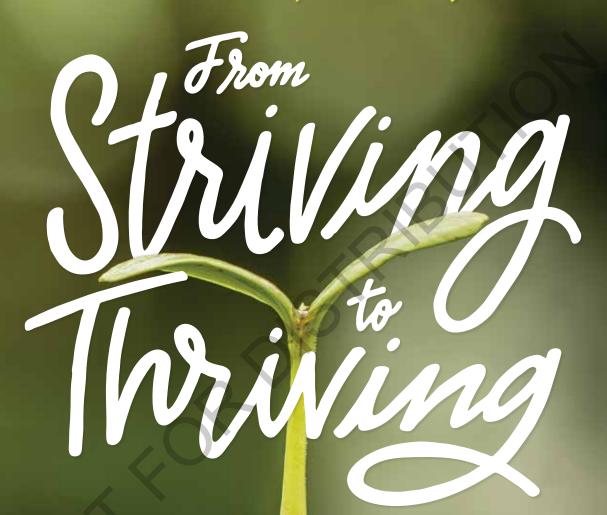
# STEPHANIE HARVEY & ANNIE WARD Foreword by Dav Pilkey



How to Grow Confident, Capable Readers

**■** SCHOLASTIC

#### STEPHANIE HARVEY & ANNIE WARD



How to Grow Confident, Capable Readers

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Publisher/Content Editor: Lois Bridges Development Editor: Raymond Coutu Production Editor: Danny Miller Editorial Director/Video Editor: Sarah Longhi Editorial Assistant Manager: Suzanne Akceylan Cover Designer: Eliza Hack Interior Designer: Sarah Morrow

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ISBN-13: 978-1-338-05196-4

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### CONTENTS

A Note From the Authors	5
From Striving to Thriving: One Reader's Story by Dav Pilkey	6
Introduction: The Best Intervention Is a Good Book	9
About Our Book	11
About the Framework: Trust, Teach, Transform	13
What's Inside Each Chapter	14
What We Know About Reading	17
PART I: TRUST	
CHAPTER 1 • Table the Labels	31
CHAPTER 2 • Cultivate Curiosity	71
CHAPTER 3 • Ensure Access to and Choice of Books	87
CHAPTER 4 • Pump Up the Reading Volume	121
PART II: TEACH	
CHAPTER 5 • Book-Match Relentlessly	143
CHAPTER 6 • Teach Thinking-Intensive Reading	167
PART III: TRANSFORM	
CHAPTER 7 • Assess Readers in the Round	207
CHAPTER 8 • Advocate Tirelessly	231
Closing Thought	
Practices and Lessons	253
CHAPTER 1	
PRACTICE: Embracing Mistakes Through Story	
PRACTICE: Textual Lineage	
PRACTICE: Areas of Specialty: AOS	258
LESSON: Read, Synthesize Important Information, and Jot Down Thinki	ng 260

#### **CHAPTER 2**

PRACTICE: Wonder Walls, Wonder Books, and Wonder Boxes	. 262
PRACTICE: Close Viewing	. 264
LESSON: Keeping a Wonder Book	. 266
CHAPTER 3	
PRACTICE: Weeding Your Classroom Library	. 268
PRACTICE: Book-Talking	
PRACTICE: Celebrating New Arrivals and Highlighting Hidden Gems	
LESSON: Choosing a Just-Right Book	
CHAPTER 4	
PRACTICE: Conferring for Engagement: Reader to Reader, Heart to Heart	. 276
LESSON: What Is the Reading Zone?	
CHAPTER 5	
PRACTICE: Going the Extra Mile to Put the Right Book in a Striving Reader's Hands	. 280
LESSON: Making a Reading Plan	. 282
CHAPTER 6	
PRACTICE: Source Sets	. 284
PRACTICE: Striving Readers and Fluency Development	. 286
LESSON: Monitoring Comprehension: Following the Inner Conversation	. 288
LESSON: Using Fix-Up Strategies	. 290
LESSON: Surfacing the Big Ideas	. 293
ADDITIONAL MATERIALS FOR STRIVING READERS	
PRACTICE: Shared Reading	. 296
PRACTICE: Write to Read	. 298
PRACTICE: Invested Reading	. 300
PRACTICE: Rime Magic for Word Solving	. 302
.cknowledgments	. 306
references	
ndex	. 314

#### A NOTE FROM THE AUTHORS

How many authors have a bona fide superhero introduce their book? We thanked our lucky stars when Dav Pilkey agreed to write and illustrate this foreword to our book. Dav's superpowers come neither from a cape nor a pair of tighty-whities, but rather from his mighty pen. Through 70+ million copies of Captain Underpants books published in 20 languages, Dav has led numerous kids gleefully to literacy, especially countless striving readers who discovered the joy of reading through the humor and mischief that is Dav and his Tilt-a-Whirl of images and words.

