards and shows it to the group. She places her tongue under the roof her mouth and makes the sound "/sl/." Immediately after she finishes, the students all chirp "/sl/" in unison. The teacher repeats this activity for two other initial consonant digraphs, /sn/ and /st/. Next, the teacher places the "/sl/" card next to a "/ip/" card on a blue pocket chart. As the teacher points, the students read each card, "/sl/" and then "/ip/." Then, they blend the sounds together to form the word—"/sl-/ip/, slip." Next, the teacher shows a picture of a man slipping on ice to illustrate the meaning of the word, uses "slip" in a sentence, and asks, "Who can use 'slip' in a sentence?" The teacher repeats this same process for the initial consonant digraphs /sn/ and /st/.

After about 10 minutes of forming words and creating sentences, the teacher directs students to move into centers. One student sits down at a small table, snatches a stack of flash cards, turns to another student, and asks, "Will you be my partner?" For a few minutes, the two students go back and forth reading words that contain the featured consonant digraphs, using the chunking and blending technique demonstrated by the teacher when they encounter words they don't recognize. The partners then read a short story together and practice identifying and reading those same consonant digraphs. After reading, the two students talk about the text they just read, using an anchor chart with question stems to guide their discussion. One question, "What did you notice about the words in the story?" prompts the students to discuss the consonant digraph pattern they identified and return to the text to locate and reread those words.

Ten minutes after the beginning of centers, the teacher asks students to move to the next workstation. The student, his partner, and two other classmates take seats around a kidney-shaped table. The teacher sits in front of them and says, "Let's review some of the sounds we've been working on today." After a quick refresher, the teacher passes out decodable texts to each student, stating, "You are going to continue reading the book we started yesterday. In this book, there are more words that start with these sounds for you to practice." The students begin reading to themselves while the teacher helps them with decoding. At the end of the center, the teacher asks questions to help students make connections between decoding, language, and story comprehension. "When I was reading this book with you, I noticed that we read this word a lot," the teacher says, holding up a card with the word "snow." "But," the teacher continues, "the author used the word 'snow' in some different ways to help tell us the story. I'm going to show you some sentences, and I want you to think about the meaning of the word 'snow' and how it's used differently in these sentences." The teacher pulls out several sentence strips. The first says, "Will it snow today?" Another reads, "I hope it snows a lot." One final strip says, "It snowed ten inches." Finally, the teacher guides a brief discussion about present and past tense and how students can use inflectional endings to better understand the passage of time within a story.

These two lesson descriptions are based on observations of two Tennessee classrooms. Both lessons were aimed at common consonant digraphs. While the students in the first class spent 30 minutes in activities aligned with the target standard, the students did not actually do what the standard asks: "Use foundational reading skills to decode and read words in order to support comprehension of texts." In contrast, the students in the second class spent 30 minutes doing exactly what is specified in

the standard while the teacher integrated skills- and knowledge-based competencies into instruction— creating students who are *decoders* as well as *thinkers*. ♦

A Tale of Two Classrooms

Read and discuss:

