

Nov. 17th Staff Development Session:
Maximizing the Value of Scott Foresman's
Leveled Libraries

Presenter: Marilyn Podell

Grade Level Facilitators:

K: Georgette Vosseler

1: Brenda Bletsch

2: Kim Stromstedt

3: Katie Montagano

4: Susan Sohmer

5: Heather Mancuso

6: Wesley Hogan



General Observations

- In order to learn, children need to be engaged in the activity – hence the importance of encouraging an emotional “milk & cookies” connection to reading.
- The goal of all reading instruction is to increase comprehension.
- The District is committed to promoting Balanced Literacy, which is a structure designed to help all students learn to read & write effectively, while working at a level that is not frustrating to them.

Things to Remember

- Reading is a skill, like riding a bike – the more one practices (i.e. reads), the better one gets.
- Success breeds success.
- Children must be able to read the text without difficulty, in order to focus all their energy on comprehension.
- Background knowledge and interest level of children help them read, i.e. comprehend texts, on a higher level than they might ordinarily be able to handle comfortably.
- There are many ways to group children.

“Dynamic Grouping”

- Group homogeneously for similar reading processes & text level.
- Heterogeneous grouping can occur for other reasons, such as shared reading, literature circles, & content areas.
- Flexible groups should be changed on a regular basis.
- Skills should be taught through reading, instead of overuse of skill practice on worksheets.

Text Difficulty

- **Vocabulary**
- **Sentence Complexity**
- **Content**
- **Text Structure**
- **Themes and Ideas**
- **Language and Literacy Features**
- **Book and Print Features**

“‘Leveling’ is not an exact science. There are many variables to take into account in determining text difficulty. A text’s demands and supports cannot be reduced to a mathematical formula. The concepts of ‘easier’ and ‘harder’ must always be understood in relation to the complex and interrelated text factors...what’s more, myriad student factors impact text readability as well.”

Source: Scott Foresman *Reading Street* Leveled Reader booklet (p.1) quoting Fountas & Pinnell in [Guiding Readers and Writers: Teaching Comprehension, Genre, and Content Literacy](#)

“Understand These Guiding Principles”

by Marie Carbo

- **#1**: Learning to read should be easy and fun.
- **#2**: It's natural for children to enjoy reading and to be motivated to read.
- **#3**: Children learn from modeling.

- **#4**: Stretching students with high-level reading materials increases reading ability.
- **#5**: Literacy-rich environments increase reading motivation.
- **#6**: Good readers spend time practicing reading.
- **#7**: Balanced literacy instruction helps students to make important connections.

- **#8**: Provide assistance for English language learners.
- **#9**: Active participation by families promotes literacy.
- **#10**: Every individual has a special learning style for reading, or “reading style.”
- **#11**: Matching students’ reading styles makes learning to read easier and more enjoyable.
- **#12**: Students who understand their own reading style learn to work through their strengths and develop respect for the styles of others.

Scott Foresman Leveled Readers

- Highlighted skill & strategy the same as the anthology selection
- Leveled according to the Guided Reading, DRA_{TM}, and Lexile_R scales
- Crucial to use our expert assessment of our students' abilities, background knowledge, and interests
- 6 copies of each leveled book per anthology selection

Using Scott Foresman Leveled Readers for Differentiated Guided Reading Instruction

Differentiate according to ability: 3 levels per grade:

- **Green (grass) – Strategic Intervention ***
1.5 years below grade level *same vocabulary as anthology selection
- **Yellow (flowers) – On grade level ***
same vocabulary as anthology selection
- **Blue (sky) – 2 years above grade level ***
different vocabulary

Also ...

- You all have a Take Home Master Book for all of the below level, on level, and above level readers. Therefore, you can create additional copies for your leveled readers.
- You also have leveled trade books – one copy of a trade book on each level for each Scott Foresman unit in your anthology. In the Trade Book Library Teaching Guide, there are activities that reinforce the skills from that unit.

Things to Remember

- **Balanced literacy guidelines– sometimes we have to borrow readers from another grade level if “Below Level” is too difficult &/or “Above Level” is not challenging enough – best to err on the “Too Easy” side**
- **As we were reminded in Susan Schlueck’s workshop at the Election Day staff development, we have access to all leveled readers and ELL readers online.**

More Things to Remember

- Lower leveled readers can be assigned on the computer to differentiate.
- The audio component allows for additional differentiation for those children with a strong auditory learning style.
- Leveled readers can be accessed through the Leveled Reader Database by grade level or Guided Reading level.
- We can search for books by comprehension skill or by content area.

Other Scott Foresman Readers for Differentiated Guided Reading Instruction

- **ELL Readers - same vocabulary as the anthology selection, but simplify the content; * Important to collaborate with the ESL teachers**
- **Decodable Readers – focus on the new phonic element in K-3.**

Differentiate According to Interest Level

- Opportunity for heterogeneous groups – weaker readers listen to text, as a shared read
- May need to borrow leveled readers from another grade level, this time to match student interests
- Use the Leveled Reader Database to also locate books on all levels according to the students' interests
- Re-reading text is not a problem
 - There could be different purposes for re-reading
 - Re-reading acts as an aid to fluency – one of the components of reading instruction – which releases the reader to focus on deeper levels of comprehension

**CRUCIAL TO COMMUNICATE
WITH OTHER GRADE LEVELS
WITHIN YOUR BUILDING IN
ORDER TO DEVELOP A
COLLABORATIVE SYSTEM FOR
BORROWING LEVELED READERS
FROM EACH OTHER.**

“Continuum of Assisted Reading Methods”

- Sustained Silent Reading
- Paired Reading
- Choral Reading
- Echo Reading
- Recorded Books
- Neurological Impress
- Shared Reading

Using Scott Foresman Leveled Readers for Differentiated Independent Reading

- In March 2005, Richard Allington cited current research, stating that a *book for independent reading must be read at 99% accuracy.* This is a shift from previous research (from 1946) which put 95% accuracy rates on books for independent reading.
- One way books can be read is by reading the pictures.
- It's important to provide browsing boxes for interests & ability levels.

Suggestions for Independent Reading

- After guided reading instruction, leveled readers can be placed in browsing boxes for independent reading.
- Individual “book bags” or folders with books of the child’s choice can be provided – possibly rotate/change about every 2 weeks to allow books to circulate.
- It’s important to schedule “sharing” time in order for kids to “whet other kids’ appetites.” * Kids teaching kids is a powerful instructional tool.

Value of the District Language Arts Frameworks

Teachers are encouraged to supplement Scott Foresman leveled readers with other guided reading texts:

- **Opportunity to fill in the ability-level gaps of the Scott Foresman leveled reader libraries**
- **Opportunity to add to &/or fill in according to the children's interests, not addressed in the Scott Foresman leveled reader libraries**

Grade Level Groups

Agenda:

- Start-up
- How do we begin?
 - Classroom management
- What do the other kids do?
 - Best practices
- What are the wonderful, educationally sound things that work?
- What are some of the daily schedules that provide time for kids to read?
- What are the good things we're doing?
- What can we share with each other?

Brainstorm and create a chart