Although we knew Dav's own path to reading was complicated, we were deeply saddened at the graphic but honest depiction of his painful school journey, marked by labeling, ridicule, and exclusion. Thankfully, the experience Dav Pilkey endured is no longer acceptable. But it is a stark reminder of the impact we can have on kids, positively or otherwise. Unfortunately, more subtle forms of discouragement persist. We continue to label kids, and in spite of our good intentions and best efforts, striving readers are still apt to internalize messages that erode confidence and motivation.

More than 40 years after Dav's experience, we know what works and what doesn't. We have decades of indisputable research and field-testing of superb, high-quality teaching. We understand that children learn to read by reading. We know that kids need access to books they want to read; time to read; and loving, knowledgeable teachers who trust them as powerful learners and know how to build on their strengths. Thank heavens Dav's mother intuited that an affirming approach rooted in love would yield powerful results.

We have championed teachers throughout our careers. In this book, we invite you to channel Barbara Pilkey by meeting each child with positive expectancy and nurturing approval. We encourage you to introduce strivers to the widest, wildest array of texts and endorse their choices without judgment; to let go of labels; and, above all, to believe wholeheartedly in every child. In these conditions, reading growth isn't merely possible; it's inevitable.

Annie Ward



I never needed anybody to tell me I had reading problems.





MAYBE I SHOULD My
SEND YOU BACK TO teacher
KINDERGARTEN!!! helped.

I never needed an assortment of Labels to Zap my confidence, either.



I Learned to hate books all by myself.



On the rare occasions when I **DiD** find Some-





... it seemed as if my choices were never good (enough for my teacher.













But just when everything seemed hopeless, my mom came up with a GREAT idea:















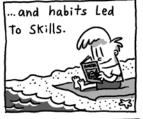














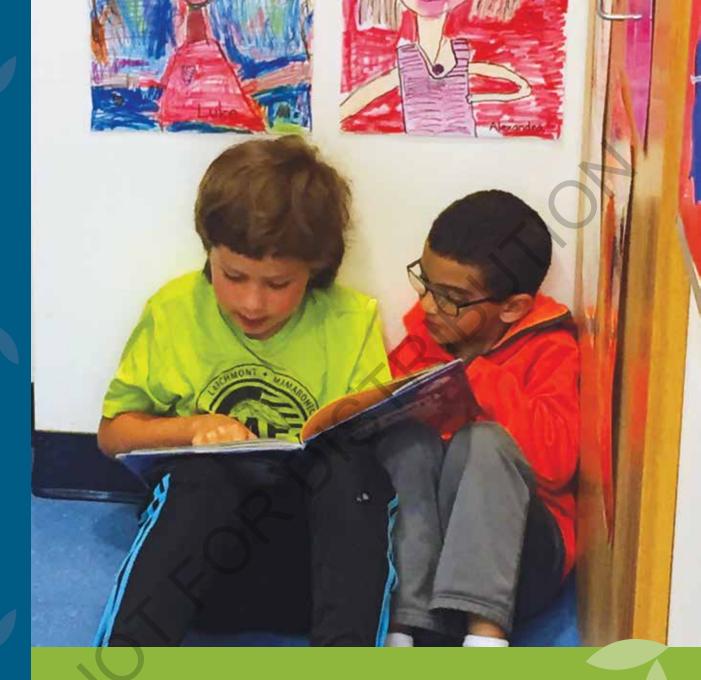
I am a reader Today because of one GREAT idea...



The book you are about to read is filled with GREAT IDEAS!

All you need to do is add the LOVE!

Day Pilkey 2017



"Children should see the point of reading, and come to know that it can be an intrinsically pleasurable and engaging activity—not just a school exercise where the point lies only in getting every word right."

-Henrietta Dombey, Margaret Moustafa & CLPE Staff

#### INTRODUCTION

# The Best Intervention Is a Good Book

ne of Annie's favorite fall rituals is going to the New York City Marathon and watching the parade of runners enter Central Park at East 90th Street for the final stretch to the finish line at Tavern on the Green. While the elite runners dazzle with their flashing speed and impeccable form, the hordes of amateurs are equally amazing—firefighters, costumed Tinkerbells and Batmen, and septuagenarians who invite encouragement by Magic-Markering first names on their jerseys. While marathoners' endurance is awe-inspiring, it's not mysterious. It's obvious that their powerful legs, efficient strides, and mental discipline have developed through thousands of steps over time. There is simply no other route to this level of fitness.