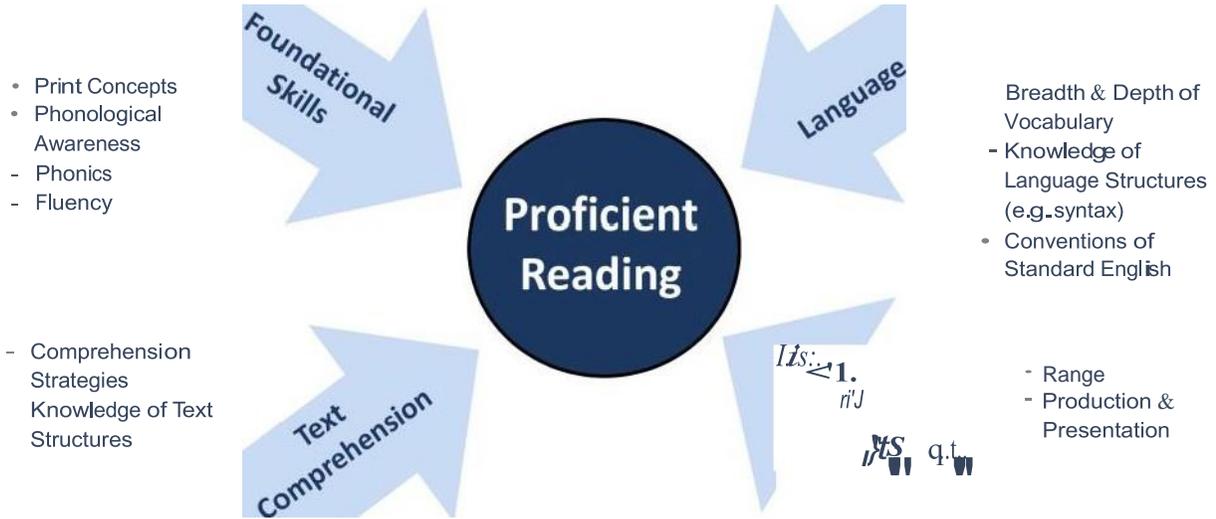


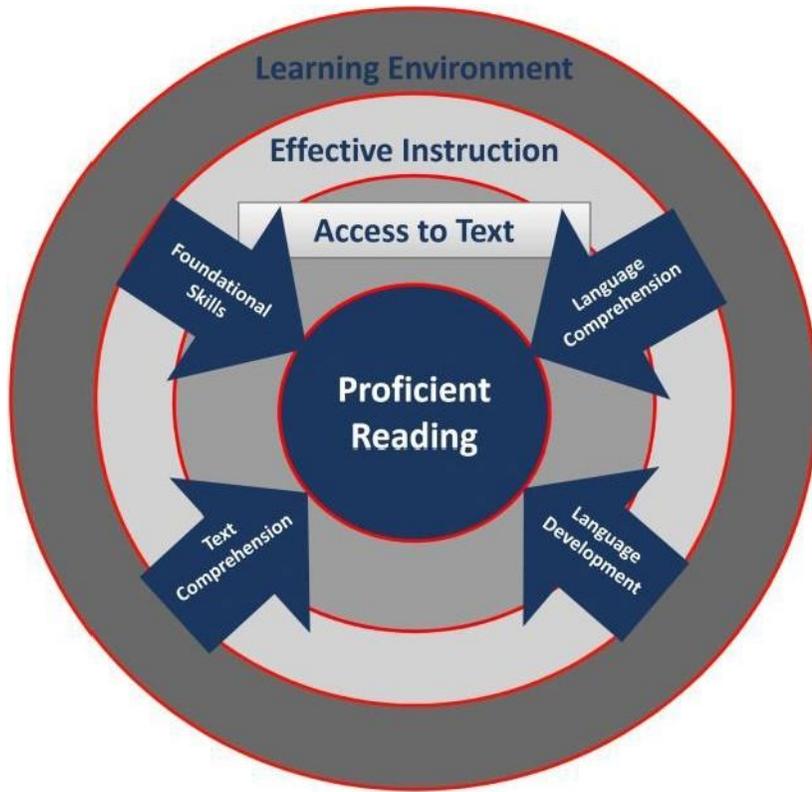
- What *ahas* did you have when you read these scenarios?
- How does the teacher create focus in each classroom?
- How was the approach different?
- Which classroom embodies a ready classroom? Why?
- Which classroom embodies a prepared classroom? Why?



[Setting the Foundation Report](#)

How do Students Become Ready Readers?





What is Proficient Reading?

Proficient readers accurately, fluently, and independently read a wide range of complex texts; strategically employ comprehension strategies to analyze key ideas and information; construct interpretations and arguments through speaking and writing; and, build knowledge about the world.



Text Use in an Early Literacy Classrooms

**Read About
It**

**Think
About It**

**Talk
About It**

**Write
About**

Read About It: read alouds, shared reads, guided reading, cold reads, partner reads, (time in text), etc.

Think About It: think aloud, text dependent questioning, etc.

Talk About It: partner discussion, interactive read aloud, accountable talk, etc.

Write About It: interactive writing, modeled writing, shared writing, explanations, synthesizing summaries, arguments, etc. (meaning focus)



, THINK, TALK, WRITE

Reading is more than just "sounding out" words. Reading is thinking deeply about a text's meaning and how it builds knowledge of the world around us.

Reading requires significant time in text practicing these meaning making skills.



Administrator’s Early Literacy Time Audit Tool

This guide is intended for analyzing how much time a teacher spends on the following types of activities.

