

Reading Conferences

The title 'Reading Conferences' is written in a large, bold, yellow-to-brown gradient font. The word 'Reading' is in a cursive script, while 'Conferences' is in a bold, sans-serif font. Below the text is a shadow effect consisting of horizontal lines that create a sense of depth and perspective.

Creating a Context for Assessment

Assessing Before Teaching

- ◇ The prescriptive cookbook nature of many reading programs create the illusion that we can teach without assessing for ourselves what each of our students need and then plan instruction to meet those needs.



- ◇ We need to realize that teaching must be based on more than a generic, one-size-fits-all program.

Reading Conferences Need to be at the Center of Our Teaching

See how well students understand what they've read.
Teach them strategies to use during their independent reading.
Match them with just right books.



Carol Bennett, WRESA

Conferences Are Conversations

- ◇ Conferences have a point to them.
- ◇ Conferences have a predictable structure.
- ◇ In conferences, we pursue lines of thinking with students.
- ◇ Teachers and students have conversational roles in conferences.
- ◇ In conferences, we show students we care about them.

❖ Don't confer with students at the teacher's desk. Calling students up to the teacher's desk to confer often puts a damper on the conversations. Many students freeze up the moment they arrive, a natural response, after all, given that the teacher's desk is a symbol of her authority and power as a teacher.



❖ Go to where the students sit to read. By going to students to confer, we show them we are interested in talking with them about their reading. We all know from experience that conversations get off to a good start when one person expresses an interest in what the other has to say. Express a sincere interest in their reading.

Assessing Attitudes and Reading Preferences



- ◇ Impromptu Reading Discussions
 - Create a relaxed atmosphere so that children will express their feelings about reading or comment on the kinds of books they enjoy.
- ◇ This can be very valuable information because as children move into the transitional stage of reading it becomes increasingly important that they be provided with books that have strong personal appeal.

Scheduling Reading Conferences

- ◇ Begin conferencing with students the first week of school and continue throughout the year.
- ◇ Emergent and early readers need regular and direct intervention as they begin to use meaning, structure, and graphophonic cues to make sense of print.
- ◇ Transitional and fluent readers need help figuring out meaning of unfamiliar words and help fully comprehending longer stories and new genres.



Scheduling Conferences



- ◇ Teacher-Initiated Conferences
 - Teacher identifies reading developmental stage
 - Teacher and student keep accurate records
 - Teacher schedules according to student need
- ◇ Student-Initiated Conferences
 - Student wants/needs one-on-one time
 - Student needs help choosing a new book or different genre
 - Student wants to be heard reading

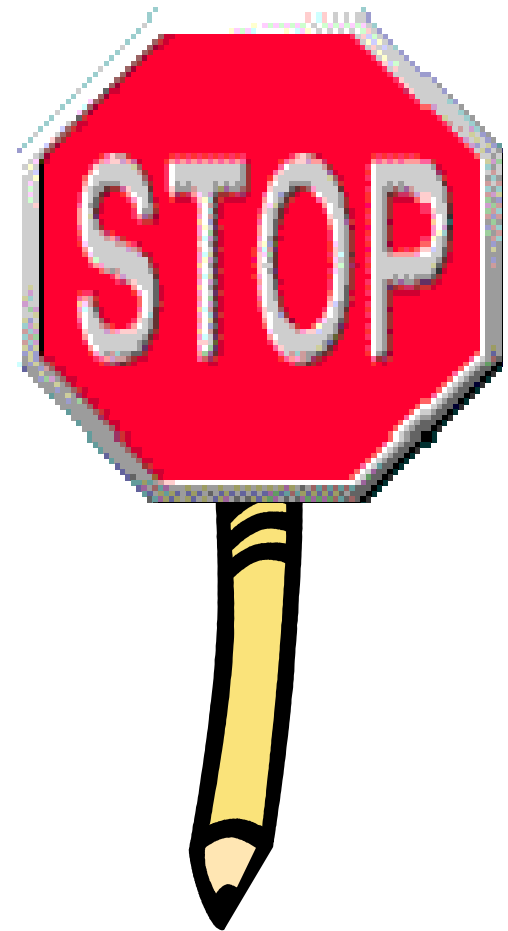
Planned Reading Discussions

- ◇ To gather basic information:
Rather than asking: "What kinds of books do you like to read?"
State your inquiry as a prompt:
"Tell me about the kinds of books you like to read." This gives the child less of an opportunity to say: "I don't know..."
- ◇ You can ask more supportive, clarifying, or extending questions if needed to find out about the child's literate life outside of school.



