



Success Starts Early:

Reading Conferences with Your Beginning Readers

by Jennifer Serravallo

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Jennifer Serravallo is a national literacy consultant, speaker, and the author of over a dozen books and resources on the teaching of reading and writing including the *NY Times* bestselling *The Reading Strategies Book* and the two-time award-winning Independent Reading Assessment series. Her other books about differentiated instruction and formative assessments are: *The Literacy Teacher's Playbooks*, *Teaching Reading in Small Groups*, *The Writing Strategies Book*, and *Conferring with Readers*. She was a Senior Staff Developer at the Teachers College Reading and Writing Project and taught in Title I schools in New York City.

ABOUT **Bebop Books**

Bebop Books, an exclusive imprint of LEE & LOW BOOKS, offers leveled books that support literacy learning content for beginning readers in guided reading and intervention settings— all with the same commitment to diversity and cultural authenticity that sets all LEE & LOW books apart. Bebop Books are carefully leveled texts that appeal to children's interests and provide the supports they need as they face challenges in their development as readers. All books are leveled by the most common book leveling systems used by teachers ensuring appropriate matches between children and books. Our titles cover a wide range of concepts, themes, and interest areas that appeal to children and fit right into your daily reading block. Perfect for small groups, Bebop Books include leveled sets that meet the needs of your emergent readers and free, comprehensive lesson plans to guide your instruction.

ABOUT **LEE & LOW BOOKS**

LEE & LOW BOOKS is the largest multi-cultural children's book publisher in the country. We are also one of the few minority-owned publishing companies in the United States, as well as a throwback to what many publishers used to be: independent, generational businesses in which the people running the company have a personal stake in its success. Our story began in 1991 with a simple mission: to publish contemporary diverse stories that all children could enjoy. We wanted our books to emphasize the richness of today's cultures and we pledge to make a special effort to work with unpublished authors and illustrators of color.

LEE & LOW has worked with schools and districts across the country to help them build libraries and collections that reflect their students. We are committed to meeting the needs of educators not only through the publication of high-quality, culturally authentic texts, but also by providing additional resources to support the use of our books in the classroom. We are proud to offer free, in-depth Teacher's Guides for more than 500 of our books.

Our comprehensive literacy program includes resources for guided reading, classroom libraries, shared reading, assessment and ELL/Dual Language programs.

What is a Conference? Overview

LEVELS A, B, C

- » one-on-one conferences
- » group conferences
- » partnership conferences
- » resources

one-on-one conferences

What is a one-on-one conference?

A **conference** is both a conversation between a teacher and a student and a valuable teaching opportunity. A one-on-one conference is a chance for a teacher to tailor literacy instruction to individual needs and to give children the personalized attention they require. During independent reading, when every student in the classroom is reading self-selected books, it is the teacher's job to confer to reinforce skills that a reader is already using and to teach a strategy or behavior that is transferable from book to book. The goal is not to teach the meaning or content of a specific book; it is to help the student learn the skills and behaviors that will help him or her read.

Do one-on-one conferences follow a predictable structure?

It is helpful to follow a predictable structure in conferences. The structure helps keep the conferences clear and concise. Each conference will last about 5 minutes. The teaching resources in this kit assume the following structure for conferences:

1. **Research:** Observe, ask questions, and/or listen to the child read.
2. **Compliment:** Reinforce something the child has done well by explicitly naming the strategy or behavior he or she is using and offering praise or encouragement.
3. **Teach:** State the strategy you want the reader to work on. Coach the reader.
4. **Link:** Repeat the compliment and the strategy, and encourage the child to continue practicing the new skill or behavior when reading.

How many students will I see each day?

The number of students a teacher will see each day depends on several factors, including how much time has been designated for the reading workshop and the reading stamina of children in the class. Most teachers ask their kindergarten students to read alone for 15 minutes at a time, with additional time each day for partner reading. One-on-one conferences, as well as small group conferences, will occur during private reading time. Partner conferences will

occur during partner reading. Assuming this schedule, a teacher could potentially meet with 8-10 students in one workshop period, with one-on-one and group conferences occurring during private time and partner conferences during partner time. Teachers should try to see every child at least once a week, although in classrooms with smaller numbers of students, they will probably see each child more frequently.

How do I track student progress?

Many teachers find it helpful to maintain a binder or notebook in which they keep all notes from conferences. The notes may include what the child was doing well, what the child needed support with, and next steps for future conferences. Some teachers prefer to keep notes in narrative form, while others prefer checklists. Either way, it is best if the

system is portable, easy to read, and used to note future goals for each student. During the research stage of a conference, it is important for the teacher to review past conference notes. Ideas for note-taking systems have been included in this kit.

group conferences

How is a group conference different from a one-on-one conference?

The biggest difference is that a teacher will have two, three, or four students to work with at once in a group conference instead of just one child. A group conference brings together several children who are in need of the same strategy. Students do not need to be reading the same book or even be at the same level. Group conferences will save time if they are formed correctly, because the teacher can meet with several children in the course of a 7-to-10 minute group conference

as opposed to spending 5 minutes per child in one-on-one conferences.

A group conference is the same as what is known as a “**strategy lesson**” (Calkins, 2001; Serravallo, 2010). Not only is it beneficial and more efficient for teachers, it also helps students. Being part of a group lets children know that there are others practicing the same strategy they are.

How do I form the group?

Groups can be formed ahead of time or spontaneously. When forming groups ahead of time, look for a common area of need in terms of strategy or behavior. It is not important that all children are at the same reading level. To plan these groups, teachers might look at:

- Previous running records or other assessments
- Past conference notes
- Observations and research from partnership conversations

To form groups spontaneously, teachers might:

- Scan the room during independent reading and look for a common need.
- Gather children who need similar support, based on repeated similar conferences for several individuals.
- Turn a one-on-one conference into a group conference by having other children who are seated nearby listen in.

Do group conferences follow a predictable structure?

Yes. Typically the teacher starts with an explanation of why students have been brought together. When stating the purpose, the teacher should tell everyone clearly what he or she should practice while in the group.

