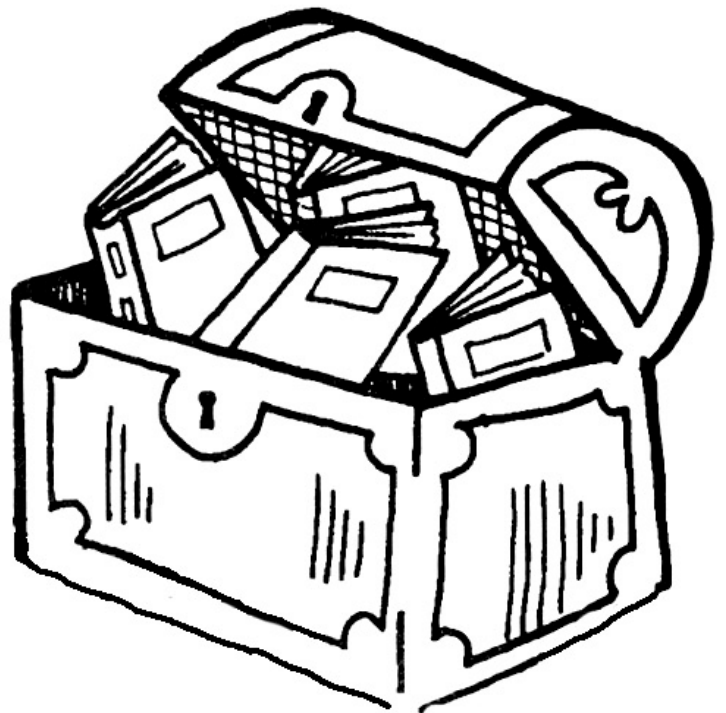


# Transforming Literacy Instruction for the Common Core

Presented by:  
Maria Walther  
1<sup>st</sup> Grade Teacher  
Gwendolyn Brooks Elementary  
2700 Stonebridge Blvd.  
Aurora, IL 60502  
(630) 375-3244  
[www.mariawalther.com](http://www.mariawalther.com)  
Twitter: @mariapwalther  
[maria\\_walther@ipsd.org](mailto:maria_walther@ipsd.org)



# The Big Picture: Cultivating the Thinking-Learning Connection

## Where will I find the time?

- Connect reading, writing, thinking, listening, and speaking instruction

## How will I support striving readers to comprehend complex texts?

- Engage in comprehension conversations

*"Children in the early grades—particularly kindergarten through grade 3—benefit from participating in rich, structured conversations with an adult in response to written texts that are read aloud, orally and comparing and contrasting as well as analyzing and synthesizing" (CCSS, p. 27).*

- Read complex texts closely from both the reader's and the writer's point of view

## How will I maintain a 50/50 balance of literary and informational texts?

- Infuse content-rich nonfiction throughout the curriculum

## Foundational Skills and Language Standards: The Morning Message

### First and Last

Recognize the distinguishing features of a sentence (F.1.1)

### Where Do the Periods Go?

Use end punctuation for sentences (L.1.2b) (*M-by-M Writing* p. 36)

### Verbs

Use frequently occurring nouns and verbs (L.K.1b) (*M-by-M Writing* pp. 64-66)

### Verbs—Present and Past

Use verbs to convey a sense of past, present, and future (L.1.1e) (*M-by-M Writing* p. 97)

### Introducing Prefixes

Use frequently occurring affixes as a clue to the meaning of the word (L.1.4b)

Determine the meaning of a new word formed when a known prefix is added to a known word (L.2.4b) (*M-by-M Reading* p. 154)

# Mentor Texts for Common Core Language Standards

Jocelyn, M., & Jocelyn, N. (2013). *Where do you look?* Plattsburgh, NY: Tundra.  
A playful, colorful, and kid-friendly look at homonyms.  
**Multiple-Meaning Words Mini-Lessons (M-by-M Reading pp. 181-182)**

Collins, R. (2011). *Doodleday*. Chicago, IL: Albert Whitman.  
Harvey's mom warns him not to draw on "Doodleday" but he doesn't listen. When his drawings come to life and take over his house and neighborhood his clever mom comes to the rescue.  
**Verbs—Shades of Meaning Mini-Lesson (M-by-M Reading p. 122)**

Banks, K. (2013). *City cat*. (L. Castillo, Illus.). New York: Farrar Straus Giroux.  
A city cat stows away with a family on a European vacation, and then using various modes of transportation follows them on their travels.  
**Teaching Ideas: Vocabulary—Three Read Aloud Words: *beckoning, pounces, squints* (M-by-M Reading p. 15-16); Grammar—Verbs (sprinting, striding, dancing, prancing, floating, boating, humming, drumming . . .)**

