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AUTHOR	Burke, Carolyn; Crafton, Linda; Egawa, Kathy; Long, Susi; Martens, Prisca; Mills, Heidi; Smith, Karen; Stephens, Diane
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ABSTRACT

The final result of this inquiry study will be the compilation of a Literacy Portfolio on a targeted reader. The data included within the portfolio will come from strategies and tools teachers were introduced to in Year One of the Reading Initiative and for which teachers gathered data both on themselves and on younger learners. The study revisits the concepts of miscue analysis, kidwatching, close observation, and what some educators call "case study." The overarching concept of Literacy Portfolio is used to pull all of these together. Teachers will be challenged to extend their knowledge and use of assessment tools, to suspend judgment about what the behaviors they observe might mean, and to carefully plan for future instruction--a process known as "assessment as inquiry." Finally, each teacher will organize all this information in a thoughtful and useful way. Lists 24 professional resources selections. (NKA)

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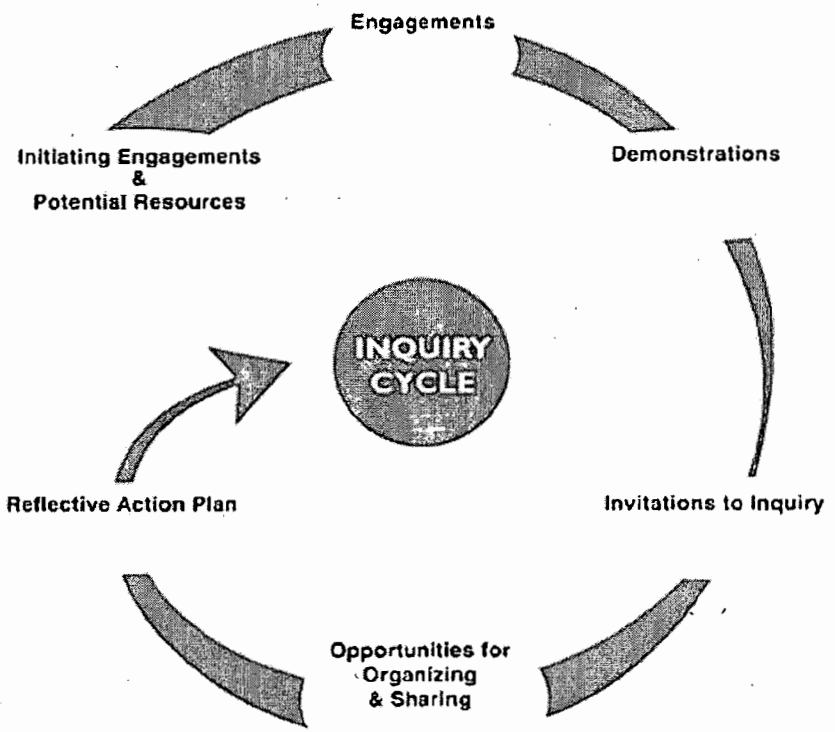
Literacy Portfolios
Looking Closely at Individual Learners

The final result of this inquiry study will be the compilation of a Literacy Portfolio on a targeted reader. The data included within the portfolio will come from strategies and tools you were introduced to in Year One of the Reading Initiative and for which you gathered data both on yourself and younger learners. This study revisits the concepts of miscue analysis, kidwatching, close observation, and what some educators call "case study." We use the overarching concept of Literacy Portfolio to pull all of these together. You will be challenged to extend your knowledge and use of assessment tools, to suspend judgment about what the behaviors you observe might mean, and to carefully plan for future instruction—a process known as *assessment as inquiry*. Finally, you will organize all this information in a thoughtful and useful way.



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Burke, Crafton, Egawa, Long, Martens, Mills, Smith, Stephens
Spring 2001

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LEARNING AND LANGUAGE CONCEPTS

The following is a list of learning concepts that will be explored in the study. You are encouraged to add additional concepts that reflect constructivist, inquiry-based learning, as it is not meant to represent an exhaustive list.

