

Decodable Literature Library Close Reading Guide

Reading Series 2: Overview

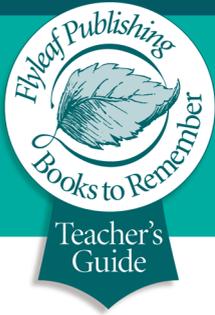
Your instruction with Decodable Literature Library Reading Series 2 Close Reading Guides will support students as they engage in the process of simultaneously reading and thinking deeply about text. As the series progresses, there will be an explicit effort to gradually release more responsibility to students for using strategies to comprehend text; this will happen via the use of carefully designed instructional tools integrated into close reading routines. Reading Series 2 texts are both decodable and robust, so your students will have the unique opportunity to develop the habits and skills of competent, comprehensive readers with texts they can decode independently.

As students progress through Reading Series 2 texts, they will begin to anticipate elements of a story's narrative structure and become comfortable with the literate language (connecting words, mental-state verbs, and feeling words) used in discussions of story relationships and characters' thoughts and feelings. Additionally, they will explore the text structure and text features that exemplify the informational text genre in the series' informational text selections. Throughout the series, your students will develop important strategic reading behaviors—thinking and talking about the text and illustrations, making inferences, reflecting on understanding in a deliberate and controlled manner, grappling with and identifying text structure, and examining the author's craft—that are critical for comprehension (Cain 2009).

An important goal of Reading Series 2 close reading instruction is to build students' competence in narrative development stage 4, the abbreviated episode, and usher them toward stage 5, a complete episode. These Close Reading Guides will help you deliver the explicit and systematic instruction being called for by research. This instruction will help your students integrate information and gain a coherent and deeper understanding of how story grammar elements relate to each other, including how characters' reactions to events in the story lead to the story message (Liss-Bronstein 2012).

As students progress toward the complete episode stage of narrative development, they will

- become more competent in the use of causal chains in their story recounts,
- progress in their ability to talk about an initiating event that sets the story into motion and about a character's reaction to that event, with an internal response (feelings) followed by a plan or goal,
- be able to infer what a character wants from their actions and dialog,
- be able to track a character's feelings in response to events and see how those feelings motivate the character to take action,
- understand that a character's actions often spur a sequence of events, which are typically attempts to carry out a plan, and
- understand that authors usually conclude a book with a resolution that can help readers understand the story message.



Reading Series 2: Overview

For Your Teaching Knowledge: Story Grammar 101

The story grammar model, first introduced by Stein and Glenn (1979) and further developed by others, including Westby (1999) and Moreau and Zagula (2002), is one of the most widely used systems to analyze the macrostructure of story narratives. As students' knowledge of story grammar grows, their ability to predict the course of the narrative grows, and this not only enhances their comprehension of what they read or listen to but also provides a structure for generating their own unique written stories (Duchan 2004; Johnston 2008).

Story Macrostructure

The macrostructure of the story refers to the narrative text structure, or story grammar, which consists of the setup, the initiating event, the character's internal response, the plan, the attempts to carry out the plan, the consequence, and the story resolution.

Setup: The introduction of the main character(s) in the context of a setting that helps to establish a character's habitual actions. At this stage of narrative development, students will be asked to think about the questions *What have you learned about the characters and the setting that is important to the story setup? What does the character want? How is the setting important to what the character wants?*

Initiating Event: An action or occurrence described as an unexpected event, problem, or dilemma for the character that causes a chain of events beginning with the character's reactions. Students will be asked to identify this event with the question *What is the initiating event?*

Internal Response: The main character's emotional reaction to the initiating event; often needs to be inferred from what a character says and does and/or the illustrations. At this stage of narrative development, students will be asked to think about the questions *How does the character react? How does the character feel about what happens?*

Plan: Evidence of the character's goal or plan in reaction to the initiating event; often needs to be inferred from the character's actions. At this stage of narrative development, students will be asked to think about the questions *What can you infer about the character's plan? Is there a challenge the character has to deal with?*

Attempts: Actions by the main character(s) to carry out the plan or solve the problem; there can be one attempt or multiple attempts. At this stage of narrative development, students will be scaffolded to *retell the attempts to carry out the plan.*

