

THE DAILY 5: FOSTERING LITERACY INDEPENDENCE IN THE ELEMENTARY GRADES

In a continuous effort to provide the best instruction to our students, the First Grade team has decided to begin a new literacy program in the classroom called The Daily 5. Daily 5 and the CAFE system were created by Gail Boushey and Joan Moser, two sisters with more than 40 years of teaching experience between them. I am excited about starting this in our classroom! The Daily Five is a student-driven management structure designed to fully engage students in reading and writing.

The best way to become a better reader is to practice each day, with books you choose, on your just-right reading level. So, during our literacy block students have time each day to practice, practice, practice! Our literacy block consists of the following: whole group interactive read aloud, several focused mini-lessons, small group reading instruction and/or individual reading conferences, and independent literacy tasks.

Students are carefully taught how to choose a good-fit (just-right) book to read. Each student in our classroom has his/her special book box to place all just-right books in. Students read independently daily (during Read to Self time) and also with a partner (during Read to Someone time). At this time, I am teaching guided reading and meeting with individual students. Mrs. Dupree also meets with small groups and works with struggling readers one-on-one on specific skills. While Mrs. Dupree and I work with our small groups, all other students are highly engaged in the Daily 5 reading activities around the room.

Here's what the Daily 5 looks like in our classroom:

1st Focus (Mini) Lesson - 7-10 minutes

****COMPREHENSION LESSON****

During this first focus lesson, students will receive direct instruction in a comprehension strategy (benchmark).

ROUND 1:

1st Daily 5 Choice/Small Group - (20-25 minutes)

At this time, we meet with a small reading group- other students choose from one of THE DAILY FIVE

2nd focus (Mini) Lesson 7-10 minutes

***WORD WORK INSTRUCTION**

This second mini-lesson includes explicit instruction in the following: *phonics, decoding, spelling.*

ROUND 2: 2nd Daily 5 Choice/Small Group (25 minutes)

At this time, we meet with a small reading group- other students choose from one of THE DAILY FIVE

3rd Focus (mini) Lesson - 7-10 minutes

*** Work on Writing***

This third mini-lesson includes explicit instruction in Writing and Grammar

ROUND 3:

3rd Daily 5 Choice/Small Group - (25 minutes)

At this time, we meet with a small reading group- other students choose from one of THE DAILY FIVE

Check-in Sessions - 5 minutes or less (at the end of each round)

At the end of each round of guided reading I play my music box. When students hear the soft, tinkling sounds of the music box they know it is time to clean up and check-in at the carpet. During check-in time, we may share reading successes and problem-solve together if necessary.

The Daily 5 ‘centers’ continue in this way throughout our literacy block all morning. Some days we may only have time for 3 rotations. Other days we may make it through all 5 rotations.

We will spend the first 4-5 weeks of school explicitly modeling and practicing what to do at each rotation. This seems like a long time to spend, however it will pay off enormously when the students have learned what is expected of them and how to participate in each rotation. Students will be independent learners, we will be able to work effectively with our small groups and individual students, and meaningful learning will take place! ☺

DAILY 5 CHOICE DESCRIPTIONS:

Read to Self

When students Read to Self, students read good-fit books independently from their book boxes. Students take their book box and find a cozy reading spot around the room. Leveled readers from the our reading series as well as good-fit books from our classroom library are read during this time. Students have learned there are 3 ways to read a book: 1) Read the pictures. 2) Read the words. 3) Retell a story previously read. Each student meets with me once a week to select good-fit books to put in their book boxes.

Why do we do this? The best way to become a better reader is to practice, practice, practice each day! Read to Self helps us become better readers and it is fun!

Read to Someone

When students choose Read to Someone, partners take their book boxes and read just-right books together. Partners are taught to sit "EEKK" style when partner reading (elbow to elbow, knee to knee). Students make decisions together about where they want to read, what they want to read (same book or different books), and how they want to read (echo or choral). Students are carefully taught to CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING when partner reading. This helps us improve our comprehension. While one student reads, the other student listens carefully and then "checks for understanding". The listener retells what he/she heard by saying: "I heard you say (who & what)." This holds the listener accountable. Students are also carefully taught how to be good reading coaches and to assist partners when they come to an unknown word or when comprehension may break down.

Why do we do this? Reading with a partner is fun and helps us become more fluent readers. It also helps us improve our reading comprehension. A MUST-DO activity each week is to read the anthology story from our basal with a partner.

Listen to Reading

When students choose Listen to Reading, they can either listen to stories on the computer or books on tape or CD. Our classroom is very fortunate to have two computers with internet access, a cassette player, a CD player and a variety of books on tape and CD. Often, students will write or draw about the story they have listened to as a follow-up comprehension activity.

Why do we do this? Listening to books on tape/CD is fun and helps us to become more fluent readers. It exposes us to a variety of genres, too!

Word Work

When students choose Word Work, they explore and work with our weekly spelling and vocabulary words. They have a list of Word Work activities to choose from. Examples: Rainbow spell the words, make words with magnet letters, sort words on a pocket chart, etc.

Why do we do this? Work work allows us to learn about words, to expand our vocabularies, and to become better spellers! Our writing is important to us and correct spelling allows our readers to have a better understanding and appreciation of our writing.

Work on Writing

Work on writing is a time for children to practice the skills we are learning during our writing lesson. It could be expository writing, narrative writing, a grammar skill, writing about a story we have read or free choice writing.

Some fun writing choices include: Squiggle writing (make a squiggle on a piece of paper, use your imagination to create a picture using the squiggle, write a story that goes with the picture), Sticker stories (make a picture using 4-5 stickers, write a story to go with the picture), sill story starters, etc.