Build a coherent literacy system in your school and improve student outcomes with . . .

The Literacy Quick Guide

A Reference Tool for Responsive Literacy Teaching
Energize your CLASSROOM

_The Literacy Quick Guide_ provides a concise description of a coherent literacy system in which all instructional contexts are reciprocally connected to improve student outcomes. This information-packed guide provides an important look at reading, writing, talking, and word study, while succinctly describing research-based instructional practices for high-impact literacy teaching.

The MUST-HAVE literacy tool for ALL teachers and school leaders.
The literacy system described in *The Literacy Quick Guide* is based on Fountas and Pinnell’s vision for schools and a set of core values that they hold for students and literacy educators. These values reflect a vision that is worthy of the children we teach.

### Our Vision and Core Values

The schools we envision recognize every child’s right to grow up literate as a member of a dynamic learning community that values the richness of linguistic, ethnic, and cultural diversity. Members of the school community are treated and treat others with empathy, kindness, and respect. Students are motivated to investigate new ideas that fuel intellectual curiosity and act as powerful agents in their own learning. Because students are fully engaged and feel a sense of joy in their own learning, they achieve a higher level of literacy. Through dynamic literacy education that exemplifies the beliefs and core values listed to the right, students come to understand their physical, social, and emotional world and their roles as informed global citizens—hallmarks of the literate lives they can lead.

### Schools are places where students—

1. Act as members of a cohesive learning community that sustains their literacy growth and success.
2. Engage in authentic inquiry within and beyond the classroom walls to ignite their intellectual curiosity and expand their knowledge of the world and of others.
3. Believe in themselves and their own ability to acquire and use language and literacy for learning and enjoyment.
4. Read, think about, talk about, and write about relevant content that engages their hearts and minds every day.
5. Read, think about, talk about, and write about texts that are culturally sensitive, reflect the diversity in our world, and vary in genre, content, and perspective.

### Schools are places where literacy educators—

6. Implement a coherent set of evidence-based instructional practices in whole-class, small-group, and individual contexts.
7. Make expert instructional decisions based on evidence gained from systematic observation and ongoing assessment data.
8. Work as a team to take collective responsibility for the high achievement of each student in a widely diverse population.
9. Act as members of a community with a common vision, common goals, common language, and a strong belief that their work can transform children’s lives through literacy.
10. Demonstrate an unwavering commitment to their own professional learning and to supporting the learning of their colleagues and team members.

View sample pages online at www.fountasandpinnell.com
With *The Literacy Quick Guide* at your fingertips, teachers and administrators can:

| ✔️ | Design effective literacy instruction for today's classroom, school, and districts. |
| ✔️ | Plan instructional time to support literacy learning in a variety of contexts. |
| ✔️ | Organize your classroom for effective, efficient literacy teaching. |
| ✔️ | Provide a rich, coherent instructional design for your teaching. |

**PERFECT FOR:**
- PreK–8 classroom teachers
- Literacy coaches
- Literacy specialists
- Instructional leaders
- School administrators
- District literacy leaders
- Professional learning communities

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**Create COHERENCE**

*The Fountas & Pinnell Literacy Continuum* is a tool that helps you think about, plan for, and reflect on the literacy instruction you provide to individuals, small groups, and the whole class. Throughout *The Literacy Quick Guide*, you will find references to pages in *The Literacy Continuum* that will support your planning and teaching of the instructional contexts.
Embrace a COMPREHENSIVE design

The Literacy Quick Guide is your in-the-hand reference tool for responsive literacy teaching.

Support for English Learners

Throughout The Literacy Quick Guide, there are suggestions on ways to support English learners in your literacy classroom.
Provide CLARITY

Simply laid-out tools, definitions, and teaching opportunities are built into *The Literacy Quick Guide* making your design for effective literacy instruction that much easier.

Concise explanations & graphics

Clear definitions

Purposeful reminders

Visit [www.fountasandpinnell.com](http://www.fountasandpinnell.com) to view sample pages and start building a vibrant learning community in your school!

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### Leveled Texts

**What Are Leveled Books?**

Leveled books are books that have been categorized along a gradient of difficulty from easiest, Level A, to most complex, Level Z. A book’s level is a quick way to think about the text characteristics and processing challenges that readers are likely to encounter when reading that particular text.

**Using Levels to Select Books for Guided Reading Lessons**

Studying the text characteristics of books at a given level will provide a good inventory of the challenges readers will meet across the level. Remember that there are a great variety of texts within each letter level. These characteristics apply to what is generally true for texts at the level across that variety. For the individual text, some factors may be more important than others in making demands on the readers. Examining these factors in relation to a particular group of readers will help you plan effective book introductions and tailor your teaching points.

