

PLANNING SUPPORT & SAMPLE LESSON

Fluent Guided Reading Lessons (Levels N–Z)

Comprehension is the ultimate goal of every guided reading lesson, but it plays an especially important role with fluent readers. Now that decoding has become automatic, the fluent reader has more cognitive capacity to devote to deeper thinking and reflection. The focus for your lesson will likely be a specific comprehension strategy; however, the ultimate goal is for students to use a combination of many strategies so they can independently read and understand complex texts.

Fluent Guided Reading Framework		
Day 1	Day 2	Day 3
Text Introduction	Briefly review Day 1's work.	Guided Writing
Read and Respond	Read and Respond	
Conferences	Conferences	
Share and Teach	Share and Teach	
Discussion Questions	Discussion Questions	
Word Study	Word Study	

Preparing to Teach a Fluent Guided Reading Lesson

As with any guided reading lesson you teach, you want to select the text and the lesson components that match your students' needs and interests. Depending on what you've learned about your readers from analyzing your assessment data, the focus for your lesson might be on decoding, vocabulary, or comprehension. The section that follows will help you make this instructional decision.

Pinpoint an Instructional Focus

To select the focus for your lesson, use the data from the Whole-Class Comprehension Assessment Class Profile, the Reading Assessment Conference Class Profile, and what you've learned from observing your readers. With fluent readers, we usually spend one or two weeks on the same focus, but you may need to adjust your groups sooner if you notice students making accelerated progress.

Proficient readers use many strategies to comprehend text. We have included a few basic ones to get you started. As you gain expertise in teaching guided reading, you'll be able to design lessons around other important reading behaviors. See the Fluent Guided Reading Prompts and Teaching Points Chart (pages 146–147) for more ideas.

If readers have difficulty . . .	Then prompt and teach . . .
Self-monitoring and decoding big words (e.g., they skip or mumble through words and continue reading even when a miscue doesn't make sense).	Self-monitoring and decoding
Determining the meaning of words in text, including figurative language	Vocabulary strategies
Recounting stories	Retelling
Answering literal questions to demonstrate understanding of a text	Asking questions
Determining the main idea and recounting supporting details	Main idea/key details
Analyzing relationships between characters and their actions	Character analysis
Making an inference or drawing a conclusion about characters or ideas	Inferring
Distinguishing fact/opinion, point of view, and theme	Evaluating
Summarizing the important parts of a text	Summarizing
Interpreting information from text features such as charts, graphs, maps, and diagrams	Text features and creating graphic organizers

During the guided reading lesson, state the instructional focus for your students; we recommend doing this after the book introduction and just before students begin reading independently. This will set a purpose for reading and help guide your during-reading prompts, observations, and after-reading teaching points.

Select a Text

Select any short text that provides a slight challenge for the group and fits your focus. Look beyond the leveled book room; you can choose any short text (poem, magazine article, short story, or a chapter from a novel). Read a few pages and ask yourself, “Does this text contain some challenging vocabulary? Will it give students a chance to practice the focus strategy?” If so, then it is a good text for your guided reading lesson.

The CCSS for English Language Arts state, “To build a foundation for college and career readiness, students must read widely and deeply from among a broad range of high-quality, increasingly challenging literary and informational texts” (<http://corestandards.org/the-standards>, p. 10). Guided reading is a perfect format for exposing students to complex texts. See the chart below to help select texts for fluent guided reading.