- All learners have literacy histories that impact their current literacy decisions.
- All learners have useful knowledge to bring to new learning.
- All learners have questions that come out of the issues that interest them.
- Learners' literacy histories are what generate their beliefs and their actions.
- A learner always interprets his or her instructional experiences based on that literacy history.
- We all act on our literacy histories, whether or not we are conscious of that fact.
- The only reliable way to assess a language process is when a language user is engaged in that process
- Creating a portfolio of literacy learning and artifacts allows one to make conscious learning decisions—to be reflective.
- In order to create a portfolio, one has to become selective—acting on current best beliefs.
- Instructional decisions are dependent upon reflective knowledge of a learner's literacy history.
- Analyzing a reader's use of language systems and strategies supports effective instructional decision-making.
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FOCUSING QUESTIONS

These are questions that we, as authors of this study, generated to focus the experiences provided in this inquiry study. Everyone in your Reading Initiative group is invited to add questions throughout the study and throughout the year.

- What are this learner's strengths? What are the weaknesses?
- What are the learner's beliefs about how the language works?
- What does one have to know about a learner to make good instructional decisions?
- What role do portfolios play in documenting learning and planning instruction?
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TERMS ASSOCIATED WITH THIS TOPIC

In addition to asking the questions that came to mind when we considered teachers as active inquirers of their own practice, we generated an initial list of words and phrases related to research and inquiry. You might elect to begin your own list—graffiti-style—on a large piece of butcher paper that can be added to over time. You are also invited to add terms to those below. This list helps frame the territory of our work.

Portfolio	Case study	Assessment	Evaluation	Miscue Analysis
Surveys	Interviews	Running Records	Observations	Data
Artifacts	Instruction	Inventory	Reading log	Field notes
Narrative portrait	Kidwatching Portfolio	Kidwatching Folder	Close Observation	Literacy Portfolio

READING INITIATIVE LEARNING STRANDS

The Reading Initiative professional development experience could be envisioned as a complex tapestry of beliefs, engagements, readings, questions, and reflections. Each engagement is woven onto a foundation provided by the following strands.

Personal Literacy as Part of a Cultural Community	Knowledge Base	Close Observation	Supportive Literacy Contexts	Professional Culture
Focused observations and analysis by each participant of his/her own literacy processes and theories, including the forces that impact those theories.	The concepts and experiences explored and supported by professional reading.	Focused observations and analysis of students as literacy learners.	Exploration and development of contexts that support and encourage readers and writers.	Exploration and development of procedures and contexts that encourage collegiality.

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Literacy Portfolio: Looking Closely at Individual Learners

Overview

Each of you will be completing the majority of the listed engagements in this study, as the final result of this work will be the compilation of a Literacy Portfolio on a targeted reader. The data included within the portfolio will come from strategies and tools you were introduced to in Year One of the Reading Initiative, which you gathered both on yourself and younger learners. We revisit the concepts of kidwatching, close observation, and what some educators call "case study," and use the overarching concept of Literacy Portfolio to pull all of these together. You will be challenged to extend your knowledge and use of assessment tools, to suspend judgment about what the behaviors you observe might mean, and to carefully plan for future instruction—a process known as assessment inquiry. Finally, you will organize all this information in a thoughtful and useful way.

Initiating Engagements

Shared experiences that help participants reflect on their personal experiences and knowledge—getting those out into the class conversation—as the group predicts the direction of the study.

The Site Leader facilitates several or all of these experiences to get the study underway.

I1
Collecting what we know
As a group, participants contribute to four ongoing collections, 1) questions they have about the language study, 2) at least 5 resources for a group-created text set, including books, journals, articles in the popular press, reading/writing developmental continua, 3) a graffiti board collection of all related words and phrases, i.e. report cards, grades, rubrics, artifacts; 4) a list: what possible ways could we study how teachers document what learners know?

I2
Reexamining Your Personal Literacy Portfolio
Participants use their own Literacy Portfolios (or gather artifacts and instruments from Year One) to consider which engagements, tools and experiences would contribute to a reasonable and informative portfolio for a younger learner.

I3
Seeing What's There
Participants each bring four to six artifacts—a drawing, a journal entry, a report—from one learner that they know well. In discussion groups of 2-4, they swap artifacts and after ten minutes, each person lists the number of things they now know about that language user, repeating the process several times. The group reads an article by Sharer, addressing the value of collaborative assessment.

I4
Surveying Surveys
Group members collect and bring in a collection of literacy surveys and instruments that they then sort through to determine which provide the most helpful information and which the group might elect to use during this study.

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I5
Collecting Portfolios
The study group collects a range of portfolios/learner stories to see how other educators have documented what learners know. Browse to see which look most interesting, most informative, and most inviting. Group members note elements of these that they would like to include in future assessments on a Literacy Portfolios Issues & Questions chart.

