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A need for motivation : increasing engagement to bolster success

Abstract

Educators want to create a sustained, life-long reader in their students. This overview of the literature will share with educators valuable insight into how increasing motivation and student engagement will help create more involved readers. Key themes in the literature include: increasing literacy motivation, increasing literacy engagement, and applying thoughtful literacy practices. This review will also highlight several helpful strategies on how educators in today's classrooms can help increase student motivation and engagement related to literacy.

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A Need for Motivation: Increasing Engagement to Bolster Success

A Graduate Paper

Submitted to the

Division of

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UNIVERSITY OF NORTHERN IOWA

By

Libbie M. Willert

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Abstract:

Educators want to create a sustained, life-long reader in their students. This overview of the literature will share with educators valuable insight into how increasing motivation and student engagement will help create more involved readers. Key themes in the literature include: increasing literacy motivation, increasing literacy engagement, and applying thoughtful literacy practices. This review will also highlight several helpful strategies on how educators in today's classrooms can help increase student motivation and engagement related to literacy.

Purpose:

The purpose behind this literature review is to increase awareness of the importance of reading motivation to the overall success of a reader. The design of the review is to view various sources and previously conducted studies in order to compile information in regards to the notion that a student motivated to read is therefore more likely to read, and again therefore more likely to be/become a proficient reader (Guthrie, Coddington, & Wigfield, 2009).

As an educator, I have found lack of student motivation to be a personally relevant issue. After teaching several years of middle school, and currently teaching fifth grade, I have seen a large number of students unmotivated to read. This has left me to wonder whether that lack of motivation was situational, age-related, or perhaps a general trend amongst students today. In my reading, I have been pleased to discover that this 'trend' seems to be cross-generational and is not directly related to students today. This perceived lack of motivation seems to be loosely connected to the ever-changing likes and dislikes of adolescents (Conradi, et al, 2013). However, there is still a need to increase overall motivation of these readers to, in turn, increase overall reading achievement. Students who struggle to read are far more likely to drop out of school, as well as have a higher likelihood to break the law and become juvenile offenders (Conradi, et al, 2013). The cycle of poverty and crime is then perpetuated and may continue throughout the individual's life due to a lack of reading proficiency (Wise, 2009).

Methodology

After several years of working with adolescents the same question kept entering my mind, "How can I help students find enjoyment and purpose in reading?" It seemed that every time I asked students to read or gave an assignment that involved reading, I was met with the greatest resistance. At times students were unwilling, but often they outright refused. Therefore, I began the hunt for resources to help aid me in increasing the reading motivation and engagement of students within my own classroom, as well as provide an understanding for the attitudes towards reading that I observed on a regular basis.

My first general database search on reading motivation led me to an article by Applegate and Applegate on thoughtful literacy (2010). The idea that the article focused on was that the more involved students are with a literacy task, the more likely they are to appreciate what they are doing and therefore become engaged. As an educator, I feel this is the key to learning and appreciated the ideas and strategies offered by the husband and wife team.

After reading the aforementioned article, I then began a search on thoughtful literacy. This search did not result in many helpful articles, but did introduce me to the world of showing students how to become critical and active readers. Much of John Guthrie's work is based on these ideas, as well as concept-oriented reading instruction (CORI). I greatly respected the materials that I was reading from Guthrie, however I wasn't looking for engagement ideas that were as specific as CORI for my own personal use. After reading many of Guthrie's articles I followed many of the references cited in those articles to further my own investigations.

Throughout my queries I used the databases *Education Full Text* and *ERIC*. These database searches were fueled by a combination of various key terms. Subject searches were conducted with the terms 'reading motivation' and 'reading engagement.' Specific authors, such as Guthrie, Kelley, and Allington were also searched.

After reviewing the articles above, and beginning the formation of this review, subsequent searches on student accountability and ways to monitor student progress were also searched. These results proved to be less than helpful in finding resources on literacy activities or record keeping tools. I then decided to try a sort of backward thinking, and conducted a search on reading logs; in hopes to find other related articles that may give alternative activities to traditional reading logs. This search did help uncover several resources that helped aid this portion of the review.

All article searches were limited to the years 2000-Present and those included in this review were all peer reviewed from scholarly journals. These searches were conducted between the fall of 2012 and spring of 2013.

Terminology Used

Struggling readers: Readers who are reading significantly below grade level, as measured by a teacher administered reading inventory.

Reading motivation: The general inclination to want to read, and to also read for enjoyment.

Reading engagement: The interplay of motivation, conceptual knowledge, strategies, and social interaction during literacy activities (Guthrie, 2000).

Independent Reading: The act of reading on one's own from a text that was chosen by the reader.

Literature Review

Step into any elementary classroom during their reading time and you will find children with books in hand, pages turning, teacher's working with children, etc. However, now, take a closer look. Are those children you are observing truly reading? Are they decoding the words on the page and putting them together to create meaning? Will they be able to sit with their peers later and discuss what they've read? Will they have time to share their favorite new transpiring with their teacher? It is a concern for many educators that many children are not choosing to read on their own and that independent reading opportunities during the school day appear to be diminishing (Williams, Hedrick, and Tuschinski, 2008).

In today's classrooms, it is all too common that students appear to be reading, but in reality they are not. Each student is unique, as is each reader, and a students' level of reading engagement can range from completely disengaged to obsessive. A student's engagement may waver according to the content task, and text (Kelly and Clausen-Grace, 2009). Many factors play into this ever-growing problem of lack of engagement. One of the main components that appear to be missing is the opportunity for children to be able to thoughtfully respond to the text that they are reading. Opportunities to respond to text increase engagement. Response activities may include being asked to make connections and then to share those connections with friends and teachers. "Students with fewer reading skills than their peers read relatively less and avoid the task when possible…This

avoidance clearly accounts for less exposure and in turn fewer learning-to-read opportunities. Due to the fact that engagement in reading and achievement in reading are mutually causal, they must both be cultivated within the school" (Guthrie, J.T., 2004, pg. 6). A possible way to increase this level of engagement to help create a higher level of motivation may be to have students share some aspect of their reading with others (Williams, et al, 2008).

While reading, *A Study of Thoughtful Literacy and the Motivation to Read,* by Anthony and Mary Applegate (2010), I examined their research questions and yielded some valuable insight into reading motivation and inclination to read. The most valuable question being: "Would the inclination to respond thoughtfully to narrative text be related to the overall motivation, the value ascribed to reading, and the reading self-efficacy of elementary school children" (p. 229)?

The results of their research showed that, yes, being inclined to respond to text meant a significant increase in motivation to read. (Applegate & Applegate, 2010). One of the main goals of schools needs to be fostering intrinsic motivation and helping students find the enjoyment and fulfillment in reading (Cambria & Guthrie, 2010).

After reading the Applegate and Applegate article, it became evident that many teachers are facing similar struggles to get their students engaged and motivated to read independently. My question became, 'so what can be done to increase motivation and engagement?' In the following sections, I will highlight research that supports independent reading as a means of increasing motivation and engagement. I will also review various strategies that can help increase classroom motivation and engagement with literacy tasks.

Supporting Independent Reading

In Sarah Parks Duncan's (2010) article, *Instilling a Lifelong Love of Reading,* she lays out many great habits to help kids to become more involved readers. She lists various strategies that can be used by teachers to get students thinking about what they are reading; as well as showing how to help students pick books that will get them interested in the words on the page. The ideas discussed were: being a reading model, reading aloud to children of all ages, and giving student choice in book selection. This author is not alone. Williams, Hedrick and Tuschinski (2008), also state that choice and control, as well as social interaction are two guiding principles to help increase students' motivation and engagement. These ideas will be elaborated on later within this paper.

When the phrase independent reading is used, educators need to recognize that though the students may be doing the act of reading by themselves, it should not remain a solitary activity. "Although the label of *independent* has often been applied to the practice of providing students with time with text without direct oversight, true autonomy only appears to apply in limited circumstances and degrees" (Sanden, 2012, pg. 226). It is worrisome to think that the lack of guidance and overseeing of some of struggling readers may aid in increasing some of their ineffectiveness (Sanden, 2012). When a struggling student is left to read in a truly solitary manner they may begin to doubt their abilities. They find themselves "retreating from all text interactions and reducing their own opportunity to do what they want to do more than anything – be a good reader" (Cambria & Guthrie, 2010, pg. 17). For a reader who is struggling, they often don't even realize that they are not making meaning of the text. "Poor readers do not seem to know that they are supposed to make sense of the text and do not seem to realize when meaning

breaks down" (Diehl, 2005, pg. 59). Without an adult finding some way to 'check-in' with their students many of these struggling readers may continue to struggle, and in fact may become even less interested. "Students who initially find reading a little tough tend to avoid the book whenever possible and put in minimum effort. Obviously, this prevents them from gaining skill and they enter a cycle of failure to read and avoidance" (Cambria & Guthrie, 2010, pg. 25). What then can be done to help them?

Motivation and engagement seem to be some of the most likely keys to success in reading. "However, the fact remains that teachers may have a wealth of knowledge and experience and a full repertoire of proven teaching strategies at their disposal, but if a child cannot or will not muster the motivational resources to respond, then there is virtually nothing that teachers can do" (Applegate and Applegate, 2010, pg. 226). Key themes in literature about motivation and engagement in reading are choice and control, communication and collaboration over text, and student accountability. These themes are highlighted in the following sections, which discuss strategies to get students motivated through the act of reading.

Fostering Student Choice and Providing Control

A concern that many educators have when students are independent reading is that they have not chosen an appropriate text. However, "a favorite motivator of many teachers is choice" (Cambria & Guthrie, 2010, p. 22). Promoting appropriate book choice is an important factor in the independent reading block. Students often get a sense that their interests and opinions rarely matter to their learning because current mandates call for teachers to use specific materials in which to teach from. Personal text selection

is therefore one chance that students can have to feel a sense of power and control over their education (William, Hedrick, & Tuschinski, 2008). "[Students] feel uninhibited during the self-chosen activities and are able to make decisions about when, how, and whether to pursue them" (Quirk, et al, 2010, 97). Supporting a student's own autonomy is not an opportunity to completely remove the teacher's role in the classroom, which may create bedlam. Instead, students have a mini-choice in their own learning and teachers can facilitate this process in many ways. Students are automatically more invested due to the fact that the text selection was of their own choosing (Guthrie, 2004).

With the aforementioned in mind, the organization of a classroom library is also an important factor to consider when providing opportunity for student choice. As Sanacore suggests, children like an easily accessible and understandable arrangement, just like adults. He suggests that books and resources should be displayed with covers facing outward, materials should be arranged by interest, topic, or genre, and the materials should be easily reached and at eye-level (2006). A classroom library with little organization makes independent book selection more difficult.

Along with the organization of a classroom library, the materials housed in that library are also an important component to any classroom. "A well-stocked library serves as a nucleus for browsing, selecting, and enjoying resources. Therefore, the library should consist of a variety of materials to accommodate a diversity of interests" (Sanacore, 2006, pg. 33). This should include texts of all genres of fiction, and a variety of non-fiction and informational texts too. "When classroom libraries represent a better balance of fiction and nonfiction, our students will have more opportunities to read materials that interest them" (Sanacore, 2006, pg. 34). This will lead to better student

choice and readers who are more compelled to read, as they have a book that suits them and their interests.

Educators need to remember that, "Students read more, understand more, and are more likely to continue reading when they have the opportunity to choose what they read" (Allington, 2010, pg.10). All people appreciate the option to choose various things for themselves. However, we are all aware that not everything in our daily lives is up for choice, yet when we are given the opportunity to choose. While I understand that students will not be able to make choices at every point in their learning, when given the opportunity to do so, students appreciate the chance to do so. This is the same for students choosing independent reading materials.

Communication and Collaboration with Text

Another aspect that seems to increase motivation and engagement in an independent reading block is social interacting with text. Social interaction with text can be conducted in a variety of ways; but often integrates dialogue with others about text. "Children appear to have high motivation to read when they will be sharing some aspect of their reading with others" (Williams, Hedrick, & Tuschinski, 2008, p. 136). Whether using think-pair-share, whole class discussion, teacher conferences, or book talks, educators need to find ways to get children talking and connecting with each other about literature. "Enjoyment of the learning activity, and the desire to participate in similar activities in the future, were accelerated by the collaborative learning structures" (Cambria & Guthrie, 2010, p. 23).