It should be just as obvious that readers, too, develop through practice—by turning page after page in books that they love. Not only is this common sense, but also, four decades of research have established that voluminous, pleasurable reading is key to literacy development. Ask successful adults about their childhood reading habits, and you'll hear about flashlights under the covers, comic books, magazine subscriptions, quickly devoured series, dogeared rereads, tattered library cards . . . in short: steady consumption of vast amounts of appealing reading material.

It follows that striving readers are inexperienced readers. They simply haven't read enough *yet*. They haven't taken enough steps inside books that grab their hearts or pique their curiosity. They haven't learned the ways books work.

Striving readers typically lack positive experiences with reading; in fact, they are likely to have had many negative interactions with unappealing and difficult material. Children's author Jon Scieszka has called this the reading "death spiral." "It's where kids aren't reading and then are worse at reading because they aren't reading, and then they read less because it is hard and they get worse, and then they see themselves as non-readers, and it's such a shame" (Strauss, 2008).

Research on volume gives us a clear and empowering professional mandate. We have an opportunity to change kids' lives by putting them on an upward reading spiral. The first step is to trust that through experience with appealing books—through a high volume of pleasurable reading—these readers will thrive. We replace the dooming label "struggling reader" with the dynamic, effort-based term "striving reader" because it connotes energy, action, and progress. We feel urgency and agency about matching striving readers with compelling reading material, arranging time and space to read a lot, and providing expert instruction.

#### WHAT DOES SUCCESS LOOK LIKE?

With the right books in their hands and our close monitoring, teaching, and support, strivers will:

- enter the world of reading with anticipation, rather than dread.
- marshal the full force of language—speaking, listening, reading, and writing, as well as multimedia and the visual and dramatic arts—to make sense of text.
- participate in lively book talks and discussions about "their" books.
- learn that reading is personal, social and cultural, engages minds and hearts, and sounds like language, which it is.
- recognize that reading is about thinking, understanding, learning, and building knowledge.
- develop identities as readers with personal reading tastes and inclinations (e.g., discover favorite authors, topics, and genres—plus, learn where, when, and how to read).
- gain self-confidence.

All of which add up eventually, over time, to a vibrant and deeply fulfilling reading life.

### **About Our Book**

From Striving to Thriving grew out of a shared and evolving recognition that far too many striving readers are suffering unproductive and unintended consequences of the very instructional tools and approaches designed to support their growth. Systems of text-gradient leveling may stamp strivers with the label of a level. Remedial programs often separate strivers from their classroom peers and deprive them of the voluminous reading experiences necessary for growth. Additionally, strivers may miss out on the classroom community building that stems from a shared reading experience. Our mission



is to guide children to active literacy. To make sense of their ever-changing world, develop informed positions, and take principled action, children need the technical skills to access print and the comprehension strategies to make meaning and think critically about it.

Children also need to understand that reading is thinking and should sound like language. If it doesn't, and the text becomes a grab bag of words on a page, that's a signal that something has gone awry, and they need to call up their strategies to regain meaning. This ability to self-monitor for meaning is the hallmark of a thriving reader.

In our work, we feel a particular sense of urgency for striving readers—those children who have not yet developed the robust literacies they need and deserve. Like you, we feel an affinity and affection for these kids; we are intrigued by their interests and curious to know what gets in the way of their reading. For a few children—perhaps five percent of the population—learning differences or disabilities prevent them from learning to read as re-

differences or disabilities prevent them from learning to read as readily as their peers do. For the vast majority, it's more external—lack of access to compelling reading material, for example, and well-intentioned but theoretically unsound interventions that actually confuse kids and interfere with the reading process.

self-monitor for meaning is the hallmark of a thriving reader. This book aims to change all that, beginning with the most important step of all: showing strivers that they *are* readers who, with informed and thoughtful instructional support that honors what we know about language and language acquisition, can read their way into a robust and deeply meaningful reading life.

In short, with this book, we seek to close a massive "knowing-doing gap" by doing the best of what's been known for decades: providing all children with daily access to books that jolt their hearts and turbocharge their minds, abundant time to read, and sound instruction in essential skills and strategies grounded in close observation and conversation. What's more, we immerse our students in an inclusive classroom environment that honors their culture, language, and interests, stimulates their curiosity, and provides the time and resources to ask questions and search for answers.

#### We Stand With You

As you read *From Striving to Thriving*, please know that we empathize with you and stand with you. We know that you may be required to use your district's intervention program. We recognize that you may live in a test-driven pressure cooker. We're simply asking that you think beyond your students' scores and any



labels they've been given, and get to know them as multidimensional people. We bet you'll find strivers who know how to read and love reading in ways that intervention data may not reflect. We also know that, most likely, you already view your kids in holistic ways—in ways that can't be measured by test scores. You are closer to your kids than almost anyone. We wrote this book to support you as you advocate for them, particularly your striving readers. For the sake of equity, as well as sheer love, they deserve nothing less.

