# S.O.S. (A Summary of the Summary)

The main ideas of the book are:

~ This book introduces an approach to reading that leads to high levels of achievement *and* a love of reading.
~ This approach consists of a comprehensive set of 12 rigorous, research-based practices for teaching reading.

**Why I chose this book:**
The advice in this book works for any grade level and can be used along with whatever reading program or approach a school is currently using. Witter focuses on twelve rigorous, research-based, Common-Core-integrated best practices, and makes it easy for schools to start using the practices, providing lots of options, step-by-step instructions, and ways of avoiding pitfalls.

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# The Scoop (In this summary you will learn...)

- How to quickly find out students' reading levels
- How to build students' enthusiasm for reading
- How to organize three different kinds of reading practice: choice, shared, and guided
- A sequence of the most important reading skills students need
- Teaching strategies to help students understand, independently use, and remember reading skills
- How to integrate test preparation and vocabulary practice into reading classes
- Professional development ideas to help teachers learn the strategies in this book
**Introduction**

According to a recent ACT report, half of all American adults are unable to read at the eighth grade level. How can principals make sure their students do not end up in that group? How can we give them the reading skills to succeed in school and beyond? The answer is twofold: help students learn to love reading and teach them to understand what they read.

The Reading Without Limits approach weaves together research-based best practices for building lifelong reading habits and academic reading skills. Teachers learn how to successfully lead three different types of activities: fun and easy individual reading, small-group skill-building, and rigorous whole-group analysis of texts. Students read equal amounts of fiction and nonfiction. Overall, this approach includes twelve rigorous, research-based best practices that are aligned with the Common Core Standards. This uniquely balanced and thoroughly researched approach has helped thousands of students across the country make dramatic improvements.

**Reading Without Limits (RWL) Overview**

Some reading activities help students fall in love with books. Other activities build their skills as readers of academic texts. Below you’ll find definitions of the three different kinds of reading students will do in this approach.

1. **Independent Choice Reading**: Students independently select and read books that interest them and are at their reading levels. This part of the system teaches students to enjoy reading. They begin to develop lifelong reading habits which are strongly correlated with academic and career success. The more time students can spend on independent reading, the better: a study at the University of Minnesota found that students who read 40 minutes a day made much more progress than students who read for 15 minutes per day.

2. **Guided Reading**: Within the same class, some students may be learning to match letters to sounds, while others are struggling to get beyond literal meanings. This part of the system allows teachers to target students’ individual needs. A teacher places students in groups of eight or fewer, with peers at a similar reading level. She selects a book that is slightly beyond their current level, and provides lessons in strategies that help them read and understand the book.

3. **Shared Reading**: A student might be a voracious reader, but to develop the reading skills necessary for academic success, it is important to work with a teacher. During shared reading, a teacher and class read and analyze a challenging book together. The teacher models high-level reading skills and provides feedback as students practice those skills. After the teacher and students do a close reading in which they “pick apart” a small piece of text, the students continue to read the class book on their own both in and out of class. In addition, the teacher conducts classroom discussions of the shared text so the class can analyze the text together.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level of Books</th>
<th>Independent Choice Reading</th>
<th>Guided Reading</th>
<th>Shared Reading</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Activity</td>
<td>Individual reading</td>
<td>Slightly above grade level</td>
<td>Slightly above grade level</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time</td>
<td>At least 30 minutes 4x/week</td>
<td>At least 30 minutes 2x/week</td>
<td>At least 30 minutes 4x/week</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**PART I: THE FIRST PART OF THE RWL APPROACH: THREE TYPES OF READING**

**1st RWL Practice: Assessing Reading Levels**

If you go into a tenth-grade classroom, will most students be reading at a tenth-grade level? Probably not; some of them may still be at the third-grade level, while others may be zooming ahead to adult literature. Figuring out students’ reading levels is the first step in the Reading Without Limits approach because teachers use that information for all the reading activities:

1. To help students choose books at their comfort levels for independent choice reading
2. To assign students to groups and give them books at or slightly above their comfort levels for guided reading
3. To select a whole-class book slightly above students’ comfort levels for shared reading

It’s important for all schools – elementary, middle, and high – to assess student reading levels. As students grow older, teachers will experience more differences in reading levels within a single class. In fact, to find out how many different levels you’ll see in one classroom, you can multiply the average age of students by 2/3. If the average age in a tenth-grade classroom is 15, then: 15 * 2/3 = 10 different reading levels. Students need to practice reading at their comfort levels in order to improve and achieve academically. If a tenth-grader is still reading at a third-grade level, he or she will improve by independently reading some third-grade-level materials.

How can we figure out a student’s level? Below, you’ll find a few effective tools.

**Practical Ways to Determine a Student’s Reading Level**

To find students’ levels, Witter recommends using the running record – a short, leveled assessment that the teacher administers during a one-on-one meeting with a student. A running record helps the teacher know how fluently each student reads and how each student understands the reading. The downside of running records is that, at ten minutes per student, they can be time-consuming. Leaders can help by rearranging schedules (e.g., a few teachers have one day “off” to assess students), providing classroom coverage, and finding additional staff or volunteers to assess students.
if there isn’t time for running records, schools have other options. the first is to have students self-evaluate. at the elementary level, this might mean teaching them to use the five-finger test when they’re picking out books (if they don’t know 5 words on a page, it’s too hard, if they don’t know 1 word, it’s too easy). at the secondary level, a teacher can give out materials at a few different levels and have students identify the materials they’re most comfortable with. the second option is to use a group inventory, such as the QRI-5.

To organize data, Witter suggests principals appoint a non-classroom teacher to track students’ levels and progress in a spreadsheet.

**Match Students to Books Based on Their Comfort Level**

the chart below shows how a teacher can use the results of reading assessments to select books for guided and shared reading and help students find independent reading books. The percentages are the minimum fluency and comprehension scores students need for texts that are on the right level for them.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Score needed for:</th>
<th>Independent Choice Reading</th>
<th>Guided Reading</th>
<th>Shared Reading</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fluency score:</td>
<td>At least 96%</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>At least 75%*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comprehension score:</td>
<td>At least 90%</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>At least 75%*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*If a student reads below these levels, the teacher needs to provide scaffolding for him or her.