I6
Identifying candidates for instructional evaluation
Use the *Selecting a Target Reader* form or revisit the *Getting to know your students* form to identify potential targeted readers. Consider: What circumstances made it possible to add the first set of names? What set of circumstances cause the second set to be omitted? Determine why a child in the second set should be a candidate for developing a Literacy Portfolio, and then specifically which child. Create a new *Getting to know your students* form if necessary.

Potential Resources

Multiple and varied sources of information that provide alternative perspectives and create opportunities for complex connections.

All participants in the study group contribute resources to a collective text set. NCTE provides key articles and video footage. Site Leader reads all articles in planning the study.

R1
Professional Reading and Videos
Professional reading is an ongoing part of the study. As one option, the group may elect to schedule part of each meeting to read from the evolving text set, providing an opportunity to seek information to inform the group's questions. A variety of video clips of teachers and students at work are provided to add to the group's discussions.

R2
Creating a Text Set
Participants each contribute at least five resources for a group-created text set, including books, journals, articles in the popular press, pamphlets, etc.

Specific to this study:

- A collection of assessment surveys and instruments
- A collection of learning portfolios
- A collection of early reading books
- A collection of quality reading material for oral reading/retelling

Engagements

Opportunities to test out and explore multiple perspectives on the language process.

These experiences might be facilitated by the Site Leader or by a group leader in the Site Leader's absence. Some experiences are lived outside of the study group time.

E1
Taking Note of Learning
All group members bring one written classroom learner anecdote. These are shared with colleagues after briefly describing the classroom circumstance during which it was collected. Colleagues ask questions to gather additional information they think they need to know. Each group member then rethinks what s/he would need to know and observe to rewrite the notes. Process observation of the strategy "say something" is offered as one option.

E2
Creating a Literacy Portfolio Format
Small groups each develop a set of criteria for what a Literacy Portfolio should do and look like. These are shared and then considered in relation to the Literacy Portfolio format provided by the Reading Initiative that will direct the data gathered and organized for each learner. Members add to the Literacy Portfolios Issues & Questions chart.

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E3
Looking into the life of a learner
Group members each select a minimum of two of five provided *narrative portraits*, read thoroughly, and come to the next session ready to discuss strengths, what you think might be missing, what resonated for them as teachers. Add questions, concerns, and ideas to the Literacy Portfolio Issues and Questions chart.

E4
Matching books and readers
Group members consider how they select books, and then beliefs about selection for students. Readability, predictability, and decodable texts are explored and a collection of books analyzed with these criteria. The group reads, "I am a level 3 reader" by Pierce and initiates a collection of quality reading material.

Demonstrations

Examination of language concepts and the learning process. Build from learners' questions and help to generate new insights.

Group as a whole looks over the demonstrations listed here and decides which are key ones they want to revisit to support the portfolio creation.

D1
Revisit the TORP
Study group members take or retake the TORP, score it, and place their score on the continuum. Compare with earlier beliefs and locations on continuum and what this might mean as a range of teacher beliefs are directing the creation of a range of literacy learners.

D2
Revisit the Burke Interview
The group members each review a personally conducted Burke Reading Interview, the implication of the questions and answers, and the strategies suggested for different reading profiles in preparation for developing "best instructional strategies" for their targeted readers. A video clip of an interview helps frame the discussion.

D3
Revisit Miscue Analysis
In pairs, group members review their initial miscue analyses records and challenge themselves to include an increasingly sophisticated version of miscue in preparation for compiling a portfolio on a targeted learner. The group then watches a video clip of Josh reading and retelling *Alexander and the Wind-Up Mouse*, taking their hand at miscue markings. The group reviews and discusses; the concepts of miscue and mistake are considered.

D4
Revisit Running Records
Some school systems include Running Records as part of the assessment of early readers. Revisit the video of a teacher taking Running Records during instructional time, and then the records taken by group members. Discuss the value Running Records have played in understanding readers' use of proficient strategies and read an article by Vento-Zogby on how phonics is taught in the context of strategies and meaning through the Reading Recovery program.

D5
Revisit Interest Inventories and Surveys
Participants sort through a collection of surveys that was started in **I4**. The group uses this as a working time to adapt, create, or revise instruments as determined necessary.