# About the Framework: Trust, Teach, Transform

We have divided the book into three parts, reflecting the mindset and spirit we think is needed to help turn strivers into thrivers.

#### **TRUST**

We recommend that you claim your rightful role as a professional decision-maker. Study the research, gather the data, and trust yourself to make wise and informed instructional decisions for your strivers every day.

At the same time, trust your strivers—trust that with access to abundant books, time to read books they choose, expert instruction, and a chance to learn what reading is and how it works, they will become confident, capable readers because you've ignited a spark that will burn bright.

#### **TEACH**

Recognize as well the critical role of sensitive, thoughtful teaching that is informed continuously by research and assessment. Remember, we are always teaching the striver—not a program.

#### TRANSFORM

And finally, transform. We're firm believers that to fall in love with reading forever, all it takes is getting lost in one good book. When that happens, we discover that reading is one of life's greatest pleasures. An entire generation became readers inside the pages of Harry Potter books. We advocate for our strivers every day so they, too, will experience nothing short of the transformative joy and power of reading.

# What's Inside Each Chapter

Our chapters are organized around a clear, easy-to-navigate template. Here's what you'll find.

#### **CHAPTER 1**

### Table the Labels

o this day Steph is guided by the aha moment of a striving for reader named Anthony. This high-spirited, inquisitive boy felt reading as any child she had ever met. He was convinced he could out during reading workshop daily for a special reading class wher on nonsense words for 30 minutes among other meaningless activ floundered. He got far less reading time than the other kids. Each the room, he felt the sting of their stares, whether real or imagine benchmark testing showed little or no growth. And all the while, the animated boy slipped deeper into a sense of

assumed disability and lonely isolation.

Steph pleaded with the administrators to let Anthony stay in class during reading workshop time, and they agreed once they understood her argument. Seated near the front of the whole class bunched on the floor, Anthony participated in the daily shared

eractive comprehension re central to literacy his classroom. The kids turned ughout and jotted their

#### **PRACTICES AND LESSONS**

In the back of the book you will find Practices and Lessons for each chapter. These are also available for downloading at scholastic.com/ThriveResources.

tions, and new learning on

Read, Synthesize Important Information,

for this chapter

and Jot Down Thinking . . . . . . . . . . . 260

See the following Practices and Lessons

Embracing Mistakes Through Story . . . . 254 

These sheets are also available at scholastic.com/ThriveResources.

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31

VIGNETTE

We open each

chapter with a classroom- or home-based story

that captures the point of the chapter.

#### THREE TO KNOW

#### RESEARCHERS ON TABLING THE

1. Peter Johnston's wise words have guided us for over a decada a reservoir of research, his books, Choice Words and Openith the power of language to build agency, lift kids up, and make asserts, "In productive classrooms, teachers don't just teach build emotionally and relationally healthy learning communit that lead to more successful learning outcomes. In Choice W suggests language for us to use with kids to build confidence of agency. For instance, telling kids they are so smart is finite learning optential, whereas telling them they are so thoughtful

to continue to think deeply and engage in learning. He reveals the impact of our words—the power of what we say and what we don't say—to shape literate, empathetic, efficacious human beings.

- In Closing the Achiever words about the inequit bilingual and multilingua and a deficit-laden appr that focuses on what stu students' lives and send
  - Limited English President
  - Language Minority
  - Auditory Processir
  - Intellectually Hand
  - Special Needs
  - Attention Deficit D
  - At Risk
  - Hearing Impaired

While some students too many, particularly the English, become their do innocuous label such as attribute that most chall we mean well, tagging s

> exacerbate their fe linguistic difference

From Striving to

#### **RESEARCHERS: THREE TO KNOW**

We highlight pivotal literacy researchers you'll want to know. We make it easy for you to remember them by showcasing three seminal studies and/or bodies of work related to the chapter topic that every teacher should know, presented in a succinct, compelling way.

#### TAKE ACTION

### What You Can Do to Table the Labels and Grow Confident, Capable Readers

To table the labels and build confident, capable readers, we recommend taking these five actions:

- Let go of labeling kids.
- 2 Champion a true growth mindset.
- 3 Encourage empathy.
- Get to know your kids ASAP.
- 5 Create conditions for interaction and boundless reading.

#### 1. Let go of labeling kids.

In 1977, Steph was teaching second grade using a basal reading program. Her class was divided into four ability groups—high, medium-high, medium-low, and low—all practicing round robin reading. Shocking, right? And more than a little embarrassing!