Teachers should be urged to move beyond the independent read, reflect, and respond stages. While time should be dedicated for students to read on their own,

teachers must give students time to share their ideas with peers. "After students engage in reading experiences, teachers should follow up with discussion – a natural after-reading activity for most lifelong readers" (Duncan, 2010, pg. 92). According to the work of Vygotsky (1978), the best learning occurs with the availability to collaborate with others who have more knowledge. Allowing the opportunities for students to share their ideas with others helps to increase their participation, as well as make personal connections to various texts they are reading. "Motivation for using comprehension strategies and reading deeply is increased when students are afforded opportunities to share their questions, opinions, and newly gained information. Collaborative activity enables students to clarify their understanding of core concepts" (Guthrie, 2004).

Literature circles. The use of literature circles is a common instructional structure used to facilitate student conversation about texts. First introduced in the 1980s by Harvey Daniels, literature circles have been used worldwide as a sort of children's book clubs. However, they can take on various forms depending upon teacher interpretation and purpose of the circle. Daniels suggests that children create their own literature circles (2006) by choosing their own book and select their own people to hold conversations with about that book. In other common forms, literature circles involve students discussing either the same book that they are reading as a group, or forming conversations around the different books they are reading and making connections. Often, if the books are differently titled, they share a similar theme, which will help aid discussion. Teachers usually initially lead this process, and the gradually release the students to have discussions on their own (Williams, Hedrick, & Tuschinski, 2008).

Originally, Daniels used role sheets that gave students specific jobs to perform within their group, with the hope that eventually those roles would become natural and, the sheets would then serve as an aid to learn the process; this idea is good for those educators wanting to try the process. This format may be useful for those educators wanting to try the process, yet need guidance (Daniels, 2006).

Online Forums. Another common form of socially interacting through text is through online forms, often built upon the same structure described above. Sometimes teachers utilize blogs or various classroom pages to help guide discussion, and yet provide the students an opportunity to share without having to physically discuss with their classmates (Zawilinski, 2009). For some, this method is more successful because it also allows for students in secondary levels to interact with students from various class sections, not just their own (Beach, 2012).

When observing today's classrooms, "No group is more acutely aware than literacy educators of the difference between lessons that engage and challenge thinking and those that stultify and deaden the mind" (Applegate, 2010, pg. 233). No one wants to be the teacher that deadens the mind of their students! Discussion is one way to ensure that educators are not 'mind-deadeners' and that reading is more engaging for students. "Good discussions give students opportunities to identify specific text material that supports their position and to listen as other students do the same. In the course of an effective discussion students are presented with multiple examples of how meaning can be constructed from text" (Kamil, et al, 2008, pg. 24). There are many ways to make reading enjoyable for all students, it is a teacher's job to find those ways.

Ideas and Strategies to Maintain an Engaged Independent Reading Block

Though many of the aforementioned articles offer the foundational knowledge about the importance of engagement, they lack the information teachers need to make their own independent reading block more successful. The article entitled, *R 5: The Sustained Silent Reading makeover that transformed readers*, by Michelle Kelley and Nicki Clausen-Grace, helped do just that. Kelley and Clausen-Grace described how a successful reading program was implemented within one school, across grade levels. They shared the five components of the successes that they were able to achieve, which are: Read, relax, reflect, respond, and rap/share. They collected data before and after implementation using the Developmental Reading Assessment (DRA), which poses questions regarding both engagement and comprehension. This particular assessment has a component that involves a student survey on reading habits and student interest. With the use of these collection tools the researchers were able to see motivational growth within the collection sample.

Mini-lessons. Teachers are coming to a crossroads on deciding best instructional practices for teaching national and state standards. They need to be able to take a road that leads to both reading for enjoyment, as well as helping students to gain important reading skills. Teachers know that "as the debate over reading instruction continues, teachers are hard-pressed to help students see the joy in reading when associated only with isolated reading skills and drills" (Duncan, 2010, pg. 91). Therefore, Kelly and Grace suggest several methods for increasing engagement during independent reading time, while still teaching valuable skills. One of the methods suggested is through the

use of daily mini-lessons. A mini-lesson is when a teacher briefly teaches a helpful reading and then models that strategy with meaningful text. After this direct instruction teachers have the time to meet with students in a guided reading type fashion, while other students are independently reading at their seats or around the classroom (Kelly & Grace, 2006).

Record keeping. Monitoring students who are independently reading is another very important part of setting up a successful classroom routine. "Students must not only be allowed to choose their own books and have the time to read them, but they must also be accountable for the decisions they have made" (Johnson and Blair, 2003, pg. 187). However, teachers need to be careful to not make the assigned tasks evaluative. Tasks shouldn't be assigned a score or grade, but be viewed as an accountability activity. For example, Kelley and Grace (2006) make mention of a daily status sheet that a teacher can use to record data on all students' progress. "The status sheet had cells for student's text, and the page they were on each day. It took 5 to 10 minutes for the teacher to circulate and record the information" (Kelley & Grace, 2006, pg. 153). This log, though simple in design, gave teachers a chance to see how many pages are being read by their students. Also, through the use of a daily reading log, students are asked to pick a writing stem and respond with one quick thoughtful sentence in relation to their text (Kelley & Grace, 2006). For example productive stems could be: I'm thinking that, or When I read _____ I was reminded of _____. Though these ideas are quick for students to complete, they do require students to think about the text that they are reading.

Another strategy that exists for the same purpose is a learning log. Learning logs are similar to a journal but typically involve a given prompt or task that aids students in tracking their learning and thinking as they read (Carr, 2002). Often they are used as a pre-reading tool that gives a prompt in order to help students find purpose in the text that they are reading for the assigned task or allotted time (Knipper & Duggan, 2006). This log is then exchanged between the teacher and student for feedback and communication on the student's progress and participation during the independent reading block.

The importance of instruction cannot be overlooked. Students who struggle with reading may not have internalized or do not yet know what it is that proficient readers do. Teachers need to have on-going conversations with these struggling students. Holly Diehl (2005) models metacognition as follows, "Good readers have to listen to the voices going on in their heads while they read. By paying attention to our voices, I can tell when my mind starts to wander" (pg. 60). This is just one example of how teachers can help students learn what it is proficient readers do.

Writing to Learn. Other ideas that can be incorporated into an engaged reading block include various writing to learn activities. "Writing to learn engages students, extends thinking, deepens understanding, and energizes the meaning-making process…The purpose for writing to learn is meant to be a catalyst for further learning and meaning making…Writing to learn is an opportunity for students to recall, clarify, and question what they know about a subject and what they still wonder about with regard to that subject matter" (Knipper & Duggan, 2006, pg. 462). Knipper and Duggan (2006) suggest a wide variety of applicable activities to use during and after reading.

And though some of the activities listed are most applicable in secondary levels, others appear to be applicable at lower levels as well. Included in those activities are quick writes, learning logs, and framed paragraphs.

A quick write is an activity that is formatted by the teacher, usually with some sort of prompt, however, and open-ended writing or summary could also be used. With a quick write, students are usually given one minute to write, and then their writing is selected. Sometimes this is referred to as an admit/exit ticket, depending upon its placement within instruction (Knipper & Duggan, 2006). Allowing only one minute keeps students engaged and creates a response that takes little time for the teacher to review.

An additional strategy that could be implemented to evaluate and gauge the learning occurring with independent readers is through the development of a framed paragraph or writing frame response (Knipper & Dugga, 2006). Boyles suggests that a "frame offers the most substantial level of concrete assistance we can provide by reducing the need for competence with the written language structures. Giving students sentence starts makes success attainable for even our lowest-performing students" (Boyles, 2003). A writing frame includes various parts of a paragraph leaving blanks spaces and lines for student response. Therefore, even though many of the structures of *how* to write are given, the response from the student is still authentic and shows their understanding without having to do the additional work of deciding how to gather and record their ideas.

The above named practices are all researched options to improving the motivation and engagement of independent readers. There are a plethora of resources available to

build on these ideas and to help educators find more. However, once readers are actively involved with their own learning, the act of reading should become more enjoyable and make student more active within their learning environment.

Conclusion

This review has discussed several important aspects in creating an engaged independent reading program. Included in the discussion was the notion that providing students with choice and control, as well as opportunities to communicate and collaborate, will help make readers more naturally engaged in what they are doing through involvement and participation.

When thinking of a typical classroom, it is hard not to see it as a microcosm of life. As adults, we are afforded choice and control over nearly aspect of our lives. We are also given the opportunity to talk with friends and colleagues when we have ideas and wonderings. Students should have those same opportunities. Think about your own personal reading lives. As mentioned earlier, adults do not get online to take a quiz when they have completed a book. Nor are they asked to create something like a diorama or poster (Williams, Hedrick, & Tuschinksi, 2008). Also, when considering your own personal adult book choice, does someone tell you what to read? This is certainly not typical. Authentic choices in classrooms will support lifelong readers. Educators may not always be able to provide book choice for every literacy task, but they need to afford choice where they can. Educators can also provide opportunity for mini-choices throughout their literacy instruction, for example, whether a student responds to their reading through a written task, or by sharing with a partner (Cambria & Guthrie, 2010).

The learning that takes place within classrooms needs to get students highly engaged and involved. "Without engagement, learning is difficult. Engaged readers actively interact with text, seeking to understand what they have read" (Kelly & Grace, 2009, pg. 313). All instruction needs to be purposeful and meaningful. Educators need to provide a time for authentic learning and communication with peers. Along with those collaboration opportunities, there also should be time allotted to reflect on their goals and ideas for their own independent reading block, and then communicate those expectations and ideas to their students (Kelly & Grace, 2009).

Throughout my readings, I discovered that though there are a plethora of resources on why engagement matters to learning, as well as ideas and strategies on how to increase motivation; the literature seemed to lack in research that provided a wide variety of ways in which teachers can assess learning and understanding. The strategies that were discussed throughout this review are generally well-known and practiced, but in depth review of their effectiveness was missing. Additionally, innovative techniques were hard to find. As our view of literacies change with our technological society, I hope to see that research about the methods for assessing learning will greatly increase and provide educators and students with even more choices in displaying their knowledge.

Educators should also be reminded that the act of being a reader, and reading, is what produces better readers. "Highly engaged readers are internally motivated to read, while reading frequently and deeply. These processes of engagement in reading are facilitated when classroom practices directly address them by providing instruction in the cognitive strategies and support systems for the motivational process of reading" (Wigfield, et al, 2008, pg. 443). Educators need to find ways to make every child in their

classroom highly engaged. A "deep desire for reading is not likely to be developed from one technique or one isolated teaching practice' (Guthrie & Cox, 2001), therefore all activities and tasks need to be structured for engagement, while keeping in mind the choice, control, communication and collaboration available for students.

Project

The following project incorporates the ideas and strategies reviewed above in a professional development format (Appendix A). These presentations were created with the purpose of informing relevant staff and faculty of current practices that could be utilized in their own instructional environments. The delivery of the presentations is designed sequentially and has a somewhat progressive order in the information provided.

The first session of the professional development focuses initially on setting up and creating an environment that promotes literacy interaction. A portion of the session discusses the importance of classroom library organization and variety of materials available. This then leads into helping students utilize the classroom library appropriately by selecting books that will be at their independent reading level. The session provides several different strategies that can be taught to students on book selection. A critical idea discussed as a connection to these ideas is student autonomy and independence as a way for students to have a sense of control over an aspect of learning. This is viewed as just one component of increasing engagement. (Appendix B)

In the second session, research findings for increasing communication and collaboration amongst students are examined. Applicable strategies for implementation are also discussed and modeled, including literature circles and digital book talks. Time

is provided for the participants of the session to engage in several of the strategies through a modeling lesson. Accountability measures are briefly introduced, and will be expanded upon in the following session. (Appendix C)

The third, and final, session reviews the prior sessions' key ideas and strategies, and introduces tools that could be used by teachers to monitor student accountability during independent reading. Samples are shown and time for sharing and planning is allotted. Before leaving, participants are asked to write down and turn in ideas that they plan to implement within their own classrooms, and why those ideas seemed important to them (Appendix D). Participants are also provided with various handouts and samples from the three sessions (Appendix E).