**Why a Level Matters**

The level is a guide to analyzing and selecting appropriate texts for a group of readers, but text selection is more than that. Remember that you are teaching the reader, not the text. Every action in text selection is directed toward helping readers learn new ways of problem solving and thinking about texts that they can apply to other texts they read. They are developing the “text brainwork” required by texts of increasing difficulty. The level of a text has everything to do with an expansion of each reader’s network of systems of strategic actions.

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### F&P Text Level Gradient™

**What Is a Text Gradient?**

A gradient of text reflects a defined continuum of characteristics against which you can evaluate texts. An invaluable resource in selecting texts for particular groups of students, a text gradient also offers guidance in designing lessons.

**A text gradient is:**

- A tool for teachers to use in analyzing texts
- A tool for selecting books for small-group reading instruction
- A tool for recording progress over time in reading
- A reference for teachers in designing lessons and planning teaching moves
- A guide to determining whether readers are meeting grade-level expectations
- A signal that a reader may need intensive intervention in reading
- A support for teachers in guiding readers to make good choices for independent reading (when necessary)

**A text gradient is not:**

- A tool for students to use in choosing books for independent reading
- A tool for students to use in tracking their own progress
- A label that students attach to themselves as readers
- A label for book baskets in a classroom library
- An incentive for students to practice reading
- A way for students to compare themselves with others
- A grade on a report card
- A label communicated to parents

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Text Sets
What Is a Text Set?
A text set is a collection of two or more books that can be connected because they have common features. Text sets are used for high-interest through highly directive reading aloud, shared reading, book clubs, and reading Mini-lessons. They may also be a helpful way to organize books to support student choice during independent reading.

What Why Text Sets Are Important
Text sets connect books in a way that helps students build specific understandings from book to book. Through text sets, students can gain experiences with and develop a deep understanding of a topic, author, illustrator, genre, or element of text. Text sets can help students:
1. Understand how literary elements contribute to a story.
2. Get to know the work of specific authors and illustrators.
3. Explore content-area topics in depth.
4. Experience different aspects of a genre.
5. Learn about universal problems.
6. Explore history from different perspectives.
7. Support their use of academic language to talk about texts.

Guided Reading
What Is Guided Reading?
During guided reading, students in a small-group setting individually read a text while the teacher provides support, feedback, and guidance. This instructional context helps students learn to think like proficient readers and allows students to engage with a rich variety of texts.

Optimal: 3 guided reading groups

MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENTS
Using Text Sets With Middle School Students
Text sets are a powerful tool for expanding students’ understandings of events, characters, and other content areas. Students in middle school are ready to engage with texts that provide complex arguments and challenge their views about a topic. You may wish to have the whole class read one text, sometimes called an anchor text. Partners or small groups can then assemble their own text sets around that text, using the exploration of a topic or theme that interests them as their anchor text.

Introduce the Text
Provide specific teaching that is appropriate for the group based on your observations of the anchor text. Direct students to strategies that they can apply not only to this text but to other texts that you read.

Support Students’ Reading of the Text
Provide support for proficient reading of the new text, while also leaving some problem-solving to do.

Guide Discussion of the Text
Encourage students’ exploration of thinking with guided questions in the text. Observe for evidence of students’ thinking within, beyond, and about the text.

Engage in Generative Teaching
Teach to increase rapid writing skills and fluency in word choice.

Strategies for Guided Reading

GUIDED READING

Clear lesson structures

EFFECTIVE PRACTICES FOR TEACHING WITH TEXT SETS

Guided reading in the classroom is often a form of responsive teaching in which the teacher motivates and guides students through an interim level assessment to form groups and to determine the level at which to start instruction.

Groups are dynamic because student take on new learning at different rates.

Guided reading allows you to plan your lessons, set the pace, and engage students in the learning. Each student’s instructional level is emphasized in the learning experience.

Students are engaged in reading during their instruction.

During a guided reading lesson, plan important observations while they are finished at your next.

Continuous Connection

The Literacy Quick Guide
COMPLETE your design for literacy instruction with . . .

Increase the impact of your literacy instruction by implementing all of the Fountas & Pinnell Classroom™ instructional contexts to create a complete, comprehensive, and coherent system of literacy education.

JOIN THE FOUNTAS & PINNELL LITERACY™ COMMUNITY at FOUNTASANDPINNELL.COM and receive free exclusive access to members-only content and events.

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