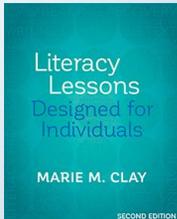January 2019

Be a Literacy Matchmaker for Early Readers
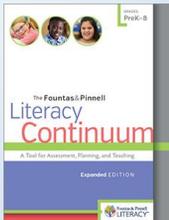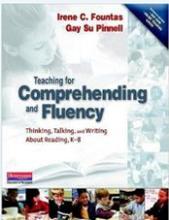
Todd N. Hartman

Dr. Marie Clay

By Different Paths to Common Outcomes
MARIE M. CLAY
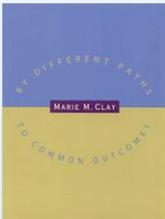
Literacy Lessons Designed for Individuals
MARIE M. CLAY
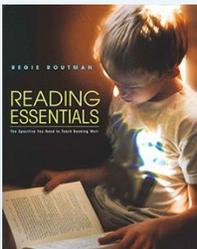SECOND EDITION

Drs. Fountas & Pinnell

Irene C. Fountas
Gay Su Pinnell
Teaching for Comprehending and Fluency
Thinking, Talking, and Writing About Reading, K–8

GRADES PreK–8
The Fountas & Pinnell Literacy Continuum
A Tool for Assessment, Planning, and Teaching
Expanded EDITION

Regie Routman

REGIE ROUTMAN
READING ESSENTIALS

"Rethinking Guided Reading to Advantage ALL Our Learners"

- October 2, 2018

Tennent, Reedy, Hobsbaum, Gamble

www.guidingreaders.com
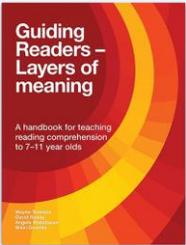
Guiding Readers – Layers of meaning

A handbook for teaching reading comprehension to 7–11 year olds

Hammond & Nessel / Richardson
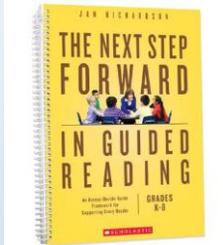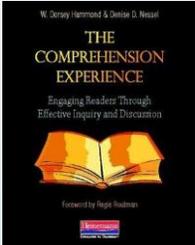
W. Dorsey Hammond & Denise D. Nessel
THE COMPREHENSION EXPERIENCE
Engaging Readers Through Effective Inquiry and Discussion
Foreword by Regie Routman

JAN RICHARDSON
THE NEXT STEP FORWARD IN GUIDED READING
An Assess-Decide-Guide Framework for Supporting Every Reader
GRADES K–8

Fay, Moritz, Whaley

POWERFUL BOOK INTRODUCTIONS
LEADING WITH MEANING FOR DEEPER THINKING
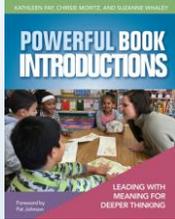
- Reading Recovery teachers
- Literacy coaches
  - Literacy Collaborative
- Fairfax County
  - Northern Virginia

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match·mak·er   /maCH͟ˌmākər/

- *(noun) a person who **arranges relationships** between others, either informally or, in certain cultural communities, **as a formal occupation**.*

---

match·mak·er   /maCH͟ˌmākər/

As teachers of students acquiring literacy, we must **arrange** a meaningful **relationship** between **students** and reading through thoughtful **book** choice and tailored introductions. We must know our **students**, know our **books**, and know the classroom **curriculum** so that we can match the three.

Student

Curriculum   Text
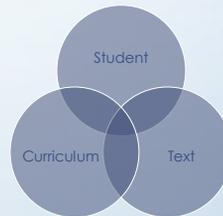
I BELIEVE…

My observations of young children trying to make any sense of the code led me to define reading as a **message-getting**, problem-solving activity.

(Clay, LLDFI 2nd ed.)

I BELIEVE…

My job as an instructor is to teach students how to efficiently and strategically **think**…from day 1.

Literacy is my vehicle.