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Appendix A – Overview

Overview of Increasing Engagement Presentations

Duration: 3 sessions
Time required: Approximately 1 hour per session

The following presentations were developed to help provide teachers with various strategies that could be used to help increase the engagement within their own classrooms. Studies show that with increased engagement comes increased student motivation. The three presentations included in this series offer immediately implementable ideas for teachers to try. Time will also be provided to share ideas and collaborate with other education professionals. Highlighted below are each day's main features:

Materials needed by presenter: Visual projector and screen/wall for projection surface

Materials needed by attendees: Printed slides (received electronically), pen, and paper.

Day 1 – Choice and Control:

*Classroom Environment
- Importance of classroom library and its organization, as well as need for variety in reading materials.

*Providing Choice and Strategies to Teach Independence
- Giving students a chance to choose. This includes strategies on how to teach students good book selection techniques.

*Giving Control
- Why students need autonomy.

Day 2 – Communication and Collaboration:

*Importance of Communication and Collaboration
- What does the literature say?

*Tools for thoughtful response
- Thoughtful Literacy Log – Can it work for your classroom?
- How to get started: Modeling of connection making

*Collaboration with others
- "Just Say Something" strategy model and practice
- Digital Book talks: The advantages of going digital

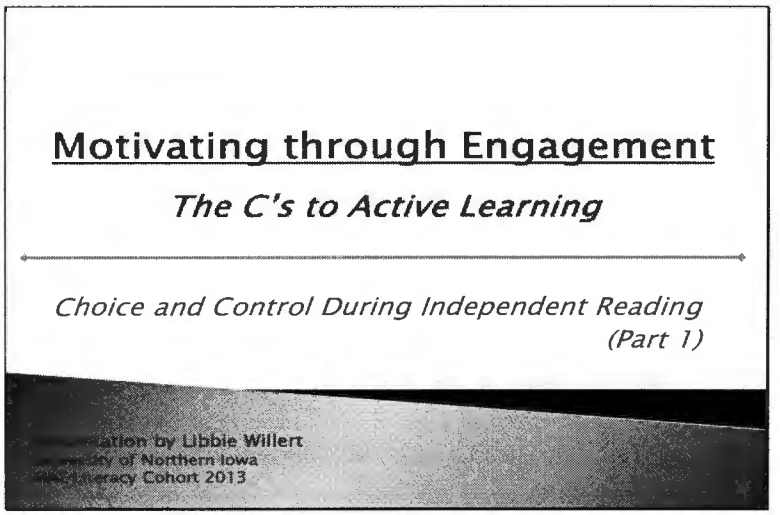
*What can you do
- Making plans to improve your independent reading block

Day 3 – Accountability
*Strategies for student accountability
- Page turner log
- Review of Thoughtful Literacy Log
- Other ideas

*Future Plans for YOUR classroom
- What now?

Appendix B – Session 1

Slide 1



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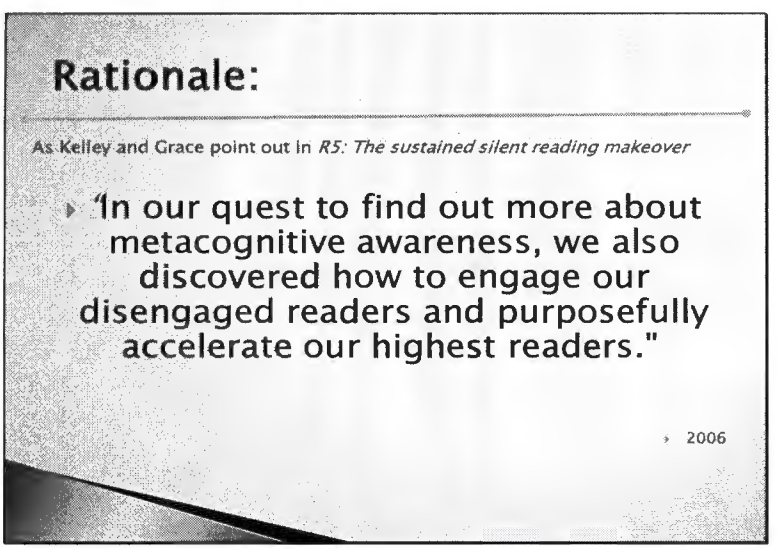


Slide 4

Don't all literacy educators want this for their own students, in their classrooms?

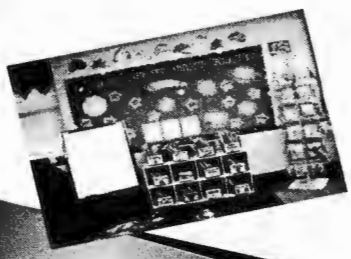
So, how do we get there?

Slide 5

First things first...Environment

Teachers should try to organize their library to be student-friendly. Book covers (or at least some showcase racks) should display books with their covers facing out. Books should also be arranged by genre or theme for easy locating.

Make books interesting and easy to find! Access is everything.



Slide 6

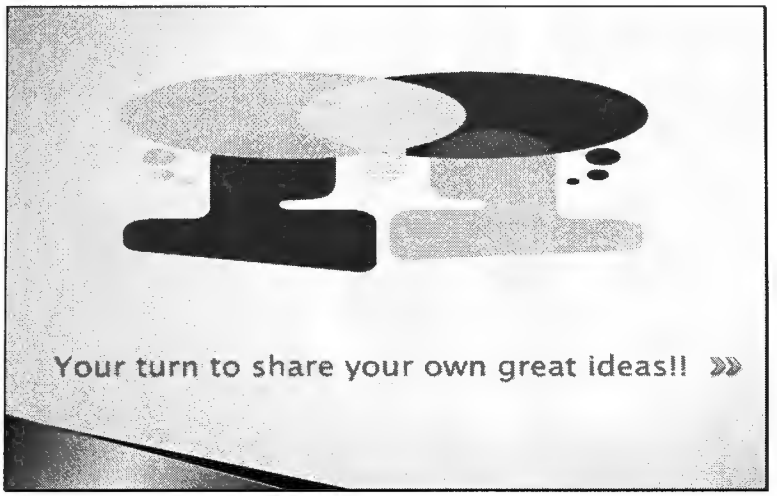
Make your classroom library a space that students want to explore. A classroom library should include:

A Balanced Classroom Library Collection*

- Narrative (fiction) materials
- Expository, updated nonfiction or informational trade books—about one-fourth to one-half of the total collection
- Poetry anthologies
- Picture or illustrated books (narrative, expository, poetic)
- Large-print books
- Audiobooks
- Magazines
- Newspapers
- Pamphlets
- Art and music
- Multicultural materials (narrative, expository, poetic)
- Bibliotherapeutic stories and information resources
- Books written and illustrated by children
- Multimedia hardware and software
- Adaptive hardware and software
- Et cetera

*Reading a balanced classroom library does take sometimes, maybe

Slide 7



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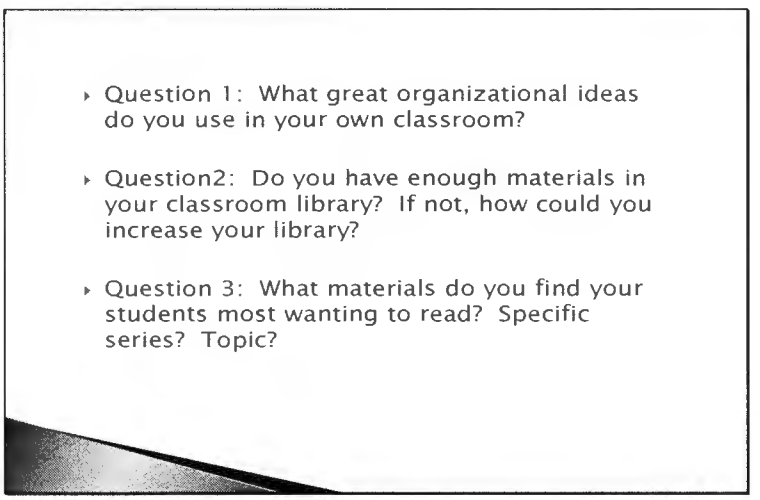

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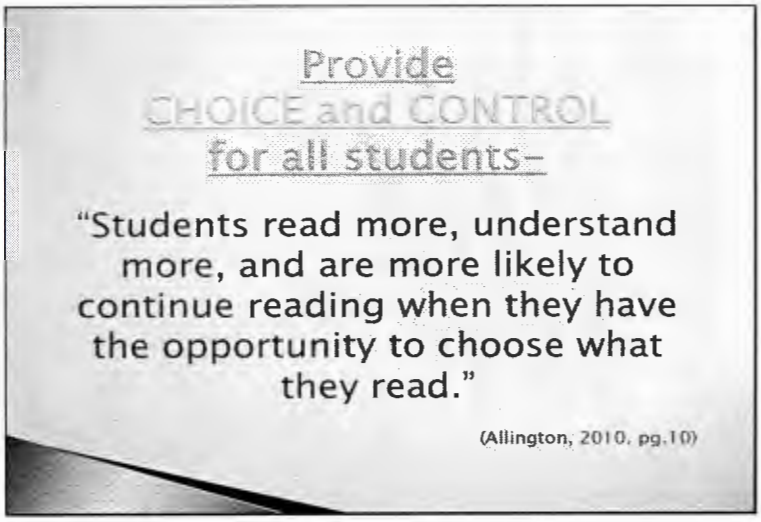

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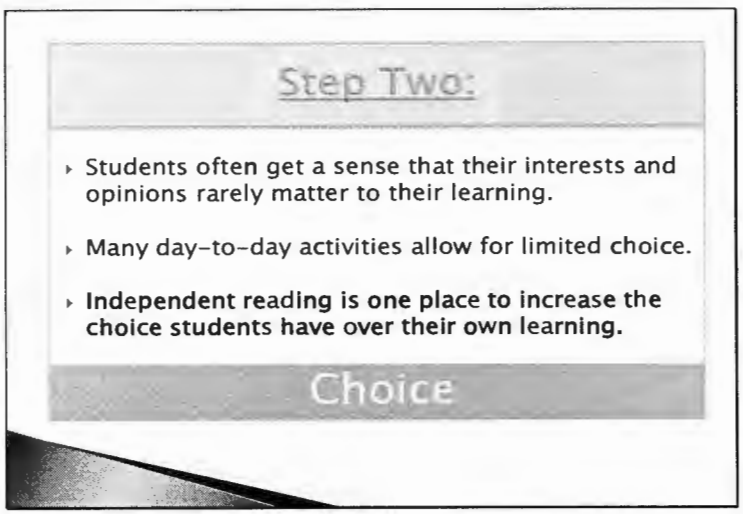

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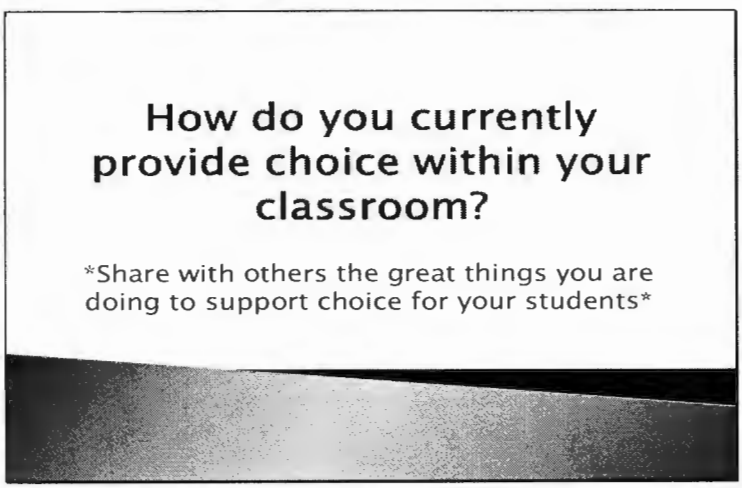

