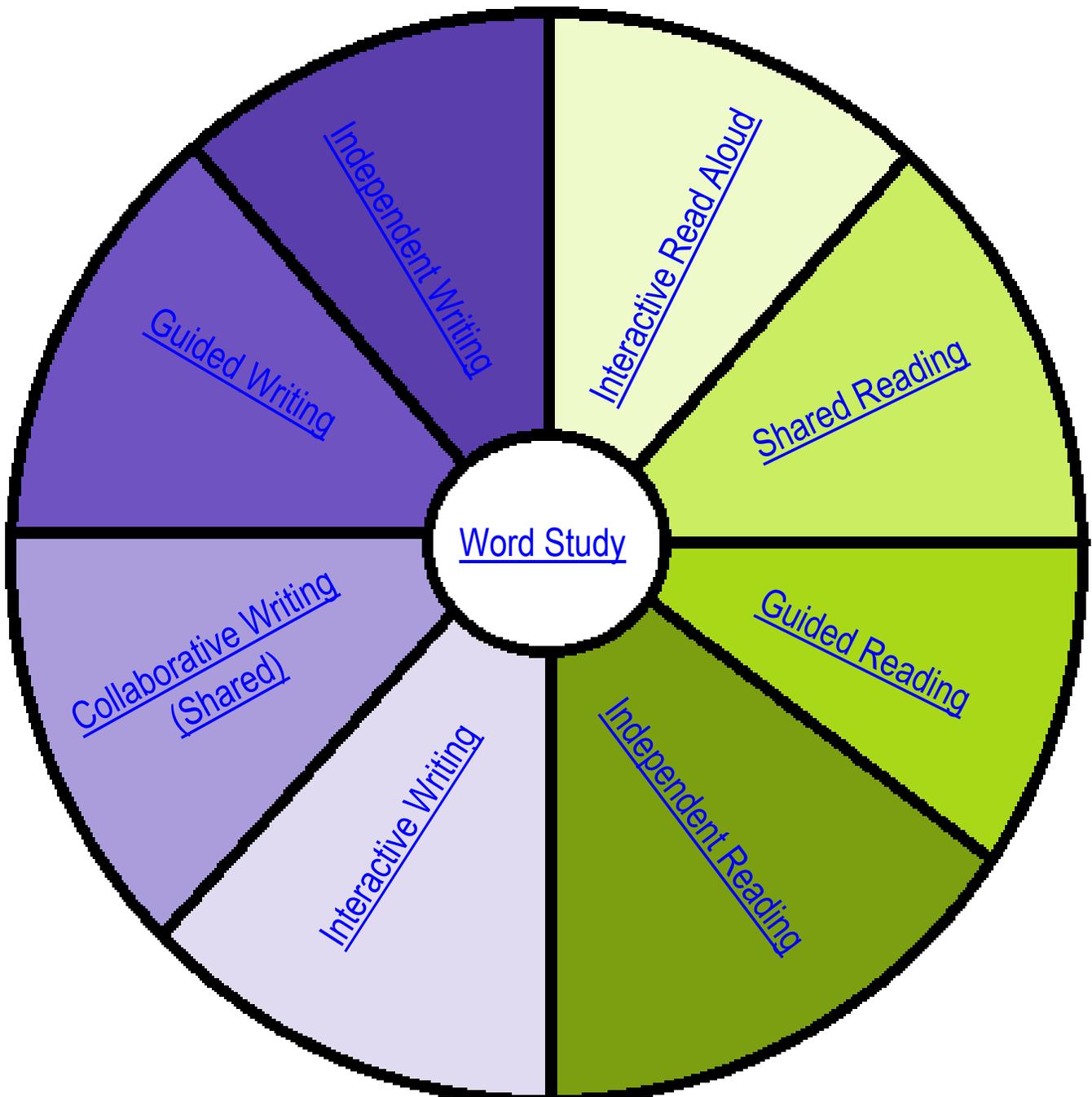


# Components of Balanced Literacy

Click on the links below in the Balanced Literacy wheel to learn more about each component.



## Guided Reading



Guided reading is a strategy designed to meet the instructional needs of all students by providing scaffolding through small group (2-6) instruction. The groups are **fluid** and students are grouped by similar *instructional levels and/or needs*. Students have individual copies of a text on their instructional level and independently whisper read (not round robin) as the teacher observes, coaches, prompts, and evaluates their reading progress. Guided reading involves ongoing formal and informal assessments with individuals in the group in order to help the teacher select the appropriate texts and guide instruction. Guided reading enables children to practice strategies with the support of the teacher leading to independent reading.