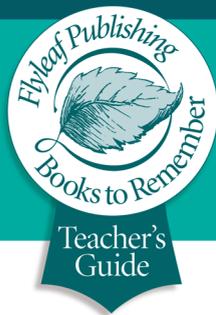
Consequence: The result of the main character's actions; the part that tells how the plan worked out. The author may make the consequence explicit or it may need to be inferred. At this stage of narrative development, students will be asked to think about the questions *How do things work out for the character? Is there a consequence to the character's actions?*

Resolution: A response by the main character(s) to the consequence. This is the part of the story where the author lets you know how things turned out for the character and how the character feels about the turn of events. At this stage of narrative development, students will be asked to think about the questions *What happens at the end of the story? How does the character feel in the end? What is the story resolution? What is the story message? What can I learn from this story?*

Story Microstructure

The microstructure of the story refers to the literate language used by the author to convey story elements as well as the literate language used during instruction to retell the story. This literate language connects the story grammar components and consists of transitional words that convey sequence (*first, next, then, after that, finally*), words that convey story relationships such as cause and effect (*but, so, because*), mental state verbs (*realize, decide*), and a variety of feeling words (for example, *worried, thrilled, elated, distressed*).

The stories (or story elements) that students generate, retell, and/or recount can be analyzed according to the presence or absence of story grammar components (macrostructure) and literate language structures (microstructure) (Westby 1999; Moreau and Zagula 2002, Moreau 2009; Petersen, Gillam, and Gillam 2008). By examining students' narrative behaviors and identifying the language structures that they use, teachers can determine a student's stage of narrative development and make a teaching plan that supports the student's progress. The systematic and explicit teaching of story macrostructure and microstructure can promote a student's progression to more advanced stages of narrative development and lead to improved story comprehension and use of literate language that conveys understanding (Liss-Bronstein 2012; Moreau and Zagula 2002, Moreau 2009).



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Instructional Tools

Reading Series 2 Close Reading Guides include a variety of instructional tools that help you to begin the process of gradually releasing more responsibility for comprehending text structure to students.

Purpose Statements

Purpose statements—listed in a green box in the right margin of the teacher's guide—align with each day's instruction. Select from the statements and/or adapt them to fit with your instructional focus, and post them for students before they begin reading. Purpose statements will help you focus student attention on specific reading strategies, allowing them to self-regulate the process of making meaning.

Story Grammar Bookmarks

Story Grammar Bookmarks serve three distinct purposes: (1) they mark the section of assigned reading; (2) they identify the story grammar component that is the focus of the assigned reading (the story setup, initiating event, and resolution); and (3) they offer questions to guide students' independent thinking during and after the reading of the designated section. Story grammar bookmarks help students become independent in using narrative text structure to guide their comprehension.

Metacognitive Icon Cards

Beginning with close reading instruction for the book *Frank the Fish Gets His Wish*, you will introduce and use Metacognitive Icon Cards with students. You will see icons in the Close Reading Guides, placed at key points in the instructional scripts, to indicate which icon cards you should display during instruction. In displaying a Metacognitive Icon Card, you will direct students' attention to the kind of thinking being done, thus helping them to become more aware of the metacognitive habits of successful readers. The Metacognitive Icon Blackline Master is a related tool that can be reproduced and displayed in the classroom for student reference.

Feeling Word Synonym Cards

Feeling Word Synonym Cards are designed to help you facilitate development of increasingly sophisticated vocabulary, specifically students' knowledge of a range of nuanced synonyms that describe character feelings, often leading to a deeper understand of the text. The heart icon on each card reminds students that they are thinking about characters' feelings.

Shades of Meaning Synonyms Chart

After nuanced feeling words or other synonyms have been explored during instruction, the words can be added to the Shades of Meaning Synonyms Chart, which should be posted in your classroom for students to use as a reference when they are discussing or writing about character feelings.

Nuances in Word Meaning Chart

The Nuances in Word Meaning Chart helps to facilitate an organized approach to identifying challenging vocabulary, considering its meaning in context, and arriving at an understanding of why the author chose the word(s) being examined. The completed charts can be posted in your classroom for student reference when discussing and writing about the story. The pen icon on the chart reminds students that they are thinking about the author's craft.