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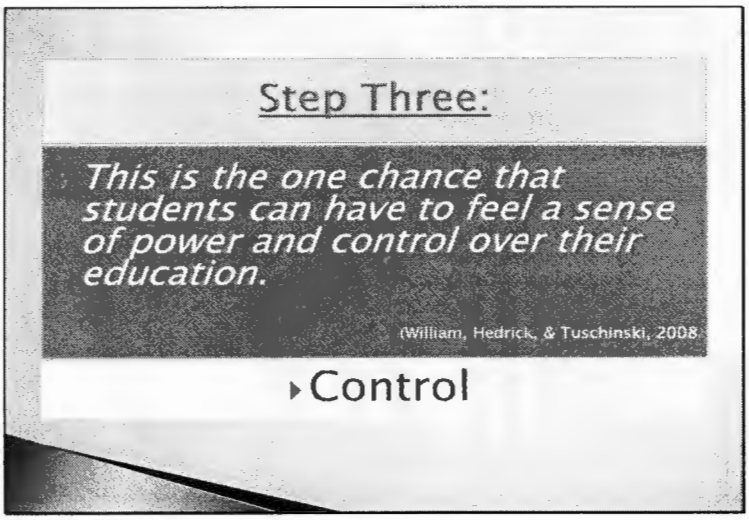

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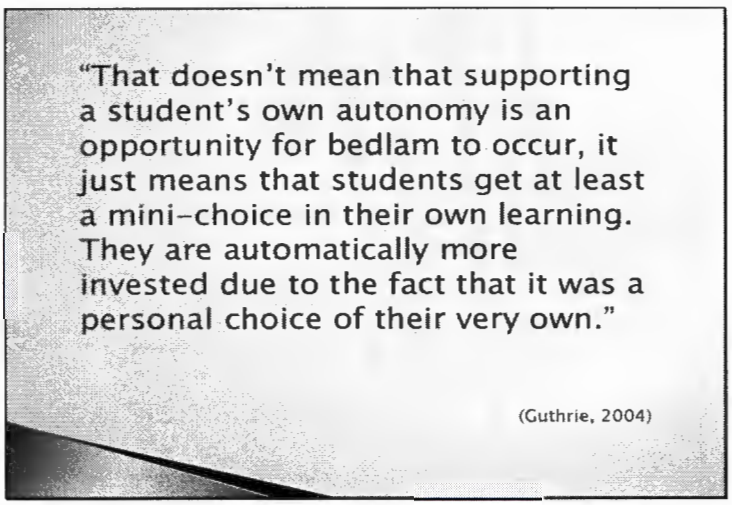

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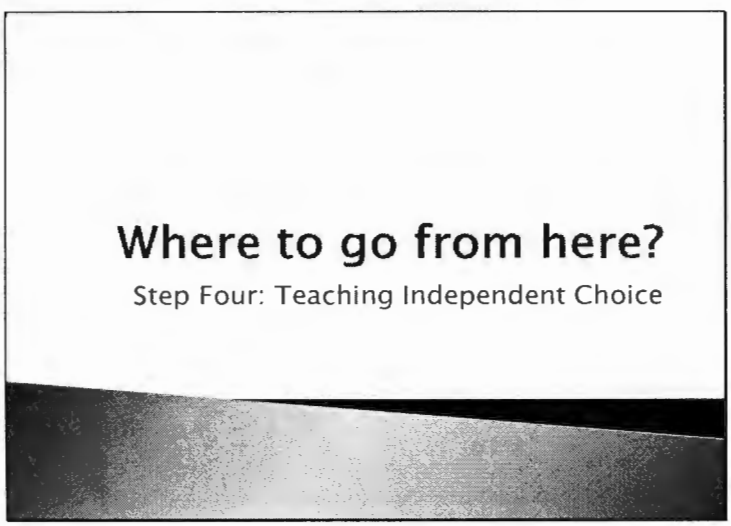

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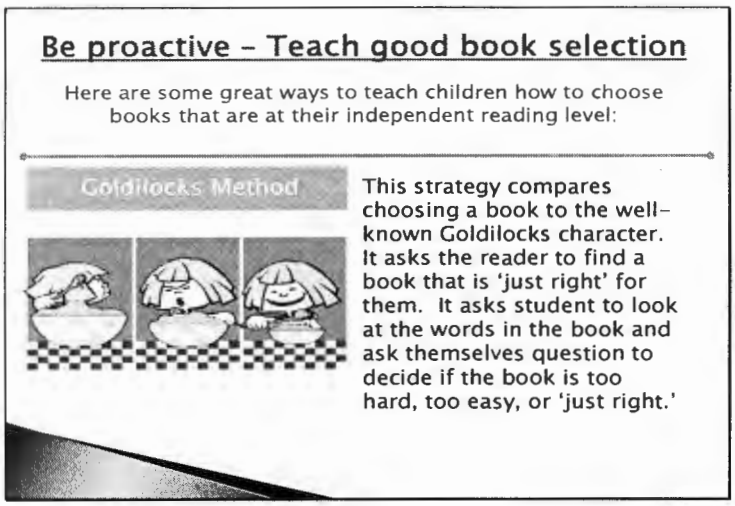

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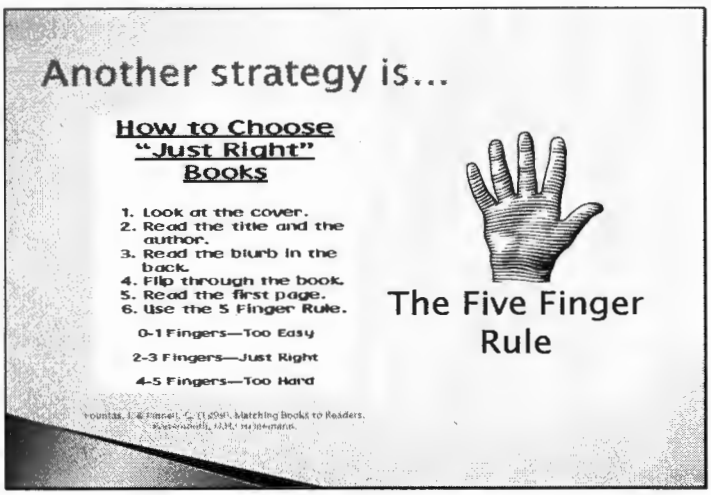

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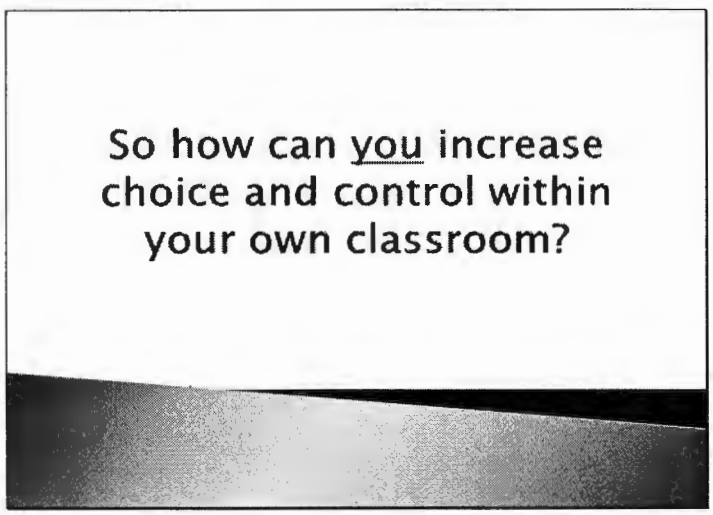

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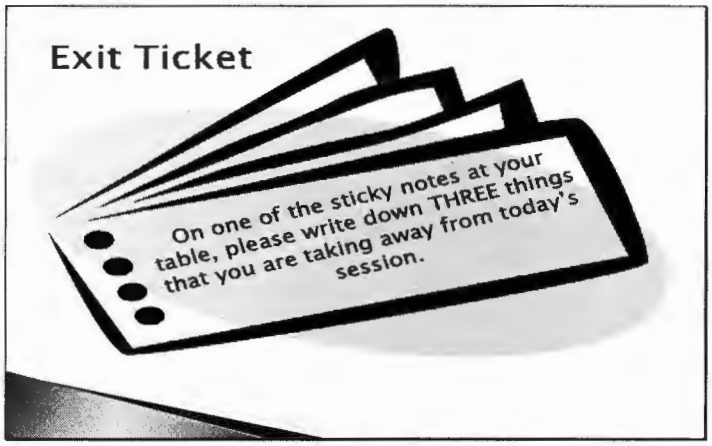

Notes from Session 1:

Appendix C – Session 2

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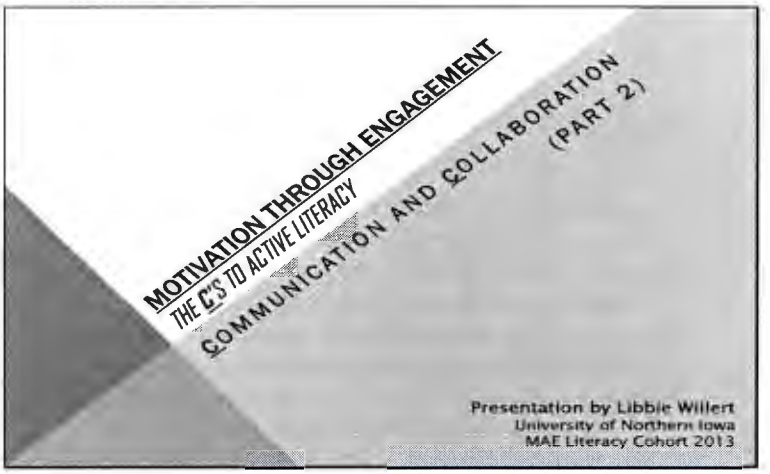

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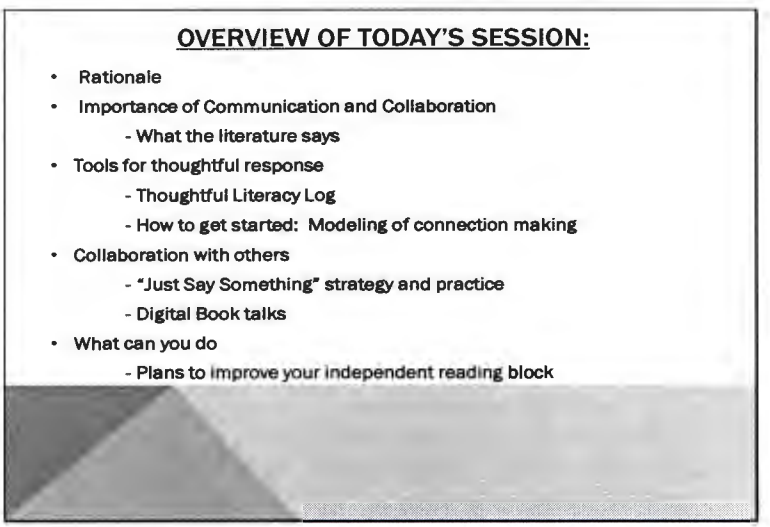

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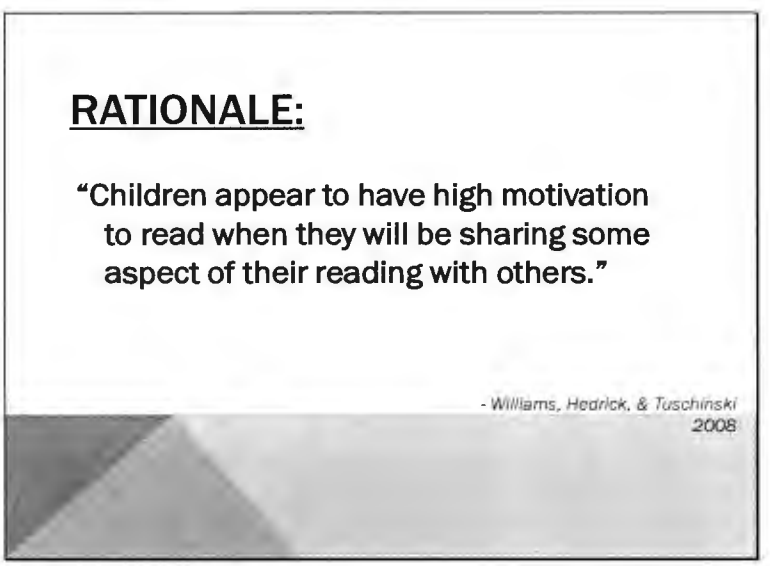