I BELIEVE

STUDENTS READ TO LEARN
AS THEY
LEARN TO READ

I BELIEVE…

We do not subscribe to the theory that students first *learn to read* and then *read to learn*. We cannot divide literacy learning into discrete stages. Students learn by reading from the very beginning, and they continue learning to read throughout all their years of schooling.

(Fountas & Pinnell, Teaching for Comprehending and Fluency…, 418)

I BELIEVE…

Drs. Fountas & Pinnell

I BELIEVE…

"Guided reading is any learning context in which the teacher guides one or more students through some aspect of the reading process." (Routman, RE)

I BELIEVE…

Book introductions are a necessary part of what good teachers do.

(Clay, BDP, 184)

I BELIEVE…

I think introducing new texts that schoolchildren are going to read demands great skill. If we fine-tune our understanding of what book introductions can achieve, we can become more sensitive to the different needs of children.

(Clay, BDP, 171)

Storybook introductions are designed to ensure a successful first reading early in the lesson before the teacher develops lesson activities. (Clay, BDP, 172)

Introductions draw children into the activity before passing control to the children and pushing them gently towards problem-solving the whole first reading of the story for themselves. Children quickly learn that they must initiate the reading work needed to get meaning from the texts. (Clay, BDP, 172)

oral language

introduction

knowledge of story structure

MEANING

pictures

knowledge of world

print
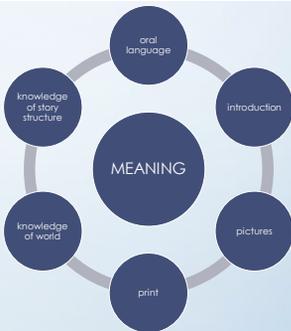
I BELIEVE…

Powerful introductions serve as doorways, leading students down the path of actively constructing meaning. Effective book introductions ground readers' thinking and teach them how to use meaning to develop a rich understanding of their own. (PBI)

I DON'T BELIEVE…

NO MORE

Picture Walks are proper introductions!

Picture Walk

You have chosen this book for this child at this particular point in his lesson series. As you introduce the book you might

- draw the child's attention to important ideas
- discuss the pictures to give a sense of the complete plot
- give the child opportunities to hear and use new words and structures that he will need to use in the reading
- anticipate and prepare the child for something that will be new for the child. (Clay, LLDFI 2nd ed.)

Picture Walk

Descriptions of a 'picture walk' in the literature of early literacy do not provide a suitable substitute for the introduction described here. [Introductions] must be fine-tuned by the teacher to increase the competencies of [children].

(Clay, LLDFI 2nd ed.)

Picture Walk

The introduction is not a 'picture walk' – it is about orienting the reader to the meaning of the whole text.

(Fountas & Pinnell, Teaching Struggling Readers, 409)

Processing Text 'Levels'

- Feature of a letter
- Letter level
- Cluster or letter sequence level
- Word level
- Phrase level
- Sentence level
- Gist of the passage (Clay, LLDFI Part Two, 126)

Make an excellent choice of book, ensure that the challenge matches the child's learning needs and avoid unnecessary interruption of the reading by making too many links to other things. Stay close to the problem-solving of this text and the reading of this story as a whole. (Clay, LLDFI 2nd ed.)

While he's reading, is he problem-solving at the…

- Word level?
- Phrase level?
- Sentence level?
- Whole book level?

Is he reading the words, or is he reading the book?

Did I introduce the words, or did I introduce the book?

Processing Text 'Levels'

- Microprocesses Level
  - Words & Phrases
    - Table
      - Kitchen?
      - Do it later?
      - Math term?
  - Idioms & figurative language (GRLM)

Processing Text 'Levels'

- Integrative Processes Level
  - Sentence coherence
    - Meaning across sentences (GRLM)
      - "Who's 'they'?"
      - "Who said that?"