In the summer of that year, the first Star Wars movie premiered, and Steph stood in line for 12 hours to ensure a front-row seat and free t-shirt. The movie transformed her into an instant Star Wars geek. That September, she headed to Burger King to snag the first in a series of Star Wars character posters, which was free with the purchase of a Whopper. By the month's end

nany Whoppers), she had posters of Luke Skywalker, R2-D2, Darth Vader, and Chewbacca. She decided to post them on the classroom bulletin board and name her reading groups after the characters. Guess which group was named after Luke Skywalker? The high group. And the low group? Chewbacca. Sheesh—a mortifying story for sure, and one that's painful to share. But we don't pop out of the womb knowing how to teach reading. Becoming a wise reading teacher takes time, thoughtfulness, deep study, and sheer effort. Teaching reading to striving readers is rocket sciencel Learning how to teach

#### ACTIONS

Professional moves that will help you make an immediate and tangible difference in your strivers' lives are presented in the imperative voice to inspire you to act!

70

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#### ASSESSING READERS IN THE ROUND

#### **TABLE THE LABELS**

Use these questions to drive responsive, learner-focused teaching based on what kids can do.

#### **Self-Questions**

- Do I believe that an expert, caring teacher is superior to programmatic instruction?
- · Do I believe that striving readers can become avid, proficient readers?
- · What are some ways I can build confidence in my striving readers?
- Do I share my area of specialty with my kids and encourage them to share theirs?
- Do I share with my kids times I have made mistakes or experienced frustration?
- Do I share stories that show how effort and hard work eventually lead to success?
- Have I designed and created comfortable learning spaces in my classroom? Spaces that make reading more desirable?

#### **Kidwatching Questions**

- · Does the student believe that he can become a good reader?
- Does the student believe that reading will help her grow more knowledgeable?
- · Does the student become frustrated when he loses meaning while reading?
- Is the student willing to try again?
- · Does the student easily find reading materials she is interested in?
- · What does the student know and care about?
- Are there spots in the room where the student knows he can work most easily and productively?

#### **Conferring Questions**

- Do you want to try that again? What will you try differently in the next attempt?
- · Did you learn anything you would like to explore further?
- What do you care about most in life?
- · What topics do you like to read about most?
- Do you need a more comfortable space to do this work?

#### ASSESSING READERS IN THE ROUND (ARR)

Integrated throughout the book, the ARR helps guide your kidwatching, conferring, and data collection across a spectrum of reading behaviors, attitudes, and understandings.

Annie Ward, Scholastic Inc.

69

## **What We Know About Reading**

Taking our lead from literary researcher Louise Rosenblatt (1938), we believe that reading is a meaning-charged transaction between the reader and the text. For that reason, the meaning you take away from a book may vary from the meaning somebody else takes away. For example, Annie recently paused outside the high school band room to talk with Addie, a ninth grader, who was reading *Wild*, Cheryl Strayed's memoir of her solo hike on the Pacific Crest Trail. Having recently finished the book herself, Annie was eager to talk to someone about it, particularly about Strayed's grief over the loss of her mother. Annie's own mother was in the final stage of a long battle with lung cancer, and

Strayed's writing moved her viscerally.

"What do you think so far?" Annie asked. Addie replied, "You know how Cheryl names her backpack Monster because it's so enormous and heavy? Well, this is my Monster because it's a big hardcover nonfiction book, and I don't usually read nonfiction. I'm challenging myself to read the whole thing, and I'm getting inspired because if Cheryl can keep hiking, I can keep reading and finish this Monster." When Annie mentioned that she was devastated by Strayed's



loss, Addie politely acknowledged, "Yeah, for sure—but I'm really drawn to her perseverance along the trail."

When Annie told Steph about the exchange, Steph shared that, although she is an avid hiker and mountain woman, she would never attempt the Pacific Crest Trail alone. Wild made her reflect on the challenges of growing older, but also helped her come to terms with it. Three readers, three different, meaningful "mosaics of thought" (Keene & Zimmermann, 2007). Which interpretation is "right"? Of course, they all are—and, undoubtedly, they are not the only ones. There are unlimited ways to read and interpret the book. The writer Annie Proulx says simply, "The reader writes the story."

#### **HOW DO YOU DEFINE READING?**

As you read *From Striving to Thriving*, we encourage you to think about these questions to determine what reading means to you:

- Who are the thriving readers in your classroom?
- How do you know they are thriving?
- What makes them thrive?
- What do you need to do to ensure all kids thrive as readers?

Considering these questions will help you identify not only your own beliefs about reading, but also your values. What do you think matters most about reading? Accurate, fluent reading? Comprehension? A rich reading life? Your answer is essential because, as reading researcher and founder of Reading Recovery Marie Clay maintained, "We assess what we value."

### **How We Define Reading**

And that brings us to our definition of reading. We believe that reading is a personal process, a social/cultural process, thinking, and language.