Focus Strategy	Genre	Look for texts with . . .
Self-Monitor and Decode*	Short stories Magazine articles	Multisyllabic words with prefixes and suffixes that students can problem solve because they are in their listening vocabulary.
Vocabulary Strategies	Short stories Informational books Poetry	Some unfamiliar concepts that are supported with context clues, illustrations, or a glossary. Select poems with figurative language including similes and metaphors.
Retell	Short stories Fables	A straightforward plot with a clear problem and solution.
Ask Questions	Any short text	Interesting topics so students have questions to ask and share.
Main Idea/Key Details	Informational texts	Chapter titles, headings, and picture captions.
Character analysis	Short stories Fables Myths	Dynamic, multifaceted characters whose actions illustrate character traits.
Infer	Short stories Poems Biographies Fables Myths Informational texts	Characters that have depth and complexity. Texts should require the reader to draw inferences from dialogue, character actions, and thoughts. Text structure that invites the reader to make inferences and draw conclusions.
Evaluate	Persuasive texts Newspaper or magazine articles	An author's bias so students can evaluate the point of view.
Summarize	Any text	Short chapters or sections students can summarize.
Text features Creating graphic organizers	Informational books Magazine articles	Text features such as graphs, charts, diagram, maps, and so on.

* You won't have many fluent readers who will need this focus, but we included it just in case. We have had fluent readers who skip tricky words or mumble them instead of using strategies to decode the words.

Once you've selected the texts, you are ready to gather the other materials you will need to teach a fluent guided reading lesson.

Gather Materials

We find it is more efficient to place all the materials for each group in a separate basket. That way, when it's time to meet with a group, you can grab the group's basket and you are ready to read!

- Set of short texts (stories, poems, magazine articles, short books, etc.)
- Dry-erase board and marker (for teacher use only)
- Copy of Fluent Guided Reading Lesson Plan template (see Appendix, page 144)
- Copy of Fluent Guided Reading Anecdotal Notes sheet (see Appendix, page 145)
- Fluent Guided Reading Prompts and Teaching Points Chart (see Appendix, pages 146–148)
- Student reading notebooks (one per student) for recording responses and new vocabulary (see page 123)
- Sticky notes and flags

TIP

It is helpful to make a stack of two-sided copies, with the Lesson Plan template on one side and the Anecdotal Notes sheet on the other, to keep on a clipboard for this group.

Fluent Guided Reading Lesson Plan

In this section, we'll walk through the Fluent Guided Reading Lesson Plan; it's a three-day plan. Students read a text on the first two days; you confer with each student individually. If desired, students can complete Guided Writing when they complete a text.

We recommend copying a set of lesson plan templates, with the Fluent Guided Reading Anecdotal Notes sheet on the back, to have on hand while working with your fluent readers. Keep in mind that while you've pinpointed an instructional focus in your planning, you'll also want to consider students' written responses when you make your teaching point after reading.

TIP

The Fluent Guided Reading Lesson Plan, found on page 144 in the Appendix, is a template you can use to plan your lessons. Each component of the lesson is described in detail here and appears in brief on the template.

Fluent Guided Reading Lesson Plan (Levels N-Z)			
Title: _____		Level: _____	
Instructional Focus: _____			
Before Reading	Day 1 Date: _____	Day 2 Date: _____	
	Text Introduction: (3–4 minutes) This text is about _____ New Vocabulary: _____ Model Focus Strategy: _____	Briefly review Day 1's work: (3–2 minutes) Restate the strategy and introduce any new vocabulary. Invite students to continue reading. New Vocabulary: _____	
	Read and Respond: (10–14 minutes) Students read silently and take brief notes that address the comprehension focus. Conferences: Confer briefly with each student, coaching as needed. See the Fluent Guided Reading Prompts and Teaching Points Chart on page 146.		
During Reading	Share and Teach: (7–2 minutes) Invite students to share their notes; make a related teaching point. See the Fluent Guided Reading Prompts and Teaching Points Chart on page 146.		
	Discussion Questions: (3–5 minutes)		
After Reading	Word Study: (2–3 minutes) • Spelling-Meaning Connection • Greek and Latin Word Roots		
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Day 3 Date: _____ Guided Writing Prompt: (10–20 minutes) (optional) _____ _____ _____			

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DAY 1 LESSON COMPONENTS**Before Reading** (3–4 minutes)**Text Introduction**

Introduce the text with a one- or two-sentence gist statement that piques student interest. Think of this as an advertisement that entices students to want to read this text. Record it on the Lesson Plan template after the sentence stem: *This text is about.*

Then invite students to scan the text, including the table of contents and index, to do the following:

- Activate background knowledge/connect to schema.
- Share what they notice about the illustrations and other text features.
- Make predictions.
- Discuss the organization of the text.