The purpose may be conveyed in several different ways. The teacher may compliment the group about some habit or behavior children are using that the teacher wants them to continue. The teacher may demonstrate a new strategy for the group and then have students try it in their own books while being coached. The teacher and the group might practice a strategy together on a shared text before children try it on their own. Most of

the time should be spent with the teacher supporting children's practice in their own books through prompting. Just like a plate spinner in the circus, who keeps all the plates in the air by not lingering too long with any one, the teacher should be moving amongst the children, prompting and coaching and supporting them as they do their reading work. This practice time is essential to helping children transfer previously taught skills and behaviors into their own reading.

How often do I have group conferences?

The frequency with which a teacher holds a group conference depends on how many children are in the class, how often similarities among their needs are found, and how able the teacher is to form the groups ahead of time or spontaneously. It is advisable that teachers balance group, partnership, and individual conferences so that all take place

within a week. Teachers should aim to see about 8-10 children in one workshop in some format. It is nearly impossible to meet this goal when only holding one-on-one conferences.

partnership conferences

What is a partnership conference?

Daily partnership meetings are prime opportunities for conferring. As students read together and talk about their books, the teacher can walk around the classroom, teaching and encouraging children to use the same skills and behaviors during partner reading that they are learning when reading independently. In addition to coaching

reading skills and behaviors, these conferences are important opportunities for teaching guidelines about how to exist in a partnership. Children need to learn how to sit next to each other, share a book, listen, respond to each other's ideas, and be ready to talk about their own books.

Do partnership conferences follow a predictable structure?

Partnership conferences follow the same structure as one-on-one conferences. A recommended structure follows. The teaching tip cards in this kit assume this structure for conferences and also include tips for conferring with partnerships.

1. **Research:** Listen to students as they read to each other or talk about their books and observe their interactions.
2. **Compliment:** Reinforce something children have done well by by explicitly naming the strategy they are using and offering praise or encouragement.
3. **Teach:** State the strategy you want children to work on and coach them as they practice.
4. **Link:** Repeat the compliment and the strategy, and encourage children to continue practicing the new skill or behavior when reading together or independently.

How often do I have partnership conferences?

Partnership conferences take place every time children meet for partner time. A teacher should be able to confer with two or three partnerships a day, depending on how long children can sustain partner reading

or conversation and how long it takes to complete each conference. In general, children will usually meet with their partners about 10 minutes at a time.

Is there any teaching that is unique to partnership time?

Partnership conferences can be a time to practice the routines and behaviors of a good partnership as well as a time to work on reading skills and behaviors. Children need to learn to sit hip to hip and place the book between them so they both can see the book they are sharing. When they talk, children need to learn to listen to each other and respond to what the other has said. On each of the teaching tip cards, there are tips for

partnership activities that children might try when they are working on the behavior or skill goals. Young readers need to learn that they have “jobs” when they work with a partner. It is important to take notes on the children’s abilities in using reading and partnership skills and behaviors in order to hold them accountable and to follow up for future conferences.

Where can I read more?

- Calkins, Lucy. *The Art of Teaching Reading*. New York: Longman, 2001.
- Collins, Kathy. *Growing Readers: Units of Study in the Primary Classroom*. Portland, ME: Stenhouse Publishers, 2004.
- Collins, Kathy. *Reading For Real: Teach Students to Read with Power, Intention, and Joy in K-3 Classrooms*. Portland, ME: Stenhouse Publishers, 2008.
- Serravallo, Jennifer. *Teaching Reading in Small Groups*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann, 2010.

Conferring with Readers

LEVELS **A, B, C**

- » Conferring with Readers: **LEVEL A**
- » Conferring with Readers: **LEVEL B**
- » Conferring with Readers: **LEVEL C**



conferring with readers: LEVEL A

About the books at LEVEL A

Books at this level are designed to assist children in practicing early reading behaviors. The stories are highly predictable. The text is often made up of one-syllable words. If there is a multisyllable word, it is usually at the end of a sentence. Often the child knows what the text says because there is a simple pattern and the

picture easily supports the text. Level A books also make heavy use of familiar sight words.

Children at this level typically have 12+ books in a plastic bag or bin at one time. They read and reread these books, practicing skills and behaviors. Children trade in these books for new ones each week.

Conferring with readers at LEVEL A

Read the title and first page of the text to the reader when he or she first chooses a book. This will help the child learn the pattern and read the book with success. This introduction is done one-on-one when the child is choosing a book from the classroom library.

Conferences to help children with one-to-one matching, moving from left to right across a page, reading the left page before the right page, or checking the pictures for support begin with the teacher asking the child to read the book aloud. When the reader encounters difficulty, the teacher can either prompt the child quickly so that he or she can keep reading or stop the reader and briefly demonstrate the strategy or behavior. Readers at this level should be encouraged to use their finger to track the text as they read.

To research a child's ability to retell, summarize, or infer, the teacher should begin by asking one or two questions to engage the child in a very brief conversation about the book. For example, a teacher may ask, "What was this book about?" or "What happened?" or "How is the character feeling?"

Readers at level A are working on the following skills and behaviors:

1. Moving from left to right across a page
2. One-to-one matching
3. Using pictures and the text to read
4. Reading sight words automatically and accurately
5. Retelling/summarizing/synthesizing
6. Inferring

When is a reader ready to read books at LEVEL B?

When children demonstrate the behaviors listed above, they are ready to start trying level B books. Children do not need to be reading all the words in their books accurately to be ready to move to level B. As long as a child is using the pictures to help read a word, the word can be viewed as correct.

For example, if a child reads "the ketchup" because there is a picture with red liquid in a bottle, it is acceptable even if the text reads "the sauce." At times children may read level A and level B books simultaneously, especially as they are transitioning.

Information adapted from: *Matching Books and Readers*. Fountas and Pinnell. 1999. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann



conferring with readers: **LEVEL B**

About the books at **LEVEL B**

Books at level B are very similar to books at level A and are designed to assist children in early reading behaviors. The text is highly predictable. The reader is supported by a simple pattern and the picture supports the text. Level B books also make heavy use of familiar sight words. Children who read books at this level typically have 12+ books in a plastic bag or folder at one time. They read and reread these books, practicing skills and behaviors. Children trade in these books for new ones each week.