Reading Instructional Practices include:	Classroom Time Spent On:
Read about it	ie. 8:15-8:28AM
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use of read alouds to model language and vocabulary, to build knowledge and develop critical thinking skills, and to provide opportunities for students to grapple with the structure and meanings of more complex texts (use of productive struggle and scaffolding) 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use of on-grade level texts through shared and interactive reading to apply foundational skills, develop reading fluency, and build comprehension. Provide multiple opportunities to practice rereading familiar text at the right level of difficulty. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Other Read About It Activities 	
Think about It	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Utilizes text dependent questions during interactive read alouds to engage students in thinking activities with text. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides opportunities to grapple (use of productive struggle) with more complex text and provides scaffolds to support readers-Interactive Read Aloud/Shared Reading. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Other Think About It Activities 	
Talk About It	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tailored instructional feedback focusing on the learning target is provided throughout lesson to all students. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Listening, speaking, reading, and writing are integrated throughout literacy instruction, not taught in isolated sections of a lesson. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides opportunities daily to practice responding to texts through speaking and discussion. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Other Talk About It Activities 	
Write About it	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides opportunities daily to practice responding to text through written expression. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use oral discussions and writing to synthesize new knowledge gained from reading. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Other Write About It Activities 	

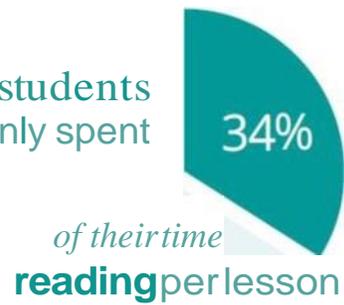
about it with Time in Text

- Regular practice listening to and reading text
- Become better readers by reading
- Time audit tool

K-2 students



3-5 students
only spent



about it with Time in Text



- How much time do your students spend engaged in text every day?
- What does that look like in K-1?
 - 2-3?
 - 4-6?
- How much of this time focuses on reading for meaning making?

Time Audit Tool is placed in your digital resource guide.



Text sets allow ALL learners to be engaged in text

A **text set** is defined as a group of texts sharing a similar topic, theme, or idea. What is especially important is that the texts in the set are connected meaningfully to each other to deepen student understanding of the anchor text. In a sense, the texts "talk to one another" so that in reading the set, children build a coherent body of knowledge around a topic.

Why the text set approach?

Diving deeply into any topic and looking at it from multiple perspectives will help students see connections. When these connections are made, vocabulary and knowledge have a place to "stick" allowing them to develop a deep understanding and interest in the topic. This approach helps us to address content-area knowledge within literacy (double dipping), and it also helps to connect the day around a single idea.

II

Sample K-1 Text Set: Animals, Animals Everywhere!

1. Animal Life Cycle 600L
2. Baby Animals 850L
3. Do You Know About Fish? 540L
4. Move! 430L
- 5. What's Alive 430L**
6. What do You do With a TAIL Like This? 620L
7. Whose Egg is This? 630L

This text set begins with the anchor text What's Alive. The text supports the focus questions "What is an animal and how do they live and grow. Teachers could have the option of interchanging titles based on availability. Other titles include Do You Know about Amphibians? Do You Know about Insects? (from Achieve the Core.org text sets. See digital resources for entire unit).



[Click here, and you will see a sample unit with this text set.](#)

Another 2nd/3rd Grade Text Set Muscles

Books

1. Get Moving: Tips on Exercise 514L
2. Keeping Fit: Body Systems 873L
3. The Muscular System 624L
4. The Skeletal and Muscular Systems: How Can I Stand on My Head? 593L

Articles

5. "The Human Body Hiccups" 590L
6. "What Causes Hiccups" 1050L
- 7. "What Do Kids Know About Health?" 820L**

TN

READ *about it* with Text Sets

- Lessons are sequenced to build repeated experiences and deep understanding.
- Incorporated into instructional routines
 - Interactive Read Aloud
 - Shared Reading
 - Guided Reading
 - Independent Reading
- Text sets provide the thinking opportunities that yield opportunities for more purposeful writing.

