Miles on the Page

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# The Research

**The Critical Importance of Independent Reading:**

Research over the last twenty years points to a fairly self-evident idea: students who read consistently grow as readers. In 1988, a study published by three prominent professors and reading experts Anderson, Wilson and Fielding[[1]](#footnote-1), remains the bedrock of the volume of reading movement. The authors investigated an array of activities and their relationship to reading achievement and growth. They found that the amount of time students spent in independent reading was the single best predictor of reading achievement and gains made by students between 7-11 year olds. Specifically, they found that reading builds fluency, vocabulary and schema, or background knowledge. In the next five years, the study was expanded to examine students ranging from 7-14 years old; the results were almost identical. Other researchers, reputable sources, and acknowledged experts agree that a volume of reading is the key to reading growth, though the rationale varies.

|  |
| --- |
| **What Matters: Variation in Amount of Independent Reading** |
| **Percentile Rank** | **Minutes Per Day** | **Words Read Per Year** |
| 98% | 65 | 4,358,000 |
| 90% | 21.2 | 1,823,000 |
| 80% | 14.2 | 1,146,000 |
| 70% | 9.6 | 622,000 |
| 60% | 6.5 | 432,000 |
| 50% | 4.6 | 282,000 |
| 40% | 3.2 | 200,000 |
| 30% | 1.8 | 106,000 |
| 20% | 0.7 | 21,000 |
| 10% | 0.1 | 8,000 |
| 2% | 0 | 0 |

**But Why?**

Many researchers attribute the benefits of a volume of reading to its unique ability to close the word and world knowledge gap. David Liben from Student Achievement Partners has said that while many put a volume of reading on the back burner, increasing the amount of time scholars spend reading at home and in school is the only way to close the word knowledge gap that exists between those students with word and world knowledge deficits and those who currently have a high volume of reading. Scholars who need to improve their word and world knowledge must actually surpass the amount of reading done at high performing and competitive middle and high schools in order to catch up. Most of the research suggests that kids with a limited vocabulary are blocked out of the text when they don’t know the words and thus the primary cause for comprehension issues is vocabulary. In terms of vocab acquisition, we do know that students require a working vocabulary of 60,000-80,000 words required to be college and career ready. This means that scholars must acquire about 3,000-5,000 words a year to be competitive[[2]](#footnote-2).  Most of the research suggests that kids acquire words in three ways:

1. Through oral conversation – research suggests this is most effective in elementary school, as adult conversation is typically held at a 5th grade vocabulary level and students acquire relatively few words this way as they get older.
2. Direct instruction –highlighting the meaning of words in context and use of a formal vocabulary program enables scholars to engage in word study and find patterns within word meanings.
3. Reading widely –the more students read, the more words they acquire through repeated exposure in new contexts and morphologies. Thus begins a virtuous cycle where the more scholars read, the more words they know and thus the more texts they are able to access.

Research also suggests that a volume of reading can positively contribute to world knowledge acquisition through a cycle known as the “Mathew Effect.”[[3]](#footnote-3) Much like vocabulary acquisition, the premise suggests that there is an integral relationship between reading, learning more words, gaining more knowledge about the world, and continually growth in reading comprehension; thus kids that read more tend to learn more.  According to the Mathew Effect, the inverse is also true for scholars who read less. Inherently, this creates classrooms and schools where the rich get rich and the poor get poorer with regards to reading ability and content knowledge. Stanovich, Biemiller, and Launder all proved the integral relationship between volume of reading and word and world knowledge in separate studies over the last 20 years.

Research, common sense and collective experience all point to the prominent place that a volume of reading has in any comprehensive literacy program. However, given the equally important role of closely reading complex text, it can be challenging to build in the time, accountability mechanisms, and teacher skill required to ensure that both are done consistently and at a high quality. Both are important levers for student achievement.

Reading achievement is based on a symphony of capable decoding, fluency, reading comprehension, critical thinking, world, and word knowledge. Both a volume of reading and opportunities to closely read complex text are required for scholars to improve their comprehension and independent reading abilities

In closing, we know that research supports Achievement First schools finding ways to build in more time for a greater volume of independent reading both inside and outside of class. We also know that if our scholars are going to be successful in college, they will need to build the habits to independently tackle texts themselves. Alumni reports from both AF Amistad High School and AF Brooklyn High School suggest that scholars need to become comfortable with reading large quantities of text independently and outside of class before they set foot on campus. This is a shared responsibility across our network. Furthermore, our schools must “find a ways to prepare scholars to read for the rigor of their [college courses] courses.”[[4]](#footnote-4) The following proposals offer strategies for schools to address volume of reading within a comprehensive program.