Teachers need to be careful otherwise, students may tease peers with “low” levels. Witter suggests teachers focus on growth: a classroom chart might display improvements in reading levels, not the levels themselves. To reduce the embarrassment about reading “easy books,” a teacher can read a rich picture book during independent reading or use one for a lesson. also, it’s okay to occasionally allow students to read books above their levels if you make sure they are not getting too frustrated. Schools should buy books at all students’ levels. older students might enjoy high-interest, low-level readers, like the ones from Capstone Press.

**2nd RWL Practice: Teaching Reading Comprehension Strategies**

If you get stuck while you’re reading, what do you do? maybe you re-read the passage, or maybe you try to connect the unfamiliar parts to things you already know. Skilled readers, like you, use strategies to understand what they read. They make sure they understand what they’re reading, they respond to it in their heads, and they remember the important parts. unfortunately, many of our students are not skilled readers – yet. They might read all the words in a passage, but not be able to tell you what it was about. They might say they hate reading, but what they really mean is that they hate not being able to understand.

Identifying student reading levels is the first step toward helping them. the next step is to teach them reading comprehension strategies. To help students become skilled readers, the Reading Without Limits approach explicitly teaches them strategies and gives them lots of practice in applying the strategies during all three kinds of reading: independent, guided, and shared. this chapter lays out a sequence of strategies that will help students understand what they’re reading and suggests ways of teaching these strategies.

**Where to Begin: A Sequence of Reading Comprehension Strategies**

There are five types of strategies; teaching them in order will help students move from basic into advanced skills. (For the full list of reading skills, see pages 68-75 in the book.)

1. Before reading: Choosing a book and preparing to read. For example, students might learn how to preview a book using the cover and title. They might also learn how to set a reading goal.

2. Strategies for the Beginning of a Text: Getting motivated to read and connecting to a text. Students learn to make predictions about what they’re reading and to connect events in a book to their own experiences.

3. Finding the Literal Meaning: Figuring out what a text is saying. These are the reading skills students need for everything whether it’s in the classroom or at a job, and Witter suggests devoting a lot of time to teaching them. one crucial strategy is figuring it out: asking questions to make sure they understand what the text. Another is paraphrasing: using their own words to retell what they read.

4. Finding the Implied Meaning: Making inferences about characters, events, and images. For fiction, teachers can begin by helping students figure out characters’ personalities. For nonfiction, students can use text clues to figure out which facts are most important.

5. Making New Meaning: Coming up with insights about books. here students look at the “big picture,” and form their own understandings, using text to justify their opinions. A younger student might explain why she liked or disliked a particular part of a book, whereas an older student might assess whether an author was persuasive.

Use the Read-Aloud/Think-Aloud to Introduce Reading Comprehension Strategies

A read-aloud/think-aloud is a demonstration of how skilled readers figure out books -- a teacher reads a passage aloud and talks about which strategies she’s using to understand it. Witter recommends using read-aloud/think-alouds to teach the reading comprehension strategies above. there are five steps:
Step 1. Preview the strategy: “We’ll be reading… (the text)… and working on paraphrasing, so I will ask who’s in the scene…”

Step 2. Read aloud from the text: Use just a small piece of text, a paragraph or two. To get students interested, read with expression!

Step 3. Think aloud: Pause a few times to talk students through your use of the strategy. “Who do I see in the scene so far? There’s a girl, and since she’s getting ready for school, we know…”

Step 4. Check for understanding: After reading each section aloud, pause to think aloud and then check whether students are beginning to understand the strategy. One way to do this is ask questions: for paraphrasing, a teacher might ask, “What has happened so far?” Ask the question aloud or you can have students quickly write down their answers before sharing; Witter calls this technique the stop and jot. An alternative to asking questions is using nonverbal cues: “Nod if you’re with me.”

Step 5. Do two additional think-alouds: Do about three think-alouds per lesson – either re-read the passage or read on in the text.

Moving from the Read-Aloud to Guided Practice
After the Read-Aloud, guided practice helps students practice using the reading comprehension strategy, and gets them ready for independent work. This part of the lesson takes about two to ten minutes. There are several ways you can do the guided practice. Teachers might simply have students practice the strategy, individually or in pairs: “Now, I want you to paraphrase the passage by writing down what happened in your own words.”

Choosing a Think-Aloud Text
Which texts should teachers use for think-alouds? Look for engaging, accessible materials that provide an opportunity to teach the strategy in your lesson. The shared reading text might be a good choice because students will know and probably like the class book. Alternatively, picture books tell rich stories, and students can go through an entire plot in one lesson. Or, the teacher can select excerpts from adult-level texts she’s reading – Witter once used an article from an auto magazine when she was looking for a car.

Even though teachers will be choosing think-aloud texts that are on-level for most students in the class, struggling readers may still need additional help. To make sure they follow the lesson, a teacher can give them copies of the text, use the “gloss notes” described in Chapter 4 as aids, or give them 15-20 words from the passage and ask them to make predictions about it before the lesson begins.

3rd RWL Practice: Independent Choice Reading
This chapter introduces one of the three types of reading in the Reading Without Limits approach: independent choice reading. Choice reading is a lot like vacation reading: students pick books they think they’ll love and can read comfortably, and then they read those books, mostly on their own. Choice reading is also an incredibly powerful learning experience. The more students read, the more their comprehension, vocabulary, spelling, and writing will grow. This chapter shows teachers at all levels – elementary, middle, and high school – how to help students find books, organize an independent reading session, and teach reading strategies.

Help Students Choose Books They’ll Love and Can Read Comfortably
It’s important for all students, and especially for teenagers, to have some control over their reading lives. So that you don’t overwhelm students with choices, choose classroom library books carefully, giving priority to interesting, readable, well-written books. Then, add some break books – magazines, comic books, newspapers, and how-to guides – and let students read them between longer books. Keep adding new books, including lots of series, which students love. Give students some choices while they’re reading, too, with comfortable seating, the opportunity to read in partners or alone, and, possibly, the option of reading aloud (elementary teachers might look into Toobalos). Students will sometimes ask for recommendations. Knowing about their friends and interests will help you suggest books they’ll enjoy, so talk to them about their lives outside school, or give them a survey.