### The Role of the Teacher

- To select appropriate texts at the students' instructional level with minimal complexity.
- To guide students in previewing the text, activating prior knowledge, and setting a purpose for reading.
- To ask questions to clarify and extend thinking while reading.
- To discuss and respond to text.
- To observe and evaluate student progress and evidence of the strategy in use.
- To give students feedback on their ability to interact with the text.
- To take anecdotal notes on individual readers.

### The Role of the Student

- To engage the student in a pre-reading conversation about the text.
- To read the text in whole or in part silently or quietly.
- To ask for support when needed.
- To respond or engage in collaborative discussion about the text orally or in writing.
- To engage in activities which involve extending understanding and responding to the text.

### Resources

*Preventing Misguided Reading* by Burkins & Croft  
*Yellow Brick Road: Shared and Guided Paths to Independent Reading 4-12* by Janet Allen  
*Guiding Readers and Writers: Grades 3–6* by Irene Fountas and Gay Pinnell  
*On Solid Ground: Strategies for Teaching Reading* by Sharon Taberski  
*Reading with Meaning: Teaching Comprehension in the Primary Grades* by Debbie Miller  
*Literature Circles: Voice and Choice in Book Clubs & Reading Groups* by Harvey Daniels  
*Guided Reading: Good First Teaching for All Children* by Irene Fountas and Gay Pinnell

[Back to Top](#)

## Guided Writing



Guided writing lessons are designed for temporary specific needs grouping. Students usually meet in small groups where needed strategies are taught with immediate guidance/support from the teacher. Guided writing lessons follow whole group instruction once other students are actively engaged in independent writing. It serves as the bridge between teacher demonstration and modeling and successful student independent writing. It targets needed skills to improve writing within the context of strong teacher support.

### The Role of the Teacher

- To compile data to assess and form groups based on needs, abilities and interest.
- To monitor by giving formative assessments: observation, anecdotal notes and a teacher-generated checklist.
- To monitor and scaffold lessons according to individual needs within the group.
- To observe and respond to the needs of the individuals.
- To extend and challenge groups of students.
- To maintain a balance between teacher support and student independence, by using the Gradual Release of Responsibility.

### The Role of the Student

- To maintain and master a specific skill by being involved in small group instruction.
- To transfer the modeled strategies/skills during independent writing.
- To develop confidence to use the skill independently.

### Resources

[www.readwritethink.org](http://www.readwritethink.org)

[k5chalkboard.com](http://k5chalkboard.com) 4 Stages of Teaching Writing to Children

[A Guide to Effective Instruction in Writing, Kindergarten to Grade 3](#)

[http://eworkshop.on.ca/edu/resources/guides/Reading\\_K\\_3\\_English.pdf](http://eworkshop.on.ca/edu/resources/guides/Reading_K_3_English.pdf)

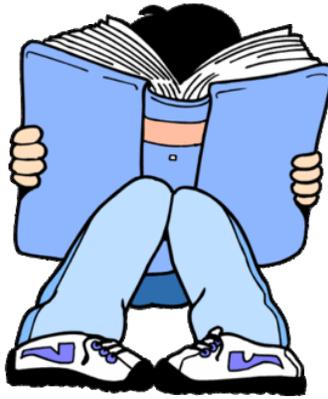
[Guided Writing: Practical Lessons: Powerful Results by Lori D. Oczkus](#)

<https://www.heinemann.com/shared/onlineresources/E01071/chapter4.pdf>

*Guided Writing: Practical Lessons, Powerful Results by Lori D. Oczkus (Chart)*

[Back to Top](#)

## Independent Reading



Independent reading is a time when students read self-selected text at their independent level to practice reading strategies and develop fluency and automaticity. The teacher confers with students one-on-one, prompts the use of strategies, discusses various aspects of the text, and learns about each student as a reader. Students may respond to the text in meaningful ways through writing, discussion, etc.

### The Role of the Teacher

- To know each students' independent reading level progress and interests.
- To confer with students one-on-one or in small groups.
- To keep students' reading on track by setting and monitoring specific goals. (i.e. journal)
- To motivate students to become lifelong readers.
- To observe reader behaviors.
- To schedule daily conferences (3-5 per day).

