



6 Elements of Effective Instruction:

LISTENS TO A FLUENT
ADULT READ

READ SOMETHING
THEY CHOOSE

TALKS WITH PEERS
ABOUT READING &
WRITING

WRITES
ABOUT SOMETHING
PERSONALLY
MEANINGFUL

READS ACCURATELY

READS SOMETHING
THEY UNDERSTAND

Every Child Reads Something They Choose

Students read more, understand more, and are more likely to continue reading when they have the opportunity to choose what they read. Everyday, students are given opportunities to choose reading materials along with teacher or district selected texts.

Selecting texts boosts motivation. Offering choice makes it more likely that every reader will be matched to a text that the student can read well. Through these opportunities, students develop the skills to choose appropriate texts and place them on the path to lifelong reading. Furthermore, choice allows students to master manageable chunks of content, share learning with others, and build upon each other's knowledge.

Allington, R. L., & Gabriel, R. E. (2012). Every Child, Every Day. *Educational Leadership*, 69(6), 10-15. Retrieved from <http://www.ascd.org/publications/educational-leadership/mar12/vol69/num06/Every-Child,-Every-Day.aspx>

McKnight, K. S. (2016). Reading, the Foundation for All Learning. In K. S. (ed), *Addressing the Needs of All Learners in the Era of Changing Standards: Helping Our Most Vulnerable Students Succeed through Teaching Flexibility, Innovation, and Creativity* (pp. 69-90). Lanham, MD: Roman and Littlefield.

Elementary Level

At the elementary level, student choice in reading texts is an integral part of balanced literacy and differentiation in the classroom. When we provide children with choice, we encourage self-selection and reading for pleasure. By choosing their texts, young readers learn that they can locate books and articles that match their interests and ability levels. This increases student engagement and agency.

When we support choice by offering texts of varied topics and complexity levels, students learn to self-regulate for their own reading needs and enjoyment. This contributes to the development of reading comprehension skills, stamina, motivation, and builds self-esteem as a reader.

Secondary Level

When accessing more complex texts and content in higher grades, reader choice supports differentiation, engagement, motivation, and builds self-confidence for learners. Students develop higher-level mastery of content when given choice of both topic and complexity. By offering choice within content areas, teachers create opportunities to amplify student voice and build on student interest and motivation.

Reader choice allows teachers to meet student academic levels, interests, emotional needs and cultural and gender identities. At the secondary level where the range of readers in any given classroom varies greatly, providing choice is critical to the success of all students.

Self-Regulation Stages:

Student Choice in reading aligns with these student self-regulation stages:

- 1. Modeling and Observing:** When teachers model how to make text choices, it fosters student confidence and generates a positive learning environment
- 2. Copying and Doing:** As students are guided to select texts, they develop habits to build self-efficacy and a positive self-concept as a reader
- 3. Practice and Refinement:** Students practice and refine the ability to select texts for a variety of purposes (e.g.: content study, independent reading)
- 4. Application and Independence:** Students independently select texts for a variety of purposes

Cash, R. M. (2016). *Self-regulation in the classroom: Helping students learn how to learn*. Minneapolis, MN: Free Spirit

Look-Fors in Student Choice When Selecting Texts to Read:

1. Materials align to content standards
2. Student comprehension and self-selection is monitored and supported by teacher
3. Provide differentiated materials based on a variety of topics and text complexity
4. Materials are relevant to culture, gender, and student interests
5. Choice may include a range of text types and lengths (e.g.: research articles, poetry)

Resources

- [NewsELA* & \(Text Sets\)](#)
- [ReadWriteThink](#)
- [TweenTribune](#)
- [Wonderopolis](#)
- [DOGOnews](#)
- [MackinVia*](#)
- [Epic!](#)
- [Tumblebooks*](#)
- [Pebble Go!*](#)
- [Edutopia](#)
- [Reading Rockets](#)
- [AdLit](#)
- [School Media Center](#)

* Some resources available in Spanish



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Prepare:

1. Identify engagement, learning goals and lesson outcomes
2. Identify reader interests and ability levels in connection to learning objectives and course content
3. Identify texts that will support differentiation while amplifying students mastery of learning objectives with your content area. Texts can include articles, stories, poems, and word problems. These texts could come from course books, media centers, and online resources and can include articles touching on different topics, articles of varying complexity, and different excerpts from the same text
4. Design student interaction with each other and text in order to support comprehension, analysis, and discussion

Steps with Students:

1. Focus on student learning goals and content standards and elicit student background knowledge and interests

Examples Include:

- [Interest Survey \(Primary & Secondary\)](#)
- [KWL](#)
- [Wonder Wall](#)
- [Brain Dump or Retrieval Practice](#)
- [Vocabulary/Synonyms](#)
- [Graffiti Wall](#)

2. Present text options and parameters for choice

Examples Include:

- Connect with your media center for choice options and Good Fit Choice
- Identify excerpts from your textbook or a bank of word problems from course content
- See the blue "Resources" on the front

3. Model self-selection and reflection processes

Examples Include:

- [Book Tasting](#)
- [Five Finger Rule](#)
- [I-Pick](#)
- [Good Fit Choice Lesson](#)

4. Teacher facilitates progress toward independent student self-selection and comprehension of increasingly complex texts

Structures to Consider that Support Choice:

- | | | |
|---------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------------|
| • Book Clubs | • Concentric Circles | • Socratic Seminar |
| • Think-pair-share | • Learn4ward | • Genius hour/Passion project |
| • Jigsaws & Expert groups | • Roundtable discussion | • Close Reading |
| • Conferring | • Group project | • Metacognitive Strategies |
| • Gallery Walks | • Parallel Line Share | • Reciprocal Teaching |