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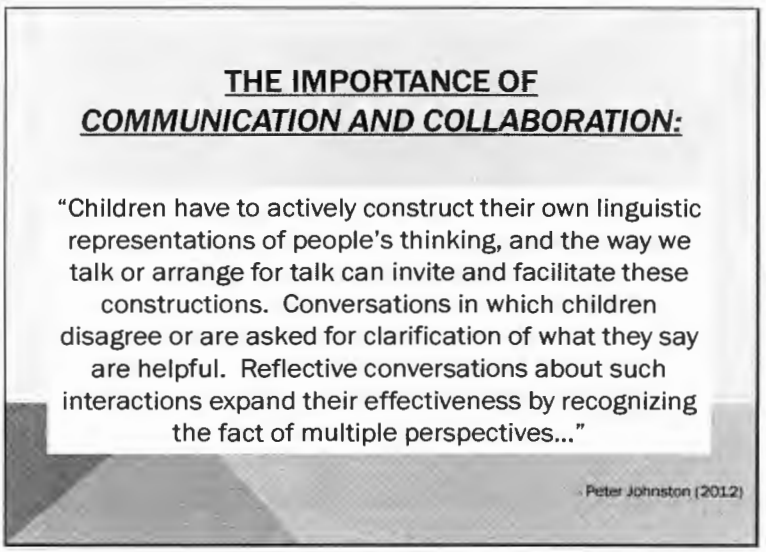

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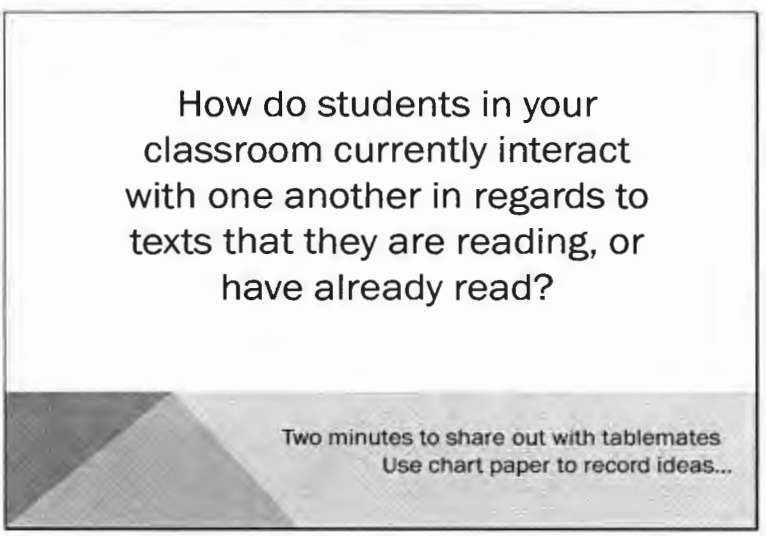


Slide 7

TOOLS TO GET STUDENTS THINKING AND RESPONDING

On the next slide you will see a thoughtful literacy log to keep students on track during their independent reading times.

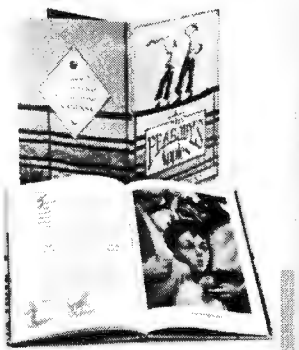
To be able to use this the teacher will spend three days teaching connections. They will share one short reading each day, for three days.

After the reading, the teacher will then make a connection and record it on the log. She will demonstrate what a text-to-self, text-to-world, and text-to-text. Teacher will emphasize the importance of daily reading and the need for student-to-teacher communication in regards to time on task.

Slide 8

For example:

Mr. Peabody's Apples by Madonna



Overview from Barnes and Noble

Mr. Peabody's Apples takes place in 1949 in Happville, USA. One Saturday, Mr. Peabody, the beloved elementary school teacher and baseball coach, finds himself all alone on the baseball field. He wonders where everybody is until he sees the bat boy, Billy Little, walking toward him with a sad look on his face. Billy tells him that another student, Tommy Tittlebottom, spread a rumor that Mr. Peabody was a thief after Tommy saw Mr. Peabody taking apples twice from the local market.

Mr. Peabody then shows Tommy that what matters is the truth - not how things appear - and teaches him an unforgettable lesson about how we must choose our words carefully to avoid causing harm to others.

Excerpt shared with you today is taken from this book

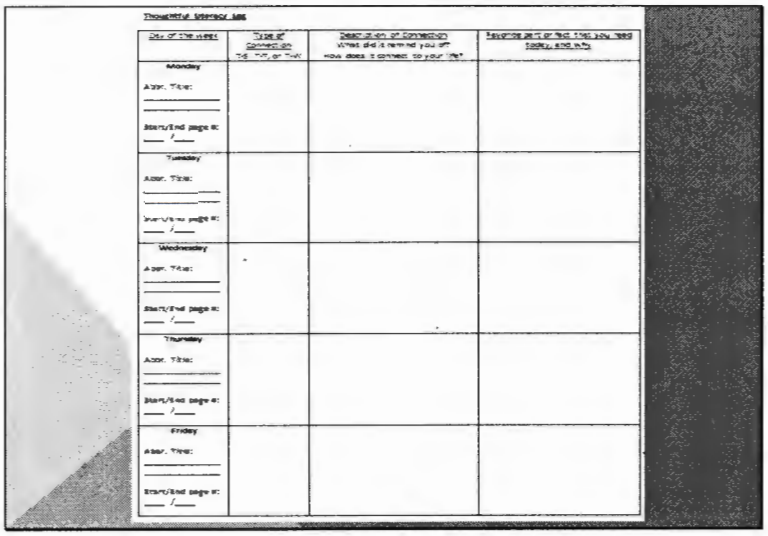
Slide 9

AFTER THE STORY:
MODELING MY THINKING

Type of Connection:	What did it remind me of?	Favorite part of the story:
• Text to Self	• An experience at school when my friends were spreading an untrue rumor about me. And I wished they knew the truth.	• My favorite part of the story was when the boy had to rip open the pillow, only to realize what Mr. Peabody was trying to show him about gossip.

Steps for filling out the Thoughtful Response Log

Slide 10



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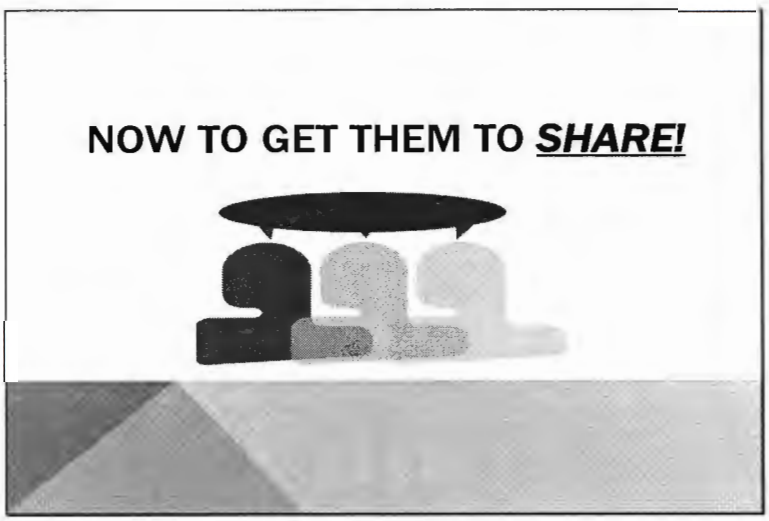

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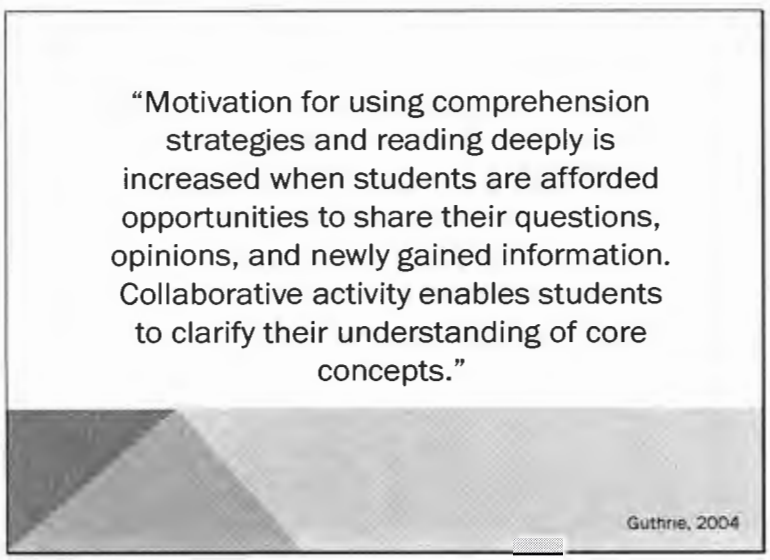

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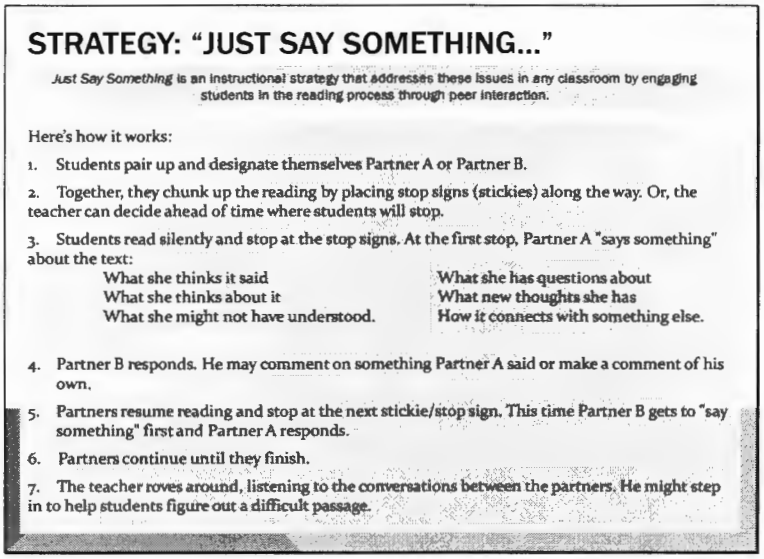

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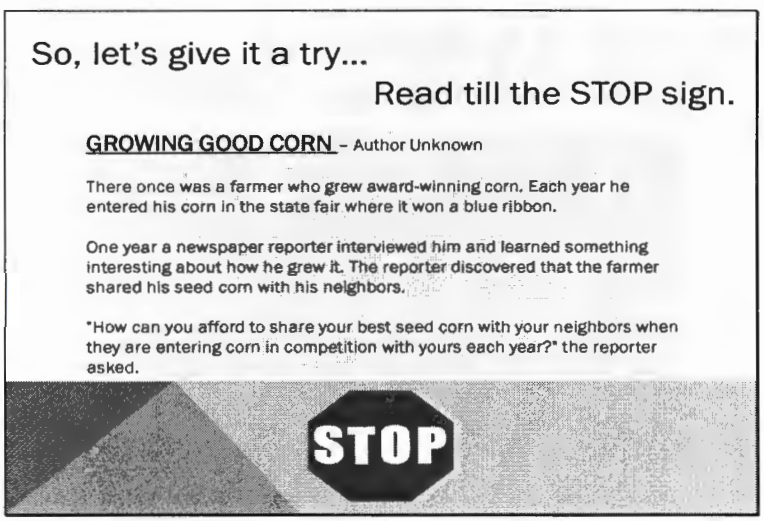