# Accountable Independent Reading: Building AIR into a Scholar’s Day

|  |
| --- |
| **Volume of Reading in School Schedules** |
| **Block:** | **Description:** | **Benefits and Pitfalls:** | **Ways to Improve Block** |
| Tiered\* Reading Block:-Guided Reading-Reading Club (modeled after Brownsville MS’ Reading Club FOI—[see Appendix](#_Appendix_A:_Model))-Independent Reading*\* All schools in Achievement First should offer a reading block for scholars in 2nd-8th grade, though whether it is tiered or untiered is entirely up to the school site.**\*We strongly recommend that 9th-10th grade also offers a reading block. If this is not feasible, it essential that Guided Reading/Reading Tutorial is baked into the schedule and well-staffed to ensure that all struggling scholars are supported.*  | A sacred block during the school day, lasting at least 30 minutes is carved out for scholars to account for volume of reading rather than close reading. Depending on reading ability and willingness, scholars may be targeted for Guided Reading, Reading Club or Independent Reading. All options must be staffed with an attentive teacher held accountable for the volume of reading scholars complete, though the level of supports vary by structure. | **Benefits:*** Right level of intervention appropriate to scholar need
* Ensures reluctant readers get accountability and supervision
* Group size controlled for struggling readers

------------------------------------------------------------* By targeting particular scholars for the appropriate type of reading block, this system ensures the appropriate level of support to all scholars.
* Students targeted for guided reading get more individualized attention, data collection toward progress goals, and targeted texts.
* Students who may be reluctant readers or are in danger of becoming struggling readers are targeted for Reading Club to ensure increased accountability and joy embedded into more shared reading experiences.
* Students who are reading above grade level will independently read, allowing them to explore their own passions in text. Grouping for IR blocks can be larger, thus ensuring that scholars enrolled in guided reading are in groups no larger than 6.
* **If your school has the capacity to ensure that 100% of scholars get Guided Reading or Reading Club without sacrificing the size of groupings in intervention groups, this is the strongest option.**

**Pitfalls:*** To keep Guided Reading groups to six scholars or less, creative scheduling and staffing is required
* Guided Reading does require teacher skill and must be staffed by teachers with a literacy background
* Guided Reading, Reading Club and Independent Reading require teachers to stay on top of strong accountability mechanisms and ensure scholar investment. This requires time and effort.
* In high school, 9th-10th grade should have this time, though it is challenging in the context of high school schedules.
 | * Ensure scholars are actively and independently reading for the majority of time in the block.
* Control the group size and consider the teacher. **Smaller groups and highly skilled instructors should be prioritized for struggling readers.**
* Texts for Reading Club should support Literature or other content areas. Brownsville MS has seen great investment and depth of knowledge when pairing a non-fiction book to support the content in literature. [See Brownsville’s Reading Club FOI in Appendix A for guidance.](#_Appendix_A:_Model)
* To increase scholar accountability during reading club discussion, vary the way scholars access the discussion questions or TDQs This could include the following:
	+ Give the focus question at the end of the reading period
	+ Give multiple focus questions
	+ Ask them to annotate for perhaps the most important information or the questions they have
	+ Give them a lens for reading instead of a question
 |
| Increased Accountable Independent Reading (AIR) During Literature, Composition, and Content Area Classrooms*\*AIR in literature class in isolation is not a sufficient solution to increasing volume of reading. AIR must also happen in other blocks during the day as well as at home.* | The majority of in class reading should be done independently or prioritized for close reading. [During all content classes, scholars should spend time acquiring content through AIR rather than lectures.](#_Appendix_D:_AIR)  The teacher guides scholars through strategic checks for understanding, but allows scholars to access knowledge and utilize reading skills independently. | **Benefits:*** Embeds volume of reading into the literature, composition, and content area classes
* Ensures increased opportunities to read with increasing independence and grappling
* Annotations reveal what scholars can understand when reading a text by themselves

 **Pitfalls:*** Given text complexity, not all texts in Literature class are conducive to large amounts of AIR
* Teacher skill is required to ensure that scholars are reading accountably and teachers can collect data through annotations or journals.
 | * Are scholars reading enough during the school day? **School Leaders should engage in a Slice Protocol at the beginning of the year in grade teams to see the amount and quality of independent reading done over the course of the day**. [See Appendix E for a description of the protocol.](#_Appendix_E:_Assessing)
* For each unit, scholars should have access to and should be assigned to read a number of non-fiction texts that help them build background knowledge on the subject. [See Appendix C for guidance on creating text sets.](#_Appendix_C:_Guidance)
 |
| **Homework and Outside School** |
| **Recommended HW** | **Description** | **Benefits and Pitfalls** | **Methods to Improve** |
| Volume of Reading Packets | At the beginning of ELA, Science or History units, scholars are given packets to ensure they read deeply on the topic. For instance, if scholars are about to launch a unit on the Russian Revolution, they will be given a packet with a large number of texts so they can build their world and word knowledge on the topic. These packets are likely not at the top of the text complexity band per grade level, but are rather relatively accessible for scholars to read independently. Packets may be gradated based on need.  | **Benefits*** **Jet propel Tier 2 and Tier 3 vocabulary growth** as students will likely see the same words in a variety of contexts.
* Give scholars more experiences with complex text; as scholars learn more about the topic of study, **they will be more able to access complex texts within the series of texts**.
* Ensures volume of reading also occurs out of school
* Deep reading within a topic builds vocabulary, schema, and understanding about a topic
* Packets are likely to aid comprehension throughout the unit
* Volume of reading is deeply connected with key content
* Pushes scholar independence and accountability for reading
* This can be used for homework, content acquisition in all content area classrooms including History and Science, and even in Guided Reading.

