

Ohio Literacy Conference for K-3rd Grade Teachers

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A-3 Breaking the Six Habits of Struggling & At-Risk Readers:... (Gr. K-3)

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Top questions teachers ask about reaching and teaching struggling readers:

1. What is the definition of a “falling” reader?
2. What are the most useful assessments for identifying strengths and weaknesses of falling readers?
3. How can I engage and challenge falling readers during guided reading lessons?
4. How can I ensure students are reading text at the appropriate level of difficulty?
5. What are running records and how can they help me?
6. Which verbal prompts should I use to differentiate instruction for my struggling readers?
7. What strategies can I use to build comprehension and reading fluency in struggling readers?
8. How can I incorporate writing into my guided reading lessons?
9. How can I gradually release responsibility to my struggling readers while keeping motivation and achievement levels high?

C. Hebert. *Catch a Falling Reader*. (2008). Corwin Press.
www.conniehebert.com

TEACHERS OF READERS REFLECTION EXERCISE

Read and select only ONE item that describes what you tend to do MOST OFTEN, when working with struggling readers:

1. *When my struggling readers come to words they don't know, I tend to:*
 - a. Tell them the difficult word when they appear to be stuck.
 - b. Offer some clues such as the first sound, first syllable, pictures, etc.
 - c. Give them some 'wait time,' some choices, and maybe tell them the word.
 - d. Question them about the word they are stuck on.

2. *While working with struggling writers who are having difficulty with spelling, I tend to:*
 - a. Orally spell out a new or difficult word for them.
 - b. Write the difficult words down for them to copy.
 - c. Give them some clues about the first sound, last sound, known chunks, or an analogy to a word they know.
 - d. Ask them how they could figure out the word on their own.

3. *When struggling readers look up at me and ask for help with a word while reading, I tend to:*
 - a. Smile and tell them the word.
 - b. Give them clues such as the first sound, first syllable, similar rhyming words, etc.
 - c. Say "try it" in a supportive voice and then give some clues, if needed.
 - d. Ask them why they took their eyes off the text.

4. *When a struggling writer is stuck when writing a new word, I tend to:*
 - a. Write the word for her/him so he/she can move on.
 - b. Pronounce the word several times loudly for the child.

- c. Encourage the child to say the word aloud slowly and then to record what he hears.
- d. Ask him/her what he/she can do to help him/herself.

5. *When a struggling reader is reading 'painfully' or word-by-word, I tend to:*

- a. Let him/her finish and praise his/her efforts.
- b. Tell him/her, "I'll read a page and then you read a page."
- c. Praise him/her for working so hard, but tell him/her to read by putting his/her words together, "like we talk." Then read a sentence to model this for him.
- d. Ask him/her why he/she is reading 'word-by-word.'

6. *When a struggling reader is reading and then suddenly looks up, off the text, I tend to:*

- a. Redirect him with my finger and sometimes tell him the word.
- b. Give him some wait time and then tell him the word.
- c. Tell him to "keep his eyes on the word" and prompt him with some verbal clues.
- d. Ask him why he is looking up on every word that is new or hard.

7. *When other students in the group call out a difficult word for a falling struggling reader, I tend to:*

- a. Encourage the student to keep reading on.
- b. Repeat the correct word for the student and say "sh" to the others.
- c. Tell the other students NOT to call out the words, even though they want to help, and encourage the child to "try it" alone.
- d. Ask the student why that word is hard when he has seen it so many times before!

8. *When building sight words for falling readers, I tend to:*

- a. Use mainly flashcards to teach them these words and often tell them the ones they forget.
- b. Refer them to the word wall often.
- c. Provide daily practice with reading **and** writing sight words FAST.
- d. Ask them how each sight word is spelled.

Totals: a's = _____

b's = _____

c's = _____

d's = _____

What does this suggest?

As a result of the exercise, I am mulling over:

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An Assessment Table

- Students' literacy assessment folders.
- Running Record booklets & forms (copied & collated!!)
- Date stamp and clipboard.
- Sight Words & Sight Word Phrases.
- Wordless Books.
- Writing Prompts.
- Informal Assessment Tools.





***Common Habits
of
Struggling Readers***



Reflections . . .