Processing Text 'Levels'

- Macroprocesses Level
  - Coherent whole text
    - A general understanding of the text
- Elaborative Processes Level
  - Inferencing
    - Within the text & beyond the text
  - Deeper understandings – Lessons learned (GRLM)

Processing Text 'Levels'

Problem-Solving (Clay)	Message-Getting (GRLM)
• Feature of a letter	
• Letter level	
• Cluster or letter sequence lvl	
• Word level	
• Phrase level	• Microprocesses
• Sentence level	• Integrative Processes
• Gist of the passage	• Macroprocesses

Developing Introductions

We believe a well-crafted introduction has the power to guide readers in beginning to actively construct the meaning of the book even before they begin to read. This active construction of meaning before and during reading leads to authentic discussion after reading which keeps the experience enjoyable and allows readers to negotiate meaning together. (PBI)

Teachers Who Provide Good Introductions…

- Seem to know the strengths, weaknesses, and interests of the kids in the group;
- Know the gist of story and what it's really about beyond the literal level;
- Don't do all the talking;
- Don't go page by page;
- Keep it short;
- Bring kids' attention to something important, whether it's the structure of the text or some confusing language structure or vocabulary; and
- Send students off to read with a focus on meaning. (Johnson, PBI, Intro)

Being a Matchmaker: The Steps
- **Text selection and analysis**
  - Done before introducing the text to students
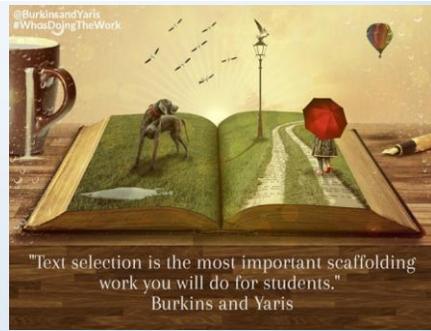- **Overall meaning statement (synopsis)**
  (PBI)

Being a Matchmaker: The Steps
- **Support with new and/or challenging characteristics…if necessary**
  - Text structures
  - Language structures
  - Vocabulary
- **Launching statement/Question**
  - Leading with **meaning** for deeper thinking (PBI)

Being a Matchmaker: The Steps

- Start broad with a **meaning** statement that provides an overall synopsis.
- Narrow the focus to smaller units of **meaning** at structural and word levels.
- Return to the broader **meaning** with a launching statement or question that gets readers thing about bigger ideas. (PBI)

"Text selection is the most important scaffolding work you will do for students."
Burkins and Yaris

Matchmaker

Student(s)	Texts

• Know Behaviors w/in instructional level
  – Interests
  – Strengths
  – Needs
	• Choose books that allow students to construct meaning.
	• Know the characteristics of the texts and how they support the reader.

Mapping Text Potential

Vocabulary
- unknown words
- technical vocabulary
- multiple meanings
- slang
- unusual words

Language features
e.g.:
- speech: direct and indirect
- Standard and non-Standard English
- register – level of formality

Coherence
How easy is it to follow the text when reading? How are sentences linked? Check that readers are able to follow.

Narrative features
- plot
- character
- setting

Grammar; Syntax
Sentence structure

Theme
Deeper meaning, e.g. loss, triumph over adversity, redemption, friendship, loyalty, overcoming problems, justice, fairness, etc.

Historical, social, and cultural context
All texts have a context e.g. Southern States of USA in 1930s, etc.

Visual features
Illustration, colour, shape, layout, medium, line, composition, typography, point of view

Subject
What is the text about? e.g. First World War, a lost dog, the circus, food.

Making links to background knowledge:
Possible connections to personal experience, world knowledge, and familiarity with other texts.

Literary features
- narration
- voice
- imagery
- metaphor
- simile
- alliteration
- pun, etc.

Text type, purpose, and intended readership
Including bias, values, etc.

GRLM

Text Selection & Analysis

- **If** I have data and observations that suggests [students' interests, strengths, and needs based on their reading behaviors]…
- **Then** I'll select a book that [characteristics of texts that will offer opportunities to build on identified strengths and support identified needs]. (PBI)

Text Selection & Analysis

- **If** I have data and observations that suggests [students' interests, strengths, and needs based on their reading behaviors]…
  – What do they **like**?
  – What do they **do**?
  – How do they **think**? (PBI)

- What do they like?
  – Texts have the power to motivate or deter readers. (PBI)
    – Humor (broad, not narrow)
    – Animal related
    – Photography

- What do you observe them doing while reading? (PBI)
  – Solving
  – PoD
  – Phrasing
  – Stretches of accurate reading
    – Long vs short
  – Monitoring?
    – If yes, what are they doing about it?