## Books to Spark Comprehension Conversations

### Thinking About Point of View

Neubecker, R. (2013). *Winter is for snow*. New York: Disney/Hyperion.  
A winter-loving brother is trying to convince his reluctant sister to join him outside for a fun-filled time in the snow. The text is written in two different colors, making it clear who is speaking at different points in the story. This book could also lead to opinion writing about winter!  
**Teaching Ideas: Fluency Fun! Seesaw Reader's Theater (M-by M Reading p. 98); RL.6 Point of View**

### Asking and Answering Questions

Javaherbin, M. (2010). *The secret message*. (B. Whatley, Illus.). New York: Disney/Hyperion.  
Based on an ancient Persian poem, "Parrot and the Merchant" by Rumi, this is a tale of a wealthy merchant who keeps a parrot in his shop to attract customers. When he asks the parrot what he wants from India, the parrot requests that the merchant tell his wild bird friends about him and their secret message leads to his freedom.  
**Teaching Ideas: Comprehension Conversation—Predicting (M-by-M Reading p. 121) or Questioning (M-by-M Reading p. 172); Multicultural Literature**

### Comparing and Contrasting Traditional Tales

Kostecki-Shaw, J. S. (2011). *Same, same but different*. New York: Holt.  
Elliot lives in America and Kailash lives in India, by exchanging letters and pictures the two boys discover that their lives are similar yet different.  
**Teaching Ideas: Comprehension Conversations—Discovering Connections; Pair with *Mirror* (Baker, 2010)**

Hopkins, J. M. (2013). *Prairie chicken little*. (H. Cole, Illus.). Atlanta, GA: Peachtree.  
Mary McBlicken the prairie chicken thinks a stampede is coming, so she and her friends run off to tell Cowboy Stan and Red Dog Dan until they're spotted by a sly coyote.  
**Teaching Ideas: Traditional Tales, CCSS RL9 - Compare & contrast two versions of same story (M-by-M Reading p. 142)**

# Engage in Collaborative Conversations Using Mentor Texts to Read Aloud Like a Writer

*Reading aloud IS teaching writing, even if no writing activity follows the reading.*  
Vicki Spandel, *Creating Young Writers* (2008)

## READ LIKE A WRITER: COLLABORATIVE CONVERSATIONS

Turn and Talk Teaching Tips:

Before you begin, model "turn and talk" with another adult or student. Emphasize the importance of having a two-way conversation with one person speaking at a time. Assign students a "turn and talk" partner or small group.

During read aloud, stop several times at natural breaking points and pose the following queries for students to "turn and talk" about:

- Where do you think this author got his/her ideas for this book?
- Listen to this! Let me reread the beginning of this book. Did the lead make you want to read the story?
- Did you hear any words that you want to remember and use in your writing?
- Can you picture this setting/character/event in your mind? How did the author help you do that? What words did he or she use?
- Notice the way the sentences flow. Talk about how the author did that.
- Does this writing have voice?
- Who is telling this story? How do you know that?

Source: Adapted from Routman, Regie. (2003). *Reading Essentials: The Specifics You Need to Teach Reading Well*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

***We need to marinate students in literature so that, over time, it soaks into their consciousness and, eventually, into their writing.***

Ralph Fletcher, *Roots and Wings: Literature and Children's Writing* (1993)



What to look for . . .	What to say. . .
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Various Text Structures</li> <li>• Sensory Language</li> <li>• Creative Conventions</li> <li>• Repetition</li> <li>• Word Play</li> <li>• Onomatopoeia</li> <li>• Interjections</li> <li>• Illustration Techniques</li> </ul>	<p><i>Source: Choice Words by Peter H. Johnston (Stenhouse, 2004)</i></p> <p>"Oh, I love that line!"</p> <p>"Did anyone notice *any interesting words? *any new punctuation? *any new ways of arranging the words on the page?"</p> <p>"Are there any favorite words or phrases, or ones you wish you had written?"</p> <p>"Why would an author do something like that?" "How else could the author have done that?"</p> <p>"Why did the author choose that word?"</p>

## A Few of My Favorite Mentor Texts for Narrative Writing

(CCSS Writing Standard 3)

Daywalt, D. (2013). *The day the crayons quit*. (O. Jeffers, Illus.). New York: Philomel.  
Duncan's crayons write him letters to tell him why they are quitting. Illustrated with crayon (of course!), this clever book is perfect for launching a discussion on creating colorful illustrations.