Planning Time for Choice Reading
To get the most out of choice reading, students need to do it for 30 minutes per day or more, so it’s important to set aside solid blocks of time. School leaders might add 30 minutes of DEAR (Drop Everything and Read) to the daily schedule. During DEAR, everyone – all the teachers and students – reads a book they’ve chosen for themselves. However, will students be able to read for thirty-minute stretches when they start out? Probably not: the trick is to begin with small, manageable chunks of time, and build gradually. Along the way, you’ll need to explicitly teach some techniques for focusing and understanding. The next few sections explain how.

Help Students Build Stamina
Stamina is the ability to focus for an extended period of time. Perhaps some of your students lack stamina: constantly jumping up, switching books, fidgeting and doodling during reading. How do we teach stamina? First, think about what a class of focused readers might look like. Would students choose books quickly? Would they be able to read through distractions? Would their facial expressions show they’re responding to their books? Make a stamina checklist, share it with your students, and have them use it to self-assess halfway through a reading session. Also, model the skills you’d like students to have. For example, show students that you read for a solid number of pages, perhaps fifty, before deciding whether you’ll stick with the book or choose a different one.
Finally, have students set reading goals to help them stay motivated to keep increasing their stamina. A rule of thumb is that students should finish books every 4-7 days. To plan for their reading, they should figure out how many pages of their books they’ll need to read every day to finish on time, and use calendars or bookmarks to record daily goals (“Up to page 40 by Friday.”) Older students might set larger goals, based on their interests: a student might want to read three Maya Angelou books, or all the books in a fantasy series. To make sure they are on track to meet their goals, teachers should check in with students a few times a week.

**Add Fun Activities to Choice Reading Time**

To help students stay motivated, incorporate fun activities, such as a school-wide read-a-thon, where students compete to see who can read for the longest time. Let students use sticky notes in their choice reading books to post messages to future readers. Have students set up “recommendation shelves” of books they’ve enjoyed, and read short passages aloud from books you’re enjoying to the class.

**Help Students Practice Reading Strategies With Choice Books**

Students should also be practicing the reading comprehension strategies discussed in the last chapter as they read independently. If students do not understand their independent reading books, they won’t become better readers! A read-aloud/think-aloud can be a great bridge into independent reading – just model a strategy, have students do some guided practice, and then have them apply the strategy in reading their choice books.

Without having read all the students’ choice books, how can teachers check their understanding? One option is a double-entry journal for students to record a passage and analyze it, as in the following excerpt:

> ...I was used to them stretching their chains to the limit...  
> The author is comparing the dogs to how they used to be.

Another way to check students’ understanding of their choice books is to have them publish their responses on a blog. Seeing each other’s responses online motivates students – and the blog format allows teachers to grade responses without lugging home journals.

**4th RWL Practice: Shared Reading**

From easy, individualized choice reading, we now move into the most challenging of the three types of reading in the Reading Without Limits approach: shared reading. During shared reading, teachers and students read a short, difficult passage together. Then, the teacher helps students apply reading strategies to understand the passage. The Common Core State Standards emphasize the ability to understand complex texts helps students succeed in college and beyond. We understand complex texts by reading slowly and carefully, using several reading strategies at the same time – for instance, using a heading to make a prediction, while also trying to remember what we read earlier. Shared reading provides the perfect opportunity to guide students through this process. This chapter will explain how to fit shared reading into your schedule, implement it in classrooms, engage students, and provide scaffolding.

**Scheduling a Shared Reading Block**

What’s the biggest obstacle to succeeding with shared reading? Time! It’s hard to find the recommended 30 minutes, four times a week for shared reading. Leaders help by scheduling dedicated time for shared reading, perhaps having it follow a schoolwide Drop Everything and Read block. If that’s not possible, teachers can alternate days for shared reading and think-aloud/read-alouds.

**Choosing the Right Text**

A good shared reading text will be just above students’ ability levels, complex, and well-written (no Goosebumps!) The Common Core Standards specify a 50:50 split between fiction and nonfiction, so use a mix of texts throughout the year. A few ideas are below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Suggested Shared Reading Books (see pp.120-23 for the full list)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Short fiction, drama &amp; poetry</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Elementary</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Shortcut</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Middle School</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>High School</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Leading a Shared Reading Session**

During a shared reading session, a teacher leads the class through several steps. First, she reads aloud from a paragraph or two of complex writing, as students follow along in their books. Next, she asks questions that help students figure out the literal meaning: what’s actually happening in the book. Finally, she asks questions that guide students toward understanding the implied meaning of the passage: for instance, “What is the character feeling? How can you tell?” (Pages 126-127 include sample script.)

To prepare for shared reading, the teacher needs to plan the questions, with increasingly difficulty, in advance. (See pp.128-32 for sample questions at varying cognitive levels.) It is also helpful to predict and find ways of addressing potential issues; for example, if a particular word is likely to be confusing, the teacher can plan how she'll help students understand it.

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To engage students in shared reading, be honest about the challenge. If the class book includes a lot of complicated sentences, tell the students about that – and explain why the book is worth the struggle. Also, for students to engage in a discussion about the shared reading, they need to respond to and build off of each other’s ideas – not just respond to you. Teach students to use accountable talk – to respond to one another’s ideas in a way that moves the discussion forward, with sentence starters such as, “I noticed that…” and “It makes me think…” Also, teach them to provide textual evidence – to use parts of the book to explain their interpretations.

Assigning Shared Texts for Students to Read Independently
The Common Core Standards specify that 30% of students’ reading should be challenging: assigning shared reading provides the perfect chance to support students in meeting this requirement. Also, since shared reading focuses on short excerpts, students will need to read most of the book independently, during and after school, in order to finish it. After reading part of a shared text together, assign students to read the rest independently for more of a challenge.