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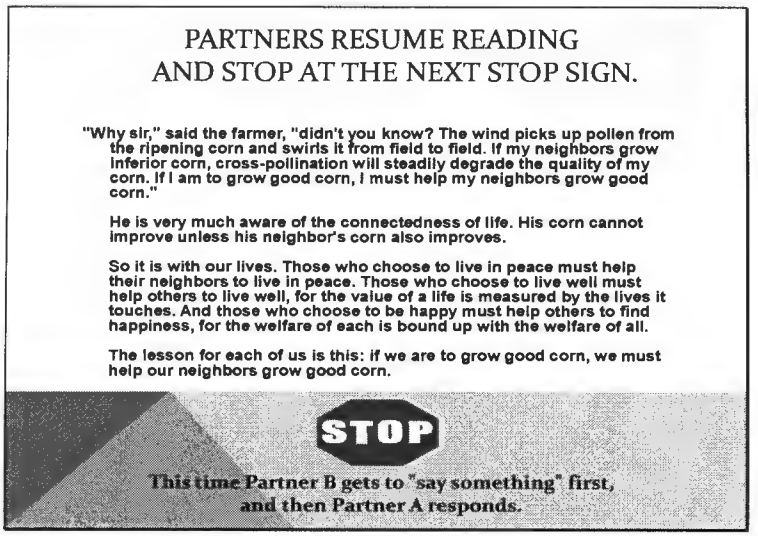

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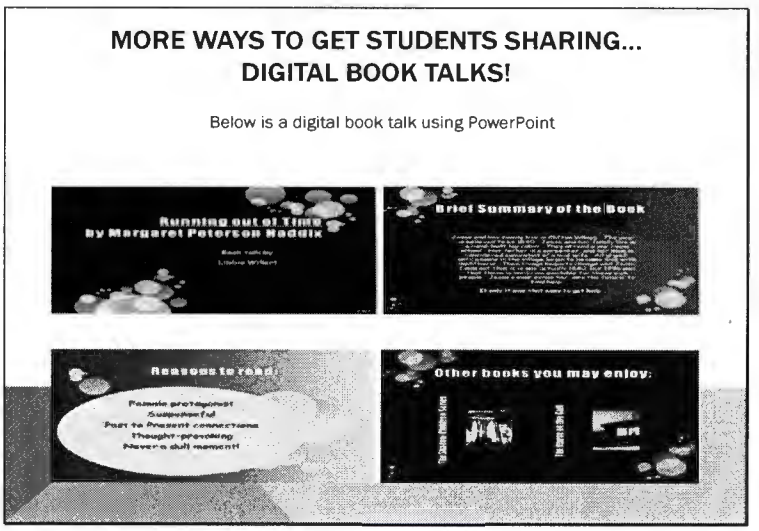

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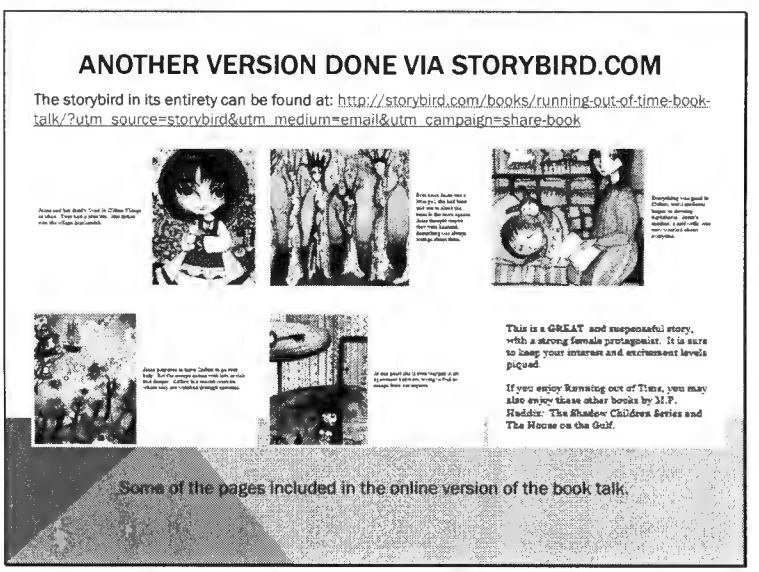

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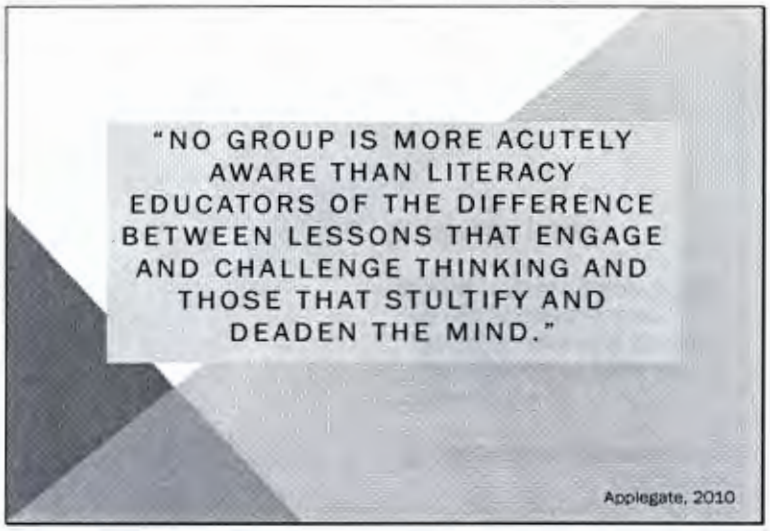

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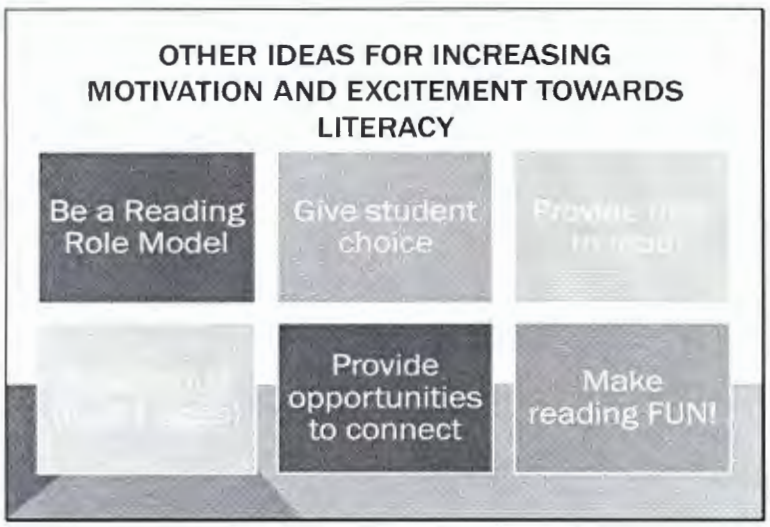

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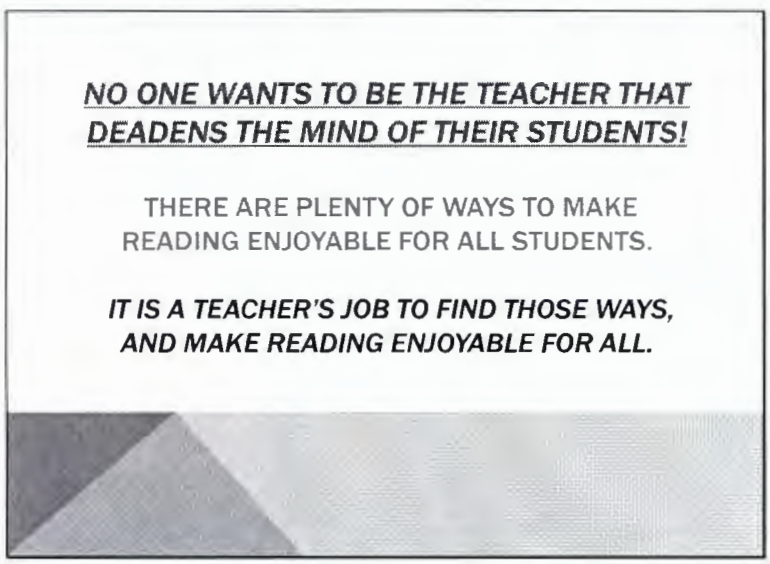

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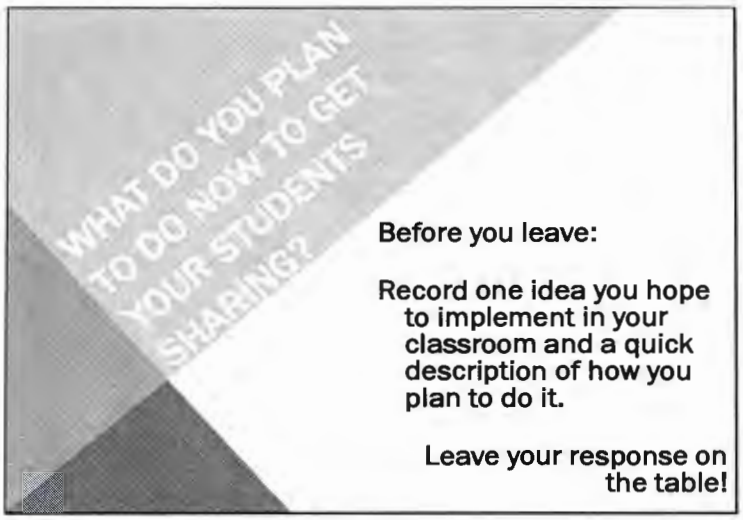

Notes from Session 2:

Appendix D – Session 3

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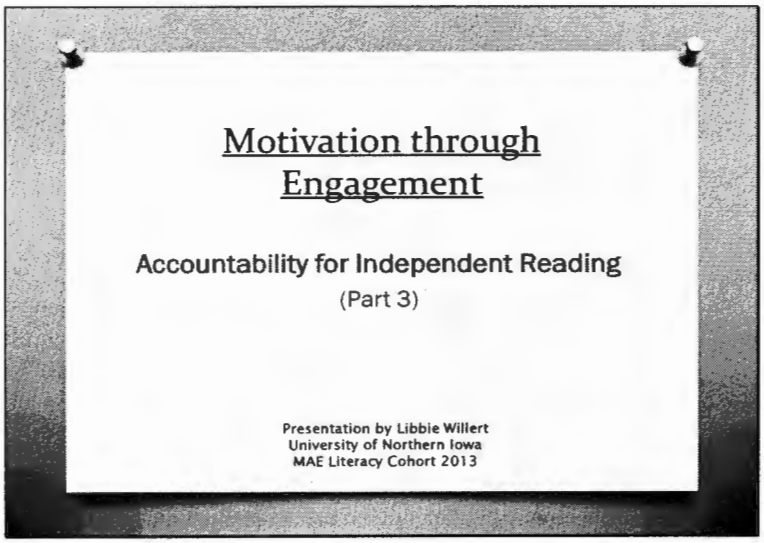

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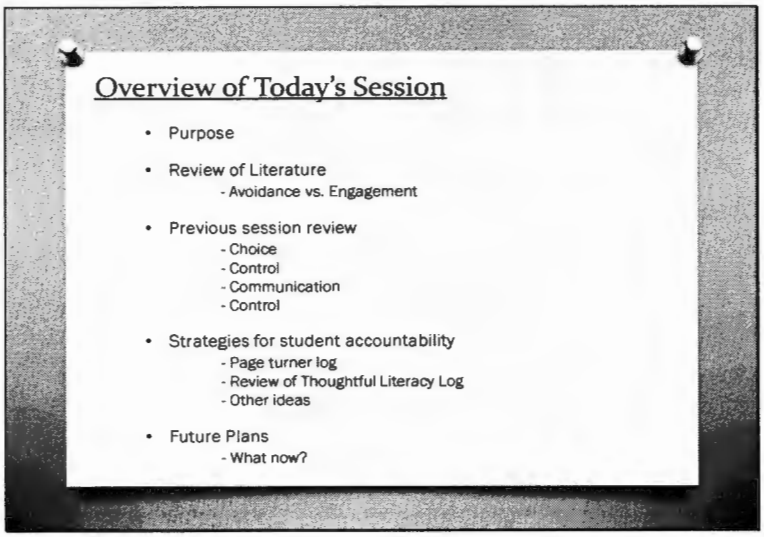

