



Fountas & Pinnell
LITERACY™

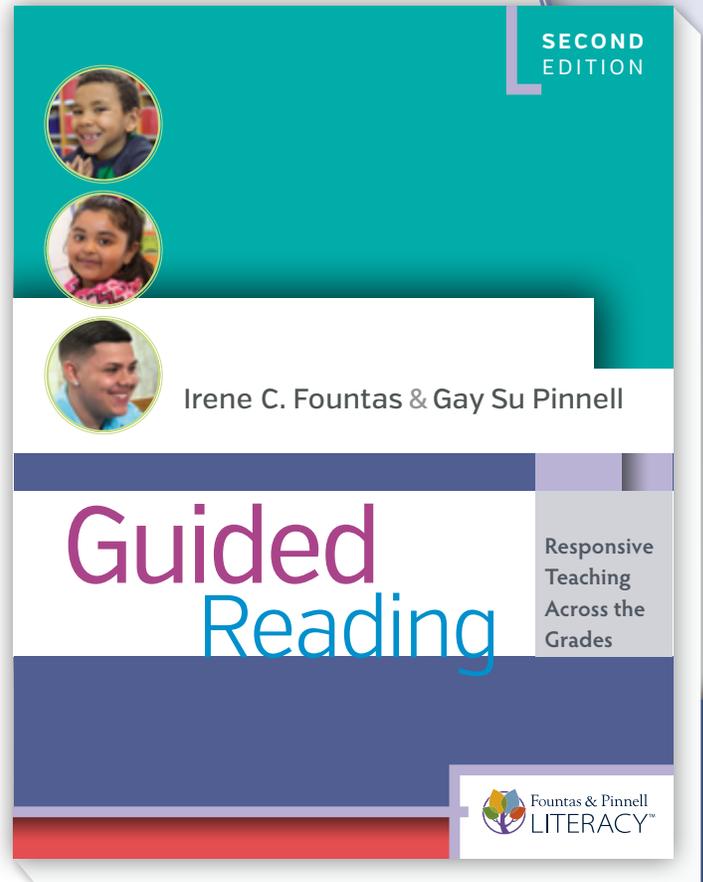
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NEW!

TRENDING LITERACY TOPICS

Q & A

In celebration of the 20th anniversary of Guided Reading, Irene Fountas and Gay Su Pinnell, unparalleled literacy leaders, sit down for a Q&A about this monumental instructional approach and its continued impact on literacy learning worldwide. With Guided Reading: Responsive Teaching Across the Grades, Second Edition, Fountas and Pinnell remind us of guided reading's critical role within a comprehensive literacy system, and the reflective, responsive teaching required to realize its full potential.



Revitalize your literacy instruction with the **new** edition of the book that changed the landscape of literacy education:

Guided Reading, SECOND EDITION
by Irene C. Fountas and Gay Su Pinnell

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Fountas & Pinnell
Guided Reading
SECOND EDITION

More strategic, more
inspiring, and more
powerful than ever.

Much has been written on the topic of guided reading over the last twenty years, but no literacy leaders have championed the topic with such depth and breadth as Irene Fountas and Gay Su Pinnell. With *Guided Reading*, teachers are able to make literacy a reality for all children.

As the pendulum of literacy education policy continues to swing, and schools continue to adapt to the Common Core State Standards, one thing remains constant—good, high-quality teaching is the foundation of education, and the right of every child.



What is the primary goal of guided reading?

The ultimate goal of guided reading is not for students to just read “this book” or even to understand a single text. But rather, through expert teaching, to create learning that is generative—learning that can be applied across texts. The primary goal of guided reading is to help students build their reading power—to build a network of strategic actions for processing texts.

REVITALIZE

your literacy instruction



Where does guided reading fit within a high-quality literacy system?

We believe guided reading is one central component of a high-quality literacy system. Guided reading instruction takes place within a larger framework that brings coherence to each student’s school experience, but it is only one component. A high-quality literacy system includes several instructional contexts—including whole-group opportunities such as interactive read-aloud, shared reading, and reading minilessons, as well as independent reading opportunities—that enable all students to access several kinds of reading and writing. In a comprehensive approach to literacy education, small-group instruction is needed for the careful observation and specific teaching needed to ensure every student is successfully literate.

It is through guided reading, however, that expert teaching can support students to make significant strides in building their processing system.



Looking at the structure of a guided reading lesson, can you speak to the critical role of instructional level texts and expert teaching in the process?

A critical aspect of guided reading is matching books to readers. Books are selected with specific students in mind. With strong teaching students can meet the demands of challenging instructional texts. Remember that the challenge for readers lies in the kind of thinking that they engage in with texts, not how hard the words are to read. The text needs to provide the right level of support and challenge for the student's current processing abilities. Instructional level texts are complex texts and provide the challenge needed to advance students' reading power with the explicit teaching found within guided reading. If the book is too difficult, then the processing will not be proficient, no matter how much teaching you do.