Scaffolding Shared Reading for Struggling Readers
Shared reading should be challenging, but not frustrating. Compare the level of the shared reading text with students’ levels: if a student’s reading and comprehension scores for that level are below 75%, you’ll need to provide scaffolding. Providing an audio version of the book is often helpful because most students understand more than they can read. Additional options include:

- Gloss Notes: Copy a page from the reading and make notes defining difficult words and simplifying sentences
- Book Walk: Before reading, have students make predictions based on images and headings
- Say Something: Pair up students; have them read the book to each other and use reading strategies to figure it out

Keeping Students Engaged
To keep students motivated with this challenging work, share your excitement about the book with them: “We get to read Holes today! Can someone remind me of the best part from yesterday’s reading?” You might also have students read short, interesting nonfiction passages that help them better understand the book (for instance, a biography of Annie Oakley for Holes). Or, you could host a tea party: serve foods from the book, and have some students arrive “in character,” dressed and acting like book characters.

5th RWL Practice: Guided Reading
Guided reading is the third component of a well-rounded approach to reading and a powerful way to increase students’ reading levels. Here’s how it works: the teacher divides students into small groups based on their reading levels, and assigns each group a book slightly above level. Then, he teaches them strategies to help them move forward. Because each group is at the same level, teachers can differentiate by tailoring lessons to meet the group’s specific needs. As the students practice reading together, they improve, and the challenging text begins to feel like a comfortable read. As psychologist Lev Vygotsky wrote, “What the child can do in cooperation today he can do alone tomorrow.” This chapter explains the structure of a guided reading session and provides tips.

In terms of difficulty and grouping, guided reading is midway between choice and shared reading, as the chart below shows.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Independent Choice Reading</th>
<th>Guided Reading</th>
<th>Shared Reading</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Individuals choose and read books</td>
<td>Small groups read together</td>
<td>The entire class reads together</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comfort reading level</td>
<td>One level above comfort reading level</td>
<td>At or above grade-level</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Schedules and Staffing for Guided Reading
During guided reading, a teacher takes a small group of students through a 25-45 minute reading lesson, at least two times a week. It is very difficult for a single teacher to do that work while also teaching the larger class. For this reason, Witter suggests that school leaders assign multiple teachers to work with guided reading groups. The reading teacher or coach can train teachers in techniques for leading the groups. She also suggests that leaders designate a specific time for guided reading. At the high school level, guided reading could be scheduled opposite electives so half of a grade is in gym while the other half does guided reading. Finally, students will be improving quickly, so it is best to re-assess their reading levels every six to eight weeks. If possible, leaders can have a team of teachers doing this work, or free the reading teacher’s schedule for a few days. Following the assessments, teachers will need additional time to re-organize reading groups, because many students will be ready to move on to the next reading level.

Prepare for Guided Reading
To get ready for guided reading, look at students’ reading levels and assign them to groups of 8 or fewer students with similar abilities. Next, select texts that are a half or a full reading level above students’ comfort level. Witter suggests using short texts, like the ones available from the website www.readinga-z.com, because the groups will be re-organized quite frequently. Next, decide on which reading strategies you’ll be teaching. Usually, the teacher uses guided reading lessons to review a strategy he’s already taught. However, for students who are far below level, the teacher can use this time to introduce strategies the rest of the class already knows. Several examples of strategies for different reading levels are below. (For the full chart, see pages 156-158.)
Reading Strategies for Different Reading Levels

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Comfort Reading Level</th>
<th>Instructional &quot;Comfort-Plus&quot; Level</th>
<th>What to Teach</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2nd grade texts</td>
<td>3rd grade texts</td>
<td>Paraphrase/retell: Beginning, middle, and end of a whole text</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Fluency: pause at punctuation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Decoding: Look for sounds within words</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Strategies: Use pictures to get information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Common Core examples: Match pronouns to characters, figure out the setting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5th grade texts</td>
<td>6th &amp; 7th grade texts</td>
<td>Paraphrase/Retell: Retell a text in your own words; create an objective summary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Strategy: Distinguish your point of view from that of characters and/or author</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Common Core Examples: Analyze how complex characters advance a plot, analyze how the structure of a text (with parallel plots and flashbacks) creates suspense</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8th grade texts</td>
<td>9th grade texts</td>
<td>Paraphrase: Paraphrase to determine the author's intention</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Retell: Determine how the structure of the book affects its meaning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Strategies: Determine what the author left out, use characters to figure out themes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Common Core Examples: Analyze how an author's point is made clearer though particular words, lines, or excerpts from the book</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For students reading at a second-grade level, a teacher's plans for guided reading sessions might begin like the chart below. (For the complete 7-week chart, see page 161.)

Guided Reading Lessons for Students at 2nd-Grade Reading Level

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Tuesday</th>
<th>Thursday</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Find smaller parts of words to help you read them.</td>
<td>Pause at all punctuation marks when reading aloud.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 etc.</td>
<td>Paraphrase two pages of text at a time.</td>
<td>When paraphrasing, make sure you include important parts.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Follow the Same Predictable Structure

Below, you'll find the sequence to use when you’re working with a group during guided reading.

1. **Before-Reading** – 2-5 minutes: The teacher helps students build background knowledge. There are lots of ways to build background knowledge, such as pre-teaching vocabulary and having students talk about issues the book will be addressing.

2. **Direct Instruction** – 5-10 minutes: The teacher teaches a mini-lesson on a reading strategy. Most of these lessons will review strategies he’s already taught, and can be abbreviated read-aloud/think-alouds. At the end of the lesson, the teacher reminds students to practice the strategy in the next step: “As you read, I want you to try to make predictions based on headings.”

3. **Independent Work** – 15+ minutes: Students read aloud quietly to themselves. As they read, they use the strategy from Step 2 to understand the text. Meanwhile, the teacher walks around the room listening for fluency as well as understanding. To ensure that students can do the strategy from the mini-lesson, she asks questions related to the strategy lesson in Step 2. For instance, if the teacher's lesson was on prediction, he might ask, “What will happen next? How can you tell?”

4. **After Reading** – 3-5 minutes: The teacher guides students to reflect on and summarize the purpose of the lesson or demonstrate a reading strategy. Or, he might ask about the strategies: “How much do you understand paraphrasing so far, on a scale of 1-10?”