Managing Reading Conferences

- ◇ Predictable Reading Workshop
 - Format, Structure, “Rules”
 - Time
- ◇ Managing Reading Folders
 - Student Accountability
 - Whole-Group Spot Check
- ◇ Allowing No Interruptions
 - “Emergency” Plan
 - STOP Sign Reminder



Helpful Information

- ◇ Keep accurate notes!
- ◇ Using what you learn from these reading discussions, you can tailor your responses and interventions to each child's particular needs.

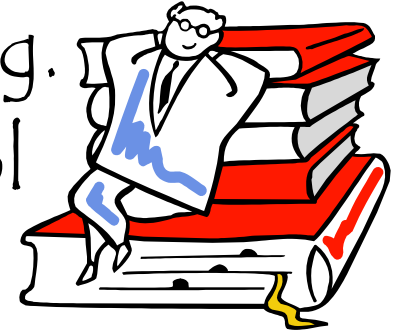


Reading Conferences

Week _____

Conferring or Assessing?

- ◆ Conference frequently with students.
- ◆ Use a balanced approach for assessing.
- ◆ Don't use a "formal" assessment tool at every conference.
- ◆ Some conferences should be discussions between two readers: you and the child.
- ◆ As needed, use a running record or other assessment tool to monitor students' reading process and progress.



Oral Reading Records

- ◇ Being able to take and analyze frequent running records of children's reading throughout the year provides distinct advantages.
- ◇ Running records provide greater flexibility and many more opportunities for assessment since they can be taken "on the run" using any text a child is reading.



Taking an Oral-Reading Record

- ◇ They become more of a tool for teaching rather than an instrument to report on children's status in class.
- ◇ They can be taken frequently, allowing teachers to learn about a child's pattern of errors, as in a miscue analysis.
- ◇ The more samples you take the more likely you are to get an accurate picture of the child's reading.

Conventions of Running Records

◇ Accurate reading

√√√√√

◇ Substitution

went
walked

◇ Repetition

R√ √√√R

◇ Insertion

here

◇ Omission

—
got

◇ Appeal

— | A
somewhere |

◇ Told

— |
whenever | T

◇ Try That Again

√ went to the park TTA
He was trying to put

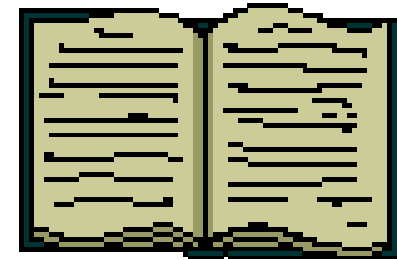
Using Oral-Reading Records to Match Children with Books

- ◇ If children read books that are too difficult, it's unlikely they'll be able to sustain their independent reading long enough to practice the skills they need to work on.
- ◇ Once the meaning of the text is lost, as generally happens when a book is too hard, children must resort to sounding out each unfamiliar word they meet.
- ◇ They need to read books that support their use of background knowledge and language structure, as well as letter-sound relationships.



Helping Students Find "Just-Right" Books

- ◇ You may need to have a "heavy hand" in helping emergent and early readers select books for their independent reading.
- ◇ You want them to use a variety of information sources and strategies as they read and stay engaged in their reading longer.
- ◇ This gives you time to help and confer with other readers!