The lesson structure is only the beginning of providing effective guided reading instruction. Powerful teaching within the lesson requires much more. When teachers understand the ten text characteristics that are used to determine the level, they understand its demands on the reader and can use it in a more powerful way in teaching. Skilled teachers of guided reading understand how a text requires a reader to think—the demands that text makes on the reader. We consider an understanding of text characteristics an extremely important area of teacher expertise. When teachers understand the inner workings of a text, they can deliver a rich and meaningful introduction and guide a powerful discussion.

It is the combination of carefully-selected instructional texts and strong teaching that allows students' reading ability to grow. Remember that good teaching becomes moot if the text is at an inappropriate level. Through

guided reading, teachers interact with students in ways that support efficient processing. Students are not brought together in guided reading to simply read easy texts—instead, texts are, must be, challenging because reading is a self-extending process.



How does responsive teaching propel the literacy learning of all students?

Guided reading is responsive teaching. It is an instructional context within which the precise teaching moves and language choices are related to the behaviors observed, moment by moment, and which guide the reader to engage in problem-solving that expands his or her reading power. The skilled teacher of guided reading makes decisions throughout the lesson that are responsive to the learners.



When you respond precisely to the reader's observable behaviors, you can meet the child where he is and lead him forward.



We advocate for responsive teaching—teaching that is grounded in the observations of precise reading behaviors and responding to the reader in a way that enables the reader to construct in-the-head strategies that become increasingly complex. In fact, no single approach “works” for every child; but with guided reading, you vary your interactions and decisions to respond to the individual needs of each student in the group. Sometimes you invite students to engage in inquiry. Sometimes you teach explicitly. Sometimes you confirm successful problem-solving. Sometimes you prompt for

problem-solving actions. And remember that within an excellent literacy system, there are many opportunities for whole class, small group, and individual teaching, all directed toward building the competencies of each reader. When you respond precisely to the reader's observable behaviors, you can meet the child where he is and lead him forward.

Q: What new learning can be gleaned from decades of guided reading instruction?

This is an important question to consider as we look to the future of guided reading. Guided reading is not static; the texts and teacher decisions change over time as students grow in knowledge and independence, and teachers become more experienced.

We have learned much from decades of guided reading. Teachers have embraced the use of leveled texts for differentiated instruction. Fluency, efficient word-analysis, and comprehension are valued and expected, and the structure and tools of the guided reading lesson framework have become internalized for many. However,

each teacher of guided reading will continue to develop and refine their understanding of the reading process and how it changes over time, how to use observations and running record analysis to guide instruction, the characteristics of a variety of texts, and how to make effective decisions within the act of teaching across the lesson to propel guided reading to new heights. With refinement comes reflection. We hope the challenges that lie ahead in the refinement of guided reading are met with enthusiasm. Reflection will garner growth in professional expertise and in turn growth in student achievement—that is simply exciting.

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Guided Reading SECOND EDITION

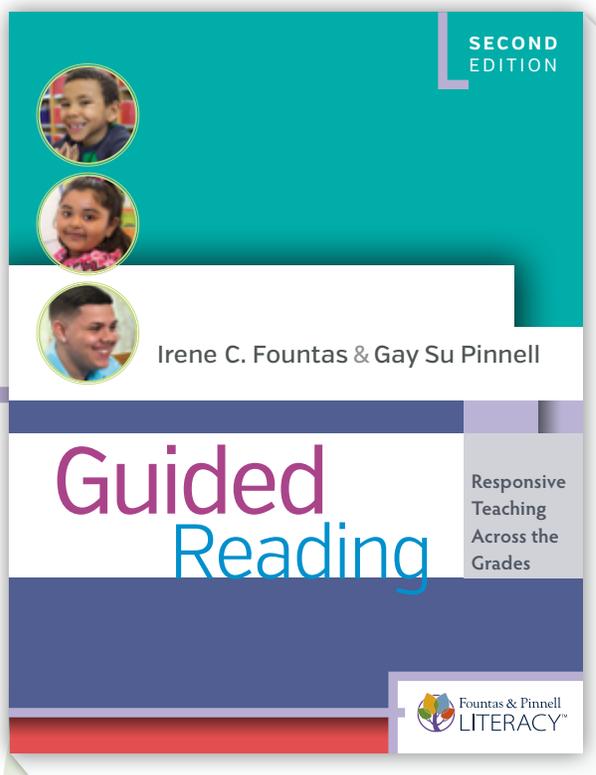
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