Reader’s and Writer’s Workshop - 45 Minutes Each

Within the workshop model, whole group instruction is followed up with explicit small group and/or individualized instruction that is differentiated according to student needs. Three basic components are present in the workshop:

**Mini-lesson (10 minutes)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Connect</th>
<th>Convey the reason for the lesson, catch children’s attention, and rally their engagement. Reference artifacts from previous learning (anchor chart, text, or visual). The teaching point names a skill and a strategy it takes to complete that skill. An example could be, “Today I’m going to teach you that when readers/writers _____, they often find it helps to ____. One way to do this is by ____.”</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teach</td>
<td>Though short, this is the MOST important part of the lesson. The teacher explicitly uses one of four methods to teach the skill and strategy students should be able to use in reading/writing once the minilesson is over:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>● demonstration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>● guided practice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>● explicitly telling and showing an example</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>● inquiry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Active engagement</td>
<td>Students have an opportunity to practice the skill and strategy with guidance from the teacher. This often involves students talking with a partner or stopping and jotting.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Link</td>
<td>Connect the teaching from the mini-lesson to the work students are asked to do independently. Repeat the teaching point, encouraging them to apply the skill and strategy to their life as readers and writers. An example could be, “Today and everyday as you read/write, remember to ...”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Practice and Application (25 minutes)

| Reader’s Workshop | Students read, independently and/or with peers, a self-selected (occasionally teacher selected) book at their independent reading level. Students are expected to show their thinking in some way and to practice using the day’s new strategy as well as accumulated strategies. During this time, teachers are conducting individual reading conferences or pulling small groups, assessing and teaching to students’ needs. |
| Writer’s Workshop | Students write, independently and/or with peers, on their pieces using the writing process. Students are encouraged to sustain focus and momentum during the independent writing time. They use the repertoire of strategies they have learned thus far. During this time, teachers are conducting individual conferences or pulling small groups for explicit instruction, assessing and teaching to students’ needs. |

## Architecture of a Conference

There are many different types of conferences and reasons to have a conference with a child. The format below is just one way. There will be times when you may use only parts of a conference depending on your purpose.

| Research | Spend a couple of minutes researching what the student is doing, or not doing, as a reader/writer. This might be “on the spot” research or you may be going into the conference with an idea from a previous assessment or observation. Here are some research questions you could ask to open-up your conference: |
| Compliment | Give the student an authentic compliment on something you notice they are doing or almost doing. Some things you can compliment include a skill, strategy, or a reading/writing behavior you are noticing. Here are some ways you could frame your compliment: |

- What are you working on as a reader/writer today?
- What is your plan for reading/writing today?
- Can you take me on a tour of your post-its?
- Last time we met we worked on...How’s that going? Can you show me where you tried that in your book/writing?

- One strategy you are trying is...This strategy is helping you get better at...
- One thing you are doing as a reader/writer that is fantastic is...
| **Teaching Point** | Now choose and state what it is you are going to show them to do as a reader/writer today. It is important that you are NOT connecting the compliment and the teaching point with the connector word “but”. This sometimes gives kids the impression that what you just observed them doing or what you just complimented them on is not good enough. Instead you could connect these parts by using one of the following statements:

- Another thing I want to teach you that readers/writers do is...
- Another way readers/writers...is to...
- Today I want to teach you that readers/writers...when they read/write. One way we do this is by.... |
| **Teach** | Demonstrate what it is you want your reader/writer to be able to do. You can be demonstrating this in a separate text that you bring to the conference or when appropriate in the student’s text. Some language you might use to set you and your student up for some learning might include:

- Be like a detective and study what I’m doing as a reader/writer...
- Do you remember in our read aloud/mini-lesson when I...Let’s see if we can try that by...
- Let’s try a bit of this strategy together. First we...Then we...Next we...and finally we... |
| **Coaching/Active Engagement** | Get your reader/writer to try what it is you just taught them. You can then coach them so that they can be successful. You may want them to try it once in front of you and then you could tell them to continue working and you can then come back to them after you confer with a couple other students to make sure they are still being successful. |
| **Link** | As you end this conference make sure you restate what it was that you worked on today as readers/writers. You may want to leave them with a tangible record of their goal. This may be a sticky note with their goal written on it, a sticky note with a process you want them to follow, a goal written in their notebook, etc. You may also want your student to repeat back to you what their plan is or what they learned today. Then make sure you document what you taught them so when you come back to confer with them again you remember what to check in on. |
Reflection (10 minutes)

A time for teachers to reinforce learning through purposeful conversations about reading/writing processes, struggles, and achievements from student work. Based on the needs of the class, a teacher may use this time to review the day’s teaching point, briefly highlight student work, have students reflect on ways they used the teaching point in their reading/writing, or preview an upcoming strategy or skill.

Interactive Read Aloud - 15 Minutes

A purposefully selected text, of appropriate grade level text complexity, is used. The text should foreshadow the work that students will soon study in reader’s and writer’s workshop. Through read aloud, the teacher demonstrates proficient reading, expands access to text beyond student’s abilities, and exposes students to a variety of genres. It will be expected that students are actively engaged through accountable talk as the teacher uses think alouds to model various reading behaviors, points out how authors use language to convey meaning, and models strategies for acquiring new vocabulary.

Shared Reading - 10 Minutes

Shared reading is a time in the day when teachers and children read in sync with one another, eyes on the same text. Using carefully selected text (poems, songs, big books, projected text, etc.), teachers focus on targeted strategies related to phonics, fluency, vocabulary and print concepts. Shared reading could involve the whole class when necessary or a just a small group of students with a common need.

Small Group Instruction - 30 Minutes

Based on assessment data, teachers work with small groups of students to address individual needs. These groups may be structured as:

- Guided reading
- Skill and strategy groups
- Literature circles

As students demonstrate an understanding of concepts, group structure may change. Not all students will require small group instruction each day. While the teacher is meeting with small groups, other students should be actively engaged in authentic reading and writing experiences.

Guided Reading - Based on assessment, the teacher brings together a group of readers who are similar enough in their reading development that they can be taught together. They read independently at about the same level and can take on a new text selected by the teacher that is just a little more challenging. The teacher supports the
reading in a way that enables children to read a more challenging text with effective processing. The guided reading lesson follows a specific structure including a text introduction, reading of the text, discussing meaning, and teaching for processing strategies. Word work or an extended reading or writing activity may follow the lesson.

**Skill or Strategy Group (Invitational Group)** - Students are brought together for a specific purpose and a outcome related to a skill or strategy. The teacher may explicitly teach/re-teach how and when readers/writers use the skill/strategy, and students may be asked to apply the skill/strategy in their own text or writing piece with on-the-spot coaching and feedback from the teacher.

**Literature Circles or Book Clubs** - Small groups of students gather together to discuss a piece of literature in depth. The discussion is guided by students’ response to what they have read. The teacher may listen in, gathering assessment data through anecdotal notes as evidence of students’ application of skills/strategies.

**Letter/Word Study - 20 Minutes**

The purpose of letter/word study is to integrate phonics, spelling, and vocabulary instruction to help children become efficient problem-solvers of words in reading and writing. Letter/word study teaches students how to look closely at letters and words to discover the regularities and conventions of English orthography, or spelling. We must ensure that we teach children how to transfer what they learn during this time into their own writing and reading work.