"Just-Right" Books

- ◇ Teach students how to use the "Goldilocks Rule" when they are trying to find books that are just right:

<http://www.booknutsreadingclub.com/goldilocksrule.html>

- ◇ Read and learn more about choosing books that are "just right" at:

<http://www.learnnc.org/articles/mparks0608-1>

Using Oral-Reading Records to Learn About the Cueing Systems Children Use



- ◇ It's equally important to use running records to assess children's "thinking."
- ◇ Miscues have a logic of their own, conveying children's understanding of what it means to read.

Don't Just Count Errors, Analyze Them!

- ◆ An individual error is less informative than a pattern of errors, and the clearer the pattern, the more helpful it is for informing teaching.

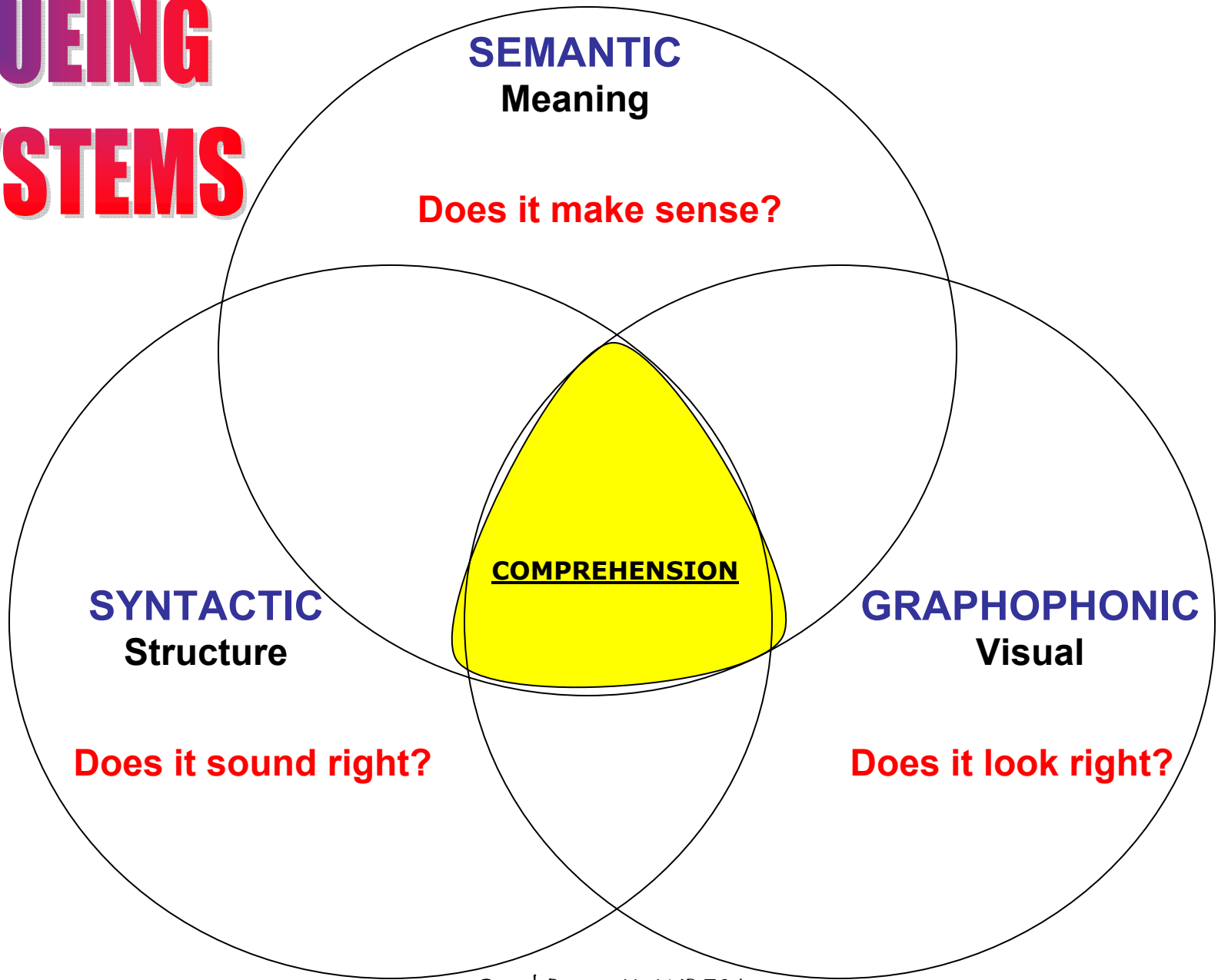


Assessing Substitutions and Self-Corrections