Strengths
- Cross-checking meaning and first letter
- Monitoring for meaning
- Monitoring for structure
- Self-correcting (PBI)

Areas of Need
- Looking beyond the first letter
- Notice/Use punctuation
  – Return sweep
  – Improved fluency

- How do they think?
  – Hold an authentic conversation about the books.
  – What do their comments reveal about the way they…
    – Summarize main points?
    – Predict what might happen?
    – Use connections to deepen understanding?
    – Infer meaning beyond what is explicit?
    – Notice, use, and appreciate the author's craft? (PBI)

If I have data and observations that suggest a need for students to…	Then I'll select a book that…
Expand on their descriptions of characters' feelings and elaborate on why they might feel a certain way	Has characters who experience a range of emotions or whose feelings change from the beginning to the end of the text
Make general connections and use those connections to infer meaning	Has events or characters students can relate to

(PBI)

If I have data and observations that suggest a need for students to…	Then I'll select a book that…
Reflect characters' emotions through intonation	Is a narrative, includes dialogue, and has characters who express a range of emotions
Use punctuation to guide their intonation	Uses a range of punctuation marks

(PBI)

If I have data and observations that suggest a need for students to…	Then I'll select a book that…

(PBI)

Overall Meaning Statement

- Read the book for meaning!

- Analyze it.
  - What is it about? (literal level)
  - What *might* it *really* be about? (deeper themes and big ideas) (PBI)

Comprehension

Powerful Book Introductions

- What is it about? (literal level)

- What *might* it *really* be about? (deeper themes and big ideas)

Guiding Readers

- "In the moment" reading comprehension

- "Deeper Understanding" through reading reflections

Overall Meaning Statement

- Craft a meaning statement that sets up the reader to think about the meaning of the *whole* text. (PBI)

Craft a Meaning Statement: Steps

Variation #1	Variation #2
Step 1: Summarize the plot (narrative) or information/topics (expository) in 1 or 2 sentences.	Step 1: Summarize the plot (narrative) or information/topics (expository) in 1 or 2 sentences.
Step 2: Consider the possible big ideas.	Step 2: Consider the possible big ideas.
Step 3: Craft a meaning statement that ties the summary and the big ideas together.	Step 3: Use the summary as the meaning statement and save the big ideas for the launching statement. (PBI)

Craft a Meaning Statement: Steps

- Step 1: Summarize the plot (narrative) or information/topics (expository) in 1 or 2 sentences.
  - Tim sees his friends climb to the top of the fort and slide down the pole. Tim's friends and teacher encourage him when he's scared so that he can slide down too. (PBI)

Craft a Meaning Statement: Steps

- Step 2: Consider the possible big ideas.
  - The gist is overcoming fears. Possible big ideas might include "You feel proud of yourself when you try something that seems scary," "Other people can help you overcome your fears," or "Once you give something a chance, you often realize it isn't as scary as it first seemed." (PBI)

Craft a Meaning Statement: Steps

- Step 3 (variation 1): Craft a meaning statement that ties the summary and the big ideas together.
  - In Come On, Tim, Tim sees his friends Michael and Anna climb up the fort and go down the pole. He wants to do it too, but once he gets to the top, he gets scared to go down. He's going to have to be brave to overcome his fear. (PBI)

Craft a Meaning Statement: Steps

- Step 3 (variation 2): Use the summary as the meaning statement and save the big ideas for the launching statement.
  - Tim watches his friends Michael and Anna climb up to the top of the fort and slide down the pole. He wants to do it too, but is scared to slide down. We'll read what happens as his friend and teacher, Ms. Hill, encourage him to go down. (PBI)

Summarize the Plot

- What about levels A/1 and B/2…and sometimes C/3?
  - Plot? These books have no plots?