Summarize and Synthesize Strategy Chart

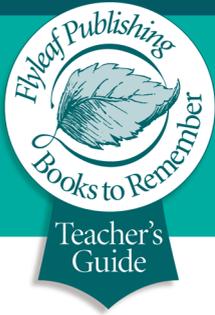
The Summarize and Synthesize Strategy Chart is a tool that supports students as they learn how to synthesize story grammar elements into succinct story summaries. The flashlight icon on the chart reminds students that they are summarizing.

Personal Narrative Organizer

The Personal Narrative Organizer is a tool that you can use during instruction to help students analyze how an author constructs an interesting personal narrative. This organizer is also used when students write their own personal narratives. The pen icon on the organizer reminds students that they are thinking about the author's craft.

Annotation Bookmark

The annotation bookmark reminds students of the annotation symbols (which they write on sticky notes and place in the book when reading) that will help facilitate their understanding of informational texts. You will be guided to fill out an annotation chart that helps students collaboratively discuss their annotations.



Reading Series 2: Overview

Close Reading Instruction

Because of the length and complexity of Reading Series 2 books, the individual student reading and close reading instruction for each book takes place over a period of three to six days. Readings are broken into sections based on the story grammar of the book. Your instructional pacing will vary depending on the needs of your students, but in total, close reading instruction is designed to take about 25–35 minutes.

Foundational Skills Instruction

Foundational skills activities are designed to consolidate knowledge of English phonics and spelling patterns, advance students into the consolidated-alphabetic phase of word reading, which includes orthographic word learning, or the recognition of common spelling patterns. Foundational Skills Guide activities almost always precede the day's close reading, and are designed to prepare students for reading the words they will encounter in that day's reading.

Narrative Texts and Poetry

Explore Book Cover

The focus of this brief exploration is to build independent thinking about what the author and illustrator want readers to know about the book from the title and cover illustration. Guiding questions ask students to make predictions that connect the illustration with the book title and to consider clues that are provided about the character and setting. Academic language frames are provided to involve students in making predictions. You will model "I wonder..." statements and/or pose "I wonder..." questions to stimulate students' thinking about the reading. In the poetry guides, this activity is used to help students identify the poem's topic. Because this activity engages students in metacognitive behaviors before they begin reading, it is especially important for students with weak comprehension skills (Cain and Oakhill 2007).

Begin and Continue Individual Reading

You will begin each day's reading by posting purpose statements and asking students to place the appropriate story grammar bookmark at the end of the page range of the day's reading. As students read quietly to themselves, take the time to listen to individual students read, give feedback on their word pronunciation, and encourage the application of decoding strategies. Pronunciation accuracy improves when students receive immediate feedback after an error occurs. Guidance should also be provided to help your students effectively use punctuation and phrasing to improve comprehension.

Generate a Summary

When generating a summary, you will work with students to pick out the most important information that was read previously, and to communicate it with story relationships clearly expressed. The purpose of generating a summary is to remind students what happened in previous readings and to provide a model of literate language if necessary. After generating the summary, you will ask students to make a prediction that they can justify with evidence from the text and illustrations.

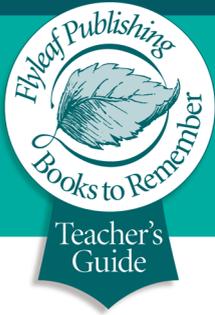
Restate the Synthesized Summary

Brief activities to restate a synthesized summary, when one was developed during the previous day's instruction, are designed to keep students focused on emerging story relationships and provide them with practice in summarizing and using literate language to connect ideas. After generating the summary, you will ask students to make a prediction that they can justify with evidence from the text and illustrations.

Examine What the Text Says

When delivering Examine What the Text Says instruction, you will elicit students' general understanding of the characters and events in the story using a story grammar lens. You will pose relevant general understanding text-dependent questions, pulled from the Story Grammar Bookmarks, asking one student to offer the general understanding in response to the question, and then asking other students to locate evidence and key details that support the general understanding. The activity guide provides the location of evidence and details in the text and illustrations so that you can readily scaffold students as necessary.