### The Role of the Student

- To know how to independently select appropriate texts.
- To develop enough stamina to read for at least thirty minutes at a time (longer for middle and high school).
- To practice and apply the skills and strategies taught during whole group instruction.
- To read a variety of genres.
- To take ownership and responsibility for leading the conference regarding their reading.
- To share new words they have learned

### The Role of the Principal

- To assure independent reading is scheduled 30 minutes per day.
- To provide feedback to teachers on the implementation of the Independent reading procedures and documentation.
  - IR schedule
  - Anecdotal notes
  - Student journals
- To support teachers with the appropriate resources.

### Resources

*The Book Whisperer* by Donalyn Miller

*In the Middle* by Nanci Atwell

*In the Company of Children* by Joanne Hindley

*Growing Readers* by Kathy Collins

[Back to Top](#)

## Independent Writing



The purpose of independent writing is for students to write independently with varying levels of support from the teacher. The student will demonstrate a clear understanding of the stylistic aspect of the given writing genre. The teacher confers with students one-on-one or in small groups, prompts the use of strategies, discusses various aspects of the writing, and learns about each student as a writer.

### The Role of the Teacher

- \* To know each student's specific writing strengths, needs, and interests.
- \* To confer with students one-on-one or in small groups to clarify, extend, and refine writing skills.
- \* To keep students' writing on track by setting and monitoring specific goals.
- \* To build stamina.
- \* To provide an uninterrupted and quiet environment.
- \* To foster a positive attitude and appreciation for writing by allowing students choice of topics so they may develop their voice and style.

### The Role of the Student

- \* To independently practice and apply the skills and strategies taught during whole group instruction.
- \* To develop stamina in order to write independently for an extended period of time.
- \* To engage in peer/teacher conferences.
- \* To share and reflect with others.

### Resources

*A Guide to Effective Instruction in Writing, Kindergarten to Grade 3*  
*The Art of Teaching Writing* by Lucy Calkins

[Back to Top](#)

## Interactive Writing



This component is identical to shared writing with ONE exception: the teacher and students interact with the pen. This strategy is mainly used in primary grades, but may be used in small group instruction for intermediate grades.

### The Role of the Teacher

- To decide on a teaching point.
- To question student for an accurate response before passing the pen.
- To select students to interact with the pen at a strategic point for a letter, word, phrase, or convention depending upon their developmental level.
- To guide students to create a readable text.
- To model thinking aloud and rereading the text during the lesson
- To make the text accessible throughout the school year.
- To model effective writing strategies across all content areas.
- To use questioning to promote higher order thinking in students.
- To assist students in solving problems which occur while writing.
- To monitor students' progression to inform future teaching points.
- To create a safe environment for student sharing.

### The Role of the Student

- To be a respectful and active participant throughout the process.
- To assist in composing and constructing the text when prompted by the teacher.
- To transfer the modeled strategies/skills during independent writing.

### Resources

*Interactive Writing* by Andrea McCarrier, Gay Su Pinnell, and Irene C. Fountas

*Comprehending Fluency* by Irene C. Fountas and Gay Su Pinnell

*Guided Reading* by Irene C. Fountas and Gay Su Pinnell

*A Guide to Effective Instruction in Writing, Kindergarten to Grade 3*

[http://eworkshop.on.ca/edu/resources/guides/Guide\\_Writing\\_%20K\\_3.pdf](http://eworkshop.on.ca/edu/resources/guides/Guide_Writing_%20K_3.pdf)

[Back to Top](#)

## Interactive Read Aloud



The purpose of reading aloud is to build background knowledge, expose students to new vocabulary, increase comprehension skills, improve students' listening skills, foster critical thinking, and encourage positive attitudes toward reading. In an interactive read aloud, the teacher allows opportunities for students to participate in accountable talk with their peers. The teacher reads aloud selections from fiction and non-fiction texts. These texts are on or above the students' reading level (mentor/exemplar text). Text selection is purposeful with a specific teaching point in mind. During the read aloud, the teacher models fluent reading by using appropriate expression, phrasing, and pacing. This allows the students to engage in comprehension strategies without the demand of decoding.

### The Role of the Teacher

- To pre-read a selection thoroughly to become familiar with the content and structure prior to the lesson.
- To plan stopping points for discussion.
- To cultivate a literacy-rich environment that fosters positive attitudes toward reading.
- To expose students to a wide variety of texts that students can read independently.
- To prepare students for the text by activating prior knowledge or building knowledge when topics are unknown.
- To help students in constructing meaning from text through thinking aloud and making connections.
- To provide opportunities for students to respond to the reading selection in a variety of ways.
- To model fluent reading such as appropriate expression, phrasing, and conversational rate.
- To expand vocabulary through exposure and direct instruction with tier 2 and 3 words.
- To model Turn and Talk and other meaningful conversational practices (speaking, listening, reflecting, & questioning).

