

Components of a Balanced Literacy Program

Reading Alouds: The teacher reads a selection aloud to students. Read alouds;

- Promote a love of reading, stimulate the imagination, and help students develop an ear for the vocabulary and structures of language in print,
- Allow the teacher to introduce new reading strategies, and to model or demonstrate them by thinking aloud,
- Provide models of fluent reading,
- Develop a sense of story/text,
- Develop vocabulary and encourages prediction,
- Build a community of readers,
- Develop active listening.

Shared Reading: The teacher and students read a text together. Shared reading;

- Allows the teacher to model reading strategies,
- Provides students with essential demonstrations of how reading works and what readers do to construct meaning,
- Demonstrates an awareness of text,
- Develops a sense of story or content,
- Teaches students strategies for decoding unknown words and for construction meaning from the text,
- Develops fluency, phrasing and reading strategies,
- Increases comprehension,
- Allows students to see themselves as readers. They feel comfortable and experience fluency when joining in the reading of familiar texts,
- Provides students with a safe, non-threatening environment in which to practice new and familiar reading strategies.

Guided Reading: The teacher introduces a selection at the student's instructional level. Guided reading;

- Promotes reading strategies and offers students the opportunity to practice their reading skills,
- Increases comprehension,
- Encourages independent reading,
- Allows the teacher to monitor individual students' progress. The teacher may need to prompt students to apply their knowledge of reading strategies when difficulties arise, provide further support, or regroup students according to their needs,
- Expands student's belief in their own ability as a reader and consolidates or extends their understanding of a text.

Independent Reading: Students read independently. Independent reading;

- Encourages strategic reading,
- Allows students to choose texts that interest them,
- Increases comprehension by allowing readers to practice the behaviours of proficient readers,
- Supports writing development,
- Extends experiences with a variety of written texts,
- Promotes reading for enjoyment and information,
- Develops fluency by reading just-right books and fosters self-confidence by reading familiar and new texts,
- Provides opportunities to use mistakes as learning opportunities.

Modeled/Shared Writing: The teacher and students collaborate to write the text; the teacher acts as the scribe. Modeled/Shared writing;

- Develops concepts of print,
- Develops writing strategies,
- Supports reading development,
- Provides model for a variety of writing styles,
- Models the connection among and between sounds, letters, and words,
- Produces text that students can read independently,
- Necessitates communicating in a clear and specific manner.

Interactive Writing: The teacher and students compose together using a "shared pen" technique in which students do some of the writing. Interactive writing;

- Provides opportunities to plan and construct texts,
- Increases spelling knowledge,
- Produces written language resources in the classroom,
- Creates opportunities to apply what has been learned.

Independent Writing: Students write independently. Independent writing;

- Strengthens text sequence,
- Develops understanding of multiple uses of writing,
- Supports reading development,
- Develops writing strategies,
- Develops active independence.