TN

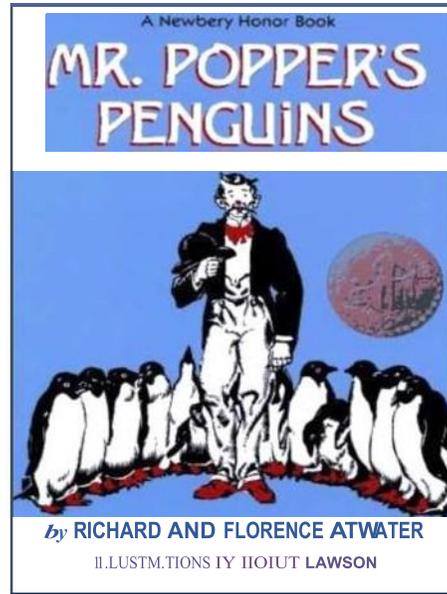
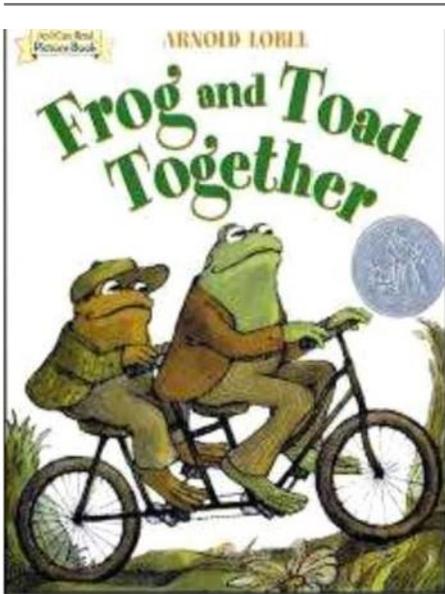
How can we support our teachers work with text sets?

- How are text sets different than leveled readers?
- What do you have in your classrooms?
- How we can use what you have to create text sets?
- Where can I go to obtain more model text sets?
 - Achieve the Core ->text sets
 - Louisiana Believes -> text sets
 - CCSSO.org ->text sets



about it: Deciding the

for the Text



When we looked at text sets, we talked about how to provide access for all learners. Here we have two whole class type texts. What are different **purposes** for using these texts for instruction?



**Lobel, Arnold. *Frog and Toad Together*. New York: HarperCollins, 1971. (1971)
From "The Garden"**

Frog was in his garden. Toad came walking by.

"What a fine garden you have, frog," he said.

"Yes," said frog. "It is very nice, but it was hard work."

"I wish I had a garden," said Toad.

"Here are some flower seeds. Plant them in the ground," said Frog, "and soon you will have a garden."

"How soon?" asked Toad.

"Quite soon," said frog.

Toad ran home. He planted the flower seeds.

"Now seeds," said Toad, "start growing."

Toad walked up and down a few times. The seeds did not start to grow. Toad put his head close to the ground and loudly, "Now seeds, start growing!" Toad looked at the ground again. The seeds did not start to grow.

Toad put his head very close to the ground and shouted, "NOW SEEDS, START GROWING!"

Frog came running up the path. "What is all this noise?" he asked. "My seeds will not grow," said Toad. "You are shouting too much," said Frog. "These poor seeds are afraid of the dark."

"My seeds are afraid of the dark?" asked Toad.

"Of course," said Frog. "Leave them alone for a few days. Let the sun shine on them, let the rain fall on them. Soon your seeds will start to grow."

That night, Toad looked out of his window. "Drat!" said Toad. "My seeds have not started to grow. They must be afraid of the dark."

Toad went out to his garden with some candles. "I will read the seeds a story," said Toad. "Then they will not be afraid." Toad read a long story to his seeds.

All the next day Toad sang songs to his seeds.

And all the next day Toad read poems to his seeds.

And all the next day Toad played music for his seeds.

Toad looked at the ground. The seeds still did not start to grow. What shall I do?" cried Toad. "These must be the most frightened seeds in the whole world!"

Then Toad felt very tired and he fell asleep.

"Toad, toad, wake up," said Frog. "Look at your garden!"

Toad looked at his garden. Little green plants were coming up out of the ground.

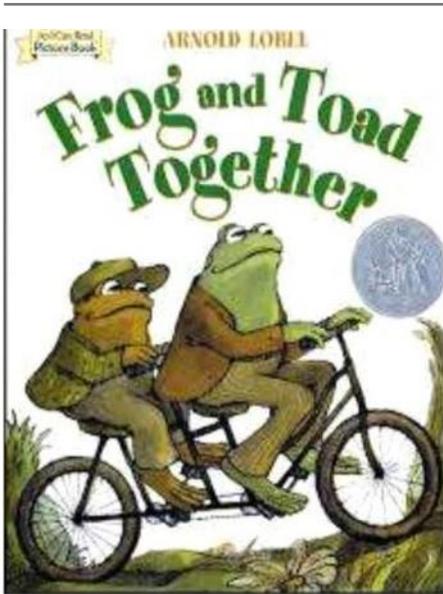
"At last," shouted Toad, "my seeds have stopped being afraid to grow!"

"And now you will have a nice garden too," said Frog.