**Pitfalls:*** Packets will likely be time consuming and complex to put together. Teachers should consider the Greenfield’s model for “playlists”—a selection of readings, videos and accompanying questions—to help get the right volume and structure for scholars. **See guidance and examples in Appendix.**
* Accountability mechanisms are essential to ensure efficacy; this will be challenging given that most of the reading will not take place during class
* Comprehension could be uneven depending on individual scholar ability
 | * When will scholars engage with these volume of reading packets? While they can obviously be assigned for homework, shorter texts can make for high impact Do Nows. Have them read 3-4 paragraphs of background before engaging in the day’s lesson.
* What’s the best way to create these packets? [See Appendix C for guidance.](#_Appendix_C:_Guidance)
 |
| **Literature, History and Science Homework** | When scholars are reading text in class – either to build background or as part of the core understandings of a unit – this can and should be assigned for homework. In literature class, this might mean assigning a portion of the core novel, whereas content classes might assign pages from a textbook or primary source. | **Benefits:*** Ensures accountability and ownership of material
* Creates more room for discussion and close reading because not all pages must be read aloud in class
* Builds independence and college readiness habits

**Pitfalls:*** Accountability must be consistent
* It is challenging to ensure that all scholars have deep comprehension of the reading in a time-efficient way
 | * How can I be sure scholars are held accountable for IR? It’s recommended that you use either annotations, quizzes, or double entry journals. [A sample template is included in Appendix B.](#_Appendix_B:_)
 |
| **Carefully Tracked Independent Reading** | Many schools have worked hard to ensure that a culture of independent reading is sustained within and outside of school. This includes running a robust library with great texts, ensuring accountability for miles on the page, and holding scholars accountable for reading through quizzes, journals and book reports.  | **Benefits:*** Allows scholars to develop passions by reading what truly interests them
* Puts increased accountability on scholars to read consistently and for pleasure
* Though teachers are accountably tracking reading, there is less of a planning lift

**Pitfalls:*** Challenging to track and hold scholars accountable—this suggestion will likely be the most difficult for newer teachers to hold all scholars accountable
* For some scholars, reading independently will not motivate them to read widely
* Without sacred time in the day or staffing allocations to monitor IR, it often slips through the cracks
* Our external consultant David Liben warns that this measure is not typically effective at the High School level. If scholars in High School are not already hooked on reading, the lack of accountability and the lack of structure will prove challenging to track.
 | * While giving scholars freedom to choose the books they read independently is a great way to hook some scholars, struggling readers may not be able to pick out the best books for them. Best practices at Hartford High School include giving scholars access to [Good Reads.](http://www.goodreads.com/)  The website allows scholars to review books, recommend them to friends, and access a feature called Listopia that allows them to see what other books are similar to the books they enjoyed.
 |

# Appendix A: Model Reading Club FOI

Brownsville MS Reading Clubs FOI

***Note for User:*** *Use this FOI as a model. Brownsville MS under the leadership of Katherine Roger, Natalie Falsgraf, and Keith Brooks has had a lot of success with their current thinking around Reading Clubs. Special thanks to the team for giving us access to their model. They have made sacred space in their schedule for this block for all scholars and are very strategic about how they group scholars, the books they choose (they all support Literature in some way), how the block is planned, and who teaches which scholars.*

**Reading Club Fundamentals of Instruction (FOI)**

**2014-2015**

**Purpose**

We are preparing our scholars for college and career readiness. In order to do so effectively, we must address the demands of the Common Core while aggressively supporting scholars to read on or above grade level.

The Common Core demands that scholars read a lot of complex text, including non-fiction. The Reading Club structure allows for scholars to read more complex text throughout the day; it is thematically linked to the anchor texts scholars are reading in Literature class and will often be non-fiction. Reading texts that are linked topically or thematically also builds more word and world knowledge, another demand of the Common Core.

Reading in a small group, close to the scholars’ reading level, with structured teacher support, also helps scholars grow many levels in reading in a short amount of time. The increased rate of individualized feedback to each scholar is a power mechanism to help every student grow. The daily accountability for reading is a needed structure to help scholars build great habits as readers, the written feedback through IR journals helps scholars become better readers, and the conversation through the discussion of the final question for the day builds a love of reading. When all of these elements are executed in conjunction, this 30 minute period is a powerful opportunity for scholars to build both skill in reading and love of reading.

