

Guided/Communal Reading Guide

Steps of the guided/communal reading routine	
Recap	• Briefly summarize what students read the day before. • Ensure everyone is clear about characters, plot. • Can serve as a check-in that students did and understood the partner reading.
Vocabulary instruction	Add to Vocab Catcher • Use the slides, or write these words on the board. ◦ This helps students see word parts and spelling patterns. • Say the words aloud, and ask students to repeat them. ◦ This gives students a chance to practice pronouncing a new word and helps them retain its meaning. • Use the questions in the lesson plans to lead a discussion of the words' meanings. Students should record the words in their Vocab Catchers.
	Quick vocabulary preview • Use the slides, or write these words on the board. • Quickly provide the definitions of the words. Students may discuss the meanings briefly if time allows.
Set purpose for reading	Setting a purpose for reading helps students focus on main themes when they read.
Students read silently	• Short chunks of text help students access the text and build reading stamina. • Focus is on comprehension. • Students get support in applying Reciprocal Teaching and other comprehension strategies.
Facilitate discussion	• Discussion helps students move beyond surface understandings of the text. • Teacher-led discussions model the types of interactions with text that stronger readers carry out independently. • All students should have a chance to talk. • Students should look at, listen to, and respond to each other. • Students can re-read the text when answering questions or making a point of their own.
Sum-up	Summing up allows students to see how the story develops, to make connections between readings, and to anticipate and predict what might happen next. Try to elicit the summary from students, and scaffold as needed.

Guided/Communal Reading Tips

- ▶ **Always preteach challenging words.** This is an important scaffold for comprehension. Remember that not all unfamiliar words need to be pretaught. Focus on those highlighted in the Vocab Catcher and if necessary, select only a few more that are critical for understanding the text or central ideas. Aim for depth over breadth.
- ▶ **Always set a purpose for reading.** This levels the playing field for all students by making expectations for the day explicit and creates accountability (students know why they're reading and what they'll be expected to discuss or write about after.)
- ▶ **Select from the questions provided**—don't try to ask them all. Feel free to ask your own questions, too.
- ▶ **Hold your guided reading group in a circle**, so students can see each other. This sends the message that students should build on each other's talk. If this isn't possible, group students at tables or desks to encourage discussion.
- ▶ **Consider posting sentence stems** ("I agree...", "I disagree...", "In my opinion...", etc.).
- ▶ **Redirect students to the text** if they have trouble responding.
- ▶ Encourage students to quote from the text in support of their interpretations.
- ▶ Make sure students are heard by using talk moves (e.g., "Who can rephrase or repeat that statement?").
- ▶ If no one responds, or if the same students always respond, ask students to talk in partners or small groups, and then call on each group to share their discussion.

Is guided reading aligned with the science of reading?

STARI uses the guided/communal reading structure to engage students in robust discussion of text, in order to build students' verbal reasoning skills, their background knowledge, their vocabulary knowledge, their literacy knowledge, and their knowledge of language structures - all critical components of language comprehension, supported by the science of reading.

STARI guided/communal reading uses the text introduction structure laid out in the guided reading model created by Fountas and Pinnell. In a text introduction, teachers support students' comprehension of the text by interactively:

- ▶ Reviewing previously read text
- ▶ Previewing vocabulary that students will encounter in today's reading
- ▶ Setting a purpose for reading

However, in many ways, STARI guided/communal reading is very different from the traditional, elementary school guided reading popularized by Fountas and Pinnell:

In STARI guided/communal reading...	In traditional elementary school guided reading....
• All students read the same age-appropriate, complex text • Students discuss the text as a whole class	• Students read different texts based on their guided reading level • Students read and discuss text in small homogeneous groups

Considerations for multilingual learners



During guided reading, language support should **amplify access to complex text rather than replace or simplify it**, helping students engage with grade-level ideas while developing the language needed to express understanding. Observe students' reading and oral language to adjust scaffolds in the moment and support both comprehension and language growth.

To further support MLs in your classroom, consider this decision tree. Use scaffolds strategically and fade them as students gain independence:

IF students struggle with...	Look for/Listen for this evidence	THEN try...
Generating ideas or getting started	Long pauses; students say "I don't know"; limited notes or evidence gathered	- Starting with Turn and Talk or small group discussion - Revisiting the question together and clarifying the task - Valuing developing responses (Treat partial or emerging language as part of learning while pressing for clarity, evidence, and reasoning.) - Leveraging home language (Some students may benefit from drafting ideas in their home language or using bilingual resources before sharing in English.)
Participating equitably in discussion	Same students speak repeatedly; some students speak very softly or not at all	- Turn and Talk or small group discussion before whole-class sharing - Goal 2 talk moves ("Who can rephrase or repeat...?") to make sure all voices are heard and encourage students who are hesitant to share their own ideas
Using evidence from the text	Opinions without citations; vague references ("it says somewhere...")	- Redirecting students to the text - Prompting students to quote or point to specific lines - Providing evidence sentence stems
Expressing ideas in academic language	Hesitation, word-searching, reliance on informal or home language patterns	- Sentence stems - Rehearsal with a partner - Drafting ideas in a home language before sharing
Responding to peers' ideas	Students restate their own points without engaging others	- Sentence stems (e.g., "I agree because...", "I disagree because...") - Talk moves to ask students to build on or challenge a peer's idea