

How to Reach Hard-To-Reach Students

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Most important elements:

- **Adult participation and encouragement**
- **Adult help with finding books for them to choose from that they are interested in and are at their reading level**
- **Instruction in decoding and comprehension so they can really enjoy reading on their own**
- **Collaboration among teachers and communication with parents**

Extension Teachers

Reading specialists, ESOL/HILT teachers and other teachers work for an hour in the classroom teaching guided reading at the students' instructional level, 20 minutes per group. The classroom teacher works on one aspect of teaching reading while the extension teacher works on another. Students may rotate from one teacher to the other teacher and to independent work. Guided Reading – Up to this year we have followed the guided reading model of grouping by reading level and relating the topic of the story to what they know and their experiences. We give them a purpose for reading. This engages them very successfully. Class discussions about a book the group has read also engage the students.

The Café Book

Grouping by Strategy – This year we're experimenting with the suggestion from *The Café Book* to group by strategy needed rather than reading level. This involves the extension teacher giving a lesson on the strategy, individually conferencing with student as they practice the same strategy but in a book of their choice at their own reading level. While the extension teacher uses this model, the classroom teacher may work with the anthology or a novel. We're planning to assess how well this works at first quarter pacing meetings.

Choice of Literature –

Teachers As Readers – We use the best children's literature we can. Sets of new books come in once a month to replace books of lower quality. Teachers read the new books and meet once a month to discuss them. We find that good literature sells itself.

Young Authors and Illustrators Day – We bring in authors and illustrators who speak with the children. The children receive a free book written by the author.

Read Alouds – Students are very interested in reading books read aloud by the teacher.

Reading Interest Survey – We are giving grades 3-5 students a reading interest survey and choosing a stack of books for students who are less motivated to read based on the survey. Students can then choose books from that stack to help them find books they like. The teacher can encourage them to try new genre and new authors this way to expand their interests.

Displaying books in the classroom – Choosing books the class will likely be interested in and displaying them in the classroom for students to choose from sparks their interest.

Nonfiction – our librarian tells us the genre with the highest circulation is nonfiction.

Time to Read in School and at Home

DEAR time and Come-In-And-Read Day – We are scheduling 15 minutes in the day outside of the language arts block for DEAR time. Before school begins once a week, children will sit outside the classroom and read books from their backpacks instead of waiting outside.

Reading Logs and Reading Log Incentive Day – Students are rewarded for reading and writing in the log about their reading at home with a gift of a new book of their choice. Students show a great deal of interest in this. Our logs are revised every year by the grade-level teams to best meet their needs. Some logs include information pages for parents to use to help their children decode and questions parents and children can discuss about their reading.

Books-in-a-Bag – Younger children take little books home in a plastic bag at their level to practice. Older children take home books from the library.