**PART II: ADDITIONAL RESEARCH-BASED COMPONENTS OF THE RWL APPROACH**

**6th RWL Practice: Setting Up the Classroom**

In previous chapters, we've discussed three different ways of reading: independent "comfort" reading, guided small-group reading, and shared whole-class reading of a challenging text. What kind of classroom set-up supports all three reading activities? One that balances cozy, comfortable areas with places for rigorous learning. This chapter offers suggestions for classroom set-up.

**Provide Several Different Kinds of Seating**

During independent reading, let students choose their seats and provide a few alternatives. Include some beanbags, armchairs or sofas for students who like to relax while reading. For students who prefer structure, include a long library-style table, with dividers, lamps and reading supplies, like sticky notes. During shared reading, arrange students' desks in a U-shape, which promotes classroom discussion. Also, to build excitement around reading, a teacher can add a reading café to the classroom. Set up some chairs and café tables, and serve a beverage. Have students earn their seats at the café -- for instance, by completing a certain number of books.

**Use Wall Space to Motivate Students to Read**

Posters showing students' progress, such as lists of books they are reading and bar graphs of the growth in their reading levels, can be very motivating. Also, consider putting up some inspirational quotes about reading or some college-themed wall decorations.
Organize the Library to Make Reading Appealing

To avoid "traffic jams" in the classroom library as students are picking out books, spread bookcases around the room. Witter recommends arranging the books by theme, using color-coded stickers. Second, use flat tables to display the books you think will be most popular -- that's what bookstores do, and it works! Third, streamline book selection and checkout: give students a time limit for choosing books, and create a few different check-out stations around the room.

7th RWL Practice: Setting Up Routines for Reading

Consistent routines help reading activities run smoothly. This chapter explains how to teach procedures for borrowing books, organizing worksheets, and other reading-related tasks. The main strategies are:

1. Explicit teaching, including examples of "what not to do," to make routines crystal clear
2. Flashy fun, "bizarre" demonstrations, to create strong, lasting memories of routines
3. Repeated practice of routines to build "muscle memory" so students automatically follow routines
4. Reminders and reinforcement, to encourage students to continue following routines

Using the techniques above to teach reading routines is easier than you might think. Let's begin with the example of teaching students to take care of the books in the classroom library. You need to explicitly teach them how to do this. How do you want students to treat those books? Should they be using bookmarks, handling the books carefully? Visualize what you'd like them to do. Then, visualize what you do don't want them to do -- perhaps you don't want them to doggy-ear the pages, for instance.

Now that you've developed some explicit examples of what students should and shouldn't be doing, it's time to plan your teaching. A "bizarre" introduction to book care might be interviewing a student who takes especially good care of his sneakers, asking him about his routines for sneaker cleaning and maintenance, and the reasons behind those routines. Then, ask the class how sneaker care is similar to book care. Finally, show students the routines you'd like them to use, as well as what you'd like them to avoid.

It's up to you to decide which routines you want to make a part of your reading classroom. The chart below provides examples of routines you can use and explains how and when you might teach those routines. (For the full list of routines, see pages 192-205.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reading Routines</th>
<th>When to Teach</th>
<th>What to Teach Students to Do</th>
<th>Make it Bizarre</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Organizing Reading Binders</td>
<td>First day of school</td>
<td>Students number worksheet pages and put them into their binders.</td>
<td>Show students a completely disorganized binder.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Book Checkout</td>
<td>First week of school</td>
<td>3 or fewer students in the library at once.</td>
<td>Have all the students try to visit the library at once.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Keeping the Library Clean</td>
<td>First week of school</td>
<td>Do not leave papers or other materials in the library.</td>
<td>Purposely create a mess in part of the library; when students notice, begin a discussion of cleanliness.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

8th RWL Practice: Reading Conferences with Students

Now that you've begun the Reading Without Limits approach, reading conferences will help you better address the needs of individual students. Reading conferences can happen during choice, shared, and guided reading. Witter describes three types of conferences:

1. Halftime Conferences: Whole-class feedback

A halftime conference is between a teacher and an entire class. After teaching a reading strategy to the whole class, while students are independently reading and using that new skill, move through the classroom to note common strengths and common errors. Halfway through the period, share your feedback with the class and give them a goal for the second half. For example: "I love how committed you guys are to your stamina goals…One thing I noticed is that many of you are reading too quickly to fully comprehend. For the next half of class, I want you to see how you slowing down, spending more time on each page…"

2. Racetrack Conferences: Individual check-ins about the lesson's aim

These are short meetings with individual students to see how well they understood that day's lesson, as other students read independently. A teacher might begin by asking a student, "Tell me how you've been using the questioning strategy we talked about today." Then, if the student doesn't seem to fully grasp the strategy, she should remind him about it, fix any misunderstandings, and suggest a next step, for instance, "In the next ten minutes, I'd like you to think of a question about the main character."

3. One-On-One ("03") Conferences: Individual conferences about each student's specific reading goals

These individual meetings with students last five to ten minutes, while other students are doing independent work. These conferences require uninterrupted time and attention, so only begin having them once choice, guided and shared reading are all running smoothly. Also, before starting the conferences, teachers will need to figure out individualized reading goals, or grow goals, for each student.

To figure out a grow goal, look at a student's reading assessments, then decide what he or she should be able to do next. The most important skills to focus on are: stamina, engagement, and paraphrasing. For example, if a student is having trouble with stamina, you could work together to set a goal for a specific amount of time to focus on reading, and provide a timer for self-monitoring. If a student is "reading through" confusing passages instead of taking the time to figure them out, you can ask clarifying questions such as, "Who is talking?" (A chart on pages 234–236 outlines common reading issues and how you can address them in conferences.)
When you conference with a student, if that student has met the goal, offer praise and set a new goal. If a student hasn't reached the goal yet, praise any improvements, and then re-teach the strategy, provide additional support (for instance, if the goal is asking questions, you could give the student sentence starters), and practice the strategy together. Then, explain what you’d like the student to do next: “Over the next few days, practice writing questions about what you're reading in your journal.”

During the conference, take notes on the date, the goal, and the next steps you've assigned. To hold students accountable and to help them remember, write the goal and next steps on a bookmark, or encourage them to take their own notes. Have students look at their grow goals before beginning independent reading, so that they focus on developing the strategies you've discussed.