Summarize the Plot

It's our job as teachers to tap into *possible* meanings and bring them to the forefront of our students' thinking that they come to expect meaning-making from *every* book they read. (PBI)

Summarize the Plot

- The overall meaning statement draws students into the text and provides them with a frame for thinking to help them construct the meaning of the text. (PBI)
  - Craft it from the students' perspectives by considering the character most relatable to the reader.

Summarize the Plot

- Adult's POV = adult character
  - *It is bedtime, and Jack's mother is trying really hard to get him to stop playing and go to bed…* (PBI)

Summarize the Plot

- Student's POV = relatable character
  - *It's bedtime and Jack is having such a great time playing that he doesn't want to stop! Look at Billy, though. Billy knows that Mom will read him a story once he's in bed. I wonder what Jack will think about this.* (PBI)

Summarize the Plot

1. In this book, Father Bear…
2. In this book, Mother Bear…
★3. In this book, Baby Bear…

Possible Big Ideas

We owe it to our students to prepare the introduction by considering the themes in books and nudging them toward discovering big ideas about things that matter to them. (PBI)

Possible Big Ideas

1. Consider a main character...
   – What did the character want?
   – What was the character's problem?
   – How did the character get what he wanted, solve the problem, or change?
   – What did the character learn (if anything)? (PBI)

Possible Big Ideas

- State a generalizable theme...
  – (Think about how the characters' experiences might be generalized to reflect universal experiences that student can connect to and apply to other stories or situation in life.) (PBI)

Possible Big Ideas

2. Determine the gist or topic of the text in 1 or 2 words...
   – Sharing
   – Responsibility
   – Trust
   – Friendship
   – Judging others
   – Overcoming fears
   – Teamwork
   – Making mistakes
   – Humorous situations
   – School vacation
   – Life cycles
   – Habitats
   – Following rules (PBI)

Possible Big Ideas

- State the gist as a generalizable theme.
  – What does this text say about the gist or topic?
  – What might the author want readers to think about this topic? (PBI)

Title	Sum up the book in 1 or 2 words – Gist	Big Idea: What does the text say about the gist? What might the author want readers to think about this topic?
Father Bear Goes Fishing (Randell)	Responsibility	We take care of those who depend on us.
The Gym Teacher from the Black Lagoon (Thaler)	Judging others	You shouldn't judge others before you get to know them. Don't always believe what others say about people.

(PBI)

Craft a Meaning Statement: First 2 Steps

Step 1: Summarize the plot in 1 or 2 sentences.

Step 2: Consider the possible big ideas. (What *might* this *really* be about?)

2a. -Consider a main character...
- What did the character want?
- What was the character's problem?
- How did the character get what he wanted, solve the problem, or change?
-What did the character learn (if anything)?
State a generalizable theme...
- (Think about how the characters' experiences might be generalized to reflect universal experiences that student can connect to and apply to other stories or situation in life.)

2b. -Determine the gist or topic of the text in 1 or 2 words...
-State the gist as a generalizable theme.
- What does this text say about the gist or topic?
- What might the author want readers to think about this topic?

(PBI)

- Text structures
- Language structures
- Vocabulary

Drafting Book Introductions

- **Support with new and/or challenging characteristics…if necessary**
  - *What is already known or familiar to students?*
  - *What do we think students can solve on their own?*
  - *What do we need to explicitly introduce?* (PBI)

Converse

Introducing what may be new/novel should occur during an authentic conversation with the students.

Text Structures

- How does this book work?
- How does noticing how the book works help me navigate and understand what I'm reading? (PBI)

Text Structures

- *Early levels*
  - Page layout
  - Speech bubbles & text
  - Labels and text
  - Dialogue
  - POV (Who's I?)

Text Structures

- *Later levels*
  - Backstory
  - Multiple events linked as one story
  - Collection of short stories vs. chapters
  - Narration
  - Compare/Contrast
  - Influence of illustrations = passing of time (PBI)

Language Structures

An awareness of language structure helps readers group the words into meaningful phrases. (PBI)

- Know the language structures controlled by our students.
- Compare their oral language structures and previous books to the structures within the this new book.
  - Introduce them to new language structures.
    - Explain what they mean.
  - Some students may need to rehearse these before reading.