New Vocabulary

Discuss unfamiliar words students will encounter during today's guided reading lesson:

- Say the word and give a kid-friendly definition.
- Connect the new word to the students' background knowledge.
- Relate the new word to the text.
- Invite students to "turn and talk" and explain the meaning of the word to a classmate.

Model Focus Strategy

Clearly state and model the focus comprehension strategy for students. Think aloud and show them how you do the strategy. Say, "This is how I draw an inference from the character's actions." Ask them to take notes in their reading notebook to show how they use the strategy during the day's reading.

During Reading (10–12 minutes)**Read and Respond**

Students read the text silently and independently for 10 to 12 minutes and write short responses that match the comprehension focus in their reading notebooks or on sticky notes. Writing during reading helps the students organize their thoughts so they are able to describe or explain complex elements in the text. They can also jot down any puzzling words and concepts that confuse them or ideas that they want to share and discuss.

TIP

Do not pre-teach new words if there is support in the text for determining its meaning. You want to empower students to figure out new words.

TIP

It will save time if students have seen you model the strategy during your whole-class mini-lessons with either a read-aloud or shared text.

Conferences

Move around the group to read their responses and have short conversations with each student. Prompt them to use strategies such as retelling, asking themselves a question, or using context clues if they encounter a confusing part. Students may need some coaching and scaffolding to read these slightly challenging, complex texts. That's perfectly normal in a guided reading lesson. Use the Fluent Guided Reading Anecdotal Notes sheet on page 145 to rate the students' independence with the strategy and record your notes.

After Reading (6–10 minutes)

Share and Teach (1–2 minutes)

After students read for about 10–12 minutes, invite students to share the notes they took during reading. Use your observations and notes to select a teaching point for the group from the Fluent Guided Reading Prompts and Teaching Points Chart found in the Appendix on pages 146–148.

Discussion Questions (3–5 minutes)

Prepare a few thought-provoking questions aimed at challenging students to think about and beyond the text. Expect students to refer to the text to support their thinking.

Word Study (2–3 minutes)

Fluent readers are usually in the Advanced Stage of spelling, so your word study will likely focus on the spelling/meaning connection and Greek or Latin word roots.

- **Spelling/meaning connection:** Select a word from the text that can be connected to other words in meaningful ways. For example, you might show students the word *exhibit* and ask them to think of other words that are similar (*exhibitor*, *exhibition*). Discuss how the meaning and spelling of these words are connected.
- **Greek and Latin word roots:** Select a word from the text that has a common Greek or Latin root or prefix and ask students to think of other words that are similar. For example, you can point out that *intercontinental* has the prefix *inter*, which means “between.” Ask students to think of other words that begin with the prefix *inter* (*interception*, *intercom*, *intercede*, *interchange*, *intermediate*, and so on).

TIP

Close each lesson by having students add one or two of the words you discussed to their New Word List in their reading notebooks.

DAY 2 LESSON COMPONENTS**Before Reading (1–2 minutes)**

Briefly review the portion of the text that students read on Day 1 and introduce any new vocabulary students will encounter on the next section of the text. Remind students of the focus strategy.

During Reading (12–14 minutes)

Students continue reading from where they left off on Day 1, taking notes as they read, while you confer with and prompt individual students according to your observations and focus strategy.

After Reading (6–10 minutes)**Share and Teach (1–2 minutes)**

Invite students to share the notes they took during reading. Use your observations and notes to select a teaching point for the group from the Fluent Guided Reading Prompts and Teaching Points Chart found on pages 146–148.