**Structure**

Three teachers divide a class of approximately 32 students into groups of 8-12. In the CTT class, there will be 4 teachers and the class will be divided 4 ways to allow for further differentiation.

The groups are organized into “low,” “medium,” and “high” groups (though level is not messaged to students) based on F & P level and scholars will be reading books on or above their reading level.

On a regular schedule, a Reading Club meetings four times a week for 30 minutes, Monday through Thursday.

**Components of Reading Club (RC)**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Element** | **Details** |
| **Scholar Homework for Reading Club:** * 30 minutes independent reading at home
* IR book is chosen by student (on level, or one level away) and is different from Reading Club book
* Scholars choose from a “menu” of prompts and write a 1 paragraph CER response in their journal each night
* Assigned 5 times/week (M, T, W, Th, and one time over the weekend)
* Scholars follow top-quality guidelines using the CER rubric (rubrics progress in rigor from 5th to 8th grade)
* Reading Club teachers grade all 5 entries/week for completion (graded out of 20 points); Reading Club teachers give more in-depth feedback, based on the CER rubric, on 2 entries/week per scholar
* **\*New option for Reading Club teachers in 2014-2015**: One of the 30 minute assignments of at-home reading can be from the group’s shared Reading Club book. The CER question for that evening is assigned during RC and students respond to that in writing in their journal. NOTE: This new option is a pilot and is recommended for those who have previously executed Reading clubs.
* The rationale for this slightly modified at-home reading is it prepares students for HS and college-level preparation for book discussions. It also provides a more standardized playing field for the teacher to grade CER responses for quality.
 | * Journals are checked during the IR portion of RC
* RC teachers give feedback on ~5 entries/day (throughout a 4 day cycle, this ensures every scholar/group receives feedback twice). See examples from Elm City. Teacher spot checks *all* entries for completion.
* If a scholar fails to turn in a journal entry that day, the RC teacher enters $-5 Scholar Dollars on Kickboard for a “missing assignment.” This must be done by 4:30 pm that day.
* If a scholar fails to turn in a journal entry that day, there are two options (to be determined by Reading Club grade team): 1) (5th grade option for 2014-2015) Teachers call home when a student has not turned in 3 journal entries in a row. 2) RC teacher submits the student’s name to Ryan by 2:30 pm; Ryan will send home a “no IR journal” Robo Call to all families of scholars missing journals by 5 pm that evening.
* 20 points per journal entry, for a total of 100 points/week.
* 20 points per day for participation (based on scholar work and contribution to group discussion)
* 20 points per week for effort (based on great character)
* Use standardized Google document for grading
* RC teacher ensures Google doc is up-to-date for that grade’s respective Lit Teacher by EOD the following Monday
* Lit Teacher sends KR list on Tuesday if any Reading Club grades are missing
* KR follows-up on Reading Club grades
* When there are alternative schedules, Reading Club teachers are still responsible for grading their student’s IR Journals. All IR journals will be on the back table during HR (after the 3-4th week of school, depending on the grade).
 |
| **Book Selection for Reading Club*** Scholars read a high, medium, or low leveled text that corresponds with the text they are reading in Lit class (ex. for *Rules* unit, scholars would read corresponding texts with a theme of “being accepted for you who are” like *Wonder*, *A Face First*, etc)
* All scholars in the group read the book at the same time (ex. the Reading Club “unit” starts and ends on approximately the same dates as the Lit block unit)
* Reading club units 1 and 2 are planned by Katherine (7th & 6th), Natalie (5th). After the first two units, lead planners will be established for each RC level of each grade and Katherine will provide feedback.
* All teachers will submit a “textual analysis” document to Katherine by 8 pm the night before of beginning a new text. This ensures the teacher has thoroughly read the newest RC book and is fully prepared to guide student through the nuances of the text. This is essential part of the “intellectual preparation” our platinum teachers do before executing any teaching with scholars. KR will follow-up if the textual analysis is missing or the teacher indicates he/she would like more support with a particular aspect of teaching the book.
 | **Examples of beginning of year texts**See complete year-long scope and sequence for full list of texts.**Unit 1- 5th*** Differentiated- The Thing About Georgie (O)
* Low- Firegirl (Q)
* Med- Wonder (V/W)
* High- Wonder (W)

**Unit 1-6th*** Differentiated- The Boy Who Lost His Face (R)
* Low- Petty Crimes (S)
* Med-Bad Boy (X)
* High- Bad Boy (X)

