

Reading Workshop

by Lisa Frase

Gather your children on the floor, and open your reading workshop by reading a picture book out loud. Stop and think out loud about your thinking while you read. Chart your thinking on large chart paper. Discuss your thinking with your children. Send them to their places to read their independent books.

Grab your notebook and conference with individual children. Talk to them about their reading. Listen to them read. Ask them to tell you about the story. Do a quick running record. Make a note about their needs and interests. Gather a small group to a table. Guide them in a focused lesson on a strategy or skill that they need to help them become better readers.

Gather your children on the floor, and end your reading workshop by spending time sharing. Encourage children to share their reading successes and their new found strategies. Connect their learning together and help struggling readers learn from their peers. Focus on how good readers make meaning. Adjourn for the day with new hopes for tomorrow.

Reading Workshop begins with a mini-lesson using a short piece of anchor text. Focus your lesson on a strategy or skill from your curriculum objectives. Explicitly instruct by thinking out loud. Putting the thinking on paper is the visual transference. Children mimicking your model during their own independent reading is the independent practice.

In the middle of Reading Workshop comes individual conferences and guided reading with small, flexible groups. Quick one on one conferences provide you with valuable information for assessing and determining a child's strengths, weaknesses and instructional needs. Gathering a small group of children who need further instruction on the same strategy or skill is the guided reading portion of your workshop. During guided

reading you might conduct a shared reading experiences, act as a support while they read instructional text aloud, provide hands-on manipulatives, or reinforce strategies through think alouds. Your flexible groups will form and disband as needed.

The end of your workshop will culminate with sharing. Invite your children to share their books and their reading experiences. Praise the successes and support the challenges by sharing strategies.

While you are conferencing and conducting guided reading lessons your other children should be reading on their own or with partners. You may choose to have literacy centers during this time as well. Children can work on vocabulary, listening, writing, dramatic play or other literary activities that support reading.

For an excellent example of reading workshop in action, I highly recommend that you read Debbie Miller's [Reading With Meaning](#).