There are a few differences between level A and level B books. While it is uncommon to find a multisyllable word in the middle of a sentence in a level A book, it may occur in a level B book. Sometimes the text follows a simple pattern, but it is a word at the beginning or in the middle of each sentence that changes. Also, the text on the last page may deviate from the pattern on the previous pages, and the text pattern may extend across two pages instead of being contained on a single page.

Conferring with readers at **LEVEL B**

Readers of level B books need the same support before reading. Read the title and first page of the text to the reader when he or she first chooses a book. This will help the child understand the pattern and read the book with success. This introduction is done one-on-one when the child is choosing books from the classroom library.

During conferences, help children with one-to-one matching, moving from left to right across a page, reading the left page before the right page, and/or checking the pictures for support. Begin by asking the child to read the book aloud. When the reader encounters difficulty, the teacher can either prompt the child quickly so that he or she can keep reading or stop the reader and briefly demonstrate the strategy or behavior. Readers should be encouraged to use their finger to track the text as they read.

To research a child's ability to retell, summarize, or infer, the teacher should begin by asking one or two questions to engage the child in a very brief conversation about the book. For example, a teacher may ask, "What was this book about?" or "What happened?"

Readers at level B are working on the following skills and behaviors:

1. Moving from left to right across a page
2. One-to-one matching
3. Using pictures and the text to read
4. Reading sight words automatically and accurately
5. Retelling/summarizing/synthesizing
6. Inferring

Information adapted from: *Matching Books and Readers*. Fountas and Pinnell. 1999. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann

When is a reader ready to read books at **LEVEL C**?

Once a child consistently demonstrates the behaviors listed on the bottom of page 10 and is able to comprehend the text, as evidenced by their retelling, summarizing, and inferring capabilities, it is time to start introducing level C books, in conferences or in guided reading groups.

The amount of time a reader spends with level A and level B books depends on many factors, including the amount of instruction the child has received in conferences and guided reading; how much opportunity the

child has to write; support across the day in other components of balanced literacy, including shared reading, shared writing, and interactive writing; whether the child speaks English as a first language; and the amount of time the child can sustain reading at school and at home each day. A child may be ready to move out of levels A and B books in just a few weeks, or it may take a couple of months.

Information adapted from: *Matching Books and Readers*. Fountas and Pinnell. 1999. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann



conferring with readers: **LEVEL C**

About the books at **LEVEL C**

Books at level C are designed for children who are beginning to use graphophonic (letter/sound) sources of information. The illustrations may provide less text support, and the stories and sentences may be more complex. Level C books make use of a set

of sight words to help students read longer sentences. Children at this level typically have 12+ books in a plastic bag or bin at one time. They read and reread these books, practicing new skills and behaviors. Children trade in these books for new ones each week.

Conferring with readers at **LEVEL C**

When reading books at level C, children must use three sources of information to help them to read: **meaning**, **syntax**, and **visual**. When students come across a word they do not know, they need to figure it out by making sure it makes sense, sounds right, and looks right.

When choosing books for the week, children who are new to level C benefit from having the title and first sentence of the text read to them. Some readers who are transitioning into this level may also need guided practice, with a teacher providing book introductions, before they can read the books independently.

When conferring with a child, the teacher should coach the child who is stuck on a word to look at the beginning of the word and say a word that makes sense and has the correct first letter. As children gain more experience, teachers should coach children to check the final letters of words too.

It is also important to confer about comprehension. Teaching children to monitor for sense, and to retell and infer, will help keep reading at this level focused on word attack strategies as well as understanding. Children reading books at level C should be reading known sight words automatically. However, they will continually encounter new words to add to their list of known words.

At level C, focus on the following skills and behaviors:

1. Using pictures and the text to read
2. Reading sight words automatically and accurately
3. Using letter(s) of a word (visual) along with meaning and syntax (integrating multiple sources of information)
4. Retelling/summarizing/synthesizing
5. Inferring

When is a reader ready to read books at **LEVEL D**?

When a child reads level C books with at least 95 percent accuracy and understanding and when he or she demonstrates the above described behaviors and skills with security,

you may begin introducing books at level D. Comprehension is essential, so it is important to assess for retelling before moving on.

Information adapted from: *Matching Books and Readers*. Fountas and Pinnell. 1999. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann

Conferring Resources

LEVELS **A, B, C**

- » [An Orientation to the Resource Pages](#)
- » [Conferring with the Resource Pages: an example](#)

An Orientation to the Resource Pages

On pages 16-31, you'll find Resources Pages for each skill/behavior. They are organized in a general order of importance from more basic to more complex. Use the cards in order. For example, teach one-to-one matching, before teaching one that is discussed later, such as inferring.

Teachers should assess each reader to determine where to start. No two readers reading at the same level are the same!

The cards are formatted so they are easy to use when following the predictable structure of conferences.

What is included on the Resource Pages?

First you'll read a brief description of the skill/behavior and corresponding levels, some suggestions for how children might practice each skill/behavior when they work in a partnership, teaching tips for conferring with English Language Learners (ELLs), and suggestions for ways to support the skill/behavior throughout the day.

On the 2nd page, you'll find the name of the skill/behavior and the corresponding levels. The bulk of the teaching tips and prompts are found in the table. In the first column there is advice for how to research the reader. You will be directed to either listen to the child read aloud, ask the child a ques-

tion, or just observe the child. In the second column, you'll find possibilities for how a child might interact with his or her book. In the third and fourth columns you'll read about demonstration and coaching advice based on the child's responses or behaviors. You have a choice in every conference to teach by demonstrating and then prompting the child, or by only prompting. If you choose the first option, you should use both the third and fourth columns. If you choose only to prompt, then you should use just the third column.

What is the teacher demo-text?