D6
Revisit Kidwatching
Group members revisit and extend their previous kidwatching observations by considering a comprehensive checklist and rereading articles by Mills and O'Keefe, Goodman, and O'Keefe. Each makes plans to gather essential information on his/her targeted reader and considers the elements of effective kidwatching. The Sharer article informs a discussion on the importance of working collaboratively.

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D7
Revisit Individual Reading Conferences
The group watches a video clip of a teacher demonstrating one type of Individual Reading Conference, discusses what they see, and fills out a Reading Conference form for oral reading and retelling. A distinction is then made between different kinds of reading conferences, their purposes and value, and how often it's valuable for teachers to gather data in this way.

D8
Introducing the H-T Process
A key component of this study is to plan specific and helpful instruction for targeted readers. This entails the ability to carefully gather rich observations and to suspend judgment about what behavior might *seem* to mean. The group initially tries out this concept on a learner described in one of the readings and then considers descriptions they themselves have gathered on children; they then generate multiple interpretations of the behaviors, and devise possible ways to test their interpretations. Several articles are provided to increase participants' understanding of the H-T Process; two video clips allow them to practice making observations of students using the H-T sheet.

D9
From observation to instruction
The group revisits the video clip of Tom Eber and Phillip, reads through Tom's key observations and reflections, and then makes predictions about effective instructional strategies. They read or reread an issue of *School Talk* on reading strategies and articles by Mills & O'Keefe and Weaver that highlight the strategic work of teachers moving from observation to instruction.

D10
The importance of self-reflection
Participants again return to their Literacy Portfolios and consider the role of the learner's ideas, intention, and reflections in the assessment process. Suggestions are offered for self-reflective strategies for their targeted readers, or are devised by the group from earlier readings and assessment gathering.

Invitations to Inquiry

Experimenting by applying questions, tools, and methods of inquiry to a specific issue.

Invitations to inquiry provide opportunities to conduct focused, short inquiries to further explore concepts and questions that have been raised. Participants are invited to choose or create their own inquiries as appropriate. They can be explored by individuals, small groups, or by the entire group.

Q1
Learning together from targeted readers
In small groups, participants view initial video clips they've made of targeted readers as an opportunity to consider what is known and what other information ought to be gathered. A clip of Eric reading is provided for participants without their own video footage. The discussion and information are used to reshape their Literacy Portfolio data-gathering plans. An article by Primeaux, "Shifting Perspectives on Struggling Readers," adds to the discussion.

Q2
Considering variation among same-age readers
Group members gather in same-age or grade groups and answer the question: based on your knowledge of proficient reading, where is your targeted reader and what instruction and assessment would best support his/her development? The group then considers literacy continua developed by different educators to compare their ideas and the value of such continua. Teachers developing Literacy Portfolios for more than one reader can use this tool to help verify a range of reading abilities and behaviors.

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Q3
Developing a Narrative Portrait
Using the narratives of other classroom teachers, provided in the professional reading, and the data gathered, each participant synthesizes across the data to provide the fullest portrait of the learner as possible. This portrait will stand aside the data gathered through other instruments and tools and bring the learner "to life" for those who read it.

Q4
Creating a Literacy Portfolio
As this inquiry evolves, participants continue to collect, review, and refine the data gathered that will go into the Literacy Portfolio. The guidelines from **E2** are followed and adapted by the group in preparation for the final compilation and sharing.

Q5
Looking again
Arrange the data in the Literacy Portfolio with the intention of adding additional data and insights in 3-6 months. Then add it. A new narrative profile will help consolidate new observations, new strategy use, new preferences and abilities.

Q6
Testing your practice
This inquiry is key. After making close observations, generating multiple interpretations of what was observed, and predicting supportive strategy instruction, group members try out those strategies. How did it go: what went well, what didn't work, what could be tried next?

Opportunities for Organizing & Sharing

Public displays—charts, webs, lists, notes--of accumulating ideas, knowledge and plans

These are used at different places in the study and are saved to revisit over time.

With the entire study
Graffiti board
How is this literacy learner portfolio creation alike and different from creating our own?

With Q1
Learning together from target readers
What do group members see as they watch the initial video tapes of target readers: questions, issues, ideas

With Q4
Literacy Portfolio
Major questions list

Reflection/Action Plan

Focused plans that help learners reflect on their current experience and opinions in constructing their understanding of the unit of study and subsequent new practice.