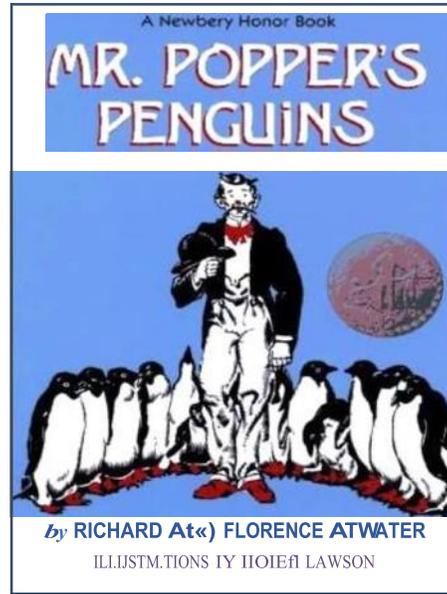
"Yes," said Toad, "but you're right, Frog. It was very hard work."

TEXT COPYRIGHT © 1971, 1972 BY ARNOLD LOBEL. Used by permission of HarperCollins Publishers.

about it: Deciding the Purpose for the Text



"Mileage" Text
To move students towards fluency and building comprehension



"Thinking" Text
To provide students an opportunity to stretch their thinking



about it...

We will be watching a video and answering the following questions after the video. Read through the questions before we start the video.

- What did the teacher do while reading to develop student thinking?
- Describe a thinking moment you saw in the video?
- In that example, how does the teacher model thinking?
- How does the focus on the author and language help the students dig deeper into the text?

III

About It Model



As you watch this video, think about answering the following questions.

1. What did the teacher do to while reading to develop student thinking?
2. Describe a thinking moment you saw in the video?
3. In that example, how does the teacher model thinking?
4. How does the focus on the author and language help the students dig deeper into the text?



about it...

Let's discuss what you saw:



- What did the teacher do to while reading to develop student thinking?
- Describe a thinking moment you saw in the video?
- In that example, how does the teacher model thinking?
- How does the focus on the author and language help the students dig deeper into the text?

II

*about it*with Teacher Language

Take Aways

- What language does the teacher use to prompt and stretch thinking?
- How does the teacher talk force students to continue to think?
- How are students carrying the cognitive load?



about it with Questioning

- Requires analysis of the text's structure and content
- Prompts to support ideas and leads to deeper understanding
- Pushes to engage with the words on the page
- Is sequenced to build knowledge
 - What does the text say?
 - What does it mean?
 - Why did the author include it ? Why does it matter?

II

about it Discuss and Chart

We will be watching a video and answering the following questions after the video. Read through the questions before we start the video.

- How does the teacher require analysis of the text's structure and content?
- How does the teacher support ideas and leads to deeper understanding?
- How does the teacher push engagement with the words on the page?
- How are the questions sequenced to build knowledge?



About It Model

Watch the video of a Kindergarten literacy lesson again from a new lens :
As you watch this video, think about answering the following questions.

- How does the teacher require analysis of the text's structure and content?
- How does the teacher support ideas and leads to deeper understanding?
- How does the teacher push engagement with the words on the page?
- How are the questions sequenced to build knowledge?

II

about it Discuss and Chart

- How does the teacher require analysis of the text's structure and content? ■ ■
- How does the teacher support ideas and leads to deeper understanding?
- How does the teacher develop engagement with the words on the page?
- How are the questions sequenced to build knowledge?

II

READ, THINK, TALK about it: What can you do?

Leaders
Actions



Support
Teachers



to Ensure
Student
Readiness

III

about it

After students have discussed ideas they have encountered in print, especially when those ideas are complicated and come delivered via complex syntax and less common vocabulary. After they have had the opportunity to hear text read aloud multiple times, re-read it silently, and ask questions of the text. They need to be able to write their new knowledge through well-crafted questions.

II

about it

Why should reading and writing be **EXPLICITLY** connected?

1. Reading and writing are reciprocal processes.
2. Writing should be grounded in an understanding of literary and informational text evidence.
3. Writing Tasks can focus on the most complex portion of text to help students understand text.
4. Writing allows students to productively struggle through reasoning and problem solving.
5. Writing shows teachers what students understand from text comprehension.



about it

What does this look like?