A **demo-text** is a book you'll know well and which you can use quickly and easily to demonstrate a strategy/behavior to a reader. *What a Street!* by Barbara Shook Hazen (level C) is the sample demo-text used on pages 16-31. In the fourth column of every page

you'll find language and specific teaching tips you can use in modeling the strategy/behavior being taught. This corresponds specifically to the demo-text, *What a Street!*, and includes page numbers for easy reference.

What isn't on the Resource Pages?

One very important thing not included is the compliment. You should give compliments based on what you observe a child doing,

phrased clearly so children know to replicate the strategy/behavior.

Conferring with the Resource Pages: *an example*

During reading workshop, a teacher settles down next to a boy reading a level B book for a one-on-one conference. The teacher pulls out the level B resources and checks the notes from the previous conference with the child. Based on the notes, she knows that the student has mastered the skills of reading from left to right and one-to-one matching.

The teacher realizes that the child can move on to the next skill/behavior—using picture clues and the text to read—and pulls out the corresponding page.

The teacher begins by researching. Looking at the first column, the teacher sees that the first step is to observe the child reading aloud. As the child reads, she notices that he is doing some things well. The reader is making sure to point under each word; and when he gets stuck on a word, he checks the picture. However, when starting a new page, the child gets stuck and doesn't know what to do.

After considering what she has observed, the teacher decides to compliment the reader. Rather than focus on something the child is not doing, she decides to highlight what he does well and support him in doing it more consistently. She says, "I noticed that when you got stuck on the

word 'red,' you looked at the picture to check that the ball was red! You know that both the pictures and the words help you read."

The teacher proceeds to help the child through prompting. She looks at the third column on the page, and it gives a few options for what to prompt. "These are the same words as on the last page," she says, and waits for the boy to think. He is still stuck. The teacher tries the next prompt and says, "Check the picture, then try to read the words." After this prompt, the child checks the picture and is able to read the words. The teacher stays by his side and when the boy gets stuck again, jumps in with the same prompts.

At the end of the conference, the teacher says, "You used the pictures to help you read the words. When you read the next book, make sure you remember to keep checking the pictures and thinking about what would make sense!" Before the teacher leaves, she jots down a few notes about the conference to create a record for the student's reading progress and a reference for his future conferences.

Teaching Resource Pages: *Conferring with Readers*

LEVELS **A, B, C**

- » Moving from left to right across a page and a two-page spread
- » One-to-one matching
- » Using pictures and the text to read
- » Read sight words automatically & accurately
- » Retelling/summarizing/synthesizing
- » Inferring
- » Using letters along with meaning and syntax

Skill/Behavior LEVELS A, B

Reading left to right across a page and a two-page spread

When turning to a new page of a book, children need to start reading on the left-hand page. Sometimes the left-hand page will have text on it, and sometimes text will only appear on the right-hand page. Beginning readers need to know they should always go to the beginning of each sentence

or line on a page and move across the page or double-page spread, from left to right, as they read. To avoid confusion when practicing this skill, level A and level B books typically do not have multiple lines of text per page.

Ideas for Partnerships who are working on this skill/behavior:

- Partners who are working on this skill are usually young children who also need to be taught good partnership behavior. Begin by telling partnerships to sit hip to hip beside each other and hold a book in the middle. Have one child put his or her book in the middle first. Tell the partners to read the book together and then move on to the other child's book.
- **Choral Reading:** Have the partners read aloud together, pointing to the words as they read.
- **Echo Reading:** Have one child read a page and then have the other child read the same page. Encourage the partnerships to help each other read if needed.
- **Turn-taking:** One child reads the left page, the other child reads the right page.

Ideas for English Language Learners (ELLs) who are working on this skill/behavior:

- If a child does not understand the prompts, try a nonverbal cue by pointing to the first word. If further prompting is needed, take the child's hand and move it from left to right across the page.

Ways to support this skill/behavior throughout the day:

- When children are engaged in whole-class Shared Reading, ask the class, "Where should I start?" after turning to each new page.
- During a Read-Aloud, think aloud about where to read next after turning each page.
- Whenever words are read aloud on a chart or in a Big Book, track the text from left to right with a finger or a pointer.

Skill/Behavior LEVELS A, B

Reading left to right across a page and a two-page spread

research

Observe the child's reading behavior.

Does the child begin by looking at the left page before the right page?

or

Observe the child's eyes. Does the child automatically start on the left page before moving to the right?

or

Observe: Is the child using his or her finger to help track print from left to right within or across a page?

observation

The child starts automatically on the left page.

The child starts on the right page, disregarding print on the left page.

The child tracks print from left to right, using a finger and eyes to track words across a page.

The child does not consistently start at the first word of a sentence or line.

coach/prompt

» Continue to research child to see if he or she follows print within a page and uses a finger to track print.

» Point to the left page. Say, "Check this page first."

» Point to the left page. Say, "You skipped this page. Go back."

» Point to the left page.

» Compliment the child and move on to next skill.

» Point to the first word.

» Point to the first word and say, "Start here."

» Say, "Think about where to start reading."

demonstration

No demonstration needed. Be sure to compliment child on his or her reading behavior and link it to future reading work in other books.

Use any book to demonstrate. Say, "Every time I turn the page, I'm going to look to see if there are words here [point to left page] first, then I'll check here [point to right page]. Watch me as I try it in my book." Read, turn the page, and then think aloud, "Oh! Let me check here first [point to left] before I go to my next page."

No demonstration needed. Be sure to compliment child on his or her reading behavior and link it to future reading work in other books.

Use any book to demonstrate. Say, "On every page, I'm going to start over here [point to the beginning of a sentence or line] and read across the line to here [point to the end of the sentence or line]." Turn to the first page and read, pointing to each word. Repeat on the second page. Have the child try in his or her own book, using prompts from the column to the left when necessary.

Skill/Behavior | One-to-one matching

LEVELS A, B

Children need to learn that they should say one word for every word that is printed on the page. Beginning readers should be encouraged to use their fingers to point under each word and track the text as they read. To master this skill in level A and level B books, it is not necessary for the child to read each word correctly. The child

only needs to say one word for each word in the text and read a word that matches the picture and makes sense. When a line of text contains a word with more than one syllable, pay close attention to whether the child points multiple times for each syllable or once.

