



Dear Readers,

As a young classroom teacher, I read my first Heinemann book—*In the Middle*, by Nancie Atwell—way back in 1988. Clocking in at more than 300 pages, I read it cover to cover, and the book literally transformed my teaching. *In the Middle* showed me the value of student-centered practices and beliefs, and after reading it, I began a journey of professional reading that's sustained me ever since. The authors of books like Nancie's have been my most important teaching mentors.

Professional books look very different today, and teachers access information and inspiration to feed their teaching in new, dynamic ways. But although the way we read is evolving, the transformative power of foundational ideas remains the same. This important realization was the genesis of the Classroom Essentials series. As the leading publisher of professional books for teachers, we asked this important question: "How might we reimagine how we offer content in books for today's busy teachers—whether they're veterans, new teachers, or just new to professional reading?"

With a laser-sharp focus, each book in the series highlights one essential, student-centered practice,

giving you the information you need to get started trying it—or refining it—in your own classroom right away. Informed directly by the content, each book utilizes a fresh, highly visual design to create an engaging, contemporary reading experience. Most books in the series also include robust online resources—including video that shows you what the practice looks like in today's dynamic classrooms. Perhaps most importantly, authors in the series connect you with their own teaching mentors, showing you how today's most progressive practices are built on a solid foundation of research found in professional literature.

As the series editor for Classroom Essentials, my deepest hope is that this book builds a strong, lasting bridge between important work in our field from the past and a future full of bright possibilities for the students we teach.

Warmly,

Katie Wood Ray