9th RWL Practice: Teach Vocabulary

In this chapter, you'll see how to teach vocabulary using the Reading Without Limits approach. First, how do students learn new words? Mostly, by accident: 90% of new vocabulary is a result of reading a word or hearing someone using it. That means to teach vocabulary we have to create opportunities for incidental learning of words. To do this, devote lots of time to independent reading. According to research, the more time kids spend reading, the larger their vocabularies will be. Second, we can use high-level words in our conversations with students, giving them enough context to guess the meaning: "The door's afar -- can you close it?"

How to Choose Which Words to Teach

When it comes to teaching vocabulary, a little goes a long way. Aim to teach 5-10 words per week -- fewer words means that students have a better chance of remembering. Try to choose one or two words from each of the groups below.

**Academic:** These are words used in schools and universities, like *symbolism* and *stamina*. Students who know academic vocabulary score 33% higher than their peers on standardized tests.

**Tier Two from Shared Reading:** Some words in shared reading books will be unfamiliar, but also common. For instance, words like *simplify* and *hazardous* appear in all kinds of books, but we don't often use them everyday. By teaching these words, reading comprehension will skyrocket!

**Morpheme Families:** Morphemes, or word parts, can be used to figure out word meanings. Although it's possible to spend years on morphemes, the most useful word parts are prefixes; specifically, the nine most common prefixes: un-, re-, in-/im-/il-ir-, dis-, en-/em-, non-, in-/im-, over-, and mis-.

**Character Traits:** Words describing personalities, such as *ambitious*, are useful for understanding literature.

When to teach vocabulary? Witter suggests using 10 minutes each day to explicitly teach and reinforce new words. A weekly schedule might look like this: teachers introduce the words on Mondays, review and reinforce the words mid-week, and give students a short assessment on Fridays. To *introduce new words* on Mondays, begin by *using them in context*; for the word *diligent*, you might describe all the ways students have been diligent during class. Or, if the new words come from shared reading, assign the passage that includes them on Friday. As another alternative, use an academic word in your daily objective, and have students guess the definition from that context.

Next, have *students talk to partners* about what they think the new word might mean. Then offer a *kid-friendly definition*; e.g., "Diligent means hard-working." Finally, *lead an activity that will help students remember the word*; Witter recommends group chants, in which students pronounce, spell, define, and act out vocabulary. Once you've introduced the words, spend several days mid-week *reviewing and reinforcing* them. *Examples and non-examples* are a good option, because they encourage higher-order thinking. Give students several sentences, some of which use the word incorrectly. (A non-example might be, "Muhad is diligent because he likes to paint.") Then, have students explain which sentences use the word correctly. For homework, you can have them create their own examples and non-examples. At the end of the week, a short quiz helps *assess* whether students have understood the words.

Remember to *spiral words*; review and reinforce words from previous weeks, as well as words from the current week. Witter suggests a 50:50 split between "old" and new words. Include the "old" words you've been reviewing on the weekly assessment.

10th RWL Practice: Class Discussions

Classroom discussions can help students gain deeper understandings of what they read and develop lifelong communication skills. This chapter will explain what to do before, after, and during discussions to make sure they're successful.

Before the Discussion: Schedule and Plan

The best time for classroom discussions is the *shared reading* block when all the students are reading the same book. To plan for these discussions first figure out *expectations*; what does "good participation" look like? A few sample expectations are below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Expectations for Class Discussions (See pp. 279-280 for more expectations.)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Expectations for Primary Students</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use language like, &quot;I agree (or disagree) with…, because…&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Share new ideas; avoid repeating what someone already said.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use evidence from the book and mention the page number.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Help students understand the expectations by putting them on a poster and explicitly teaching students strategies for meeting the expectations, using role-play and videos of past class discussions, if available. Also, create rubrics or checklists for peer and self-evaluation -- these are very helpful since teachers are busy managing class discussions. (Sample rubrics are on pp. 275 - 277.)
Next, before beginning a discussion, **plan 2-3 questions.** Try to think of questions that are *debatable* -- open-ended, without easy answers, so that the discussion stays interesting. The questions should also be *text-based*, so that students will need to use evidence from the books to support their answers. Finally, questions should be *specific* to the story or text. For instance, if you want students to make inferences about a character, try asking, "Is ___ a good friend (or father, or leader, etc.)?" Share the questions with students a few days before the lesson so they have time to consider them. Also, think about what kinds of answers you'll be looking for.

**During the Discussion: Help Students Prepare, Practice, and Participate**

Below, you'll find a series of steps for leading a discussion:

1. **Prepare students** by reviewing the previous discussion: "What went well before? What do we still need to improve?" Set a goal for this discussion (e.g., "We'll do more paraphrasing") and, if needed, teach a short goal-related lesson.

2. **Have students practice with a mini discussion.** Before the whole-class discussion, have students discuss the book in pairs and give each other feedback using a peer checklist. To encourage shyer students to participate in class discussions, listen in during the mini-discussions, and tell them when they've made good points you'd like them to share with the larger group.

3. **Begin the discussion.** Once you've asked a question, let students do most of the talking. (You might want to have them use the technique, *Pass the Mic*, in which students call on each other after sharing.) Step in only when necessary, to keep students on track, remind and reinforce reading strategies, and give feedback midway through.

**After the Discussion: Summarize and Reflect**

Make sure to finish the discussion with a few minutes for students to *summarize and reflect* so that they remember important points. First, sum up the major points students made, as they take notes. Next, have students self-reflect with a rubric or checklist.

**11th RWL Practice: Weekly Reading Tests**

In addition to regular checks for understanding, teachers should create their own reading comprehension tests to get crucial information about students' progress. This chapter explains how to design weekly or biweekly reading tests for maximum usefulness.

**What to Include in Reading Tests**

Below is a list of sections teachers should include in their reading tests to get useful information about student progress.