Ideas for Partnerships who are working on this skill/behavior:

- Partners who are working on this skill are usually young children who also need to be taught good partnership behavior. Begin by telling partnerships to sit hip to hip beside each other and hold a book in the middle. Have one child put his or her book in the middle first. Tell the partners to read the book together (choral reading, echo reading, or taking turns) and then move on to the other child's book. As one reads, he should point under words and the other child should watch and correct her partner if he fails to point.
- Instruct children to pay attention to their partners' reading. If they hear that their partner has "run out of words" (said too many words for the number of words on the page), tell them to go back together and reread the sentence. Encourage children to coach one another as well, using the teacher's behavior as a model. For example, children might say, "That didn't sound right. Try it again," or "It will help to go back and reread."

Ideas for English Language Learners (ELLs) who are working on this skill/behavior:

- One-to-one matching requires more than just vocabulary. It also requires knowledge of syntax, or how language sounds. Use books that are written in present tense and, later, in present progressive tense. Children tend to understand statements and commands before questions, so it helps to read books with these kinds of sentences until children acquire other language structures.

Ways to support this skill/behavior throughout the day:

- Make children a simple book of colors. Some color words are one syllable (e.g., red, green, blue) and others have more than one syllable (e.g., yellow, purple). Write a different color word on each page. Write the word in its corresponding color and also color a circle above the word. A common problem in one-to-one matching is that children have a hard time with the concept of multisyllable words. Encourage children to read the book while pointing under each word. They will learn that you will need to point only once for each word and consequently that one word may have more than one "beat," or syllable.

Skill/Behavior | One-to-one matching

LEVELS A, B

research

Observe: Does the number of words the child says match the number of words on the page?

or

Observe: Does the child say one word for each word in the text?

or

Observe the child's reading behavior. Does he or she point under each word while reading?

observation

The child says one word for each word in the text, pointing under each word as he or she reads.

The child sweeps finger across line instead of pointing to each word.

The child does not touch any words as he or she reads.

The child tracks text with finger but says more than one word each time he or she points.

The child is inconsistent— sometimes pointing, sometimes not.

The child points under each word as one syllable and ignores multisyllabic words.

coach/prompt

» Compliment the child and move on to next skill.

» Say, "Point under each word. Point, then pick up your finger and point under the next word. Then pick up your finger and point under the next word."

» Say, "You ran out of words. Remember to say one word each time you point under a word."

» Say, "Point under each word as you say it."

» Say, "Each time you point, it should only be for one word. Try that page again."

demonstration

No demonstration needed. Be sure to compliment the child on his or her reading behavior and link it to future reading work in other books.

Use demo-text, *What a Street!*, and turn to pages 2 and 3. Say, "Watch me point to each word in my book as I read." Read a sentence, pointing dramatically under each word. Say, "Did you see how I pointed to each word and only said one word for each one I pointed to?" Have the child try in his or her own book, using prompts from the column to the left when necessary. Note that there are two-syllable words throughout the demo-text. If this is confusing to the child, use the prompt below or read a page from a book familiar to the child.

Use demo-text, *What a Street!*, and turn to page 2. Say, "Watch how I point under only one word even when the word has two beats." Read the sentence, pointing dramatically under each word and emphasizing pointing only once under the two-syllable word "messy." Have the child try in his or her own book, using prompts from the column to the left when necessary.

Skill/Behavior | Using pictures and the text to read

LEVELS A, B, C

Pictures in books at levels A, B, and C are highly supportive of the text. It is very unlikely to find a word on a page that is not supported by the picture. As children look at each page of a book, they should get into the habit of checking the picture

first and then trying to read the words on the page. Children need to know that when they become stuck on a word, checking the picture can help them figure out the word.

Ideas for Partnerships who are working on this skill/behavior:

- Partners who are working on this skill are usually young children who also need to be taught good partnership behavior. Begin by telling partnerships to sit hip to hip beside each other and hold a book in the middle. Have one child put his or her book in the middle first. Tell the partners to read the book together (choral, echo, or by taking turns) and then move on to the other child's book.
- Instruct partnerships to open a new book together and flip through the pages to look at the pictures before trying to read the words. Turning their attention to the pictures first will help children monitor for meaning. Afterward, ask the partnership members to think about what the story was about and use that to help them figure out what the words could be.
- Encourage partnerships to question each other politely if something in a picture does not match what the partner has read. This will reinforce the idea that words in the book match the pictures and that a reader corrects the words if something does not make sense.

Ideas for English Language Learners (ELLs) who are working on this skill/behavior:

- Prompting a child to check the picture will only work if the child knows the word for what is pictured. When a child does not know the word, it can be taught during the conference. Be sure to provide a context. If applicable, teach the child what the word is like, what it is not like, and what it does.
- If the teacher anticipates that there will be unfamiliar vocabulary, preteach a few of the words before children attempt to read the book.
- Provide a separate word wall handout for ELLs that is tailored to their needs. Keep this in a folder or on a stand as a reference for children as they read.

Ways to support this skill/behavior throughout the day:

- Before doing a Read-Aloud, do a "picture walk" with the class to preview some of the story.
- During Shared Reading, prompt the whole class to check the picture to get help with a word when the children are stumped.

Skill/Behavior LEVELS A, B, C | Using pictures and the text to read

research

Observe the child's reading behavior. What does the child do when stuck on a word?

or

Ask the child to read aloud. Do the words that child reads make sense with the picture?

or

Observe: Does the child look only at the pictures and not at the words?

observation

The child looks at the picture for clues when he or she gets stuck. The word read makes sense with the picture.

The child reads a word that contradicts the picture (e.g., reads "red bus" when the picture depicts a yellow bus).

The child gets stuck in the middle of a sentence.

The child gets stuck when starting a new page.

coach/prompt

» Compliment the child and move on to next skill.