Language Structures

- *Up goes Seagull.*
- *Down comes Little Chimp.*
- *Away ran the deer.*

Language Structures

- *Baby Bear went on and on.*
- *Tim looked and looked and looked.*
- *My dad looks after me.*
- *He walked up to the tree.*

Language Structures

The dog chased Tabby up the tree. Kate Green ran into the garden. "Go away, dog! Go!" The dog went.

"Meow," cried Tabby up in the tree.

Randell, Tabby in the tree, Rigby

Vocabulary

In her introduction the teacher makes the child familiar with

- the story
- the plot
- words and phrases of language that he might **never have heard**
- **unfamiliar** names, and
- **new** vocabulary or concepts. (Clay, LLDFI 2nd ed., 115)

Vocabulary

Consider the unique vocabulary needs of your students when choosing words to preteach. Two kinds of words need to be discussed before the reading:

1. words too difficult for them to decode, and
2. words not in their listening vocabulary. (NSF)

Vocabulary

If you have to introduce more than five words, the book is too difficult. Choose another book. (NSF)

The more teachers are authentic participants in the introduction (as opposed to interrogators eliciting specific responses), the more actively engaged students will be. (PBI)

Converse

What's the best way to introduce a story?

- Activate prior knowledge before students read the book.
  - When activating prior knowledge for reading a narrative, two kinds of memory can be tapped. (Comp Exp)

Converse

Episodic Memory
- Recollections of personal experience
- Invite students to reminisce

Semantic (M) Memory
- General or conceptual knowledge
- Invite students to predict. (Comp Exp)

Episodic reminiscing is the more common introduction because it is widely recommended in commercial reading programs. However, the semantic predicting approach is far more effective. (Comp Exp)

The episodic reminiscing "have-you-ever" questions are most effective *after* reading, when they create rich opportunities for response: "Have you ever found yourself in a similar situation? Tell us about it." (Comp Exp)

The "have-you-ever" question after reading leads to substantive discussing or writing as students make meaningful personal connections to the story, seeing their experience in light of the story and vice versa. (Comp Exp)

The human brain is a meaning-maker and meaning seeker.

-Eric Jensen

Does the introduction send the right message to our students so that they realize their purpose is to make meaning of the text?

Drafting Book Introductions

• **Launching statement / Question**
  –Since comprehension is the heart and soul of reading, the very last thing we say to students should pop them back to meaning!

Launching Statements

• As you read…
• When you read today… (PBI)

Purpose for Reading

Launching Statement

When you read today, notice one or two words that are hard and write them down on your sticky note. We'll talk about them when you finish reading.

Implied Purpose

Focus on the words. If you don't know a word, divert your attention from the text and write it down. I will tell you what the word means when you are done.

(PBI)

Purpose for Reading

Launching Statement

If you get stuck on tricky words as you read, look for parts you know to figure them out.

Implied Purpose

Read this book for the purpose of applying a strategy for word-solving.

(PBI)

Purpose for Reading

Launching Statement

As you read, think about how Mother Bear and Baby Bear feel while Father Bear is fishing.

Implied Purpose

Focus on the characters and their feelings. This is where the heart of the story is.

(PBI)

Purpose for Reading

Launching Statement

As you read, think about how much work it took Father Bear to get all those fish.

Implied Purpose

This is also the heart of the story, but from Father Bear's perspective.