1. **Questions about recently taught reading comprehension strategies.** To test whether students can use the reading comprehension strategies they've recently learned, have them work with a passage from a shared reading lesson and then, with an unfamiliar passage. For the unfamiliar passage, choose a text that's at the average reading level for your class, and if that level is too high for some students, provide them with a different text. The website greatleaps.com has many short, leveled texts. For each of the reading comprehension passages, include *one question per strategy.* (For instance, if you taught four strategies, then you'd have four questions for the shared reading passage, and four questions for the unfamiliar passage.) Beneath each question, explain the criteria you will use to grade it. For example, beneath a question about inferences, you might write:

   □ An inference is supported by at least two details from the passage.

2. **Questions about previously taught strategies and vocabulary.** Include a few of the previous month's strategies and vocabulary words. Also, include a few questions from past months and years. Help students remember "old" strategies and vocabulary words by re-teaching them during the week before a test.

3. **Questions about recently taught vocabulary.** Test students on this week's vocabulary words, beginning with simple recall questions, and then asking students to use the words. Include a few words from previous weeks, too. (For details, see Chapter 10.)

4. **One Passage from a Standardized Test.** To give students practice with the test format, and to identify areas where students may need help with testing, include one sample passage and its accompanying questions from a standardized reading test.

5. **Self-Assessment Questions.** Having students assess themselves is one of the most powerful ways of increasing their performance. Include a few questions about the test itself ("Which question was the most difficult for you?") and a few questions about students' reading and classroom experiences ("Did you get enough time to independently read this week?")

**12th RWL Practice: Preparing Students for Reading on Standardized Tests**

If teachers have been following the suggestions in the other chapters, their students are already well on their way to test success. They already know most of the reading comprehension strategies they'll need; now it's a matter of making sure they're familiar with the test format, building their stamina, and strategically re-teaching a few reading strategies. Witter recommends doing some preparation throughout the school year through the weekly/biweekly tests. She also suggests that teachers teach a unit on test preparation. Teachers can use the same techniques they learned in previous chapters, such as the read-aloud/think-aloud, to prepare students for standardized tests.
**Test-Preparation Strategies to Use the Entire Year**

If you introduce students to standardized tests throughout the year, they will become comfortable working with test formats. So, start the year with **weekly reading texts** that include standardized test passages. Some students may be reading far below grade-level; give them test passages from lower grades. **Do-nows** also provide another opportunity for students to practice test-taking skills. Assign a few questions from standardized reading assessments as do-nows. Or, have students **write their own test questions** about their independent choice reading books. Store sample tests alongside the books, and encourage students to take the tests for extra credit.

**Teach a Test-Preparation Unit**

Shortly before standardized testing begins, teachers should also teach an explicit test preparation unit. The two most important reading strategies for standardized tests are **paraphrasing** and **finding evidence for answers in the text**. Students will have been practicing these strategies all year as part of reading instruction. To motivate students around the test, express the strategies as kid-friendly goals. For instance, Witter gave students the goal, "Attack the test by finding proof for every question," and made a poster with the slogan "Attack!" with a picture of an axe. (For other strategies, see pages 292-293.) Students will also need to work on their test-taking **stamina**. Taking a test usually requires reading and answering questions for long periods of time, and students need to practice this. Begin with 30-minute practice-test sessions, and then include several practice sessions that match the time on the test.

**Re-Teaching Reading Strategies**

In addition to helping students develop stamina, practice tests give the teacher valuable information about which strategies to reteach. Use the following information to plan next steps:

- **If 20% or fewer students got the wrong answer**, THEN reteach the strategy to those who got it wrong at lunch/a free period.
- **If 25% or more students got the wrong answer**, THEN include the strategy in whole-class Do-Now or homeworks and retest all students on the strategy.
- **If 40% or more students got the wrong answer**, THEN reteach the strategy to the whole class.

**PART III: PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER**

This section outlines the components of a **Reading Without Limits** lesson plan and suggestions for rolling out this approach to reading.

**Planning a Lesson**

The most important parts of a **Reading Without Limits** lesson plan are the **aim** and the **criteria** for student success. The **aim** describes what you want students to be able to do. The **criteria** explain precisely what a good student response will look like, using examples and non-examples. Below is an example:

- **Aim:** To identify themes
  
- **Criteria:** Themes are big ideas that keep coming up in the book. They are *not* one-word statements like "poverty."

Witter recommends using the same lesson plan structure every day; a predictable routine helps students focus on learning. However, plans will vary depending on whether you are doing choice, shared, or guided reading. Your lesson plan structure may include:

- **Lesson Introduction:** Connection to students’ prior knowledge and explanation of aim
- **Direct Instruction:** Read-aloud/think aloud during choice or guided reading, or close reading during shared reading
- **Guided Practice and Checks for Understanding:** Students try out the strategy while the teacher provides guidance
- **Independent Reading:** Students read and take notes, while the teacher confers with students
- **Closing, Sharing and Reflection:** A quick summary and possibly peer- or self-evaluations using the criteria for the lesson

Teachers need to pay attention to their lesson **pacing**. Students have limited stamina and teachers should make sure the bulk of student energy is spent on independent work. If direct instruction is taking too long, that’s a sign that the aim is too ambitious for one lesson.

**Implementing Best Practices for Reading Instruction**

Rather than trying to implement all the practices in this book at once, teachers should "slowly and intentionally introduce new elements," so that the transition goes smoothly. There are three stages to implementation. Once students are comfortably using the routines and strategies in one stage, they are probably ready for the next one.

**Stage 1:** First teachers help students learn routines that support lifelong reading habits. They find students' reading levels to help students find choice reading books. During choice reading, teachers help the class develop **stamina** for increasingly longer periods of time. Teachers also begin shared reading (with lessons on comprehension strategies), vocabulary practice, and weekly assessments.

**Stage 2:** Next, Teachers continue building students' reading stamina. Once students can read for fifteen minutes, teachers begin holding halftime and racetrack conferences. Shared reading continues, with more advanced reading strategies, a variety of genres, and scaffolding for students who need it. The teacher also introduces guided reading.