» Say, "Does the picture match what you read?"
 » Say, "Make sure your words match what you see in the picture."

» Say, "Check the picture and reread from the beginning."

» Say, "Check the picture. Then try the words."
 » Say, "Check the picture. What would make sense?"
 » Point to the picture.

demonstration

No demonstration needed. Be sure to compliment the child on his or her reading behavior and link it to future reading work in other books.

Use demo-text, *What a Street!*, and turn to pages 2 and 3. Say, "Watch me read this page. I need to check the picture and make sure that it matches what I read." Read the first sentence on page 2 and pretend to get stuck on the word "street." Deliberately check the picture for help. Have the child try in his or her own book, using prompts from the column to the left when necessary.

* If the child has not figured out a word after 10 to 15 seconds, do not continue waiting because the child will begin to lose the meaning of the story. Instead, prompt the child by saying, "Could it be (street)?" and encourage him or her to continue reading.

Skill/Behavior | Read sight words automatically & accurately

LEVELS A, B, C

Sight words are words that children have learned to recognize without having to decode. Sight words to teach young readers are ones that are some of the frequently used words in English. Common words are also known as Dolch words, or high-frequency words. Level A, B, and C books are filled with these familiar words. When children read books at these levels, they should be able to recognize the words they have

learned and read them automatically. Many teachers find it helpful to create a word wall in the classroom to record words that have been learned in word study and that often appear in the books children are reading. The word wall becomes a reference for children to look at when they have trouble with a word.

Ideas for Partnerships who are working on this skill/behavior:

- Partners who are working on this skill are usually young children who also need to be taught good partnership behavior. Begin by telling partnerships to sit hip to hip and hold a book in the middle. Have one child put his or her book in the middle first. Tell the partners to read the book together and then move on to the other child's book.
- Before reading, ask partners to look at the word wall and try to read all the words. This helps them get ready to read and gives children the opportunity to practice recognizing sight words.
- Encourage partnerships to prompt and coach each other by saying "Check the word wall" when a partner gets stuck on a word. Constant reminders to use the word wall reinforce the idea that children can use references in the classroom to help them when they are having trouble.

Ways to support this skill/behavior throughout the day:

- During lineup, use flash cards to reinforce the words that have been learned and added to the word wall.
- Create an activity for word-study time that focuses on sight words. For example, write high-frequency words on cards and then tell children to form sentences with the words using a pocket chart.
- Mix sight word practice with games. For example, give clues about a mystery word on the word wall and have children guess what the word is and point it out on the word wall. Or, turn off the overhead lights and shine a flashlight at a word on the word wall. Call on students to read the word as quickly as possible.
- Children may create their own lists of words that they can read and write. They can keep this list taped to their desks or in a folder.

Skill/Behavior | Read sight words automatically & accurately

LEVELS A, B, C

research

Listen to the child while he or she reads aloud. Does the child read sight words accurately?

or

Listen to the child while he or she reads aloud. Does the child read sight words automatically or does the child try to read them phonetically?

observation

The child can read known sight words automatically and accurately.

The child is unable to read a sight word that he or she has known in the past.

coach/prompt

» Compliment the child and move on to next skill or reassess in next level if text seems too easy.

- » Say, "You know that word. You just read it on the last page."
- » Say, "Try checking the word wall."
- » Point to the word wall.

demonstration

No demonstration needed. Be sure to compliment the child on his or her reading behavior and link it to future reading work in other books.

Use demo-text, *What a Street!*, and turn to pages 2 and 3. Say, "When I read, I see a lot of the words from our word wall on the pages of the book." Begin reading page 2 and stop. Say, "Oh, I know this word. 'What' is on our word wall." Gesture to the word wall and read the sentence again. Have the child try in his or her own book, using prompts from the column to the left when necessary.

High-Frequency Words for Grades K-1 found in *Bebop Books*

a	do	I	more	she	up
all	does	if	my	so	use
an	first	in	no	some	want
and	for	into	not	than	was
any	from	is	now	that	way
are	go	it	of	the	we
as	had	its	on	them	were
at	has	like	one	then	what
be	have	look	or	there	when
been	he	made	our	they	who
but	her	make	out	this	will
by	here	man	over	time	with
can	him	many	put	to	you
day	his	may	said	too	your
did	how	me	see	two	

Skill/Behavior | Retelling/summarizing/ LEVELS A, B, C synthesizing

Though not all level A, B, C books in your classroom library will be a story, the ones from *Bebop* typically are. Children need to understand that all the pages in a book make up one story or give information about one topic. They may think that every new page is a new story and need support in putting the pages together to form one story line. The retelling should be only one or two sentences long and is more of a synthesis or summary of the story than a full sequential

recounting of events. The retelling of stories in level A, B, and C books will most likely consist of a simple concept because of the easy sentence structure and little variation in sentence patterns. The teacher needs to make sure that when children retell or summarize a book they use both the pictures and the words to make meaning. As students become more fluent readers, their retellings will grow in length to include event retelling, basic story elements, and plot summaries.

Ideas for Partnerships who are working on this skill/behavior:

- Have partners retell the story across three fingers using the words “first,” “next,” and “finally” or “last” if the book tells a story. Children should list three facts from the book if it is not a story.
- Ask partners to talk about how the story in the book fits with the title. This discussion helps children see the book as a whole. It also helps them integrate the title and the text into a single story or subject of information.
- After reading the book aloud to his or her partner, have a child talk about what the book was about. Remind partners to take turns and listen carefully. This reinforces children’s listening skills as well as their retelling skills.

Ideas for English Language Learners (ELLs) who are working on this skill/behavior:

- When coaching, use gestures and fingers to indicate sequential retelling. For example, hold up one finger for “first,” two fingers for “next,” and so on. This reinforces sequential retelling and provides nonverbal cues for children to follow.
- If a child is more skilled at understanding English than speaking English, have him or her draw pictures to explain what happened in the story. This can also be an effective method for assessing a child’s comprehension. If a child is comfortable with the idea, ask him or her to act out what happened in the beginning, middle, and end of the story.