### The Role of the Student

- To make connections to his/her own experience or other reading selections. (i.e. text-to-self, text-to-text, text-to-world connections)
- To enjoy listening to and discussing texts, which are read aloud.
- To use descriptive language to explain and explore ideas he/she hears.
- To understand that print carries a message.
- To connect new concepts and vocabulary to prior knowledge.
- To retell, summarize and/or synthesize texts.
- To respond orally or in writing to text selection.
- To use and apply tier 2 and 3 words (first approximation, moving to mastery).
- To hold meaningful conversations with peers.

### Resources

*Craft Lessons* by Ralph Fletcher (Fiction and Non-Fiction)

*Read Aloud Handbook* by Jim Trelease

*The Art of Teaching Reading* by Lucy Calkins

*Classrooms That Work: They Can All Read and Write* by Richard Allington & Pat Cunningham

*Strategies That Work: Teaching Comprehension to Enhance Understanding* by Stephanie Harvey & Anne Goudvis

*Bringing Words to Life* by Isabel Beck, Margaret G. McKeown & Linda Kucan

*Text Talk* by Isabel Beck & Margaret G. McKeown

[Back to Top](#)

## Shared Reading



The teacher selects a short text that is high interest, on or above grade level, and clearly addresses a specific comprehension strategy, skill, or a focus related to the essential question. Each student will have access to the text. The teacher will read the passage aloud to the whole class and stop periodically in order to model how they are thinking through the text.

In primary grades, teachers will read aloud and may invite students to read along. The use of a big book or another form of enlarged text such as a poem, nursery rhyme, or familiar song allows the students to view both the pictures and the words. During the shared read, the teacher may also read the selected text aloud a number of different times. During repeated readings, the teacher can build comprehension, discuss interesting language or vocabulary, develop phonemic awareness, introduce print concepts, identify sight words, or model decoding and self-monitoring skills in the context of the text.

### The Role of the Teacher

- To build awareness of the print concepts and language patterns in the text.
- To assist students in constructing meaning from text through thinking aloud.
- To model reading skills and comprehension strategies of the text.
- To give students multiple opportunities to practice and apply concepts of print, reading skills and comprehension strategies.
- To utilize the Gradual Release of Responsibility Model.

### The Role of the Student

- To actively listen and observe as the teacher models the reading skills, comprehension strategies, and/or responds to the essential question.
- To practice and apply concepts of print, reading skills, and comprehension strategies
- To utilize multiple texts.
- To develop an understanding of text language and/or text structures.

### Resources

*Read It Again* by Brenda Parkes

*Mosaic of Thought* by Keene and Zimmerman

*Improving Comprehension with Think Aloud Strategies* by Jeffrey Wilhelm

*Strategies That Work* by Harvey and Goudvis

*Explaining Reading: A resource for teaching concepts, skills and strategies* by Gerald Duffy

[Back to Top](#)

## Word Study



The purpose of word study is to provide a specific time in the day for students to explore phonemic awareness, phonics, high frequency words, decoding strategies, word meanings, spelling, and word patterns. This differs from the traditional spelling approach of drill and memorization. Students are engaged in hands-on, concrete experiences by utilizing critical thinking skills in order to build transferable word knowledge. Students work with words on their instructional level in small groups. The CASD is utilizing *Words Their Way* as the word study curriculum. This is a research based, developmental approach to word study instruction, which occurs daily for 15-20 minutes. [Click here for additional information about Word Study.](#)

### The Role of the Teacher

- Administer word knowledge inventory periodically.
- Group students according to their instructional level.
- Model the routines and structure of word study.
- Confer with students individually and in small groups.
- To utilize the Gradual Release of Responsibility Model.

### The Role of the Student

- To recognize, create generalizations, and name patterns in words.
- To work cooperatively with peers while performing sorts.
- To transfer the knowledge of how words work to independent writing/reading.