**Unit 1-7th*** Low- Hunger Games (Y/Z)
* Med- Hunger Games (Y/Z)
* High- Fahrenheit 451 (Z)
 |
| **Minute-by-Minute*** 1 min: Scholars transition silently to the space—either in a new room or moving desks within the same room. Teacher passes out materials. Scholar materials:
* **IR journal: scholars bring this each day**
* Blue Book (to record evidence from that day)
* Page #s and Focus question (typed on slips of paper that kids tape into notebook)
* Reading Club set of novels
* 1 min: Teacher introduces the day’s lesson *“Hello! Welcome back, Reading Club. As you remember, yesterday in our book \_\_\_ happened. Today as you read, you’re looking for \_\_\_ to happen and you’re going to read from page \_\_ to \_\_. It’s on your focus question sheet. Get excited—this part of the book is great. Can one scholar read our ‘focus question for today?’ As a reminder, you should be finding at least 2 key pieces of evidence that answer or support this focus question as you read independently and writing those in your Blue Book. At the end, I will cold call on you and we will discuss, so you must be ready to share.”\**
* 20 mins: Scholars read independently. While scholars are reading independently, teacher first circulates to grade IR journals (~5/day, about 15 minutes total) then to whisper conference\* (~2/day, about 6 minutes total)
* 30 secs: Final prep for the discussion. Teacher gives 30 second warning and circulates to make sure all scholars have written down appropriate evidence in Blue Book.
* 5-7 mins: Discussion of focus question using evidence from the text and top-quality guidelines.
* 1 min: Transition back to class (if next class is lunch, RC teacher brings scholars directly to lunch)
 | * Scholars sit in a “team” of desks (desks are close together to facilitate circulation; desks do not need to face each other).
* Teacher materials (carry in small bin for organization):
* Teacher clipboard with CER rubric and grading sheet
* Teacher binder with hard copy lesson plans
* Blue Books & RC Novels (these remain with teacher)
* Tape (as needed to tape in focus questions)
* Timer
* Encouraged: visual anchor of “Sentence Starters for Discussion”
* AR tickets\*
* Scholars listen silently
* Scholars begin to read RC Book independently
* Scholars write down evidence in their Blue Book that proves or answers the focus question. ***Please note***: *Specific guidance from David Liben on this element suggests that it is important to vary the way you assess comprehension during reading club. This can be accomplished the following ways:*
	+ *Give question at end of reading time*
	+ *Give multiple questions*
	+ *Ask for annotations*
	+ *Lens through reading instead of a question*
* Teacher circulates and pulls up a chair next to a scholar when grading journal. Teacher can whisper conference with scholar about written response during this time.
* Teacher uses CER rubric to grade
* Teacher writes down grade on grading tracker for the week (will turn in to Literature teacher)
* Teachers grades ~5 journals/day (~15 minutes total)
* Scholars are silently taking notes on the discussion question (ex. finding evidence relating to discussion question)
* When finished grading ~5, teacher circulates to whisper conference with scholars (~2/day)
* Teacher may ask about evidence chosen (“why did you chose that evidence?” “what’s happening in this part of the text?” and ask the scholar to whisper). See “Prompting Guide” for more examples of conference questions.
* Teacher sets timer for 5 minutes
* Teacher cold calls on 2 scholars to give their evidence and explain how it answers the discussion question.
* Other scholars can silently co-sign to agree, or respectfully disagree to disagree.
* Teacher will then have volunteers to add on to the discussion
* One scholar speaks at a time; scholars track the speaker
* Scholars should use top-quality response language (ie. “I agree with \_\_\_ and want to add on…” “I disagree because in the text\_\_\_\_”). Scholars should reference the “Sentence Starters for Discussion” chart as needed.
* As the year progresses, the goal of the discussion is for students to sustain discussion of the focus question without teacher involvement; the discussion should be 100% on topic and student driven.
* Teacher wraps up the discussion in the last 20 seconds by summarizing key points and previewing tomorrow’s lesson
* Scholars put away materials and transition silently. Scholars take IR journals with them each day.
 |
| **First Two Weeks Roll-Out*** Lit Teacher lead plans the first 2 weeks of Reading Club; it is a procedures roll-out. Students will also go to the library and our beginning-of-year Book Fair. Collaboration between grades for these plans is highly encouraged ☺
* All RC teachers are “on” and report to the Lit room during assigned RC time
* The Lit teacher (Natalie/David/Allison) teaches scholars the purpose of RC, journals, how to set up journals, how to write a great CER, etc. as well as general hype for reading and for books
* During this time RC teachers support Natalie/David/Allison and scholars in setting up strong procedures for RC and hyping reading
* This establishes all teachers as RC teachers and procedures are consistent between groups
* The “first day” of Reading Clubs with broken-off small groups is Monday 9/9 or 9/15 (two or three weeks in)
* The first unit plans are planned by Natalie (5th) or Katherine (6th or & 7th)
 | **Notes on additional Reading Club structures*** One time a week for 15 minutes, scholars will go to the Library with their club to return and check-out on-level books. Students who are done checking out books may reading or take an AR Quiz in the library
* Reading Club teachers are responsible for hyping IR and AR with their students. Reading Club teachers distribute mid-month and end-of-month AR reports to students
* Reading Club teachers update the “books read” sticker chart in their students’ HRs
* Reading Club teachers should feel free to be creative with book hype and group-specific incentives. The goal is for kids to read, read, read.
* When possible a Reading Club “sub” is listed on our AFBRMS Master schedule. This teacher is responsible for filling in for any absent Reading Club teachers. If no one is absent, the “sub” teacher may use the time for observation or prep. The rationale for a more permanent “sub” role when possible is that it allows for more consistency during Reading Clubs with our students.
* Reading Club is a great character-building opportunity for our students. Teachers are encouraged to engage in character and thematic discussions with students as the culminating discussion question for a particular book.
 |
| **Supporting Documents*** There are many supporting documents that provide additional structure and support for Reading Club teachers. These include, but are not limited to:
* Example IR journal grading (PDFs)
* Reading Club unit plans (all)
* Reading Club long-term plan
* Reading Club rosters, by student, by F & P level, organized by RC teacher and grade level
* Discussion sentence starters 1.0 and 2.0
* Example videos of RC procedures & discussion (student groups) and exemplar discussion videos (teacher groups)
* PD sessions from 2013-2014 on CER norming and discussion
* Reading Club check-list for observation
* Reading Club Library rotation
* AR information and letters home that will be sent home via Reading Clubs
 |