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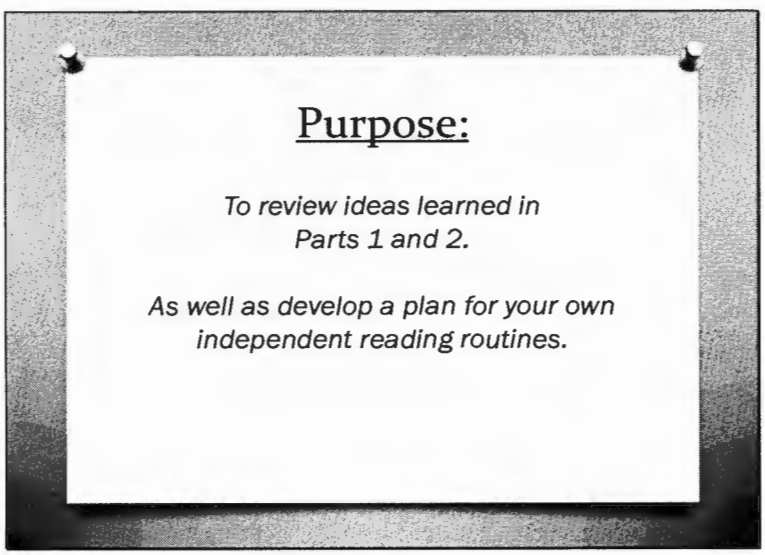

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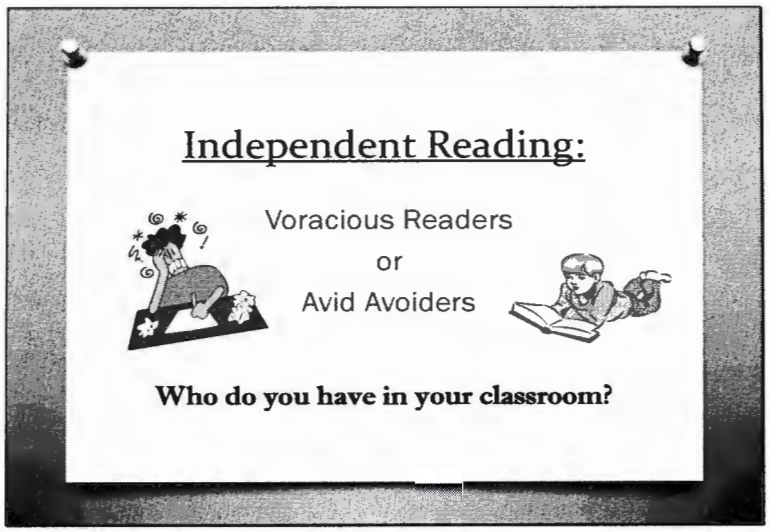

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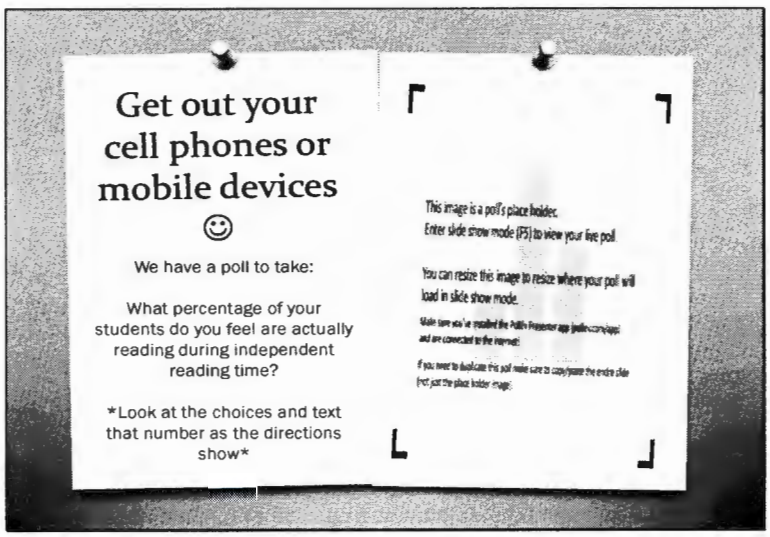

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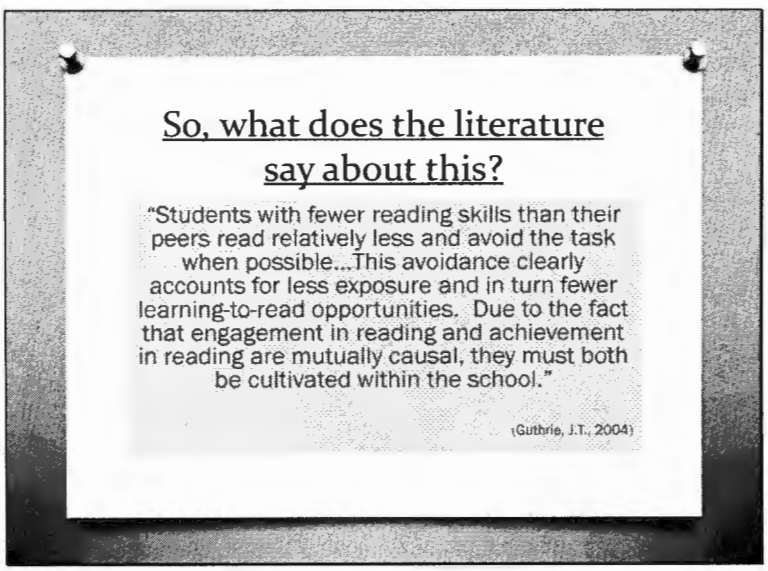

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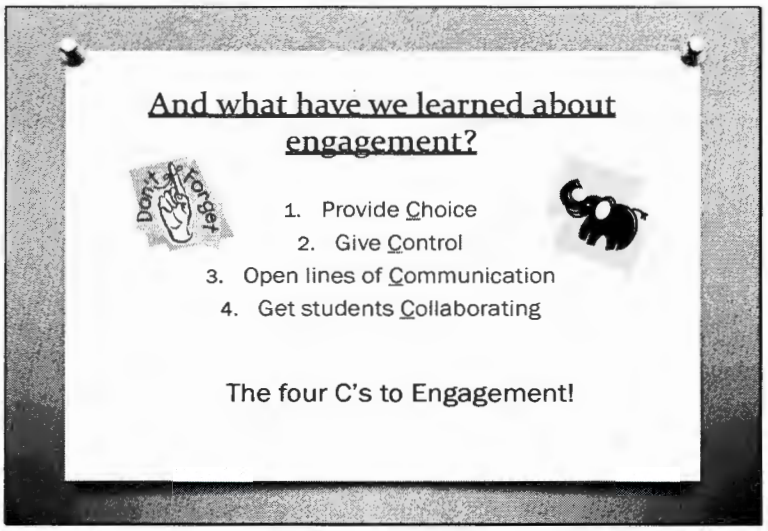

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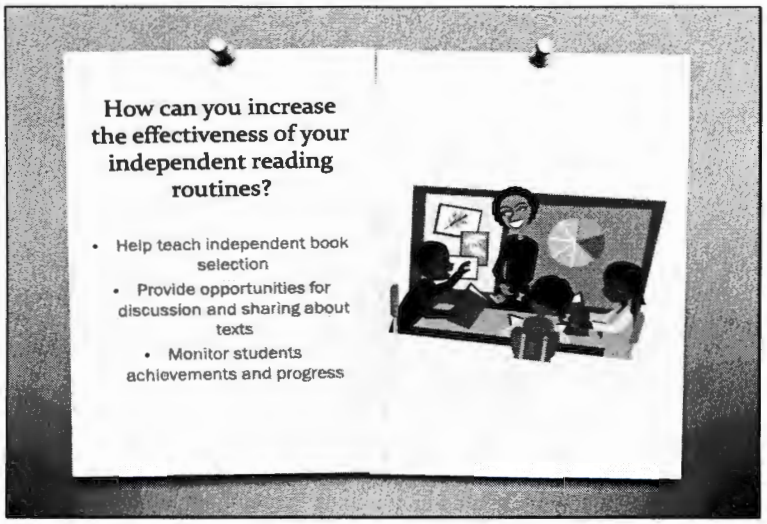

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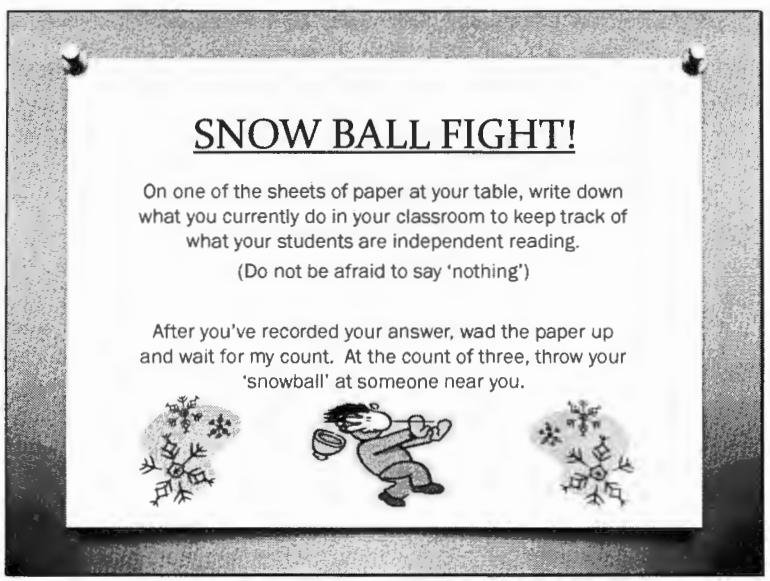

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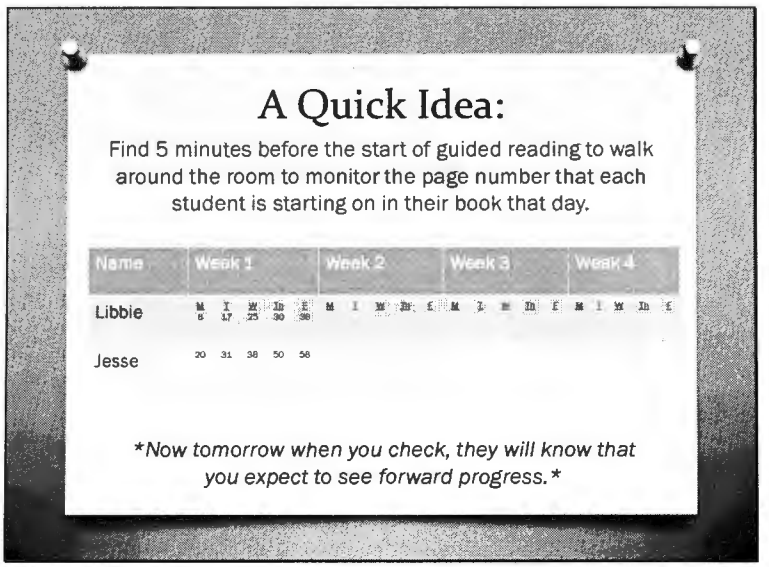

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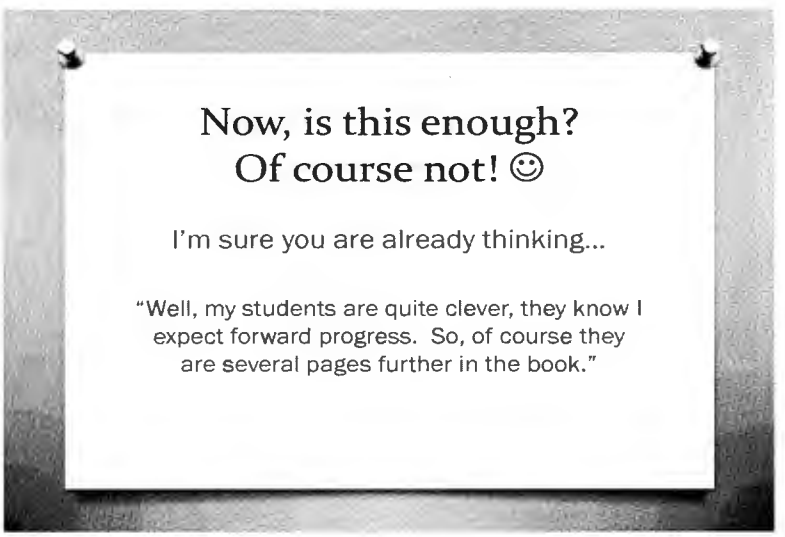