Retell practice is integrated with Examine What the Text Says instruction when appropriate to the day's reading. In retelling, students improve their general understanding and gain oral language practice that is critical at this stage of development, as it promotes accelerated growth in narrative skills.



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A major expected outcome from close reading instruction is that students be able to provide complete and well-supported answers to text-dependent questions. Helping students to identify key details (evidence) from the text and then to incorporate those details into responses using academic language is critical to their ability to achieve this outcome and should be an important focus of your instruction.

Examine How the Text Works

Examine How the Text Works instruction helps you to scaffold students to think deeply about the text by asking text-dependent questions and by examining the author's craft, considering vocabulary, and thinking about text structure. Appropriate scripting is offered to this end, and activities are designed to tease apart text elements that students need to examine to gain a deeper understanding of the story.

Examine Nuances in Word Meaning

You will use this activity to guide students in an examination of the more challenging or complex words or phrases in the day's reading with the goal of understanding the author's word choice. Your careful examination of this language with students will help them to gain greater depth and breadth of vocabulary and to infer the connection between the nuanced meaning of a word and the author's intentions (*Why did the author choose this?*). Much of the language examined in this activity is literary language. Literary language, found mainly in literature and poetry, uses words written in a grand or elevated style for dramatic effect. An element of literary language is linguistic register, meaning authors use language that is appropriate to the setting or characters; for example, in writing about a king, an author uses formal language suited to a regal setting or character. The unique purpose served by a book's literary language is explained in the activity's introduction.

Examine Text Structure: Personal Narratives

You will use this activity to help students understand how an author constructs a personal narrative. You will examine, with students, the structure (the setup, the events, and the wrap-up), the elaborations (what, exactly, is happening; and where, when, and why the event is taking place), and the descriptive details the author provides. The understanding gained in the activity will help students when they write their own personal narratives.

Explore What the Text Means

Once students have gained a general understanding of the text, have unraveled the story grammar, and have examined how the text works, they are ready for deeper discussions related to the meaning of the text and, ultimately, the story's resolution and message. The goal is for students to learn to develop the habit of asking themselves, "What can I learn from this story?" or "What can I learn from this character?" and to be able to support their answers with evidence from the text and/or illustrations. A combination of text-dependent questions and brief instructional scripts and activities are designed to help students arrive at the meaning of each text. It is also an opportunity to compare and contrast stories that have similarities.

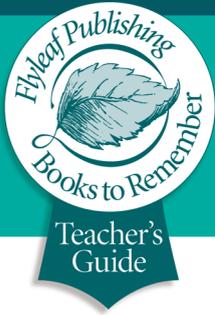
Feeling Word Synonyms

A focus on feeling word synonyms helps facilitate development of increasingly sophisticated vocabulary, and explores the shades of meaning of nuanced synonyms that describe character feelings, often leading to a deeper understanding of the text.

Summarize and Synthesize Strategy

In delivering this instruction you will explore cause and effect relationships by engaging students in thinking deeply about what a character wants at a certain point in the story. You will prompt students with questions and record answers that contain the connecting words *because*, *but*, and *so* to arrive at a succinct summary. These question prompts also direct student attention to making the necessary inferences to synthesize their thinking to achieve original insights, perspectives, and understandings about the character and the story.

While summarizing is what readers do to remember the important information they read, synthesizing is what skilled readers do to interact with the text. Synthesizing is the process of combining thoughts about what is happening in the text being read at the moment with what has been read before. This interaction produces a new interpretation or idea that comes from a reader's own schema and their engagement with the characters and events in the story. The reader's thinking should keep changing or expanding as the plot unfolds. Knowledge of story grammar supports this type of synthesizing because readers have internalized the cause and effect relationships that occur in a typical story sequence.



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Conduct a Recount

The term *recount* replaces the term *retell* when the activity is designed to guide a retelling to the point of arriving at a summary statement consistent with a story message or theme. The recount can be oral or written, uses the past tense, and concludes with a story message or lesson.

Take Action: What Does the Text Inspire You to Do?