# Appendix B: Template for Accountable Independent Reading Journals

*(can be adapted for all content area classrooms)*

***Note for User:*** *This is a possible template for collecting student responses during AIR both in class and out of class. The questions under the “Responses” column are vetted by David Liben and prompt scholars to engage in metacognition and determining importance within a text. This will allow teachers a window into what scholars deem to be most important in a text and will allow for more authentic assessment of what a scholar understands and does not understand about certain texts.*

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Pages Read: | Responses (Choose to write on *at least* 2 of these bullet points):* What are the most important points or ideas?
* What connections can I make between this and what we've discussed in class?
* What don't I understand?
* Reflections
 |
| Most important passage(s):  |  |

# Appendix C: Guidance for Creating Volume of Reading Packets

**(Guidance adapted from Jeffrey Imrich and the Greenfield Project’s Playlists;** [**follow this link**](https://drive.google.com/a/achievementfirst.org/file/d/0B2RbHre55wePMHVBMG1GYVAwUlE/view?usp=sharing) **for an example provided by Student Achievement Partners)**

***Note for User:*** *The following table provides some guidelines and resources for teachers to create their own volume of reading packets and bundles. Student Achievement Partners also regularly runs workshops that help school teams create these text sets. Reach out to Team ELA if members of your school are interested in attending in the fall.*

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Component** | **Description** |
| Hook:  | For each unit of study, there should be at least one essential question. The question should spark scholar interest and create investment. |
| Key Vocab: | Previews the most essential tier 3 vocabulary words students will encounter. Where necessary, include tier 2 words. Option: break up vocabulary words by text. |
| Text Intro: | A short text that frames up the topic of study. It gives a high level summary of the information that follows. This text is on or just below grade level. |
| 5+ Texts at Gradated Levels: | * Purpose is to build background knowledge and vocabulary.
* Level: These texts should range from students’ independent reading level to students’ grade level or one above their grade level. The length of texts should range from a couple paragraphs to four pages.
* The first text should provide most of the necessary content and be at an accessible reading level. It can be followed by texts that go more deeply. Text complexity should progress as scholars learn more about the topic.
* The following resources can be used to find texts:
	+ [ReadWorks](http://www.readworks.org/)
	+ CT and NY Library Databases (you can search by Lexile Levels)
	+ NYTimes and other media outlets are recommended for older readers
 |
| Video and other media (when appropriate) | While most of the texts found in a volume of reading packet will be articles, essays, or even fiction, from time to time including video, games, audio clips or other interactive experiences can enhance the learning of our scholars. These should only be added when they will significantly increase student engagement and understanding. |
| Check for Understanding | At the end of every text, there should be a check for understanding built in. These could be quiz questions or an online assessment. Online assessments, like [Quizlet](http://quizlet.com/) in particular, allow students to self-identify gaps in their own understanding before they go to class. |

# Appendix D: AIR Recommendations Across Contents

***Note for User:***  *The following recommendations are found in each content area’s FOI. Please review to see how a volume of reading happens over the course of a scholar’s day, both inside and outside of the classroom.*

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Class | Allotment of Time | Teacher Actions | Student Actions |
| Literature | **Reading Workout** * 25-40 minutes of AIR per class
* 60-70% of lessons within a unit
 | Teacher asks rich, text-dependent questions to ensure students deep literal and inferential comprehension of students. In all cases, questioning should be as minimally invasive as possible. Questioning should adjust to what students reveal about their own comprehension of the text, rather than assuming that proactive clarifications are needed through direct questioning. During a reading workout, teachers should focus questions and targeted discussion on what demands attention from the text. This includes:1. Strong literal comprehension
2. Discussion of trends in author’s craft and choices
3. Grappling with the big idea(s) present within the text
4. Developing an awareness of how they as readers make meaning