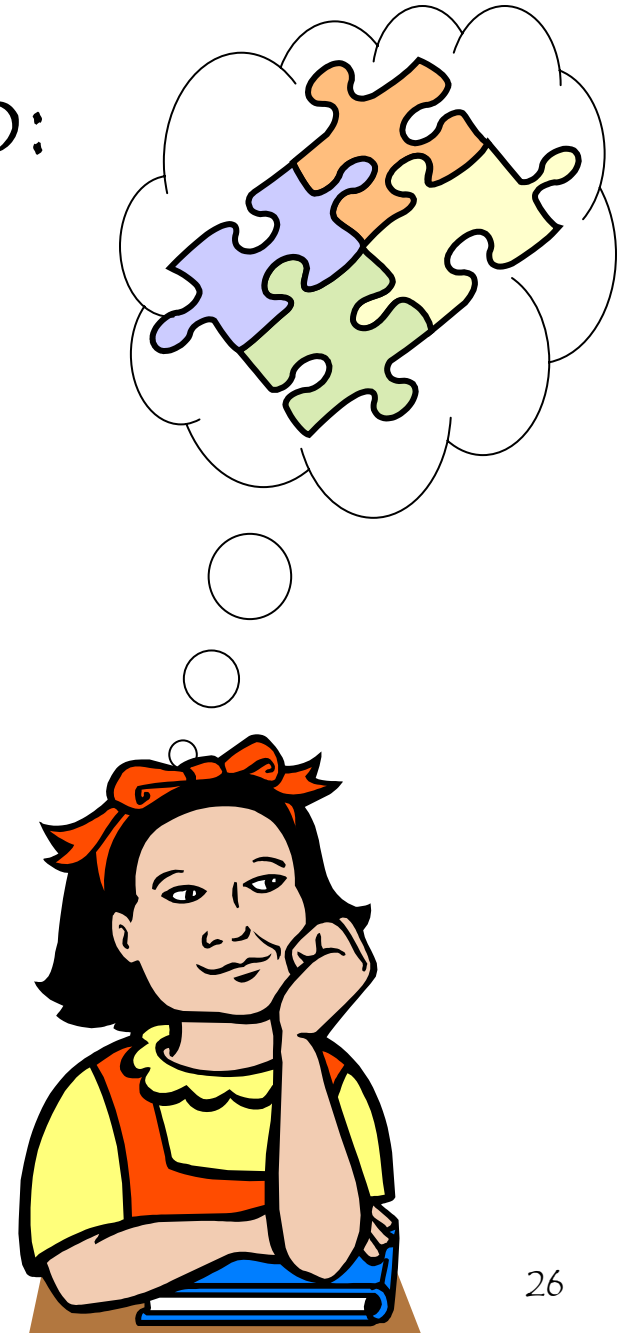
- ◇ Once you are confident that children are reading books that appropriately support and challenge them, you can look more closely at their use of the three cueing systems.
- ◇ (You will generally not have enough time during the reading conference to scrutinize each running record, but you need to do this later as you assess their substitutions and self-corrections to get a better sense of their strategies.)

CUEING SYSTEMS



Children Need To:

- ◇ Read books that are matched to their stage of reading.
- ◇ Learn to use a range of cueing systems and strategies flexibly.
- ◇ See how all of what they're doing fits together and makes sense.



Retellings and Reading Discussions



- ◇ Help you assess comprehension.
- ◇ Help you direct children to books that will engage and interest them.
- ◇ Help guide your teaching.

