Independent Reading Sample Plans

The EL Education Grades 3–5 ELA module lessons allocate time for launching and reviewing independent reading. The purpose of this section is to serve as a resource in launching and sustaining a strong independent reading program that emphasizes accountability. Lesson sequences that vary in length are included in the pages that follow. Many teachers already have robust independent reading plans in place: please view this document as a resource to enhance or extend your existing work. If you use the lesson sequences included in this document, consider which will work best given the time required by them and the needs of your students. For example, if you notice that many students need to practice logging reading in their independent reading journals, consider using "Research Reading Review: An Effective Independent Reading Journal Entry."

Lesson

Launching Independent Reading

(25 minutes)

Agenda

- Book frenzy: Display various texts for students to peruse. Ideally, these texts would include some of the titles from K–5 Recommended Text List with diverse cultures and backgrounds represented. Consider conducting brief teacher book talks on those titles related to the module.
- Give students time to browse the texts. Make this fun!
- Encourage students to select a few titles and "test-drive" them. Test-driving involves reading the first few pages to determine which one they would like to continue reading. Help students understand that for the text to be worth continuing, students should be able to read the text with good fluency and understanding. If none of them work, students can repeat this process, but they should not do this more than twice.
- Consider allowing partner selections, but keep in mind that each student needs his or her own copy of the text.
- Once students have chosen their text, invite them to start reading silently.

■ Circulate to discuss texts with students, being aware of the following:

— With texts that appear "too easy" for a student, understand that:

- Vocabulary and knowledge can still grow with simple texts.
- If reading is happening and the student is enjoying it, then that is a success.
- If the student becomes increasingly interested in the topic, he or she will likely read more complex texts about it in order to satisfy a curiosity to know more

— If a student develops a pattern over a period of time of reading only less challenging texts:

- Guide the student toward other texts on a topic you know he or she likes or is related to what he or she is currently reading, rather than telling the student to change texts.

— With texts that appear "too hard" for a student, understand that:

- A student does not have one reading level, but has many depending on the topic and his or her knowledge of it.
- For example: A student may have deep knowledge about baseball and will be able to read more complex texts on this topic. The same student may have less knowledge about boats and will not be able to read texts on this topic that are as complex when first learning about the topic.

— When checking in with students, simply ask the student about his or her book:

- If it sounds like he or she is getting something out of the book, the student should continue reading it.
- If he or she cannot easily talk about the book, ask him or her to read a short section aloud. If the student cannot read with a degree of fluency, support him or her in finding a new text on the same topic. Only do so if the student cannot read with adequate fluency and he or she does not seem to be getting anything out of the book.

Materials

■ Texts (see the K–5 Recommended Text List)

Lesson

Research Reading Review: An Effective Independent Reading Journal Entry

(15 minutes)

Agenda

■ Distribute and display a **model reading journal entry**. Tell students that this is a successful model of a reading journal entry.

■ Post and review the following directions:

1. With your partner, read the model reading journal entry aloud.

2. Discuss what makes this a successful model.

■ Refocus whole group and using a total participation technique select students to share out.

■ As students share out, capture their responses on the **Effective Reading Journal Entry anchor chart**.

- Invite students to take out their **independent reading journals** and distribute **sticky notes.**

- Invite students to:

    — Use the criteria on the anchor chart to self-assess their most recent reading journal entry.

    — Add two sticky notes to their journal entry: one thing they did well and one thing to do better next time.

Materials

- Model reading journal entry (selected and copied from a student independent reading journal; one to display)

- Effective Reading Journal Entry anchor chart (new; co-created with students)

- Independent reading journal (one per student)

- Sticky notes (two colors; one of each per student)

Lesson

Research Reading Review: Book Talk

(10 minutes)

Agenda

- Invite students to move into pairs or triads and to label themselves A, B, and C.

- Display and read aloud the following sentence frame:

    — "I am reading _____, which is about _____. I would/would not recommend it to a friend because _____."

- Model an example for students using your own **reading book** (one appropriate to share with students). (Example: "I am reading *Through the Looking Glass,* which is about a girl called Alice, whom you might recognize from the story *Alice in Wonderland.* I would recommend it because it is funny. Alice meets a lot of strange and interesting characters when she climbs through the mirror, and many of them say and do very funny things.")

- Tell students to retrieve their **research reading texts** and give them 2 minutes to think about how they would complete the sentence frame.

- Refocus whole group.

- Allocate 2 minutes for each student to share with his or her partner or triad.

- Refocus whole group. Give students specific, positive praise on their book talks. (Example: "I heard many of you giving your classmates thoughtful reasons about whether you recommend your book or not.")

Materials

- Reading book (teacher copy only)

- Research reading text (one per student)

Lesson

Research Reading Review: Connections to the Module

(10 minutes)

Agenda

- Tell students they will now participate in Back-to-Back and Face-to-Face to make connections between their research reading texts and the module. Remind students that they used this protocol in Module 1. Refer to the Appendix for the full version of the protocol.
1. Invite students to retrieve their **research reading texts**.
2. Invite students to find a partner, to label themselves A and B, and to turn back-to-back.
3. Provide the prompt and give students a minute of think time: "What connections have you made between your research reading text and the module?"
4. Invite students to turn face-to-face.
5. Invite partner B to share first. Tell them to introduce their text first, and then their answer to the prompt.
6. Invite partner A to do the same.
7. Invite students to thank each other.
8. Students repeat with a new partner.
9. Repeat until students have shared with 3 different people.

Materials

- Research reading text (one per student)

Lesson

Research Reading Review: Something Interesting

(5 minutes)

Agenda

- Invite students to move into pairs or triads and to label themselves A, B, and C.
- Tell students to retrieve their **research reading texts** and to identify one of the following in their texts that they found particularly interesting:

  — Fact

  — Paragraph

  — Image/illustration

- Refocus whole group.
- Allocate 1 minute for each student to read aloud (or show) their partner or triad the fact, paragraph, or image they chose and to explain why they found it particularly interesting.

■ Refocus whole group. Give students specific, positive praise on their conversations. (Example: "I saw a lot of you referring back to your text to describe what you found particularly interesting.")

Materials

■ Research reading text (one per student)

Lesson

Research Reading Review: New Vocabulary

(5 minutes)

Agenda

■ Distribute **sticky notes**.

■ Tell students to retrieve their **research reading texts** and **vocabulary logs** and to choose and underline a new vocabulary word they learned from their independent reading. (Note: Words from independent reading should have a star or symbol next to them.)

■ Tell students to locate that word in their independent reading texts and to mark it with a sticky note.

■ Play music and invite students to take their research reading texts, vocabulary logs, and something to write with and to move around the room in a particular way to the music (e.g., moving like a particular animal, such as a frog).

■ After 15 seconds, stop the music and invite students to pair up with the person closest to them to share their word, the meaning, and the sentence of text it was found in.

■ Invite students to record the new word they learn from their partner in their vocabulary logs.

■ Repeat this process until students have shared with three different students.

■ Ask students to return to their seats.

■ Refocus whole group. Give students specific, positive praise on their conversations. (Example: "I saw a lot of you listening carefully to your partners and asking questions to find out more.")

Materials

■ Sticky notes (one per student)

■ Research reading text (one per student)

■ Vocabulary log (one per student)