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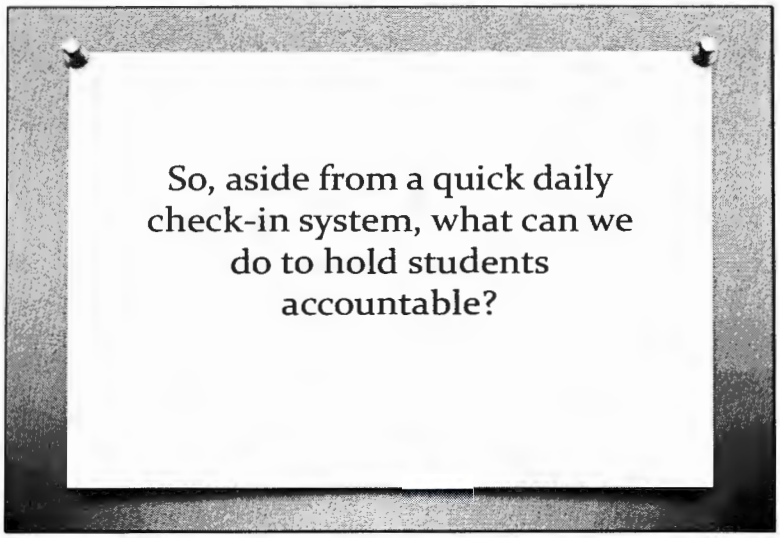

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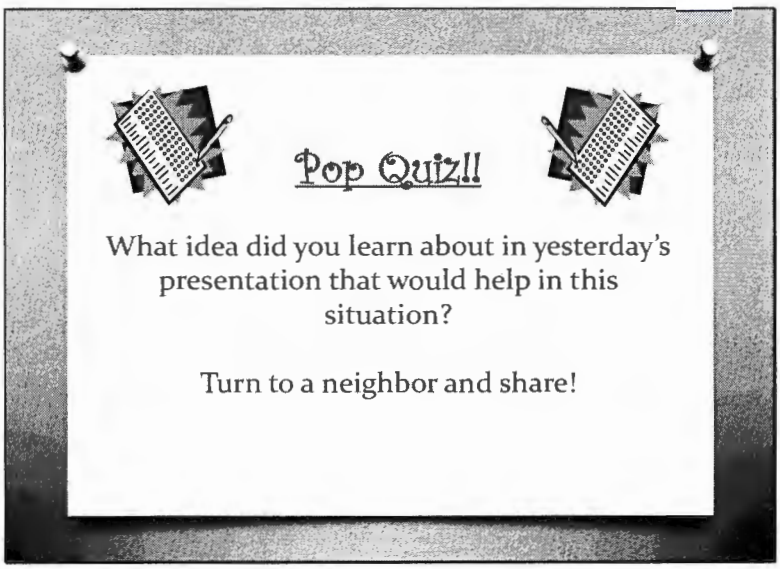

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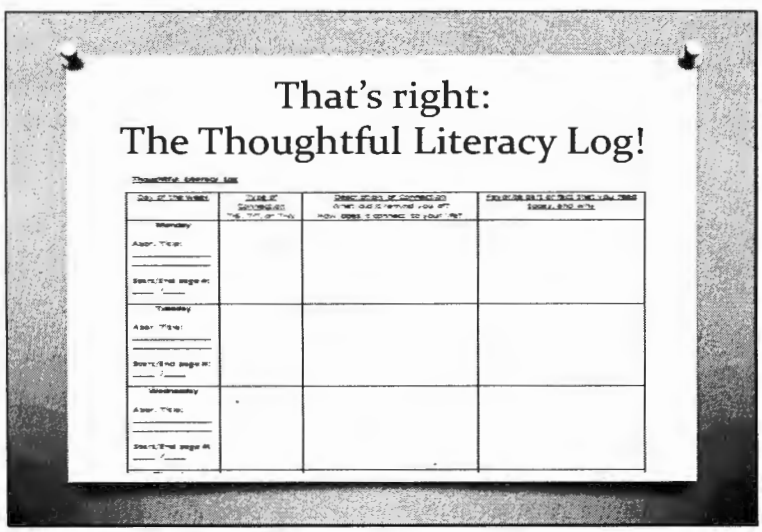

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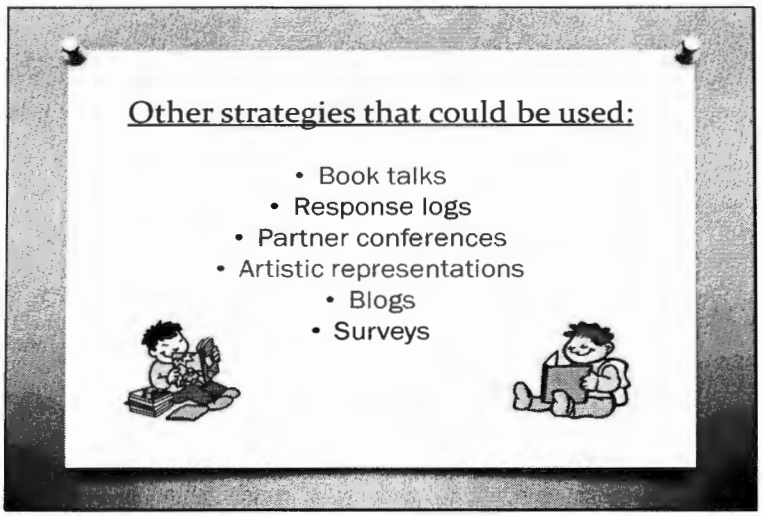

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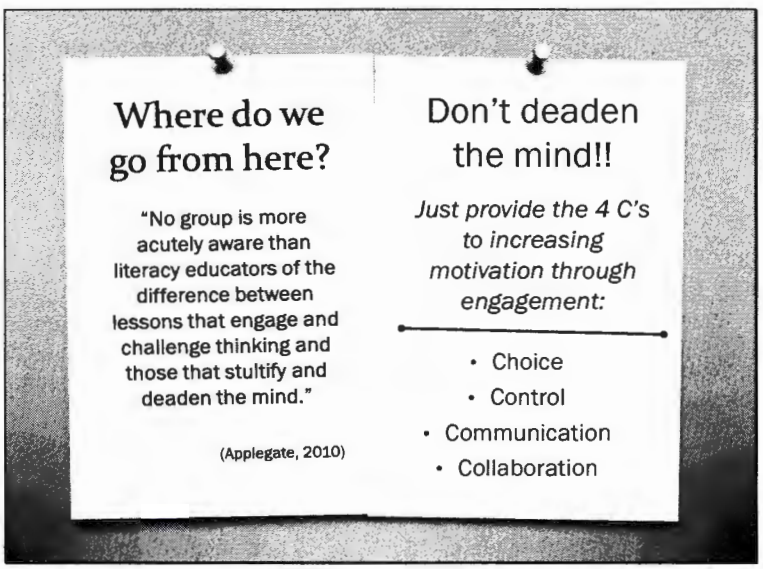


Notes from Session 3:

Appendix E - Handouts

Presentation Handouts

for

Motivating Through Engagement

Contents of Handout Packet

Session1

Classroom Environment Examples

Guidelines for Classroom Library Resources

Book Selection Strategies

Notes

Session 2

Thoughtful Literacy Log

"Just Say Something" Strategy

Digital Book Talks

Notes

Session 3

Record Keeping Example

Other Strategies

Review of Presentations

Notes

Session 1: Classroom Environment: What it could look like:

Session 1: Classroom Environment:

Your classroom library should include a variety:

A Balanced Classroom Library Collection*

- Narrative (fiction) materials
- Expository (updated nonfiction or information) trade books—about one-fourth to one-half of the total collection
- Poetry anthologies
- Picture, or illustrated, books (narrative, expository, poetic)
- Large-print books
- Audiobooks
- Magazines
- Newspapers
- Pamphlets
- Art and music
- Multicultural materials (narrative, expository, poetic)
- Bibliotherapeutic stories and information resources
- Books written and illustrated by children
- Multimedia hardware and software
- Adaptive hardware and software
- Et cetera

**Building a balanced classroom library takes time (sometimes years).*

Session 1: Book Selection Strategies (In my own classroom, I use these jointly):

Goldilocks: This strategy compares choosing a book to the well-known Goldilocks character.

It asks the reader to find a book that is 'just right' for them.

Are the words in the book too hard, too easy, or 'just right?'

How to Choose "Just Right" Books

1. Look at the cover.
2. Read the title and the author.
3. Read the blurb in the back.
4. Flip through the book.
5. Read the first page.
6. Use the 5 Finger Rule.

0-1 Fingers—Too Easy

2-3 Fingers—Just Right

4-5 Fingers—Too Hard

The Five Finger Rule

~Session 1~

Notes:

Session 2: Thoughtful Literacy Log

Thoughtful Literacy Log

Day of the week	Type of Connection T-S, T-T, or T-W	Description of Connection What did it remind you of? How does it connect to your life?	Favorite part or fact that you read today, and why.
Monday Appr. Title: _____ _____ Start/End page #: ___ / ___			
Tuesday Appr. Title: _____ _____ Start/End page #: ___ / ___			
Wednesday Appr. Title: _____ _____ Start/End page #: ___ / ___			
Thursday Appr. Title: _____ _____ Start/End page #: ___ / ___			
Friday Appr. Title: _____ _____ Start/End page #: ___ / ___			

Session 2: Just Say Something

Just Say Something is an instructional strategy that addresses these issues in any classroom by engaging students in the reading process through peer interaction.

Here's how it works:

1. Students pair up and designate themselves Partner A or Partner B.

2. Together, they chunk up the reading by placing stop signs (stickies) along the way. Or, the teacher can decide ahead of time where students will stop.

3. Students read silently and stop at the stop signs. At the first stop, Partner A "says something" about the text:

What she thinks it said	What she has questions about
What she thinks about it	What new thoughts she has
What she might not have understood.	How it connects with something else.

4. Partner B responds. He may comment on something Partner A said or make a comment of his own.

5. Partners resume reading and stop at the next stickie/stop sign. This time Partner B gets to "say something" first and Partner A responds.

6. Partners continue until they finish.

7. The teacher roves around, listening to the conversations between the partners. He might step in to help students figure out a difficult passage.

Session 2: Digital Booktalk Example – Storybird.com

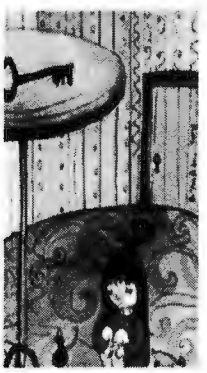
The storybird in its entirety can be found at: http://storybird.com/books/running-out-of-time-book-talk/?utm_source=storybird&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=share-book

Jesse and her family lived in Clifton Village in 1840. They had a nice life. Her father was the village blacksmith.

Ever since Jesse was a little girl, she had been told not to climb the trees in the town square. Jesse thought maybe they were haunted. Something was always strange about them.

Everything was good in Clifton, until sundown began to develop diphtheria. Jesse's mother, a midwife, was very worried about everyone.

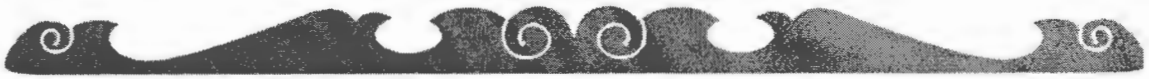
Jesse prepares to leave Clifton to go seek help. But the escape comes with lots of risk and danger. Clifton is a tourist location where they are watched through cameras.



At one point she is even trapped in an apartment bedroom, trying to find an escape from her captors.

This is a GREAT and suspenseful story, with a strong female protagonist. It is sure to keep your interest and excitement levels piqued.

If you enjoy Running out of Time, you may also enjoy these other books by M.P. Haddix: The Shadow Children Series and The House on the Gulf.



~Session 2~

Notes:

Day 3: Accountability –

Record Keeping Example for Page Number Monitoring

Name	Week 1					Week 2					Week 3					Week 4				
Libbie	M	T	W	Th	F	M	T	W	Th	F	M	T	W	Th	F	M	T	W	Th	F
	8	17	25	30	38															
Jesse	20	31	38	50	58															

Other strategies that could be used:

- Book talks
- Response logs
- Partner conferences
- Artistic representations
- Blogs
- Surveys

Take Away Message: What have we learned about engagement?

1. Provide Choice
2. Give Control
3. Open lines of Communication
4. Get students Collaborating

~Session 3~

Notes: