



Appendix C: Resources to Help You Provide Responsive Whole-Group, Small-Group, and Individual Instruction

Minilesson Planning Template

Phase	Plan
Connect (1–2 minutes) Make a connection to the past/activate prior knowledge.	
Teach (3–6 minutes) Identify and explicitly teach one clearly defined skill or strategy.	
Engage (3–6 minutes) Have students turn and talk, try out the strategy, share reading, and so on.	
Link (1–2 minutes) Remind students to use the strategy whenever they are reading.	

Potential Topics for Whole-Group and Small-Group Strategy Lessons

Following are lists of possible topics for strategy lessons to get you started. Of course, nobody can tell you exactly how many or which of these topics your students will need. Only you can know that for sure. But these are some simple starting points that students in other classrooms have benefited from.

Readers know that finding the right books matters.

Readers choose books that they will enjoy.

Readers look for books that interest them.

Readers look for books that will entertain them.

Readers look for books that will teach them how to do something.

Readers spend time previewing books before they make a selection.

Readers understand what makes some books easy and some books hard for them.

Readers know that choosing a good-fit book can be a bit like Goldilocks choosing a bowl of porridge or a chair.

Readers choose good-fit books by listening for smoothness when they whisper read.

Readers think about what it is they like and don't like about the books they read.

Readers have favorite authors and read many of their books.

Readers have favorite topics that they read many books about.

Readers have favorite types or genres of books that they like to read.

Readers want to read for longer and longer periods of time.

Readers choose reading spots that work well for them.

Readers try to read a little bit longer each day.

Readers make reading a priority. They find time by putting reading first.

Readers monitor their own progress by keeping track of how many books or pages they've read.

Readers set goals for themselves in order to become stronger.

Readers ignore the noises and other distractions around them and keep their minds on their books.

Sometimes readers stretch or take short breaks, but then they start reading again right away.

Readers know that having books they care about will make it easier to stick with the reading.

Readers read some things more than once.

Readers might reread favorite books more than one time.

Readers reread familiar books to better understand them or learn more about a topic.

Readers reread to make their reading sound more like talking.

Readers reread pages or parts when they lose their way or feel confused.

Readers reread whole books or favorite parts of books to share them with other people.

Readers tell others about the books they are reading.

- Readers share favorite books with friends, making recommendations.
- Readers ask other people with similar interests about the books they are reading.
- Readers connect with each other to share book recommendations.
- Readers use lists and blogs to find new ideas about what to read.
- Readers keep a list of books they might like to read in the future.
- Readers sometimes make written book recommendations.

Readers get ready to read.

- Readers clear their minds of other things before they start reading and get ready to enter the world of the book.
- Readers get ready to read a book by spending time looking at the cover, the back, and the pictures.
- Readers make predictions about what will happen in the book and then let their ideas change as they read.

Readers interact with the book while they are reading.

- Readers make movies in their minds to help them make stories come to life.
- Readers jot notes about the things they want to remember.
- Readers pause and restate (paraphrase) what they have read in order to deepen the learning.
- Readers use visual tools (graphic organizers) to help them organize information when they are reading.

Readers think more about their books after they read.

- Readers retell their books by choosing the most important parts from the beginning, middle, and end.
- Readers use bookmarks to mark where they left off. The next time they read, they start by rereading the parts near the bookmark to remember what's happening in the text.
- Readers talk with others about books after they are done.

Readers work to solve words independently.

- Readers use what they know about other words or word parts to solve tricky words.
- Readers use the pictures to help solve tricky words.
- Readers reread a sentence and think about what would make sense to solve tricky words.
- Readers look carefully across the whole word.
- Readers back up and make corrections when they realize something doesn't seem right.
- Readers think about if the words make sense with what the story is about.

Readers work with partners.

Readers make a plan for partner work to be sure each partner gets a turn.
Readers listen attentively, by leaning in and making comments or asking questions.
Readers exchange ideas with their partners about the books they are reading.
Partners can remind each other of strategies they have learned in the past.
Readers can make notes in their books about things they want to visit with their partners about.
Partners act like coaches, but they don't jump right in and do the work for each other.
Partners listen to each other retell to check for understanding.

Readers get to know the characters in their books.

Readers relate to characters by thinking about people in their own lives.
Readers make predictions about what characters will do next based on what they have already learned about the characters.
Readers revise their predictions as the story unfolds and they learn more about the characters or situation.
Readers pay attention to how characters change from the beginning of the story to the end.
Readers pay attention to the strong emotions of characters for clues about what makes them tick.
Readers learn lessons from characters that can help them in their own lives.
Readers read with expression to show that they understand what a character is feeling in a story.

Readers read information from different texts in different ways.

Readers read different books in different ways. Informational books are read differently from stories.
Readers read nonfiction at a slower pace.
Informational texts are not always read from cover to cover. Readers sometimes wander on the page, exploring text features.
Readers ask questions before they read nonfiction to help their minds get ready to learn as much as possible about the topic.
Readers get some answers and some new questions as they read informational texts.
Readers often read more than one book on a topic they are interested in.
Readers compare the information from one book on a topic to that in another, looking for similarities and differences.

Readers use strategies for monitoring and repairing.

Readers know that reading is always about understanding what the text says.

Readers notice when they are having trouble and try to fix it.

Readers notice when things don't make sense. They decide what they can do to help themselves understand the text better.

Readers know that sometimes they have to back up and reread to understand better.

Readers know that sometimes they have to keep going ahead to get the information they need.

Readers make connections.

Readers use all that they know to make sense of a text.

Readers make connections between the text and their own lives.

Readers make connections between the book they are reading and other books they've read.

Readers slow down their reading to consider connections.