RA1
Reflection leads to instructional plans
Consider all the information gathered in a selected reader's Literacy Portfolio in relation to the accumulating set of instructional strategies. Each group member selects a small set of strategies that are predicted to be most important for that student's immediate instructional experience. This list is the last thing added to the learner's portfolio. Two issues of *School Talk* and an article by Weaver are considered as members make these decisions.

RA2
This was the year that ...
The group reflects on their learning by each bringing one or two items that represent their learning through assembling a Literacy Portfolio. Using the strategy, "save the last word for me," other group members hypothesize the significance of the item(s) prior to hearing from the colleague who selected it.

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Professional Reading

Narrative Portraits of Learners

Gilles, C. and Dickinson, J. (2000). Rejoining the literacy club: Valuing middle grade readers. *Language Arts,* 77(6), 512–521.

Goodman, Y. M. (1996). I never read such a long story before. In S. Wilde, *Notes from a Kidwatcher*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann. Originally published in *English Journal, 63* (1974), 65–71.

Hynes, M. (2000). "I read for facts": Reading nonfiction in a fictional world. *Language Arts,* 77(6), 485–495.

Kawamoto, C. (1997). Driven to read. *Primary Voices K-6,* 5(1), 24–31.

Merrill, C. S. (2000). Following a child's lead toward literacy. *Language Arts* 77(6), 532–536.

Other Learner Stories

Gray, E. N. (2001). A literacy growth spurt during inquiry: Tommy's story. *Language Arts,* 78(4), 325–332.

Lysacker, J. (2000). Beyond words: The relational dimensions of learning to read and write. *Language Arts,* 77(6), p. 479–484.

McCallister, C. (2000). Making history as a reader. *Language Arts,* 78(2), 138–147.

McMillon, G. T. and Edwards, P. A. (2000). Why does Joshua "hate" school...but love Sunday school? *Language Arts,* 78(2), 111–120.

Tsuchiyama, E. (2000). Devin. In D. Stephens and J. Story (Eds.), *Assessment as inquiry: Learning the hypothesis-test process.* Urbana, IL: National Council of Teachers of English.

Other Articles

Crafton, L. K. and Burke, C. (1997) Inquiry-based evaluation. *Primary Voices K-6,* 5(1), 2–6.

Five, C. L. and Dionisio, M. (Eds.). (1999). Instruction to meet special needs. *School Talk,* 4(2), 1–6.

Omalza, S., Aihara, K., and Stephens, D. (1997). Engaged in learning through the HT process. *Primary Voices K-6, 5(1),* 4–17.

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Pierce, K. M. (1999). I am a level 3 reader: Children's perceptions of themselves as readers. *The New Advocate,* 12(4), 359–375.

Primeaux, J. (2000). Shifting perspectives on struggling readers. *Language Arts,* 77(6), 537–542.

Sharer, P. L. (1999). Strength in numbers: Professional growth through a collaborative agenda. *The New Advocate,* 12(1), 69–79.

Stephens, D., Story, J., Aihara, K., Hisatake, S., Ito, B., Kawamoto, C., Kubota, S., Mokulehua, J., Oka-Yamashita, S., Omalza, S., Tsuchiyama, E., Yamate, F., Yoshizaki, L., Yoshizawa, D. (1999). Overview of the HT process. In D. Stephens and J. Story (Eds.), *Assessment as inquiry: Learning the hypothesis-test process.* Urbana, IL: National Council of Teachers of English.

Vento-Zogby, G. (1998). Reading recovery: Teaching phonemic awareness and phonics in the context of strategies and meaning. In C. Weaver (Ed.), *Practicing what we know: Informed reading instruction*. Urbana, IL: National Council of Teachers of English.

Weaver, C. (1998). From reading strategies to strategies for teaching in tutorial and small group situations. In C. Weaver (Ed.), *Practicing what we know: Informed reading instruction*. Urbana, IL: National Council of Teachers of English.

Let's go back and reread ...

Goodman, Y. (1985). Observing children in the classroom. In A. Jaggar and M. Smith-Burke (Eds.), *Observing the language learner.* Urbana IL: National Council of Teachers of English.

Maxim, D. and Five, C. L. (Eds.). (1997). The teaching of reading strategies. *School Talk,* 3(1), 1–6.

Mills, H. and O'Keefe, T. (1999). What really matters in literacy instruction? *The New Advocate,* 12(1), 39–54.