LaRochelle, D. (2012). *It's a tiger!* (J. Tankard, Illus.). San Francisco, CA: Chronicle.  
Begin reading this boldly illustrated picture book on the front flap and continue to read, notice, and laugh at the young narrator's adventures as he narrowly escapes a tiger again and again!

Fleming, C. (2012). *Oh, no!* (E. Rohmann, Illus.). New York: Schwartz & Wade.  
When a frog, mouse, loris, sun bear, and monkey fall into a hole, the tiger is ready to pounce. Then, elephant comes and saves the animals and tiger falls into the hole. Will the animals help him out? "Oh no!"

Mack, J. (2013). *AH HA!* San Francisco, CA: Chronicle.  
Frog is relaxing in the pond (AAHH!) when he finds a rock (AH HA!). Close behind there is a boy with a jar poised to catch him (AH HA!) and the chase begins. Using only four letters, Jeff Mack tells a rollicking tale.

Rocco, J. (2013). *Super hair-o and the barber of doom*. New York: Disney/Hyperion.  
Rocco and his "superfriends" get their superpowers from their hair. Unfortunately, they all have to go to the barber. Will they get their powers back?

# Opinion Writing Opportunities

**W.2.1** Write opinion pieces in which they introduce the topic or book they are writing about, state an opinion, supply reasons that support the opinion, use linking words (e.g., *because*, *and*, *also*) to connect opinion and reasons, and provide a concluding statement or section.

Viorst, J. (2010). *Lulu and the brontosaurus*. (L. Smith, Illus.). New York: Atheneum.

Bratty Lulu wants a brontosaurus for a pet, so she runs away to the forest to find one. The tables turn when the brontosaurus decides he wants Lulu for his pet. Viorst interjects her author's voice throughout the book and offers readers three different ending options.

**Teaching Ideas: Reading-Writing Connection; 2013 Monarch Award List; Opinion Writing—Which ending do you prefer?**

Carle, E. (2014). *What's your favorite animal?* New York: Holt.

"What is your favorite animal?" Eric Carle asked 14 different children's book artists this question and got 14 very different answers. As you share this book with your students, discuss the various ways the artists went about answering the question. Notice the different styles and genres of writing. Then, ask your students the same question to discover their opinions.

**Teaching Ideas: Read Like a Writer; Opinion Writing**

Guiberson, B. Z. (2013). *The greatest dinosaur ever*. (G. Spirin, Illus.). New York: Holt.

In first person voice, each dinosaur argues why it was the greatest dinosaur of all. The pronunciation of each dinosaur's name is located directly underneath (helpful for those of us who are not dinosaur experts!)

**Teaching Ideas: Opinion Writing—Which was the greatest dinosaur and why?**

## Let's Write a Book Review

- Introduce the book to your readers—Don't give away the ending!
- Talk about what you liked (or didn't like) about the book. Explain your reasons.
- Recommend this book (if you liked it) to your readers.

### Connecting Words and Phrases that Help Writers Explain More Than One Reason

For example,	For instance,	Also,	In addition,	Furthermore,
Similarly,	Likewise,	Lastly,	Finally,	

**Sources:**

*Month-by-Month Reading Instruction for the Differentiated Classroom* (Walther & Phillips, 2012)

*Transforming Literacy Teaching for the Common Core K-2* (Walther, In Press, Scholastic)

# Creating a Class Biography: Columbus

## Shared Research and Writing in the Primary Grades

Source: *Transforming Literacy Teaching for the Common Core* (Walther, In Press, Scholastic)

### COMMON CORE STANDARDS

**SL.1.2** Ask and answer questions about key details in a text read aloud or information presented orally or through other media.

**W.1.7** Participate in shared research and writing projects (e.g., explore a number of "how-to" books on a given topic and use them to write a sequence of instructions).

**W.1.8** With guidance and support from adults, recall information from experiences or gather information from provided sources to answer a question.

**W.1.2** Write informative/explanatory texts in which they name a topic, supply some facts about the topic, and provide some sense of closure.

**Time:** Approximately 30 minutes per day for one week.

#### **Materials:**

- Informational texts, digital resources, songs and/or poems about the famous person.
- Paper (sentence strips, white paper [4 1/2 x 12]) or interactive whiteboard document for collecting brainstormed facts and a place to display facts.

