

# Reading Conference Guide



*Make the most  
of every  
conference!*

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## How's it going?

Start your conference with a quick check. Begin with the question "How's it going?" to get your students thinking.

Next, have your students read a passage from the book.

As they read, think about a specific praise and a teaching point.

## Book Choice

Children who don't choose the correct books are not going to be engaged in their independent reading. If you notice students who are not enjoying their reading, focus on book choice during your conference.

- **Interest** This is the most important aspect of keeping kids engaged in reading. Help children find books that fit their likes.
- **Just Right Books** Is your book too easy or too hard?
- **Purpose** Why am I reading this book? To learn or for pleasure?

## Connections

As good readers read, they are constantly making connections to help them comprehend. If you feel a student needs practice with this skill, here are questions to focus on:

- **Text to Self Connections**  
How does this book remind you of something that has happened to you?
- **Text to Text Connections**  
How does the book remind you of something that has happened in another book?
- **Text to World Connections**  
How does the book remind you of something you know about the world?

# Fluency

There are many aspects to fluency. A kid-friendly way to describe fluency is telling kids that they want to learn to read smoothly like they talk. Here are some you might choose to focus on:

- **pausing** look at punctuation
- **phrasing** grouping words in phrases to help build meaning
- **intonation** varying tone and pitch
- **stress** emphasize important words
- **pace or rate** the speed, steady
- **integration** putting it all together

# Phonics

Good phonics skills help students decode new words. When working on phonics, you might choose to focus on:

- sound out the word
- looks for blends and digraphs
- chunk the word
- read through to the end of the word (-s, -ing, -ed)

# Comprehension

Many students can read the words in the books they choose but are not taking the time to comprehend what they have read. If you feel like this is true for the student, try these ideas:

- Tell me what happened.
  - Who is the main character?
- What do you know about the main character?
  - How does the main character change during the story?

# Comprehension, continued

- Where does the story take place?
- Describe the setting.
- Why is the setting important to the story?
- What is the problem?
- How is the problem solved?
- Is there a lesson being taught?

## Nonfiction Focus

Students use different strategies when they are trying to read nonfiction. Here are some focus areas that might be helpful (some can also be used for fiction):

- Fact vs. Opinion
- Look at context clues to help understand new vocabulary words
  - What did you learn?
  - What do you still wonder about this topic?
- Where do you think you could go to learn more about the topic?
  - Tell me about the text features the author uses.
- Focus on the text structure the author uses.

## Everything Else

Other areas of focus for your reading conferences:

- Making predictions (along with finding evidence to support the predictions)
- Using picture clues
- Reread when something doesn't make sense
- How did the book make you feel?
- Using sensory images (What are you picturing in your head?)