Discussion Questions (3–5 minutes)

Prepare a few thought-provoking questions that challenge students to think beyond the text. Ask students to refer to the text to support their thinking.

Word Study (2–3 minutes)

See page 124 for word-study ideas for fluent readers.

DAY 3 LESSON COMPONENTS**Guided Writing (10–20 minutes)**

Guided Writing is optional at the fluent level. If you notice your students need some extra support with writing, or if you want to challenge them to probe a text more deeply in writing, plan a guided writing session after the group finishes reading the text.

Fluent Guided Writing Procedures

Give students a prompt that challenges their thinking and requires them to return to the text. Consider using ideas from the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) that match the text and the strategy focus. For example, you might ask students to do one of the writing responses listed in the following chart:

Fluent Guided Writing Response Options

Writing Prompt	CCSS Link
Compare and contrast the most important points and key details presented in two texts on the same topic.	Reading Standard for Informational Text: Grade 3, Standard 9
Select a chart, diagram, or graph from the text and explain how the information contributes to the understanding of the text.	Reading Standard for Informational Text: Grade 4, Standard 7
Describe how the narrator's point of view influences how events are described in the story.	Reading Standard for Literature: Grade 5, Standard 6
Describe one character in the story (e.g., traits, motivations, or feelings) and explain how his or her actions contribute to the sequence of events.	Reading Standard for Literature: Grade 3, Standard 3

As the students write, circulate among the group and have a two- or three-minute conference with each student. Think of these interactions as mini writing conferences. Attend to some errors and let others go, depending on the individual needs of the students. You will have greater success if you select one teaching point for each student. The goal is not to perfect a piece of writing, but rather to develop a better writer.

As students are writing, offer support in the following ways:

- *If the writer struggles with organization*, help the student write a simple key-word plan before writing.
- *If the writer gets off-topic*, tell the student to refer to the plan and check off the key word once it is used.
- *If the writer relies on common vocabulary*, ask him or her to use interesting words that grab the reader's attention. Assign a monetary value of 5 cents to common adjectives and verbs such as *good*, *nice*, *fun*, *said*, and 25 or 50 cents to more descriptive vocabulary. As a teaching point after writing, ask students to star the most interesting sentence in their piece and share it with the group.
- *If the writer doesn't understand paragraphing*, prompt the student to indent if the time or setting changes. Tell the students how many paragraphs they should write and then distribute one sticker for each paragraph. They will place the sticker at the beginning of each paragraph to remind them to indent.

Making the Most of the Fluent Guided Reading Lesson Plan Template and Anecdotal Notes Sheet

To help you make the most of these two reproducible teacher resources, follow these tips for planning activities and recording students' performance over the course of two days.

- Make two-sided copies with the Lesson Plan template on one side and Anecdotal Notes sheet on the other.
- Jot down your planning notes before meeting with your fluent guided reading group:
 - » **Title:** Write the title and level of the book you'll be using.
 - » **Instructional Focus:** After pinpointing your instructional focus, write it on the top of the Lesson Plan sheet.

Before Reading

- » **Text Introduction:** Create a gist statement to introduce the text.
- » **New Vocabulary:** Note the words you'll introduce using the four steps outlined on page 123.
- » **Model Focus Strategy:** Briefly note how you will introduce and/or model your instructional focus.

After Reading

- » **Discussion Questions:** Prepare one or two thought-provoking questions to spark discussion of the text.
- » **Word Study:** Decide whether to work on spelling-meaning connections or Greek and Latin word roots; jot down which words you will explore.

Day 3

- » If you choose to do Guided Writing, record the prompt you will use.
- Write the names of the group members on the Anecdotal Notes sheet. Circle or write in your focus comprehension strategy; then assess each student's strategy use during the lesson and circle a comprehension rating. There's also space for you to record any observations that will help you make instructional decisions for your students.