These activities, usually conducted on the final day of instruction, integrate speaking, reading, writing, and listening, allowing students to demonstrate understanding of what they have read and to express themselves as writers, illustrators, and discussion partners. Using story vocabulary, story grammar knowledge, and important story message ideas generated during instruction, students discuss and write opinions, story extensions, narratives, and character sketches. Academic language frames offer support in students' use of literate language.

Informational Texts

Explore Book Cover and Infer Topic and Text Type

The focus of these two brief activities is to build independence in thinking about what the author and illustrator want readers to know about the book from the title and cover illustration. Guiding questions ask students to connect the cover picture with the book title, and to consider the part of the title that offers clues about the topic and about the book's text type. The activity is scripted to help students arrive at the understanding that they are reading an informational text, and to identify the topic.

Record an Opinion

Some guides ask students to write something they think or know about the topic prior to embarking on reading. This writing activates students' thinking on the topic initially, and returning to it later in instruction (you will save what they have written) helps students identify how the reading of informational text can elaborate on their knowledge and/ or change their opinion about a topic.

Conduct a Text Feature Tour

In this activity, you will "tour" the book with students to identify the text features they will encounter when they read. This helps them gain an understanding of how these text features relate to and deepen knowledge of the topic and/or an author's claims. Text features include boldface headings, captions, photographs, maps, pictographs, diagrams, and glossaries.

Begin and Continue Individual Reading

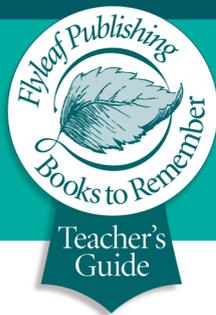
You will begin each day's reading by posting purpose statements and asking students to place the appropriate story grammar bookmark at the end of the page range of the day's reading. As students read quietly to themselves, take the time to listen to individual students read, give feedback on their word pronunciation, and encourage the application of decoding strategies. Pronunciation accuracy improves when students receive immediate feedback after an error occurs. Guidance should also be provided to help your students effectively use punctuation and phrasing to improve comprehension.

Use Text Features and Annotation

As part of a close reading routine, students need to learn how to annotate text: "Annotation, the practice of making notes for oneself during reading, is an essential practice for closely reading complex text" (Frey and Fisher 2013).

The annotation bookmark is introduced in the first informational text in the series and supports student use of annotation throughout instruction. Four symbols are used to help students interact with the information in the text or in text features (diagrams, maps, glossaries, etc.) The interactions take the form of questioning, noticing, remembering, wondering, and connecting different parts of the text to make inferences. Once the use of the symbols has been established, the use of an annotation chart is incorporated to help organize student comprehension.

Accessing complex texts requires collaborative conversations (Frey and Fisher 2013), so close reading instruction is designed to enhance students' use of annotations by providing opportunities to discuss their annotations with other students. The use of academic language frames scaffolds students in this endeavor. Your close reading instruction will help you support students in forming discussion partnerships (e.g., Think-Pair-Share).



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Ask Text-Dependent Questions

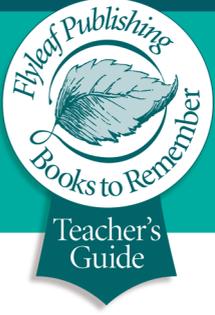
Text-dependent questions are the central feature of your close reading instruction of informational texts. The text-dependent questions you will pose to students have been carefully designed to lead students to an understanding of what the text says, how the text works, and what the text means (Fisher and Frey 2015). These text-dependent questions guide students to understand the topic and the way the author uses a combination of text and text features, including pictures, to explain the topic. There is an emphasis on ascertaining that students can give evidence for their answers with key details.

What Does the Text Inspire You to Do?

Throughout the instruction, activity prompts and scripting are provided to help students extend the knowledge and information gained from the text. You will support students in collaborative discussions about the text, research that delves deeper into the topic of the text, and connecting information in different parts of the text. On Day 5 of instruction, What Does the Text Inspire You to Do? activities are designed to allow students to demonstrate their understanding of the topic and text through discussion and writing opportunities, including opinion writing and writing about what was learned from the text. Academic language frames scaffold students to express their ideas succinctly and with evidence.

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