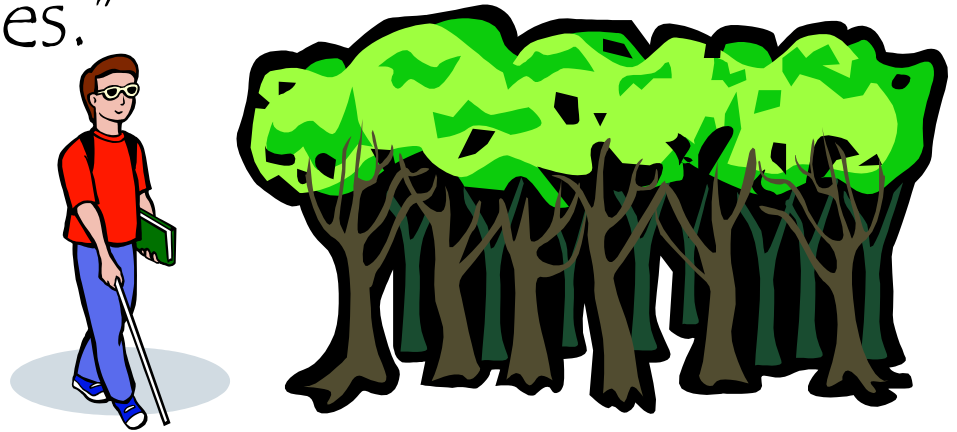
What Does Retelling Involve?

- ◇ The teacher asks the child to tell about what he or she has read.
- ◇ Children who are new to retelling may attempt to retell the entire text.
- ◇ The teacher needs to explain that they needn't tell the whole story, just the main things that happened.



Page by Page Recounts

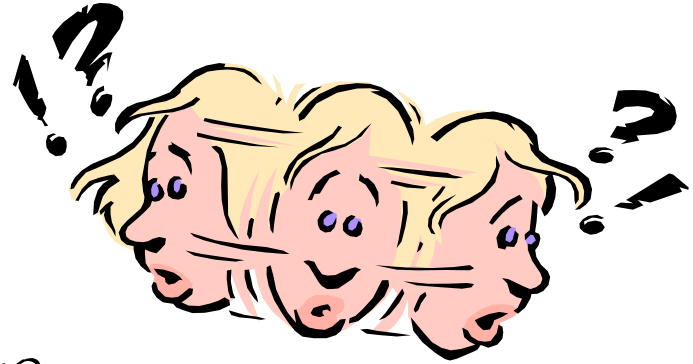
- ◇ Sometimes less secure readers "can't see the forest for the trees."



- ◇ They recount what happened page by page because they never really put it all together in their minds.

Difficulty in the Retelling Process

- ◇ The book may be too hard.
- ◇ It may have taken too many days to complete.
- ◇ They may need to learn more comprehension strategies to handle longer text.
- ◇ Or, they may need a clearer explanation of your expectations.
- ◇ To learn more:



http://www.bridgew.edu/Library/CAGS_Projects/TPALINGO/web%20page/srlitrev.htm

Retellings Can Provide Both General and Specific Information

- ◇ Understanding of the story elements:
 - Setting
 - Characters
 - Main events
 - Problem
 - Resolution
- ◇ Specific details
- ◇ References to the text
- ◇ Connections with the text



Find Out Why the Child Doesn't Understand What He's Read

- ◇ The difficulty may be at the word level---
 - If his accuracy rate is below 95%
- ◇ The difficulty may be at the text level---
 - If his accuracy rate is 95% or above yet he still doesn't understand what he's read, the text may be too long for him; or there were too many difficult words in which he spent so much time trying to articulate them that he lost the meaning of the text; or the text may be too complex for him to fully understand it.

Educate Parents

- ◇ Parents are often confused because they think their child can read well when he or she can articulate words. They fail to distinguish between reading with comprehension and “word calling” without a clear understanding of the meaning the words convey.
- ◇ Too often parents encourage the child to read harder texts than he or she is actually capable of reading, leaving him or her with little “mental space” to attend to comprehension.
- ◇ For more info for parents:

<http://www.nwrel.org/comm/monthly/retelling.html>

