

Five Steps of a Guided Reading Lesson

How a text is introduced and the kind of support that is given during reading can all affect whether a text is easy or hard for a child (Fountas & Pinnell, 1996).

Step one

Setting the scene. This is simply a conversation between the adult and the child to orient the reader to the author, type of story they will read, and the concept of the book. This helps prepare the child for the reading they will do in the story. By setting up the scene, the child will have the ability to call upon relevant thoughts, experiences, images, language, and vocabulary. The reader is being asked to make a connection to the author and use what they already know to predict what the story *could* be about. This stage is important because it will set the child up for the comprehension component of the lesson.

Step two

Picture walk. This step is used for readers who are beginning to read. The adult guides the children through each page of the story and advises the child to look at the pictures that are used in the story. This helps the children understand that the pictures are an important source of information and can be used as a strategy to determine character, setting, action, and vocabulary that might appear.

Step three

Reading of the text. This is the part in the lesson where the eyes and mind together make sense of the print on the page. For beginning readers, the adult's goal is to engage the child in reading the text. The way to do that is to *guide* the child through the process. The adult will help the child use a variety of strategies to figure out words and will coach, prompt, and question the child as they are reading the text aloud together.

**** MAKE SURE TO INCLUDE PLENTY OF NON-FICTION READING AND INSTRUCTION ON ELEMENTS OF TEXT ****

Step four

Returning to the text. This is the time when the adult takes the child back into the story and *explicitly* teaches a specific strategy or vocabulary word. Also, the adult is helping the child understand the strategy and process that he/she used while they were reading. Sometimes the children do not realize what they have done to make sense of the print and the adult makes clear to them what they did.

Step five

Responding to the text. This step is really the comprehension piece of the guided reading lesson. The response can be oral, written, or visual. This discussion presents the opportunity to tell what happened in the story, to express if their predictions were correct, or to connect personally. Work on sequential retelling. Use the Fountas & Pinnell "Behaviors & Understandings" guidelines to not only notice and remember "right there" details, but also support your student with inference skills and connections to the real world.