

Guided Reading Groups: Frequently Asked Questions

How are the groups formed?

I test the students at the beginning of the year to determine their current guided reading level. From this assessment, I place the students in groups depending on what strategies they need to work on. Although these groups are a “starting point,” they are not concrete. The groups change often during the year as a result of students’ individual progress rather than the group’s progress. This way, students are being adequately challenged at all times.

How often do the groups meet?

I will meet with each group 2-4 times per week. I also meet with students individually.

What happens in the groups?

Each week, we will focus on a book that is at instructional reading level. Instructional means that a student can read approximately 85-90% of the words and comprehend the text. Some students may be able to read words with higher accuracy, but may need to concentrate on their comprehension skills instead. The first day we meet, I will introduce the book and each student will practice reading it quietly while I “listen in” to each one, helping when necessary. The second and third days that we meet, we will revisit the book and practice reading it again individually. There will also be other skills practiced such as reading comprehension strategies, fluency, vocabulary, phonic rules and writing/sentence skills.

What will parents need to do at home?

Your child will be bringing home the guided reading book that we are working on each night that we meet. Please sit with your child while he/she reads the book and help if necessary.

Remember, they will have read the book before, so don’t be alarmed if it seems too easy. We reread books because research has shown that repeated reading builds skills such as word recognition, vocabulary development, fluency, and comprehension. Of course, it also will help to build your child’s confidence as a successful reader! ☺

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What are “free-choice” books?

On the days that your child does not meet with me for guided reading, he/she will be allowed to choose a different book to bring home. Students will select free-choice books that are either at reading level or slightly below. We do not want to discourage young readers by allowing them to choose books that are too difficult or too easy. Please sit with your child again as he/she reads and help them if necessary.

What if a parent can not read with the child on a particular night?

I understand that we all have busy schedules. If parents are unable to read on an evening, perhaps another adult such as a grandparent or other relative is available. Sometimes even big brothers and sisters read with their sibling. However, please be sure that the older sibling knows how to be encouraging during the reading time.

When do the books for guided reading and free choice need to go back to school?

The books need to be sent back **each day** in your child’s book bag, which can travel inside the take-home folder. I can not send home a new book with your child until the previous one has been returned in the bag. Thank you in advance for helping your child to work on responsibility skills.

What can parents do to help if a child gets “stuck” on a word?

- Give your child time to figure out the word
- Remind them to look for picture clues, beginning/ending sounds, and little words (chunks) that they know inside of larger words.
- If your child figures it out, ask how he/she was able to do so and praise the problem-solving skills that were used. If not, go ahead and tell what the word is at that point and encourage him/her to go on with the story.

As always, please let me know if you have any questions! Thanks! ☺

Mrs. Ely