(PBI)

Launching Statement

THINK

Meaningful Dialogic Interaction
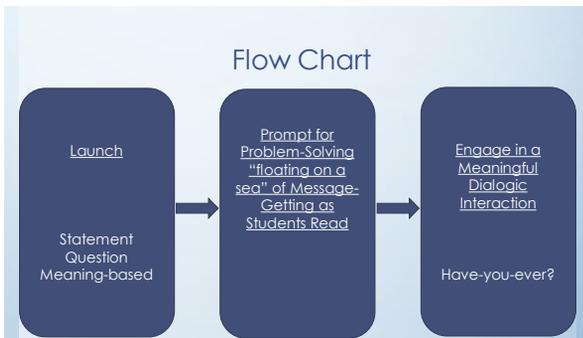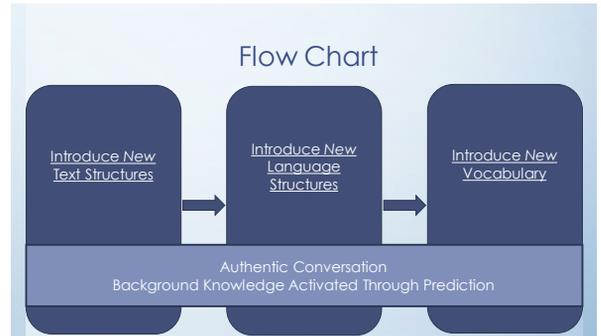
Problem-Solving floats on a sea of Message-Getting.

To guide readers effectively, it is essential to understand how they have made sense of what they have read (in the moment) and to use this to inform how this understanding of the text can be deepened (through reading reflections). The most common way to do this is by asking them; developing effective dialogic interactions. (GRLM)
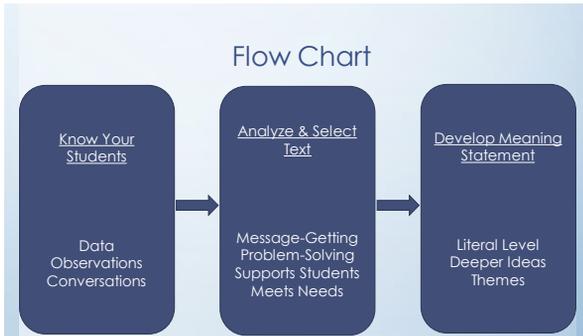
To guide readers effectively, it is essential to understand how they have made sense of what they have read (*literal*) and to use this to inform how this understanding of the text can be deepened (*big ideas/theme*). The most common way to do this is by asking them; developing effective dialogic interactions. (GRLM)

Flow Chart

Know Your Students

Data
Observations
Conversations

→

Analyze & Select Text

Message-Getting
Problem-Solving
Supports Students
Meets Needs

→

Develop Meaning Statement

Literal Level
Deeper Ideas
Themes

Flow Chart

Introduce *New* Text Structures

→

Introduce *New* Language Structures

→

Introduce *New* Vocabulary

Authentic Conversation
Background Knowledge Activated Through Prediction

Flow Chart

Launch

Statement
Question
Meaning-based

→

Prompt for Problem-Solving "floating on a sea" of Message-Getting as Students Read

→

Engage in a Meaningful Dialogic Interaction

Have-you-ever?

None of us in this room read books, newspapers, magazine, blogs, Twitter, Facebook, etc. because we want to practice a skill or strategy. Instead, we are seeking meaning…in learning, enjoying, and connecting.

Points to Ponder

We do not learn from experience… we learn from reflecting on experience.

— **John Dewey**

Points to Ponder

What are your theories of teaching students who are acquiring literacy?

Points to Ponder

Are your theories evident in the way you teach?

- Book introductions
- Book reflections/discussions

Points to Ponder

How do you talk about books?

- *Do you want to read a book about Baby Bear or Kitty Cat?*
- *Do you want to read a book about 'never giving up' or one about 'helping others'?*

Points to Ponder

What do your "bookends" sound like?

- Are they meaning-based?
- Are they skills/strategies-based?

Points to Ponder

What are your students' theories of reading?

- Remembering words?
- Solving words?
- Reading fast?
- Enjoyment?
- Thinking deeply?

Points to Ponder

How is the way you are teaching influencing a child's theory of reading?

- Do our children enter school with a different theory of reading (gained from their parents) compared to the theory they leave K-2 after learning with us teachers?

Matchmaker

Matching readers with books is arguably the most important step in supporting students to read with accuracy, fluency, joy, and understanding. (PBI)