#### **Text Set (In order by publication date):**

*Columbus Day* (Gardeski, 2009) (Rookie Read-About Holidays)

*Columbus Day* (Nelson, 2009) (First Step Nonfiction - American Holidays)

*Christopher Columbus* (McCormick, 2005) (Scholastic News Nonfiction Readers)

*Columbus Day* (Ansary, 2001)

*Encounter* (Yolen, 1992)

*A Picture Book of Christopher Columbus* (Adler, 1991)

*Follow the Dream* (Sis, 1991)

*In 1492* (Marzollo, 1991)

*What Is Columbus Day* (Parker, 1985)

#### **Procedure:**

##### **DAY 1:**

1. Read and discuss a text or digital resource about the famous person.
2. Brainstorm and record 9-10 different facts from 9-10 different students. These facts will be used on Day 5 to make the class biography. Each child should have one fact by the end of the week. Remind each student to write his/her name on the fact. Instruct each child to draw a picture to accompany his/her fact. Put in pocket chart.

## **DAY 2:**

1. Review facts collected yesterday.
2. Read and discuss a new source about the person.
3. Brainstorm and record 9-10 different facts from 9-10 different students. These facts will be used on Day 4 to make the class biography. Each child should have one fact by the end of the week. Remind each student to write his/her name on the fact. Instruct each child to draw a picture to accompany his/her fact. Put in pocket chart.

**DAY 3:** Continue with the same procedure as Day 1 & 2

## **DAY 4: Organizing the Class Biography**

1. Finish brainstorming facts for students who still do not have one, cut apart chart (if needed) and give each student his/her fact.
2. Invite students to read their facts to a friend.
3. Discuss the events in the famous person's life and divide facts into three groups: beginning, middle, and end. Assist students in finding their group.
4. Each group works together to arrange their facts in chronological order.
5. After each group agrees, place whole biography in order and read.
6. Number each strip in chronological order.
7. If you choose, students can copy and illustrate their fact on a piece of paper for a class book. Remind them to put their page number on the page!

## **Building An Understanding of Biographies**

**RI.1.9** Identify basic similarities in and differences between two texts on the same topic.

**RI.1.3** Describe the connection between two individuals, events, ideas or pieces of information in the text.

**RI.2.3** Describe the connection between a series of historical events . . .

**RI.2.9** Compare and contrast the most important points presented by two texts on the same topic.

*George Washington's Birthday: A Mostly True Tale* (McNamara, 2012)

*Henry's Freedom Box: A True Story From the Underground Railroad* (Levine, 2007)

*Who Says Women Can't be Doctors? The Story of Elizabeth Blackwell* (Stone, 2013)

*Unspoken: A Story from the Underground Railroad* (Cole, 2012) (Wordless)

*Looking at Lincoln* (Kalman, 2012)

*I am Abraham Lincoln* (Meltzer, 2014)

*Finding Lincoln* (Malaspina, 2009)

*Rosa's Bus: The Ride to Civil Rights* (Kittinger, 2010)

*The Cart that Carried Martin* (Bunting, 2013)

*Gandhi: A March to the Sea* (McGinty, 2013)



## A Few Professional Books That Have Shaped My Thinking

- Atwell, N. (2007). *The Reading Zone: How to Help Kids Become Skilled, Passionate, Habitual, Critical Readers*. Scholastic.
- Johnston, P. H. (2004). *Choice Words: How Our Language Affects Children's Learning*. Stenhouse.
- Johnston, P. H. (2012). *Opening Minds: Using Language to Change Lives*. Stenhouse.
- Keene, E. O. (2012). *Talk About Understanding: Rethinking Classroom Talk to Enhance Comprehension*. Heinemann.
- Miller, D. (2013). *Reading With Meaning: Teaching Comprehension in the Primary Grades* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). Stenhouse.
- Nichols, M. (2009) *Expanding Comprehension With Multigenre Text Sets*. Scholastic.
- Ray, K. W., & Cleaveland, L. B. (2004). *About the Authors: Writing Workshop with our Youngest Writers*. Heinemann.
- Richardson, J. (2009). *The Next Step in Guided Reading*. Scholastic.
- Richardson, J., & Walther, M. (2013). *Next Step Guided Reading Assessment*. Scholastic.
- Routman, R. (2005). *Writing Essentials*. Heinemann.
- Spandel, V. (2007). *Creating Young Writers* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). Allyn & Bacon.
- Taberski, S. (2011). *Comprehension From The Ground Up*. Heinemann.
- Walther, M. P., & Fuhler, C. J. (2010). *Teaching Struggling Readers With Poetry*. New York: Scholastic.
- Walther, M. P. & Phillips, K. A. (2009). *Month-by-Month Trait-Based Writing Instruction*. New York: Scholastic.
- Walther, M. P., & Phillips, K. A. (2012). *Month-by-Month Reading Instruction for the Differentiated Classroom*. New York: Scholastic.