



Study Guide for *No More Fake Reading*

Berit Gordon

Beritgordon.com

Questions and Activities to Grow Our Practice, Nourish Our Teaching Lives, and Help Every Student Be a Skilled and Lifelong Reader

Introduction

Collaboration is what can help us to reflect, grow, and push our thinking. This study guide is to jump-start your conversations with colleagues about your instruction, your current successes, and how to help every reader in the room.

I suggest you schedule time with colleagues in person and/or virtually to discuss what's working and what challenges you're facing. As a teacher, I was lucky to have weekly time set aside with colleagues, as well as weekly sessions with a staff developer who came to my classroom and pushed my practice. At the time, it didn't always feel like fun (reflecting and changing is hard work!) but in retrospect, those conversations are what changed my teaching. Without collaboration, I would have stayed a so-so teacher on most days and a good teacher on lucky days. Instead, learning and reflecting with others helped my classroom become consistently engaging and meaningful for everyone in the room (again, on good days).

My consulting work in schools has the strongest impact when I can gather with teachers to discuss goals, visit a classroom where I can model a teaching strategy and teachers try it out together, and then gather again to debrief and discuss our next steps. My hope is that you will coach one another in a similar fashion, as time and energy allow. Another hope is that you will use this book to help every student in the room identify as a reader- that you will be able to ask any student what they're reading and they will tell you their favorite author, favorite genre, and what they're going to read next. Another hope is that you will help readers access classics and gain the cultural capital of grappling with complex texts that stand the test of time, but even more so, that they can transfer the moves of expert readers to the texts that they want to and can read.

My *greatest* hope is that *No More Fake Reading* and this study guide will provide you with validation for what you do, support for what you try, and celebration and acknowledgment for how much you are helping our next generation be empowered, lifelong readers.

Quick suggestions for how to use this guide:

- Predetermine set times to meet in person or check in remotely. If you wait until people find time, there will never be time! 8 meeting times are ideal--one meeting for each chapter.

- The discussion questions and activities are suggestions only. There are multiple questions and activities-- choose the ones that work best for your purposes!
- The activity suggestions are useful for setting goals between meetings. Agree to try one before the next time you gather.
- Set protocols for your meeting times so everyone feels heard and supported.
- Let me know how it goes. Success moments, questions, challenges? Contact me at beritgordon.com

Chapter 1: Why Are My Students Snapchatting Their Way Through the Odyssey - and What Can I Offer Instead?

Questions to ask yourself and to explore with your colleagues:

- What were your own school experiences with reading in middle/high school?
- What structures and methods do you rely on to teach your students how to be skilled readers?
- What are your fundamental beliefs about teaching in general, and the teaching of English specifically?
- What do you know about choice reading and volume of reading that you'd like to make part of your instruction?
- How do you balance your interests in literature with students' interests?
- What gets in the way of your students' reading?
- What benefits do you see in choice reading for teens?

Ideas for activities or exploration in and out of the classroom:

- Define choice reading. Compare your definition with the others in your study group.
- Share out a statistic about teens and reading from Chapter 1 that surprised you. Discuss how your instruction will address it.
- List out the texts that you currently teach, and how those are balanced with students' choice reading. What is the % of texts you choose and texts they choose?
- List the number of pages a week students will read if they genuinely read everything you assign. Compare it to the average # of pages a week students will be assigned in college (300-400 pages a week).
- Contact students who have graduated from your school and gone on to college. Send a google survey or other easy-to-answer and administer set of questions. Ask how well they felt prepared for the reading load in college, what helped them, and what has been hard. Ask how they independently manage the reading load. Share those answers with your team, and ideally with your current students.
- List your top goals for what students will be able to do, know, and understand as readers by the end of your grade. Now examine your curriculum and mark where those goals are directly supported, addressed, and assessed. What are the gaps? How can you address those with choice reading and class texts?

Chapter 2: Getting Ready for the Blended Model

Questions to ask yourself and to explore with your colleagues:

- How do your students find books that they can and want to read?
- How does your classroom reflect a love of reading?
- How do you share yourself as a reader, including what you're currently reading?
- Do you let students bring books home each night? If not, how will you start? What check-out system will you adopt? How will you live with it if books are occasionally not returned?
- How do students track volume of reading? What system will you use to help them set volume goals and self-assess progress?

Ideas for activities or exploration in and out of the classroom:

- Give students a reading survey. Suss out their feelings, preferences, histories, and identities around reading. Look at the findings as a group and discuss. What is your goal in shifting those answers? How will you assess progress therein?
- Do a walk-through of one another's classrooms, paying close attention to the books available for choice reading. Consider using the following checklist to reflect on classroom environment, and to set personal goals for building classroom libraries:

<i>Classroom Libraries</i>	<i>Yes</i>	<i>Starting to</i>	<i>Not yet</i>
High interest books are available for student use			
Books are organized in sections- at a minimum, fiction and nonfiction			
Books are organized with additional sections such as graphic novels, historical fiction, sci-fi, manga, and more			
Some books are displayed with covers out			
There is a check-out system for books			
Books are labeled with the teacher's name and genre so they can be re-shelved easily by students			
There are a high number of titles (10 books per student that uses the library)			
Books are current (outdated or low interest titles have been weeded out)			

Books are diverse in genre and authors. Student see characters like themselves in the books, as well as people/settings/conflicts unlike themselves			
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- Create individual goals for starting, growing, or organizing classroom libraries. Meet back in a month and share progress. Do another walk through with the checklist and celebrate growth!
- Poll students for titles, genres, and authors they would like to see in classroom libraries. Share those titles as a group.
- Set group goals for accessing new titles. Consider how you will each get new books at low or no cost to you.
- Do a book buzz for your group. Buzz a book you think students would enjoy as well.
- Create reading plans for yourselves. Then, share those with students and ask students to create their own. Bring 2-3 samples back to look at as a group.
- Ask students to fill out Bookmark Calendars. After they have used them for two weeks or more, bring several to the group to look at and discuss.
- Observe your class during independent reading time. What does it look like when students are engaged? How many look that way? For how long? What does it look like when they're not engaged? Are they distracted from the get go, or do they lose focus after some time? Come back to your study group with the data and analyze it together.
- Identify students who are not engaged with choice reading. Discuss how you will help them find books they want to and can read.
- Share out something you've tried to help students enjoy reading and find books they love.
- Publicly celebrate a colleague in an email to administrators or colleagues, or by vocally praising them in the group, for taking risks in their teaching and making changes to help teens be readers.

Chapter 3: Building a Blended Curriculum for Fiction -Based Units

Questions to ask yourself and to explore with your colleagues:

- Look over your curriculum from this or prior years. Where do you place your emphasis on the class novel? Choice reading? Modeling yourself as a reader? Teaching students how to read well? Student's independent reading work? Mark it up and discuss with your group.
- How can you create opportunities to teach and assess those in the coming year?
- In your current curriculum, how much instruction is devoted to teaching the content or specifics of each book? How much is devoted to teaching the skills of expert readers in any work of fiction?
- Think of a goal you have for your students as readers. How can you take that goal and break it down in a think aloud or series of think alouds with your class text?
- How much of the class are you "on"? How much of the class are students working as readers on their own or in small groups? How can you shift the balance so students are doing the bulk of the work as readers?
- Why are you teaching the novels or other works of fiction in your curriculum? Do you love those texts and convey passion for them? If you do not love them, or there are not valid reasons for students to be familiar with these texts, do you have flexibility to use other texts?
- Do the works of fiction in your curriculum encompass classic texts in a modern sense-- are they complex and rich texts that stand the test of time? Are there substantial texts by women, people of color, and non-Western European countries? Are there texts that highlight lesser known voices? Voices of traditionally underrepresented groups? If not, discuss how you will adapt your class novels to expose students to a diverse range of voices and authors in class texts, not just choice books.
- Read pages 73-74. Share out your own reading identities and how you learned to be a skilled reader.
- With your group, read a section of a challenging class text together. Notice when you encounter difficulty and what you do to solve that problem of difficulty. Work with your colleagues to share those problem-solving steps with students.

Ideas for activities or exploration in and out of the classroom:

- Step 1: Spy on yourselves as readers with a beginning chapter of one of your class novels. Read on your own, marking up the text as you go with everything you paid attention to, what you questioned, and what you thought about as you read. Use the sentence starters on page 77 to guide you.
- Step 2: Share out and chart your findings.
- Step 3: Discuss how those noticings can translate into something readers do in any novel. Use the questions at the top of page 79 to help you.
- Step 4: Streamline those findings into a list of lessons- which would be most important for students to try in their own books? Which are generalizable to any work of fiction?
- Everyone bring their class novel. Choose a question from the “Fiction Based Notebook Prompts” resource on pages 237-241. Answer that question by going through your book, seeing where you pay attention, and then narrating that thinking process aloud to your group. This is a think aloud that models the moves of good readers.
- Try the same think-aloud in class. Ask students to answer that question for their own book. As a group, discuss how it felt to share your thinking in front of the class, and how students transferred that thinking to their choice books.
- *If you and a colleague teach the same class text, do this together. If not, work on your own but share out as a group afterward.* Go through the first chapter of your book and note what you typically teach.
- Create a shared folder of short works of fiction that exemplify aspects of author’s craft that align to your standards. If you shared the text, add a comment or reflection on what that text offers in terms of reading skills.
- Share out what your students struggle with as independent readers. How can you help them problem solve by teaching the habits of good readers? List those habits of good readers that your students need to work on, and discuss how you will model and break them down into step-by-step procedures. (For example, how do good readers stay focused when they read? Find books they love?) Look at pages 84-85 for common challenges faced by teen readers.
- Together, use chart paper to create resources that summarize your class novel’s big plot events and main characters. Use page 93 as examples. Share out and discuss what is helpful and what students may still need.
- Visit a colleague’s classroom on a day they are teaching an excerpt of the class novel. Provide specific praise for what made it engaging. Say back what you learned as a reader.
- Videotape your lesson as you teach a reading move using an excerpt of the class novel. Bring it to the group to watch and reflect on.

- Bring 2-3 samples of student writing when they transfer your reading move to a novel of their choice. Use these as data and analyze together. What are students “getting”? How can you tell?

Chapter 4: Building a Blended Curriculum for Non -Fiction Units

Questions to ask yourself and to explore with your colleagues:

- According to the Common Core Standards, which most state standards are closely aligned to, seniors in high school should be reading 30% fiction across their day. What is the balance in your curriculum?
- What is your definition of nonfiction? How would you categorize narrative nonfiction? What other genres are there of nonfiction in your curriculum?
- What is your personal taste for reading nonfiction? How does that play a part in your teaching of nonfiction?
- Look back at your curriculum from past teaching. Where did you place your emphasis on choice reading for nonfiction? Modeling yourself as a reader of nonfiction? Teaching students how to read nonfiction well? Student's independent nonfiction reading work?
- How can you create opportunities to teach and assess those in the coming year?
- What are your definitions of nonfiction? How would you categorize narrative nonfiction? What other genres are there of nonfiction in your curriculum?
- Think of a goal you have for your students as nonfiction readers. How can you take that goal and break it down in a think aloud or series of think alouds with your class text?
- Why are you teaching the nonfiction texts in your curriculum? Do you love those texts and convey passion for them? Why are these authors and genres important for students to know? If you do not love them, or there are not valid reasons for students to be familiar with these texts, do you have flexibility to use other texts?
- Do the works of nonfiction in your curriculum encompass classic texts in a modern sense- complex and rich texts that stand the test of time? Are there substantial texts by women, people of color, and non-Western European countries? Are there texts that highlight lesser known voices? Voices of traditionally underrepresented groups? If not, discuss how you will adapt your texts to expose students to a diverse range of voices and authors in class texts, not just choice books.
- With your group, read a section of a challenging class text together. Notice when you encounter difficulty and what you do to solve that problem of difficulty. Work with your colleagues to share those problem-solving steps with students.

- What approach will you take if students are reading fiction when you're teaching nonfiction lessons?

Ideas for activities or exploration in and out of the classroom:

- Set a goal for to find new and engaging nonfiction texts to put in a share folder. What genres will you go for, including primary source documents? What websites and other resources will you use to find those texts?
- Create a text set for your next nonfiction unit with colleagues. Find texts that you love and that will appeal to students, in addition to texts that will allow students to transfer reading skills.
- Step 1: Spy on yourselves as readers with a section of one of your class texts. Read on your own, marking up the text as you go with everything you paid attention to, what you questioned, and what you thought about as you read.
- Step 2: Share out and chart your findings.
- Step 3: Transform your text-specific noticings into universal lessons about nonfiction. Use the questions on page 106 to guide you.
- Step 4: Streamline those findings into a list of lessons- which would be most important for students to try in their own texts? Which are generalizable to any work of nonfiction in that genre?
- Try a think-aloud with your nonfiction class text. Ask students to do the same thinking in their nonfiction texts. As a group, discuss how it felt to share your thinking in front of the class, and how students transferred that thinking to their choice texts.
- *If you and a colleague teach the same class text, do this together. If not, work on your own but share out as a group afterward.* Go through the first chapter of your book and note what you typically teach.
- Create a shared folder of short works of nonfiction that exemplify aspects of author's craft that align to your standards. If you provide a text, add a comment or reflection on what that text offers in terms of reading skills.
- Visit a colleague's classroom on a day they are teaching an excerpt of the class text. Provide specific praise for what made it engaging. Say back what you learned as a reader.
- Videotape your lesson as you teach a reading move using an excerpt of the class text. Bring it to the group to watch and reflect on.
- Bring 2-3 samples of student writing when they transfer your reading move to a text of their choice. Use these as data and analyze together. What are students "getting"? How can you tell?

o Chapter 5: What to Plan for Day to Day

Questions to ask yourself and to explore with your colleagues:

1. Chart out your weekly schedule with students. How many minutes do you see them, and how is the time broken down? What routines are consistent every day?
2. How much time do your students spend reading (eyes on print) or writing (pen to paper or fingers to keyboard) each day? Week?
3. What is the balance between what you do and what they do? Who is working harder? Does that balance need to shift with more time for independent work?
4. Which of the tips from pages 124 - 127 would help more of your students read for longer amounts of time?
5. How do your students show their thinking about reading? Sticky notes? Physical notebooks? Digital notebooks? Conversation?
6. How do you model your thinking about reading? Is it in the same format as students? How often do they see you creating it in front of them?
7. How does their reading time compare to their writing about reading time?
8. How do you close out your class? What do you want to happen at the end of class and how does this closing reflect that?

Ideas for activities or exploration in and out of the classroom:

1. For each class, time how long you are actively teaching the whole class and how long students are working on their own or in groups. Explore that data as a group.
2. Set a goal to keep your teaching time to 10 minutes or less. Time it. Look at your progress and try the tips on p. 119 - 121 for help if needed. Discuss as a group what you've found helpful.
3. Study your kids during independent reading time. Who is distracted? Doesn't have a book? Sharpening pencil/going to the bathroom? What gets in the way of your students reading in class? How can you help to remove those obstacles? (see pages 124-127)
4. Each teacher charts their daily routine/class break down. Then discuss: What happens most days? Is it routine? How much time is spent explaining what to do? How could you minimize that? What do you most value, and is that reflected in what students spend the most time doing?
5. Visit one another's classes for a similar ten minute span, such as the direct teaching time or the closing of class. Let your colleague know what you noticed,

what you saw valued in terms of the use of that time, and how you saw students responding.

Chapter 6: Bring Talk into Your Blended Reading Classroom

Questions to ask yourself and to explore with your colleagues:

1. What do your students currently understand about the routines, protocols, goals, and outcomes of meaningful discussion about reading?
2. How do you model the behaviors of productive, thought-provoking, and respectful discussion? How is that talk scaffolded?
3. How do you group students and why?
4. How do students prepare for successful discussion so they're each ready to contribute?
5. How do students talk about books when they're not reading the same book?
6. What are the benefits to talking about a shared text? Different texts when each reader is the sole "expert" in their book?
7. How do you get to know students through talk about books, and how do they get to know one another?
8. What is your role when students talk about books?

Ideas for activities or exploration in and out of the classroom:

1. Ask students to chart their thinking about a text before discussion, and again after discussion. How did their thinking change? Bring those responses back to the group. What do you see? Reflect on how talk was structured to push students' thinking, and how it could be done so more effectively.
2. Do a book "buzz" or talk for your group.
3. Read a short text together, then use the sentence starters on page 153 to guide your conversation. How did sentence starters help or hinder? What will you use to scaffold conversations in your class?
4. Discuss how you will model discussion or talk for your students. What will you emphasize? Then, video that talk and share it with students. Ask them to jot down what they notice, and share out.
5. Plan a book club unit together. Use the guidelines on p. 156 and the model on 157 - 158 to guide you.
6. Video a student discussion in pairs or in a book club. Show it to the group and discuss what students are doing. How can you help them take it to the next level?
7. Use the roundtable questions on pages 164 - 165 to guide a short talk at your next meeting. Discuss what genre you will focus on, and how you will get ready for the roundtable discussion in advance.

8. Everyone share a few names of students who are relatively unknown to you. Commit to talking to those students about their (and your) reading before your next meeting. Then share what you learned.
9. Share a success story about a connection that was forged or a relationship that was fostered through talk about reading.

Chapter 7: Assessing Readers: Grading That's Useful and User Friendly

Questions to ask yourself and to explore with your colleagues:

1. What have you found meaningful and practical in terms of assessing readers?
2. What is most important that your students learn how to do or understand as readers? How do you assess for that?
3. What role does self-assessment play in your classroom?
4. What are your fears in assessing readers when you haven't read the book?
5. How do/will you assess volume of reading?
6. How do/will you assess transfer of reading skills?

Ideas for activities or exploration in and out of the classroom:

1. Create a reading volume learning progression, adapted from pages 186-187, that will work across your grade teams.
2. Create your own reading goals to model for the group and then for students.
3. Use the paired talk note-taking sheet with your students and bring it back to discuss as a group. What are students able to do? How will you help them get better?
4. Bring examples of student writing about reading. Collectively review. What do you notice? What are these students able to do? Where could they go next? What assessments from Chapter 7 do these loan themselves to?
5. Look at 2-3 student reading notebooks as a group. Use the notebook rubric on p. 181, or one of the three notebook rubric examples in Resources to assess them on your own. Share out your filled-out rubrics as a group. Where were you aligned? Not aligned? Discuss.
6. Look at the reading notebooks on p. 181, then on pages 246-250. Which do you see yourself using? Why?
7. Use time when you talk to readers to make individualized plans that will help them approach more difficult texts and gain the skills they need. Check back with them in 1-2 weeks and note progress.
8. Commit to "assessing" by using praise only on the next assignment. Come back and discuss how it felt and how students responded.

Chapter 8: Building Teacher -Student Relationships Through the Blended Model

Questions to ask yourself and to explore with your colleagues:

1. How do you get to know your students? Is this purposefully structured within class time, or an “extra”?
2. Do you currently have one-on-one time to talk to readers and writers? Where could that be inserted into your daily routines?
3. What successful strategies can you share for structuring consistent time to talk with students about choice reading? For managing your students and yourself during that time?
4. What are some management and organization struggles that you could use support with?
5. How can conversations provide feedback for readers?
6. What suggestions from this chapter are you likely to try right away?

Ideas for activities or exploration in and out of the classroom:

1. Write your students’ names on blank pieces of paper, one per paper. If that’s too much to consider, start with one class. Jot down whatever you know about that student other than their academic performance. What are their interests? Struggles? Habits? Who are their close friends? Families? Then, note the students whose papers have the least amount of writing. Commit to going to those students for conversations about reading first.
2. Go back to the papers a month later. Do you have more to fill in?
3. Use the questions at the top of page 206 with a colleague. Go in to a classroom and try it together with student readers.
4. Video yourself and a colleague having a conversation about reading in the way you’d like to see it in your classroom. Explicitly model what you want to see. (pages 206-207) Show to students and ask them to share out what they notice.
5. Create a list of suggestions of what students can talk about when you ask them about their reading.
6. Schedule time to talk with students across the following two weeks so you make sure you see every student at least once.

7. Create a note-taking system to use when you talk to readers. Make sure there is a place to note what they are doing well. Revisit it in a month- is it useful?
Practical?
8. Administer an anonymous survey to students about how they feel about verbal feedback and conversations with teachers about reading.