Secondary Literacy Instruction: Small Group Guided Reading Instruction

What is small group guided reading instruction?

Small group reading instruction is the primary context for reading instruction and should occur daily. It involves teachers purposefully grouping identified students for a planned instructional focus. As students read silently and then discuss, it allows teachers to create a context in which students receive support as they think, talk and question their way through texts. In the process, teachers gain powerful insights into how students are approaching texts. Small group reading instruction is a social context in which readers make their meaning-making processes visible in a learning community.

-Adapted from Regie Routman

Why do small group guided reading instruction?

Small group guided reading provides differentiated, responsive instruction by building on what students know in order to support and accelerate the development of readers. Guided reading creates a social context in which students are expected to engage with other readers as they process and create meaning with a variety of increasingly complex texts.

In small group guided reading, students:

- Experience success and pleasure
- Actively engage in reading
- Think deeply about what they are reading
- Always read for understanding
- Learn how different texts work
- Converse intelligently about a text as a prelude to self-directed reading conversations

What does Small Group Guided Reading look like?

Daily, planned and targeted instruction with a small group of students based on a common focus that supports students to talk, read, and think purposefully about a text.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teachers are:</th>
<th>Students are:</th>
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<tr>
<td>Creating an environment where students are using purposeful talk to deepen understandings as readers.</td>
<td>Engaging in a variety of texts and reading experiences.</td>
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<td>Selecting and reading compelling texts as a reader to define their own process, identify supports and challenges, and determine appropriate segmentation to support meaning making and purposeful talk throughout the text.</td>
<td>Reading silently to make meaning of the text.</td>
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<td>Grouping students intentionally based on formative data and around a common focus.</td>
<td>Using purposeful talk and/or writing as a means of deepening and expanding thinking.</td>
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<td>Focusing on meaning first, asking open ended questions such as:</td>
<td>Making increasingly sophisticated connections among texts using relevant experiences and a developing knowledge of the world.</td>
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  - “What are you thinking?”
  - “What struck you as you read?”
  - “Tell me more about that.”
  - “What did that make you think about?”
  - “How will this help you as a reader?”
  - “What else have you read that is like this?”
  - “How did you figure that out?” |
| Building on what students know and can do as developing readers. | Interpreting text and providing support for personal interpretation and acknowledging the potential for multiple valid interpretations with a willingness to reexamine original opinions. |
| Supporting ELL students by using talk to draw from and build on background experiences. | Discussing their reading process and strategies that were effective for meaning making. |
| Providing feedback that allows learners to monitor their own growth as readers. | Transferring small group learning to other contexts and reading experiences. |
| Monitoring reading process and behaviors to teach into as entry points to accelerate the reader. | Monitoring their reading behaviors, strategies, and growth over time through co-constructed reading goals. |
| Planning culturally relevant pedagogy to support all learners. | |

Teaching/Learning Cycle

Assessment

Collect evidence that demonstrates the progress of learners along the APS Reading & Writing Continua and WIDA Performance Definitions (for ELL) through formative and summative assessments.

Evaluation

Turn assessment data into learning information by identifying strengths, approximations, and next steps for student learning.

Planning

Plan based on the assessment and evaluation data, to determine an instructional focus, choose appropriate resources, identifying proficient reading, writing, speaking and researching behaviors, and determine how students will transfer this learning to independence.

Teaching

Demonstrate reading and writing processes, strategies, and critical thinking needed to develop proficiency in reading, writing, speaking and researching. Set expectations for student learning and provide opportunities for practice and transfer to independence.

What professional resources support small group guided reading instruction?

- Conversations – Strategies for Teaching, Learning and Evaluating, Regie Routman
- Guiding Readers and Writers 3-6, Fountas & Pinnell
- Reading Essentials: The Specifics You Need To Teach Reading Well, Regie Routman

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