- A Personal Process To every text we read, we bring our life experiences (including those with other books), values, perspectives, and cultural and linguistic backgrounds (Smith, 2011; Goodman et al., 2016). Thus, the book you read is not exactly the same book your best friend reads. Reading should change us (Harvey & Goudvis, 2017; Beers & Probst, 2017)—enrich and enchant us, anger, delight, or move us—and that change is always shaped by our own life experiences and personal values and beliefs.
- A Social/Cultural Process "Literacy floats on a sea of talk" (Britton, 1970). Oral and written language are always learned in a social/cultural context (International Reading Association et al., 2010)—we learn to talk, read, and write through our interactions with others. And the meaning that we take away from a book may shift as we discuss that book with others and learn what they think. Nothing engages us and enhances our comprehension more than our own cultural perspectives and talking to others about what we've read, whether in partnerships, book clubs, or conferences.



Thinking Always, at its core, reading is thinking and serves multiple purposes—to inform and instruct, narrate and delight, question and challenge, and regulate and guide (Halliday, 1973). Thoughtful readers pay attention to their inner conversation as they read, listen, or view. They develop an awareness of their thinking, monitor for understanding, learn to think strategically, and actively use knowledge. As a knowledge-building activity, reading shapes and changes thinking. We want readers, particularly striving readers, to recognize the power of their own thinking when

Nothing engages us and enhances our comprehension more than talking to others about what we've read, whether in partnerships, book clubs, or conferences.

reading. Few things will give striving readers more confidence than knowing they can turn information into knowledge by thinking about it (Harvey & Goudvis, 2017).

• Finally, We Believe That Reading Is Language We think Peter Johnston (2010) explains it best: "Language is very much like a living organism. It cannot be put together from parts like a machine, and it is constantly changing." The more we learn about written language, what it is, and how it works, the more effective we'll become as teachers. As Peter notes, "Instructional outcomes in the language arts and assessment policies and practices should reflect what we know about language and its acquisition."

In general, children learn best when they are working with real, complete texts and applying all language cuing systems—graphophonic, syntactic, and semantic—to create a rich network of meaning. The more text children have at their disposal, the more meaning support they have and, therefore, the easier it is for them to make sense of that text (Goodman et al., 2016).

#### Oral Language Is the Foundation of Literacy

Children are powerful language learners. At a very young age, they arrive to school with noteworthy control of oral language, the foundation of written language. The instructional strategies we provide scaffold children to cross the bridge from oral to written language. With shared reading, for example, students observe an expert reading a text with fluency and expression, enabling them to learn critical concepts such as the alphabetic principle, phonemic awareness, vocabulary, and spelling while also learning how to orient themselves on a page, starting at the top and working their way down, left to right (Fountas & Pinnell, 2017). (See page 296 for more on shared reading.)

The key is to give our strivers access to the full force of language: reading, writing, speaking, and listening.

#### The Reading-Writing Connection

Additionally, children may learn the intricacies of written language—sounds, letters, words, and the like—when they create texts themselves, using "invented spelling." (See page 298 for more on invented spelling.) In other words, there is ample evidence (Ouellette & Sénéchal, 2017; Feldgus et al., 2017) that children drill themselves on sound/letter relationships as they write their own meaningful stories,

essays, and the like. As Donald Graves observed way back in 1983, for some children, writing—which gives them active control of written language—is an easier, more meaningful entry into reading. Always, the key is to give our strivers access to the full force of language: reading, writing, speaking, and listening.

### What We Understand About Reading Drives Our Teaching and Assessment

Because of what we understand about reading, we refer to certain practices repeatedly throughout this book. Those practices propel our cycle of teaching and assessing. Always, we:

• Keep reading instruction and practice embedded in real texts that quicken the pulse and engage minds and hearts. Learning to read is easier when kids love what they're reading. So, we build robust classroom libraries; surround our students with engaging texts in a range of topics, genres, and formats, written for various purposes; and invite students to



choose texts—with thoughtful assistance from us—that pique their interest and that they are able to read.

• Immerse students in the richest curriculum possible, driven by their own curiosity and questions about the world. We believe that kids need multiple ways to enter reading—and multiple ways to show what they know about reading. So, while Darius may not enjoy reading a novel yet, he comes to life when our digital projector is on the blink, and we encourage him to jump online to try to figure out why. Strivers need a constellation of entry points into information and ideas.

