

## Focus on Instruction: Independent Reading Practice

- **Questions for Teacher Reflection**
  - Are all my students provided with many books they can read and want to read?
  - When my students read/write, do they get to write about what they know and care about?
  - Are my students given plenty of time to explore topics and themes through reading and writing?
  - When I want my students to read/write content information, do I show them how to do it?
  - Do all of my students get opportunities to demonstrate and use their strengths in reading and writing, or do reading and writing activities in my class only accentuate their weaknesses?
- **Books in the Classroom**
  - Have appropriately leveled books and materials in the classroom.
  - Have a variety of reading material available.
  - Have teacher book talks to introduce books the students might enjoy.
  - Have reading materials that address real life situations of students.
- **What Teachers Can Do**
  - Read extensively “in all classes” to build text knowledge and fluency.
  - Read for longer periods of time.
  - Read longer texts.
  - Read texts that are linked to the curriculum.
  - Build background knowledge and vocabulary.
  - Have access to self-selected texts related to the content unit being studied.
  - Monitor students’ independent reading.
- **Generic Comprehension Questions to Ask Students as They Read**
  - Clarification: Did you get confused at any point as you were reading? Show me in the text. What did you do about it?
  - Connections: Is there a part of this piece that reminds you of something in your own life? Of something that’s happened to you? Of something else you’ve read?
  - Determining importance: What are some important things that happened in the text? How did you know they were important? Was there something interesting, but didn’t strike you as important to the message the author wanted you to get? What do you think is most important to remember about this text?
  - Inferring: What do you predict will happen next in this piece? How do you know? What do you think the author wants you to know from reading this? What evidence in the text led you to think that?
  - Questions: Can you show me a part of the text where you have a question? What were you wondering about?
  - Self-Monitoring: Did you check your understanding as you read? How? What did you do if you didn’t understand?
  - Synthesizing: Can you tell me what the piece is about in a few sentences? Can you show me a place in the piece where your thinking changed? How did your thinking change? Do you have some new ideas or information?
  - Visualizing: Were there places in the text where you made a picture or movie in your mind? What images or pictures did you see? What specific words helped you create that picture?
- **Conferencing with Students**
  - How is the reading going?
  - What do you like/dislike about this book?
  - What makes this a good choice for you?
  - Are there parts that confuse you?
  - Have students read a section of text they liked and one that is new.