Facilitating Student Grappling and Discussion: Given the rigor of TDQs and complexity of text, scholars should make mistakes, which in turn should lead to grappling opportunities. Scholar responses are corrected and refined in one or more of three ways:(1) through text-based discussion with classmates,(2) by rereading the text to better inform one’s response, or(3) by limited redirection from the teacher.  | Scholars read the text in accordance with teacher expectations.* Scholars annotate the text meaningfully, under annotation guidelines or as a cultivated habit, to demonstrate their thinking and engage in analyses of the text.
* Scholars use small and whole class discussion to make meaning of the text in accordance with teacher expectations and always using textual evidence to support their responses.

Scholars grapple and demonstrate grit – there should be ample opportunities for scholars to develop and refine their analyses, and scholars should demonstrate the habits (or the development of habits) necessary to successfully engage in refinement and correction. Scholars respond appropriately to the teacher’s push for refinement.Teacher plans the mode of reading the text based on text demands and appropriate variety. Teacher sets the expectations for reading, including ample annotations.Partner-Reading or Independent Reading: There are some rigorous text demands and barriers, including challenging vocabulary, complex syntax, or nuanced background knowledge required to access the text. However, scholars should be able to navigate these barriers and analyze the text/respond to TDQs |
| Composition | **Reading Workout** * 25-40 minutes of AIR per class
* 10-20% of lessons within a unit
 | Same recommendations as in Literature Reading Workout—see above | Same recommendations as in Literature Reading Workout—see above |
| Guided Reading Intervention | * Time set aside for intervention daily
* 15 minutes or more of independent reading
 | * There are **specific, pre-planned** questions that drive the student’s focus during reading and the comprehension conversation in the lesson to independence.
* The teacher should initially use a broad question to assess the scholar’s understanding to determine their level or comprehension (e.g., “What is happening in the text right now?”).
* The teacher should scaffold using back pocket questions to meet the level of comprehension required to independently make meaning of the text (e.g. if the student missed a major event when describing what happened in the text, the teacher would scaffold by asking “What major even happened?”).
* At the conclusion of the conference, the teacher reviews the comprehension practiced/honed to reinforce what the scholar is able to do and what scholars need to work on to become independent readers.
* Scholars are conferred with once a week.
 | * Scholars should spend **at least 15 minutes** actively reading in text every day.
* There is a clear introduction that may include a mini-lesson and is limited to 5 minutes max.
* Scholars are actively **reading independently**: not via control the game, round-robin, choral, or popcorn.
 |
| Reading Club or Independent Reading Block | * Sacred block of independent reading time set aside daily, geared for volume of reading
* 20-25 minutes of AIR per class
 | * While scholars are reading independently, teacher first circulates to grade IR journals (~5/day, about 15 minutes total) then to whisper conference\* (~2/day, about 6 minutes total)
* Teacher may ask about evidence chosen (“why did you chose that evidence?” “what’s happening in this part of the text?” and ask the scholar to whisper).
 | * Scholars read independently for 20 minutes
* Scholars are silently taking notes on the discussion question (ex. finding evidence relating to discussion question
 |
| History | **Reading to Learn*** 15-30 minutes of AIR per class
* One of eight lesson types

**Reading to Write*** 10-20 minutes of AIR per class
* One of eight lesson types
 | **Notes for Implementation:*** Setting a purpose for reading in the form of an overarching question for inquiry gives students clarity and motivation for their reading. This is far preferable than a laundry list of comprehension questions after each source.
* It’s important for students to have a clear vision of excellence for what they should be doing as they read (e.g. contextualizing sources, annotated key ideas, synthesizing across the text/sources), which should be done in as efficient manner as possible.
* A teacher-lead think aloud is not always necessary to conduct in this portion of the lesson. However, given the fact that this is a key lesson type that allows teachers to directly teach key reading/historical thinking skills, the opportunity should be considered.
* The vast majority of this portion of the lesson should involve students independently analyzing text, although it is entirely appropriate to segment CFU’s within reading chunks.
* Graphic organizers/worksheets should be kept to a minimum here so that students are developing independence in their reading and note-taking.
 |
| Science | **Explain and Engage Lessons*** One lesson per week is based in 50% text
 | **Notes on implementation:*** The teacher should set a purpose for reading the text that directly ties to answering the framing question for the lesson.  The text should be a source of evidence that will be used to answer the question.
* When paired with scientific investigation, the text should be used after the investigation so that students can use it as a source of information to supplement and support ideas developed from the investigation.
* The following are middle school expectations for the use of text in science according to the Next Generation Science Standards:

· Critically read scientific texts adapted for classroom use to determine the central ideas and/or obtain scientific and/or technical information to describe patterns in and/or evidence about the natural and designed world(s). · Integrate qualitative and/or quantitative scientific and/or technical information in written text with that contained in media and visual displays to clarify claims and findings.· Gather, read, and synthesize information from multiple appropriate sources and assess the credibility, accuracy, and possible bias of each publication and methods used, and describe how they are supported or not supported by evidence. · Evaluate data, hypotheses, and/or conclusions in scientific and technical texts in light of competing information or accounts.* The following are high school expectations for the use of text in science according to the Next Generation Science Standards:

· Critically read scientific literature adapted for classroom use to determine the central ideas or conclusions and/or to obtain scientific and/or technical information to summarize complex evidence, concepts, processes, or information presented in a text by paraphrasing them in simpler but still accurate terms.· Compare, integrate and evaluate sources of information presented in different media or formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively) as well as in words in order to address a scientific question or solve a problem. · Gather, read, and evaluate scientific and/or technical information from multiple authoritative sources, assessing the evidence and usefulness of each source. · Evaluate the validity and reliability of and/or synthesize multiple claims, methods, and/or designs that appear in scientific and technical texts or media reports, verifying the data when possible. |
| Total Time Recommended for AIR |
| For Middle School and Elementary School Students starting in 3rd Grade:* Reading should happen every class period
* During the week, at least one hour of AIR during the school day and at home
* On the weekends, students should be reading between 5-6 hours at home
	+ **Overall, this is a recommendation of at least 10 hours of AIR per week**

For High School Students:* Reading should happen every class period
* During the week, at least one hour of AIR should be completed at home **in addition** to what scholars read throughout the course of the day.
* On the weekends, students should be reading between 7-10 hours at home
	+ **Overall, this is a recommendation of at least 15-20 hours of AIR per week**
 |

# Appendix E: Assessing AIR through the Slice Protocol

**Purpose:** The Slice Protocol (developed by ASCD) is meant to gather the following information:

* A large cross-section of ordinary student work during a narrow span of time (1-2 days)
* Help us assess the impact of teacher actions and assignments on student learning
* Help determine a school’s focus areas on teaching and learning
* **For assessing Accountable Independent Reading, gathering the assignments of one scholar over the course of 1-2 days will allow you to see how much the scholar was expected to read, the scaffolds in place that help a scholar access reading, the quality and complexity of material students are expected to read, and the degree to which the scholar met expectations.**

**The Pre-Work:** A member of the leadership team needs to set up an agenda and gather student work on a designated day or designated days. Efforts need to be made to ensure we get work from all classes the scholar attends. Depending on the purpose of the protocol, it is probably preferred that the scholar has completed the work. (Variations might also include having a video camera follow a single scholar to all of his or her classes). The leadership team needs to set aside time during Friday PD for either grade teams to work together or set up a separate meeting.

**The Agenda:** While this meeting could take place in two parts in order to get the group’s input on what the focus of the Slice Protocol could be, *for assessing AIR*, the School Leader or Grade Level Chair can collect the work and determine logistics ahead of time. During the meeting, it’s recommended to cover the following agenda (adapted from ASCD):

* **Frame the parameters of the discussion** (5 minutes) Facilitator presents guiding questions and agenda. Presents purpose of discussion.
* **Examine Scholar Work** (20-30 minutes—reviewing work can also be assigned ahead of time) Group examines scholar work and takes notes, identifying trends in both student completion and assignments. Depending on size of group, you may choose to break up into smaller groups.
* **Identify Trends in Scholar Work and Assignments** (10-15 minutes) Participants share out findings, patterns, trends, and suggestions for strengthening both the scholar work and the assignments. Assign a note-taker and be sure to synthesize.
* **Debrief the process and identify next steps** (5-10 minutes) Allow this time for participants to give feedback on the protocol, especially if this becomes part of your regular rotation for assessing scholar work. Ensure members have clear next instructional steps.
	+ *Please note that time allotments depend on the amount of scholar work, any pre-work assigned, and the number of participants. Depending on your variables, you may need to adjust times.*

For more information, access the full protocol as well as other protocols [here.](http://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED509798.pdf)

1. Anderson, Richard, Paul Wilson, and Linda Fielding. “Growth in Reading and How Students Spend Their Time Outside of Schools.” *Reading Research Quarterly.* Published by International Reading Association. [Available here.](http://www.palmbeachschools.org/imlms/documents/growthinread.pdf) [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Adams, Marilyn Jaeger. “Advancing Our Students’ Language and Literacy: The Challenge of Complex Texts.” Published by *American Educator*. Winter 2010-2011. [Available here](https://www.aft.org/sites/default/files/periodicals/Adams.pdf). [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Stanovich, Keith. “Matthew Effects in Reading.” Published by *Psychology Today*. 1986. [Available here.](https://www.psychologytoday.com/files/u81/Stanovich__1986_.pdf) [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. “2014-2015 Academic Report AFAHS” and “AFBHS Academic Report Final.” Published by Team College at Achievement First. February 2015. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)