Here is a second grade sample of text-based writing:

Training a Snow Search Dog

It's hard to train a snow search dog. First, you have to get a pup. They have to love bunting things so they can find people. They have to have a thick coat. Stay warm. They have to be strong to climb mountains. It's hard to know which pup is right for you. Next, you need to train the pup. First, you need to play hide and seek with the dog. The handler goes and hides under the snow and the other person lets go of the leash. The person that is hiding has dog treats, if the dog finds him the dog gets a treat. Hide and seek gets harder when the handler goes farther and he buries himself. The dog goes to find him. Dogs train for two years! Training a snow search dog is rough, but it is important to train them. If

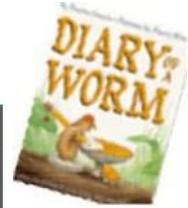
we didn't have people who are buried in avalanches would die.



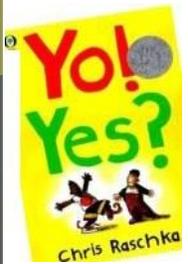
Sample connected writing tasks

E8 Books to mentor writers ...

Writing Traits	Mentor 11	Mentor 2	Mentor 13	Mentor 14	Mentor #5	Mentor 113
Ideas	Carl	night Moon	Knockout	When I Was Young the Mountains	Ymo Hun	Nothing Ever Happens on 90th Street
Organization	Brown Bear	Ten, Nine, Eight	Tuesday	The Important Book	Abraham Lincoln: A Photobiography by Russell Freedman	The Z Was Zapped
Voice	Have You Seen My Ducking?	Farmhouse	Officer Buckle and Gloria	How to Succeed in School Without Really Trying	Under the Owl of Night	If I Were in Charge of the World
Word Choice	Rose's Walk	Diary of a Worm	Owl Moon by Stephen Kramer	Owl Moon
Sentence Fluency	Where the Wild Things Are	The Snowy Day	...	The Roly-Poly Camo	All the Points to Love	The Important Book
Conventions	...	Don't Let the Pigeon Drive the Bus	...	The Ghost-Eye Tree	Puncturing Jion Takos n Vacation	The Holler by Seymour Simon



Diary of a Worm



From *Interactive Read Alouds, K/1; 2/3; 4/5*, Linda Hoyt, Heinemann, 2007.



about it Discussion

Turn and

TALK

- What is working in your schools/districts?
- What are next steps for you ?
- Where are the bright spots we can build upon?

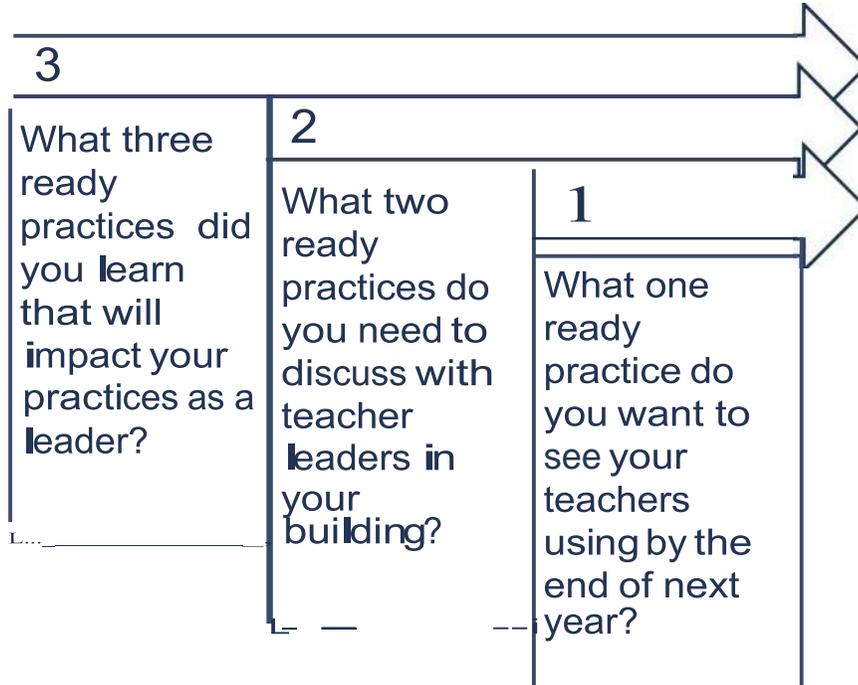
III.

Administrator Key Look Fors

- Quality of text and purpose of text are essential for effective lesson design.
- O Lessons focus on more than "sounding out" words and require students to engage in meaning making activities within text work.
- O Thinking deeply about a text's meaning helps creates knowledge.
-  Daily writing provides an opportunity to express understanding of new knowledge.

III.

Reflection 3 – 2 – 1



II