Ways to support this skill/behavior throughout the day:

- Get children into the practice of retelling Read-Alouds and Shared Reading stories. After you read the story, have children turn to partners and retell the story in their own words. You can guide this time to avoid children getting carried away in retelling unnecessary details.

Skill/Behavior LEVELS A, B, C | Retelling/summarizing/synthesizing

research

Observe the child's reading behavior. After he or she finishes, say, "Tell me what this story is about."

or

Say, "Tell me what happens in the beginning, middle, and end of the story."

observation

The child is able to summarize in a phrase or sentence what the story is about.

The child is unable to summarize the story and cannot remember what happened.

The child responds with only one or two words.

The child looks at the cover and says only what is on the cover.

coach/prompt

» Compliment the child and move on to next skill.

» Say, "Let's look back at the pictures and the words to remember what happened in the story."

» Say, "What happened in the beginning? middle? end?"

» Say, "Reread the story."

» Say, "What happened next? What happened after that?"

» Say, "Can you say it in a sentence?"

» Say, "Tell me something from the beginning, the middle, and the end."

» Say, "Check the words and pictures in the book."

» Say, "Reread the story."

demonstration

No demonstration needed. Be sure to compliment the child on his or her reading behavior and link it to future reading work in other books.

Use demo-text, *What a Street!*. Say, "Watch me turn back through the pages and remember what happened." Turn to page 2. "Oh yeah, the street is a mess! And then they clean it up." Flip through the rest of the pages and say, "And now it's all clean. The story is all about how the kids get the street clean." Have the child try in his or her own book, using prompts from the column to the left when necessary.

Skill/Behavior | Inferring

LEVELS A, B, C

An inference is made when a reader takes what is in a story and puts it together with prior knowledge to form an idea or make a prediction. Inferring suggestions on

this card are geared toward children who can practice on stories with characters and a plot, which not all books at levels A, B, and C have.

Ideas for Partnerships who are working on this skill/behavior:

- Partners who are working on this skill are usually young children who also need to be taught good partnership behavior. Begin by telling partners to sit hip to hip and hold a book in the middle. Have one child put his or her book in the middle first. Tell the partners to read the book together and then move on to the other child's book.
- Tell partners to look at the pictures after they read each page. Encourage children to imagine how the characters might be feeling. Doing this together helps children slow down and actively make inferences after reading each page. Purposefully talking about characters' feelings gives children a model for how to make inferences on their own.
- During children's second reading of a book, partnerships may act out each page using their bodies. Seeing others' dramatizations helps children visualize the story. Making a static picture come to life requires children to think more deeply about characters and situations and imagine parts of the story that are not on the page.

Some Bebob titles that are appropriate to use when working on this skill/behavior:

- *We Play Music* by Dolores Johnson (Level A)
- *My Horse* by Karen Hjemboe (Level B)
- *Train Ride* by Candace Whitman (Level B)
- *Cleaning Day* by D. H. Figueredo (Level C)
- *What a Street!* by Barbara Shook Hazen (Level C)
- *Where Is My Puppy?* by Caroline Hatton (Level C)

Ideas for English Language Learners (ELLs) who are working on this skill/behavior:

- ELLs may need more visual cues to comprehend directions and make inferences. Try drawing speech balloons on sticky notes and placing them above characters' heads. Point to the speech balloon(s) on each page. Ask children to think about what the characters might be saying.

Ways to support this skill/behavior throughout the day:

- During Writing Workshop, encourage children to add thought bubbles that describe characters' feelings or thoughts.

Skill/Behavior LEVELS A, B, C | Inferring

research

Ask the child, "What do you think the character is thinking?"

or

Ask the child, "What might the character be feeling?"

observation

The child can make solid inferences about characters.

The child has no thoughts about the character or says, "I don't know."

The child restates something that happened in the story.

The child can make connections between his or her life and the story and has an idea about characters' feelings.

The child says it does not remind him or her of anything.

coach/prompt

» Compliment the child and move on to next skill.

» Teach the child to look at the facial expressions of the characters in the pictures. Say, "Look at the face. How is he or she feeling?"

» Say, "Think about what the character might be thinking."

» Say, "How would you feel?"

» Say, "Imagine what the character is saying."

» Compliment the child and move on to next skill.

» Say, "Think of something that happened to you that is almost the same."

demonstration

No demonstration needed. Be sure to compliment the child on his or her reading behavior and link it to future reading work in other books.

Use demo-text, *What a Street!*, and turn to page 2. Say, "I'm going to look at the character's face in the pictures and think, 'What's he feeling here?' Watch me." Point to the boy in the striped shirt. Say, "Wow, he looks really worried. Look! His hand is on his head. He's thinking that this street is really messy!" Continue and say, "Did you see how I thought about how he was feeling based on the picture?" Have the child try in his or her own book, using prompts from the column to the left when necessary.

No demonstration needed. Be sure to compliment the child on his or her reading behavior and link it to future reading work in other books.

Use demo-text, *What a Street!*, and turn to page 2. Say, "Sometimes readers are reminded of something from their own life even when it is not exactly the same thing. When we remember, we can get an idea about how a character feels." Read page 2. Think aloud, saying, "Well, I have never cleaned up a street, but I remember one time when I made a mess in the kitchen. I was worried. I bet this character is worried too." Continue and say, "Did you see how I thought of something similar to the story?"

Ask the child, "Does what is happening in the story remind you of anything that has happened to you?"

and

Ask the child, "How do you think the character might feel then?"

Skill/Behavior | Using letters along with meaning and syntax

LEVEL C

This skill is new to readers at level C. Children begin to look at and use beginning letters to figure out tricky words. With more experience, children will begin to use letters at the end of the word, too. All the while, children also need to be using other sources of information—meaning and syntax—to make sure that what they read makes sense, sounds right, and looks right.