- Understand that the most effective teaching is responsive; we respond best to kids when we get to know them well by listening to them, talking with them, watching them in action in our classrooms, and analyzing the products of their learning. For that reason, we rely on multifaceted assessment that helps us capture a wide spectrum of information that reveals students' strengths. We learn what they can do and build from there.
- Understand that the most effective assessment is inquiry driven. To understand our students as readers, we engage in a process of inquiry. We ask ourselves, what support do they need to become confident, capable readers who understand that reading should be meaningful and pleasurable? How do we help them develop the skills and know-how to monitor their own reading for meaning, and, when they become lost and confused, use the fix-up strategies to regain meaning? What kinds of evidence can we collect that will demonstrate what our strivers already know about reading, which we can then use to help them thrive?
- Engage our students in self-reflection. Striving readers in particular lose confidence in themselves as readers. To regain and build their confidence, they need to see evidence of their reading strengths. The best way to do that is to show them everything that they are doing that's productive, such as self-monitoring for meaning, and help them move past the behaviors, attitudes, and understandings that are interfering with their reading, such as using only one reading strategy (e.g., "sound it out") to the exclusion of others. This kind of self-reflection is critical to their growth as readers.
- Balance one-shot summative assessments with more nuanced, child-centered formative assessments. We need multiple indicators of reading growth and success! A single measure, such as a reading achievement test, fails to deliver the rich sampling of data we need for triangulation and problem solving, a key part of our inquiry-driven assessment process. For too long, we have assessed children's reading based on one vertical measure: reading level. We deem readers strong or weak based simply on the level at which they read.

A reading level certainly indicates to some degree a reader's proficiency. But reading is about much more than levels. For example, although Ollie and Cassidy are both reading at level Q, they have markedly different reading profiles. Ollie is a third grader with a challenging home life, whose demeanor changes from combative to calm when he escapes into fantasy fiction. Cassidy is a fourth grader who has shown tremendous growth reading graphic novels, most notably the *Lumberjanes* series, and is now willing to explore other genres. We maintain that assessment is best when it is holistic and multidimensional. The chart below shows a child's reading level as derived from a software leveling program, but offers no more information about the child as a reader. The diagram on the next page shows a sampling of some of the many behaviors, attitudes, and understandings that make up the dynamic, robust process known as reading.

<b>†</b>	<b>↑</b>	+	1
К	7–8	2	451–550
J	6-8	1	451–500
_	6-7	1	80-450
Н	6-7	1	80-450
G	6–7	1	80-450
F	6–7	1	80-450
E	6–7	1	80-450
D	4-7	1	80-450
С	4-6	К	BR-70
В	4-6	К	BR-70
А	4-6	К	BR-70
Level	Age	Grade	LEXILE®

# SPECTRUM OF THRIVING READER BEHAVIORS, ATTITUDES, AND UNDERSTANDINGS

A sampling of some of the behaviors, attitudes, and understandings you might monitor, document, and analyze.

#### **Surface Structure**

- · Matches letters and sounds
- Develops phonemic awareness
- Uses the graphophonic cuing system to help construct meaning from print

#### Language

- Uses entire linguistic repertoire for meaning-making
- Uses integrated cueing system—syntactic, semantic, and graphophonic—to make sense of print
- · Self-monitors miscues
- Regards home language as a resource across all content areas
- Recognizes bilingualism as an asset

#### Volume

- Reads extensively at school and at home
- Settles into personal, comfortable reading rhythm and routine
- Develops identity as a reader
- Builds empathy
- Enjoys discussing books with teacher and peers

# **Knowledge Acquisition**

- Activates and builds background knowledge
- Merges thinking with text to turn information into knowledge
- Reads, writes, talks, and thinks across the curriculum (content literacy)
- Researches questions; follows a line of inquiry
- Comes to care and take action

#### Comprehension

- Engages in a dynamic thinking process to construct meaning from print
- Grasps literal meaning of text
- Reflects understanding through retelling
- Uses comprehension strategies flexibly to enhance understanding. Specifically:
  - » Connects new to known
  - » Asks auestions
  - » Infers and visualizes meaning
  - » Determines importance
  - » Summarizes and synthesizes
- Monitors for meaning and applies fix-up strategies for clarification
- Reads critically with a thoughtful eye and a skeptical stance

[See Comprehension Continuum on p. 26.]