**Stage 3:** In Stage 3, teachers are using all the practices in the **Reading Without Limits** approach. Once students have built their reading stamina to thirty minutes, teachers begin holding one-on-one conferences and shared reading strategies become more advanced.
THE MAIN IDEA’s PD suggestions for Reading Without Limits

How Comprehensive is Your Approach to Teaching Reading?
Have teachers self assess the comprehensiveness of their approach to teaching reading. Witter presents 12 research-based practices that should be a part of a strong reading program. Provide a brief description of the 12 components below (use the summary to help jog your memory!) and ask teachers to assess themselves on a scale of 1 to 4: 1 = I don’t yet implement this in my teaching of reading to 4 = This is a fully developed aspect that I have incorporated into my teaching. Then, have teachers use the ratings to plan which components of reading instruction they're going to develop next.

|----------------------------|------------------|------------------------|------------------------|

Choosing Leveled Books and Texts
Once teachers have determined students' reading levels, pair teachers with those whose students are on similar levels. Ask pairs to collaboratively select leveled books and texts for classroom libraries and shared reading. Remind them of these tips:

- Classroom library books should match all the different reading levels of students in the class and align with their interests
- Shared reading texts should be about one level above the average reading level of the class
- To support attainment of the CCSS, try to have a 50:50 balance of fiction and nonfiction

The pairs can use the examples of shared reading texts (such as Seedfolk, The Giver, and Night) on p.4 of the summary as a guide.

Teaching Routines
Have teachers work in small groups to brainstorm ideas for "bizarre" demonstrations of classroom reading routines. Then, ask them to practice their demonstrations in front of the larger group.

Teaching Reading Strategies
Have teachers work in small groups with their colleagues to practice teaching reading comprehension strategies, such as paraphrasing and making inferences, using the read-aloud/think-aloud teaching technique:

```
1. Preview the strategy: “We’ll be reading…and working on paraphrasing, so I’ll be asking about who’s in the scene…”

2. Read aloud from the text: Use just a small piece of text, a paragraph or two. To get students interested, read with expression!

3. Think aloud: Pause a few times to talk students through your use of the strategy. “Who do I see in the scene so far? There’s a girl, and since she’s getting ready for school, we know…”

4. Check for understanding: After reading each section aloud, pause to think aloud and then check whether students are beginning to understand the strategy. One way to do this is ask questions: for paraphrasing, a teacher might ask, “What has happened so far?” Wait at least three to five seconds before calling on someone or you can have students quickly write their answers before sharing. Witter calls this technique the stop and jot. An alternative to asking questions is using nonverbal cues: “Nod if you’re with me.”
```

Colleagues can offer feedback using the checklist below:

- Text provided a good opportunity to teach the strategy
- Teacher followed the steps of a read-aloud/think-aloud (see the steps above)
- Teacher read with expression
- Teacher clearly modeled the strategy
- Teacher accurately checked for understanding of the strategy (Colleagues can play students who have not yet understood)

Holding Reading Conferences
Have teachers role-play one-on-one reading conferences. For the roles of students, ask teachers to fill out index cards with the reading levels, reading goals, and interests of particular students who are experiencing issues with reading. Then, their colleagues can use the cards to play the roles of those students. A sample card is below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>You'll be playing a student in Grade: 7</th>
<th>Your reading goal is: To write three questions about characters.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Your interests include: baseball and drawing</td>
<td>You have/have not reached your reading goal, because of getting distracted during Independent Reading time.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Creating a Culture of Reading
It's important for students to see that the adults in their lives enjoy reading, so consider adding a "recommendation shelf" of books to the teacher's lounge. Teachers can bring in books they've enjoyed and put sticky-notes on them explaining why. Other teachers can borrow them to read during choice reading periods.

You could also start a parent-teacher book group focusing on mysteries or another popular genre, or, simply, "books we love." Finally, you could encourage teachers to visit each other's classrooms as guest speakers, describing their favorite books.

Setting Up Classrooms to Promote Reading
To provide feedback on classroom set-ups, have the staff take part in "read-throughs." Have the team enter a classroom and "check out" books from the classroom library. Then, have them spend five minutes reading in that classroom, sitting in the places students use for independent reading. Once the five minutes are up, have them return the books, using the same procedures students use. Then, still in the classroom, talk through the following questions:

1. Does the classroom provide several different kinds of seating, ranging from upright and formal to relaxed and informal? Which seating options did different team members choose to sit in, and why?
2. Does the wall space include posters and visuals that encourage reading? If so, which ones seem the most powerful to different team members?
3. Is the library visually appealing? If so, why?
4. Is the library set up to encourage smooth check-out and return processes? If so, why?

Teaching Vocabulary
Have teachers who work with the same students develop their monthly vocabulary lists together. Ask them to include some words that overlap between classes (for instance, the word "hypothesis" is useful for social studies as well as science). That way, students can reinforce important vocabulary words across several content areas.

Planning Effective Discussion Questions
Ask teachers to evaluate one another's pre-planned classroom discussion questions, using the following criteria. First, classroom discussion questions should be debatable -- open-ended, without easy answers, so that the discussion stays interesting. Discussion questions should also be text-based, so that students will need to use evidence from the books to support their answers. Finally, questions should be specific to the story or text. For instance, if you want students to make inferences about a character, try asking, "Is ___ a good friend (or father, or leader, etc.)?"

To help teachers assess each other's discussion questions, you might give them a checklist like the one below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question 1:</th>
<th>Debatable?</th>
<th>Text-based?</th>
<th>Specific?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Question 2:</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question 3:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

If a question does not yet meet one of the criteria, teachers can work together to improve it. Once all the questions meet the criteria, have the teachers think about what kinds of answers they'd like to guide students toward.

Test Preparation
Once students have taken a practice standardized reading assessment, have teachers work in small groups to decide upon which strategies to reteach, and how they will reteach them, using the chart below. Ask each small group to select a member to explain their reasoning to the larger group.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage of Students With Wrong Answers for a Strategy</th>
<th>What to Do</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>20% or fewer students got the wrong answer</td>
<td>Reteach the strategy to the students who got the wrong answer at lunch or during a free period.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25% or more students got the wrong answer</td>
<td>Include the strategy in whole-class Do-Now's and possibly a homework assignment; retest all students on the strategy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40% or more students got the wrong answer</td>
<td>Reteach the strategy to the whole class.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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