For example, look at page 4 of *Cleaning Day* by D. H. Figueredo. The text reads, “We wash the dishes.” and the picture shows a man and his daughter at a sink filled with sudsy bubbles and a dog licking a plate that the girl is holding. Children should be able to read the word “we” automatically

and then get to the word “wash” by doing some reading work. The reader might look at the picture and think, “What word begins with /w/ and matches what’s happening in the picture?” The child might try “work” or “water” because they match what is happening in the picture and begin with the /w/ sound. Then he or she might check the end of the word, recognize the /sh/ sound, and conclude that “wash” is a word that makes sense, sounds right, and looks right. It is important to prompt children when they miscue and compliment them when they self-correct.

Ideas for Partnerships who are working on this skill/behavior:

- Partners who are working on this skill are usually young children who also need to learn good partnership behavior. Begin by telling partners to sit hip to hip beside each other and hold a book in the middle. Have one child put his or her book in the middle first. Tell the partners to read the book together (choral reading, echo reading, or by taking turns) and then move on to the other child’s book.
- Encourage partners to listen to each other carefully and cross-check for multiple sources of information: Does the word make sense, sound right, and look right?

Ideas for English Language Learners (ELLs) who are working on this skill/behavior:

- Children can learn to coach one another with the same prompts that you may use. Write the prompts from the card on charts and draw a picture clue next to each to help children remember what it says. Then pass out the charts for children to use with one another and also independently. This helps internalize the prompts so children eventually remember to prompt themselves when they come across a tricky word.
- When learning about sentence structure or developing a knowledge of syntax (how language sounds), it is important to find books that match a child’s oral language. Try finding books that are written in present tense and, later, in present progressive tense. Children tend to understand statements and commands before questions, so it helps to read books with these kinds of sentences until children acquire other language structures.

Skill/Behavior

LEVEL C

Using letters along with meaning and syntax

research

Observe the child as he/she reads aloud.
Listen carefully for miscues.

and

Carefully consider whether or not the child is using multiple sources of information to read (including meaning, syntax, and visual cues).

observation

The child reads correctly, using all three cuing systems.

The child reads a word that does not make sense (does not attend to meaning).

The child reads a word that does not "sound right" (does not attend to syntax).

The child reads a word that does not look right (does not attend to visual cues).

coach/prompt

» Compliment the child and move on to the next skill.

- » Say, "Think about what is happening in the book right now."
- » Ask, "Does that make sense with what is happening in the story/sentence?"

- » Ask, "Does that sound like how books are written?"
- » Ask, "Does it look right, sound right, and make sense?"

- » Say, "Get your mouth ready to read that word."
- » Say, "Use the first/last letters of the word to help you."

demonstration

No demonstration needed. If the child can demonstrate level C behaviors and read above a 95 percent accuracy rate and with comprehension, you may consider trying books at level D.

Use demo-text, *What a Street!*, and turn to page 2. Say, "Watch me as I think about what makes sense with the story as I read words that are new to me." Read page 2 and start page 3. Say, "Pick up the ... hmm. What could that word be? Well, I know they are cleaning up. Let me check the picture. It looks like they're picking up bottles. It can't be bottles though. It has to start with /k/. Oh, 'cans!'" Re-read the sentence. Have child try in his or her own book, using prompts from the column to the left when necessary.

Use demo-text, *What a Street!*, and turn to page 2. Say, "Watch me as I think about what sounds right as I read the page." Make an error that ignores syntax by reading aloud, "What messy street." Say, "Wait a second. That doesn't sound like how books are written. Oh! I forgot a word. 'What a messy street.' That sounds right." Have child try in his or her own book, using prompts from the column to the left when necessary.

Use demo-text, *What a Street!*, and turn to page 3. Say, "Watch me as I get my mouth ready to say the first sound when I get to a word I don't know." Read page 2 and start page 3. Say, "Pick up the ... hmm. What could that word be? The first letter is 'c' so it has to start with a /k/ sound. Oh, 'cans!'" Reread the sentence. Have child try in his or her own book, using prompts from the column to the left when necessary.

Skill/Behavior LEVEL C

Using letters along with meaning and syntax

research

Observe the child as he or she reads aloud. Listen to see if the child makes a self-correction.

observation

The child self-corrects a mistake because of the meaning.

» Say, "That makes sense with what is happening in the book."

The child self-corrects a mistake because of syntax.

» Say, "That is how books sound."

The child self-corrects a mistake because of visual cues.

» Say, "That looks right and matches the letters on the page."

demonstration

No demonstration needed. If the child can demonstrate level C behaviors and read above a 95 percent accuracy rate and with comprehension, you may consider trying books at level D.



Conferring *Record Keeping and Checklists*

LEVELS **A, B, C**

Conferring Record Keeping **LEVELS A,B**

Child's Name: _____

Skills to teach at this level:	Date taught/comments:	Date taught/comments:	Date taught/comments:	Date taught/comments:
Reading left to right across a page				
One-to-one matching				
Using pictures and the text to read				
Reading sight words automatically and accurately				
Retelling/ summarizing/ synthesizing				
Inferring				

Conferring Checklist/Overview **LEVELS A,B**

Names:	Reading left to right across a page	One-to-one matching	Using pictures and the text to read	Reading sight words automatically and accurately	Retelling/ summarizing/ synthesizing	Inferring

Note-Taking System: ✓ = student seems to master skill / = revisit in a future conference (date) = date taught ○ = needs support

Conferring Record Keeping **LEVEL C**

Child's Name: _____

Skills to teach at this level:	Date taught/comments:	Date taught/comments:	Date taught/comments:	Date taught/comments:
Using pictures and the text to read				
Reading sight words automatically and accurately				
Using letters along with meaning and syntax				
Reading fluently upon re-reading				
Retelling/ summarizing/ synthesizing				
Inferring				

Conferring Checklist/Overview **LEVEL C**

Names:	Using pictures and the text to read	Reading sight words automatically and accurately	Using letters along with meaning and syntax	Reading fluently upon re-reading	Retelling/ summarizing/ synthesizing	Inferring

Note-Taking System: ✓ = student seems to master skill / = revisit in a future conference (date) = date taught ○ = needs support

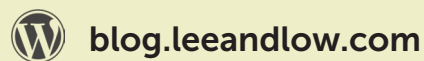


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