#### Genre & Format Knowledge

- Navigates nonfiction text features, text structures, graphic features, and infographics.
- Recognizes different nonfiction text types—essay, biography, feature writing, procedural—and fiction—realistic, historic, mystery, fantasy, sci-fi, etc.
- Distinguishes formats—series books, graphic novels, picture books, joke books, etc.
- Attends to the form, structure, white space, and figurative language of poetry
- Navigates and researches digital text online and develops digital citizenship

#### **Fluency**

- Reads orally with expression
- Reads at a pace that sounds like conversation
- Reflects the elements of prosody—the music of language

#### **Vocabulary Development**

- Builds word knowledge through voluminous reading
- Uses context clues to infer the meaning of unfamiliar words and ideas
- Recognizes appropriate grammatical syntax
- Stops to figure out words when meaning breaks down
- Skips unfamiliar words when they do not disrupt meaning
- Understands parts of speech and their purposes
- Uses prefixes and suffixes to crack open meaning

#### **Text Selection**

- Considers interest
- · Explores genre
- Searches for text worth thinking and talking about
- Follows teacher/peer recommendations
- Peruses front and back covers; flips through book
- Chooses appropriate reading level

# THE ILA/NCTE READING AND WRITING ASSESSMENT STANDARDS

In addition to what we've discussed thus far, we take our cues from the ILA/ NCTE Task Force on Standards for the Assessment of Reading and Writing (2010), which guide our assessment, and therefore, our teaching.

- The interests of the student are paramount in assessment.
- The teacher is the most important agent of assessment.
- The primary purpose of assessment is to improve teaching and learning.
- Assessment must reflect and allow for critical inquiry into curriculum and instruction.
- Assessment must recognize and reflect the intellectually and socially complex nature of reading and writing and the important roles of school, home, and society in literacy development.
- Assessment must be fair and equitable.
- The consequences of an assessment procedure are the first and most important consideration in establishing the validity of the assessment.
- The assessment process should involve multiple perspectives and sources of data.
- Assessment must be based in the local school learning community, including active and essential participation of families and community members.
- All stakeholders in the educational community—students, families, teachers, administrators, policymakers, and the public—must have an equal voice in the development, interpretation, and reporting of assessment information.

Standards for the Assessment of Reading and Writing Joint Task Force IRA & NCTE, 2010.

#### **COMPREHENSION CONTINUUM**

Answers Literal	Retells	Merges Thinking	Acquires	Actively Uses
Questions		With Content	Knowledge	Knowledge
Answering literal questions shows that learners can skim and scan for answers, pick one out that matches the questions, and have short-term recall.  Only demonstrates surface understanding.	Retelling shows that learners can organize thoughts sequentially and put them into their own words. Shows short-term recall of events in a narrative and bits of information in nonfiction.  Does not, in and of itself, demonstrate understanding.	Real understanding takes root when learners merge their thinking with the content by connecting, inferring, questioning, determining importance, synthesizing, and reacting to information.  Understanding begins here.	Once learners have merged their thinking with the content, they can begin to acquire knowledge and insight. They can learn, understand, and remember.  Shows more robust understanding.	With new insights and understandings, learners can actively use knowledge and apply what they have learned to the experiences, situations, and circumstances at hand to expand understanding and even take action.  Understanding is used for problem
TEACHER	TEACHER	TEACHER	TEACHER	solving and acting.  TEACHER  LANGUAGE
LANGUAGE	LANGUAGE	LANGUAGE	LANGUAGE	
What is? Where did? Who was? How did? How many?	What has happened thus far? What was this about? Retell what you read. What comes first, second, and third? When did ?	What do you think? What did you learn? What does this remind you of? What do you wonder? What do you visualize? What do you infer? What is this mostly about? What makes you say/think that? How did you come up with that? What, if anything, confuses you?	What did you learn that you think is important to remember? Why does it matter? What do you think the author most wants you to get out of this? What evidence can you cite to make your claim? What do you think are some big ideas here? What difference does it make? Say more about that.	What do you want to do about this? Why do you want to take action? Is there a way you can get involved? How do you think you can help? How would you convince others of your point of view? What is your plan? How might you engage the help of others?

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The Comprehension Continuum on the previous page shares five comprehension processes and the matching teacher language. The continuum is not sequential in nature, but rather a continuum of understanding that increases in sophistication from literal comprehension to the active use of knowledge. While all processes are important, we hope you pay particular attention to the last three columns to help kids think strategically and critically to build knowledge and actively use it.

Assessing Readers in the Round (ARR) helps you put into action what we've discussed in this introduction. It appears on the gatefold of this book's cover, as well as throughout the book at the end of each chapter where you'll find questions that serve three purposes:

- 1. self-reflection
- 2. kidwatching
- 3. conferring

The questions are organized according to the four principles that define reading for us: reading as a personal process, a social/cultural process, thinking, and language. For a complete overview, see Chapter 7: Assess Readers in the Round.



# **Closing Thoughts**

Our students live rich and varied literacy lives. In their own homes, no one thinks of them or refers to them as "struggling readers." Our goal is to make sure that our students remain students and don't become labels. Additionally, we aim to expand their literacy repertoires as we guide them toward capable, confident independent reading. In supportive, literate classroom communities, let's make sure that all our students, with our thoughtful guidance, develop strong identities and competencies as successful readers, thinkers, and learners.