Now let's take a look at a sample lesson plan, which Jan has annotated with her thinking about the group based on her assessment data. Lily's assessment data is shown on page 90; she is part of this fluent guided reading group.

Assess-Decide-Guide: Putting the Three-Part Framework Into Action

On pages 90–91, Jan analyzed Lily’s reading record and transferred that data to the Reading Assessment Conference Class Profile. Then, Jan grouped her with other above-grade-level readers who also needed to work on evaluative comprehension. Now it is time to use all of the data to plan a fluent guided reading lesson for Lily and her groupmates. Notice how Jan prepares to teach Lily’s group.

1

From analyzing the assessments, I learned that Lily and the other members of her group were having difficulty with evaluative comprehension. I selected an article from *Scholastic News* that presented arguments for and against cloning the Woolly Mammoth. Although the text is not formally leveled, I know the content and the strategy focus will be slightly challenging for this group.



2

I've jotted a quick book introduction and three words that I want to introduce. We'll use the map to identify Siberia, and then follow these steps to introduce "cloning" and "desolate":

- Say the word and give a kid-friendly definition.
- Connect the new word to students' background knowledge.
- Relate the new word to the text.
- Invite students to "turn and talk" and to explain the meaning of the word to a neighbor.

3

Since the strategy focus is evaluative comprehension, each student will create a T-chart labeled "support" and "opposition." As they read the article over the next two days, they will record reasons the author gives for and against cloning the mammoth.

4

Knowing Lily will find this task challenging, I want to confer with her while she reads to notice if she understands how to evaluate both sides of the argument. Once I confer with Lily, I'll meet with the rest of her groupmates.

5

Once students finish the article, they will share the information they jotted down and decide which side—pro or con—is better supported by evidence.

6

On the third day of this series of lessons, students will write an opinion piece about cloning the Woolly Mammoth, citing evidence from the text to support their viewpoint.

Sample Fluent Lesson Plan

Fluent Guided Reading Lesson Plan (Levels N–Z)																														
1	Title: <u>A Mammoth Comeback by N. Smith</u> Level: <u>R</u> Instructional Focus: <u>Evaluative comprehension</u>																													
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Tracking the Progress of Lily's Group of Fluent Readers

Each time Jan meets with this group, she observes and rates each student's level of independence with the focus strategy. If she needs to provide a great deal of support, she gives the student a one (1), indicating the student is not independent and needs teacher scaffolding. As students develop proficiency with the strategy, Jan may give the student a comprehension rating of a two (2) or three (3). If the student completely understands the text, applies the focus strategy without any scaffolding, and participates in the comprehension conversation after reading, Jan circles a four (4) on the Anecdotal Notes sheet. This indicates the student is ready for more challenging text or a different focus strategy.

After two or three weeks, Jan looks over her notes to determine whether or not the group, or a student in the group, is ready to try a different strategy or maybe a more challenging text. If she's unsure whether or not they are ready to move to the next level, she can do a quick reading record before she moves them to that level.

When Do You Take Fluent Readers to the Next Step?

As you meet with your fluent readers, you will gradually increase the complexity of the texts they are reading and change your focus strategy to address the needs of the students in the group. Fluent readers will demonstrate a range of abilities in the level of text they can read and in their depth of understanding. You will know it is time to increase the text level when the student is able to:

- Read fluently with at least 96 percent accuracy
- Retell with little teacher support
- Make logical inferences from the text
- Determine the main idea or theme
- Summarize using supporting details

As you move students up in text levels, you may return to a focus strategy you had previously taught. Even though you already taught students how to draw inferences, they will need to practice the same strategy on more complex texts. Remember to use a variety of texts, including myths, legends, poems, newspaper and magazine articles, and short informational books. Your goal is that students are able to “read and comprehend complex literary and informational texts independently and proficiently” (CCSS, page 10).