### Resources

*Words Their Way* by Bear, Invernizzi, Templton, and Johnston

[Back to Top](#)

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# WORDS THEIR WAY

## Word Study for Phonics, Vocabulary, and Spelling Instruction

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### *Benefits of Word Study*

- Teaches students necessary skills and engages their interest and motivation to learn about how words work
- Hands-on opportunities to manipulate word features in a way that allows them to generalize beyond isolated examples
- Teaches students how to look at words so that they can construct an ever-deepening understanding of how spelling works to represent sound and meaning
- Developmental approach that meets students individual needs
- Small group instruction

### *Word Study at School*

- **Monday**– Students are given the words and headers. They are challenged to determine the rules/patterns before meeting with the teacher. The teacher confers with the students in a small group setting and students record the rule and sort in their Word Study notebook.
- **Tuesday**– Students work with a partner to complete the word sort. One student sorts the words while the other students uses their notebook to check their partner's work. The roles are then reversed.
- **Wednesday**– Students work with a partner to play **Concentration**. Students use one set of words and lay them face down. Cards are flipped over two at a time. The student is to read the words and determine if they belong in the same category. If the words belong in the same category, the student has found a match and keeps the words. This continues with students taking turns until all words have been used.
- **Thursday**– Students may participate in any of the following activities:
  - **Taboo**–Students work with a partner to play this game. One student places a word card on their forehead while the other student gives them clues to identify the word. They are not able to say rhyming words. Students are encouraged to use the meaning of the word. When the student guesses correctly they say and spell the word. Once all words are completed, roles are reversed.
  - **Word Hunt**–Students look for words in books that fit the rule/pattern. Words are recorded in their Word Study notebook.
  - **Blind Sort**–Students work with a partner. One student places a word from each category on a desk. He/she reads the words while challenging his/her partner to place it in the appropriate category. Roles are reversed.

### *What does the assessment look like?*

- Students will be given a **Writing Sort** on Fridays. Each category heading will be provided. Teacher will read aloud words. Students are expected to place the words in the appropriate category and spell the words correctly.
- Students will be given transfer words during the assessment. These are words that follow the rules/patterns but have not been seen by the students.
- Students are given one point for placing the word in the appropriate category and another point for spelling the word correctly. Students can be awarded two bonus points for writing the pattern/rule of the sort.

## *Activities for home*

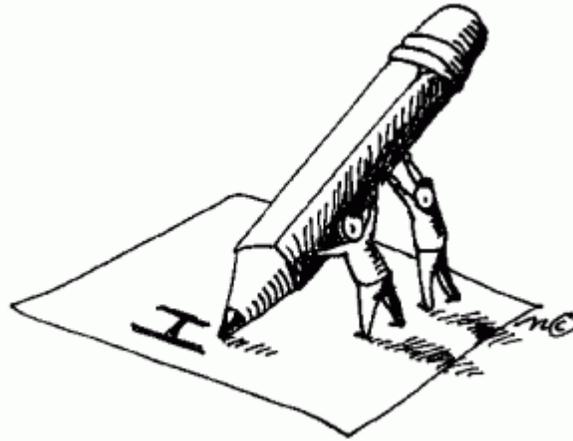
- **SAW (Sort, Alphabetize and Write)**- Students sort their words, alphabetize the words within their categories and then write down the sort.
- **Beat the Parent**-Parent sorts the words while being timed by their child. The child then tries to beat the parent's time while sorting their words.
- **Speed Sort**– Student completes the sort while timing himself/herself. The sort is then repeated to see if he/she can beat his/her previous time.
- **Concentration**
- **Taboo**
- **Word Hunt**
- **Blind Sort**
- **Writing Sort**

### **Homework Expectation:**

- Choose two activities to complete per week. An entry must be made in your Word Study Homework notebook even when playing games such as Taboo.
- Return your Word Study Homework notebook every Friday.

[Back to Top](#)

## Shared Writing



The purpose is to support students to transfer newly acquired skills to become more independent writers. The teaching points may include concepts of print, genres, traits, and strategies for reading or writing. The students will share their thoughts, which are demonstrated in the writing. Both teacher and students contribute to the writing, but the teacher is the only scribe.

### **The Role of the Teacher**

- To decide on a purpose for the experience which may include student input.
- To be the scribe.
- To guide students to create a readable text.
- To model thinking aloud and reread the text during the lesson.
- To make the text accessible throughout the school year.
- To model effective writing strategies across all content areas.
- To use questioning to promote higher order thinking in students.
- To assist students in solving problems which occur while writing.
- To monitor students' progression to inform future teaching points.
- To create a safe environment for student sharing.

### **The Role of the Student**

- To be a respectful and active participant throughout the process.
- To assist in contributing ideas for the text.
- To transfer the modeled strategies/skills during independent writing.

[Back to Top](#)