O'Keefe, T. (1997). The habit of kidwatching. *School Talk, 3(2).*

Watson, D. (1985). Watching and listening to children read. In A. Jaggar and M. Smith-Burke (Eds.), *Observing the language learner.* Urbana IL: National Council of Teachers of English.

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Video Clips

Literacy Portfolios Video Tape

Clip 1: Say Something (Child/Child)
Joanne Hindley, Third Grade
Manhattan New School
New York, NY

Clip 2: Say Something (Adult/Child)

Clip 3: Josh's Burke Reading Interview
Prisca Martens and Josh

Clip 4: Josh Reading and Retelling *Alexander and the Wind-Up Mouse*

Clip 5: Rosa and *The Stonecutter*

Clip 6: Eric Reads (for participants without their own video footage)

Clip 7: From Observation to Instruction (From *Evaluation Matters*, 1998 NCTE Teleconference)
Tom Eber and Phillip
South School
Des Plaines, IL

Clip 8: Third Grader Reading Independently
Joanne Hindley, Third Grade
Manhattan New School
New York, NY

Clip 9: Reading with Katie

Clip 10: Small Group Reading/Running Record
Clint Wills, Second Grade
Bradley Elementary School
Columbia, SC

***Reading Instruction: What's It All About?* Video Tape**

Goals for Reading Workshop and Individual Reading Conferences
Sharon Taberski
Manhattan New School
New York, NY

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Classroom Strategies
Literacy Portfolios

Each of the NCTE Reading Initiative Inquiry Studies includes many strategies for use in classrooms, as well as with your own learning. In some studies we have included specific directions for a number of strategies. Other times, they are embedded in the study's engagements and professional reading. This list will help you locate the strategies through this study.

Instructional Strategies	Location in the Study
• Before, During, and After Reading	D2
• Big Book Reading	Sharer Article
• Bookmarks	D2
• Books on Tape	Weaver Article
• Buddy Reading	Kawamoto Article; Weaver Article
• Choral Reading	Weaver Article
• Content Reading	Tuschiyama Article; Gray Article
• Drop Everything and Read	Merrill Article
• Echo Reading	Weaver Article
• Getting to Know You	Pierce Article
• Guided Reading	Weaver Article
• Guided Writing	Weaver Article
• Individual Reading Conferences	Five/Dionisio Article; Vento-Zogby Article; D7
• Inquiry Based Evaluation	Crafton/Burke Article
• Inquiry Studies	Gray Article
• Journal Writing	Five/Dionisio Article; Vento-Zogby Article
• Jump-In Reading	Gilles/Dickinson Article
• Language Experience Approaches	Weaver Article
• Literature Discussion	Five/Dionisio Article; Merrill Article; Gilles/Dickinson Article; Sharer Article
• Mine/Yours/Ours	D2
• Paired Reading	Five/Dionisio Article; Lysaker Article
• Predicting	Weaver Article
• Publishing Writing	Five/Dionisio Article; Lysaker Article; Townsend/Fu Article; Weaver Article
• Readers' Theater	D2
• Reading Aloud	Gilles/Dickinson Article; Townsend/Fu Article

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• Reading Mini-Lessons	Weaver Article
• Reading/Retelling	Weaver Article
• Reading Workshop	Townsend/Fu Article
• Rereading	Weaver Article
• Response Logs	Hynes Article
• Response through Art, Music, Drama	Five/Dionisio Article; Townsend/Fu Article
• Retrospective Miscue Analysis	Weaver Article; D2
• Save the Last Word For Me	RA2
• Say Something	E1; D2
• Schema Stories	D2
• Self Reflection	D10
• Self Selected Reading	Primeaux Article
• Semantic Webs	Weaver Article
• Sentence Reconstruction	Vento-Zogby Article
• Shared Reading	Weaver Article
• Shared Writing	Five/Dionisio Article
• Show and Tell	McMillon/Edwards Article
• Sketch to Stretch	Five/Dionisio Article; D2
• Story Boards	McMillon/Edwards Article
• Sustained Silent Writing	Five/Dionisio Article
• Sustained Silent Reading	Five/Dionisio Article; Primeaux Article; Weaver Article; D2
• VCR in Your Head	Primeaux Article
• Visual Organizers	Weaver Article
• Vocabulary Box	Weaver Article
• Writing Workshop	Townsend/Fu Article
• Written Conversation	Lysaker Article

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