Readers often choose books that have a strong connection to their own lives. Connections help them feel more engaged with the text.

Readers often read a number of texts that are connected in some way (same author, same topic, same series, etc.) in order to expand what they know about that topic.

Readers use strategies to determine importance.

Readers are always looking for big ideas or themes when they read.

Readers get clues about the important ideas from the title.

Headings and chapter titles give hints about important ideas.

Authors use special fonts (boldface, italics, larger type) to highlight important concepts.

Readers think about not only the big idea but also how other ideas connect to it.

Readers look for themes that are true for the characters in the story and for their own lives.

Readers create sensory images.

Readers paint pictures (or make movies) in their minds as they are reading.

Readers read with all their senses (sight, smell, touch, taste, hearing).

Creating an image helps readers more fully experience and understand the text.

Sensory images often help readers make emotional connections to the text.

Readers change the images in their minds as they encounter new information in the text.

Readers ask questions.

Readers think about a book before they start reading, using the front and back covers, jacket flaps, and a preliminary skim through the pages to help them wonder about the book.

Readers come up with questions before, during, and after reading a book.

Readers revise their questions and come up with new ones as they read.

Readers sometimes don't find answers to their questions and check another source.

Readers use questions to read books for special purposes.

Readers sometimes focus on only those parts of a text that will help answer their questions.

Readers make inferences.

Readers put what they already know together with what they read to form an inference.

Readers get clues about characters from the way the characters act.

Readers use inferences to build a deeper understanding of the text.

Sometimes inferences need to be adjusted later in the text.

Authors decide which things to tell readers explicitly and which things to let them figure out on their own through clues.

Readers read on to find out whether what they predicted is correct.

Readers use strategies to synthesize and summarize.

Readers retell the story using a beginning, middle, and end.

Readers retell the most important parts of a story to get others interested in the book.

Readers hold onto ideas from all parts of the book and weave them together.

Readers weave ideas together from a variety of books and experiences.

Readers add to or change what they know as they read.

Conferring Questions to Get You Started

Remember, there is no magical question or perfect answer for what to say or teach in a conference. But the questions here will help you start to get comfortable. Use them as a guide, and most importantly, trust yourself. You'll likely discover some of the strategy lesson topics in the previous lists will be perfect for conferences as well.

Getting Started

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- * So, how's it going?
- * What have you been thinking about as a reader since our last conference?
- * What's been most challenging for you?
- * What's been going really well? Why do you think that is?
- * What have you been concentrating on when making book choices?
- * What are you noticing about your stamina?
- * Which books in your book box have been more/less challenging for you? Why do you think this is?

Finding Out What Support Students Might Need

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- * Wow! Looks like things are going well for you right now. How do you think I could best support you?
- * What have you been thinking would be most useful for me to help you with today?
- * What have you been hoping to get some help with?
- * What do you think would be most helpful to you as a reader, right now?
- * What do you think is most important for you to focus on as a reader this week?

Getting Students to Say More

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- * Tell me more about that.
- * What else?
- * Hmm . . .
- * So, what did that make you wonder about?
- * What are you thinking about that?
- * Silence

Using Paraphrase

- * So, you're saying . . .
- * So, you've been trying to . . .
- * So, you've been focused on . . .
- * So, this [book, strategy, genre] worked well for you because . . .
- * So, you're working to . . .
- * So, you wish you could be more . . .

Noticing Strengths

- * I've noticed you are being more careful to . . .
- * I am noticing you've worked hard to . . .
- * I noticed that when you were reading, you . . .
- * I noticed you're using the strategy from yesterday's minilesson.
- * It looks like you've made some very smart book selections.
- * I notice that you're more focused during reading.

Suggesting Stretch Points

- * I'm wondering if it might help you to work on . . .
- * I've been thinking it might really help you as a reader if . . .
- * I have an idea of something that might be helpful for you to try. . . .
- * I've been thinking about you and have an idea. . . .
- * I've seen some other kids struggle with this same thing, and I have a few ideas. . . .

Providing a Demonstration

- * Watch me. I want to show you how to . . .
- * I want to show you something that could help you when this happens. Watch.
- * When I have this problem as a reader, I think to myself . . .
- * Watch carefully while I work to figure this out. Listen to the thinking that I do.
- * Let me show you another way to do this. . . .
- * Listen when I read this. . . . Did you notice how I backed up when it didn't sound right?

Providing Guided Practice

- * Let's try this together.
- * Give it a try, and I'll help you.
- * So, what is something you could try?
- * Let's work together to figure this out.
- * You try it now. Do just what you saw me do.

Providing More Explanation of Something You've Already Taught

- * I want to help you better understand . . . Think about it like this: . . .
- * One way that I remember this is to think of . . .
- * When you are trying to . . . , it's important to remember . . .
- * I sometimes think about it like [provide an analogy].

Providing Another Example of Something You've Already Taught

- * Here's another example of when you might need to do this. . . .
- * Here's an example of a part where it might be helpful to . . .
- * Look at this word. It's an example of [a word with a suffix, a word with parts you know].
- * This word is bold. It's an example of a word that you'll be able to find in the glossary.
- * Look at this section. It's an example of [lots of dialogue without always telling you exactly whose talking].
- * This is an example of [a flashback. In the previous chapter you were in present time, but this new chapter takes place during the mother's childhood].

Closing the Conference

- * Try to practice this every time you read. It will help you to . . .
- * I hope you will keep working on . . . ; it seems to be really helping you.
- * Use sticky notes to mark any places where you use this strategy between now and the next time we visit.

Weekly Conference Planning Sheet

Week of _____

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday

Week of _____

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday

Week of _____

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday

