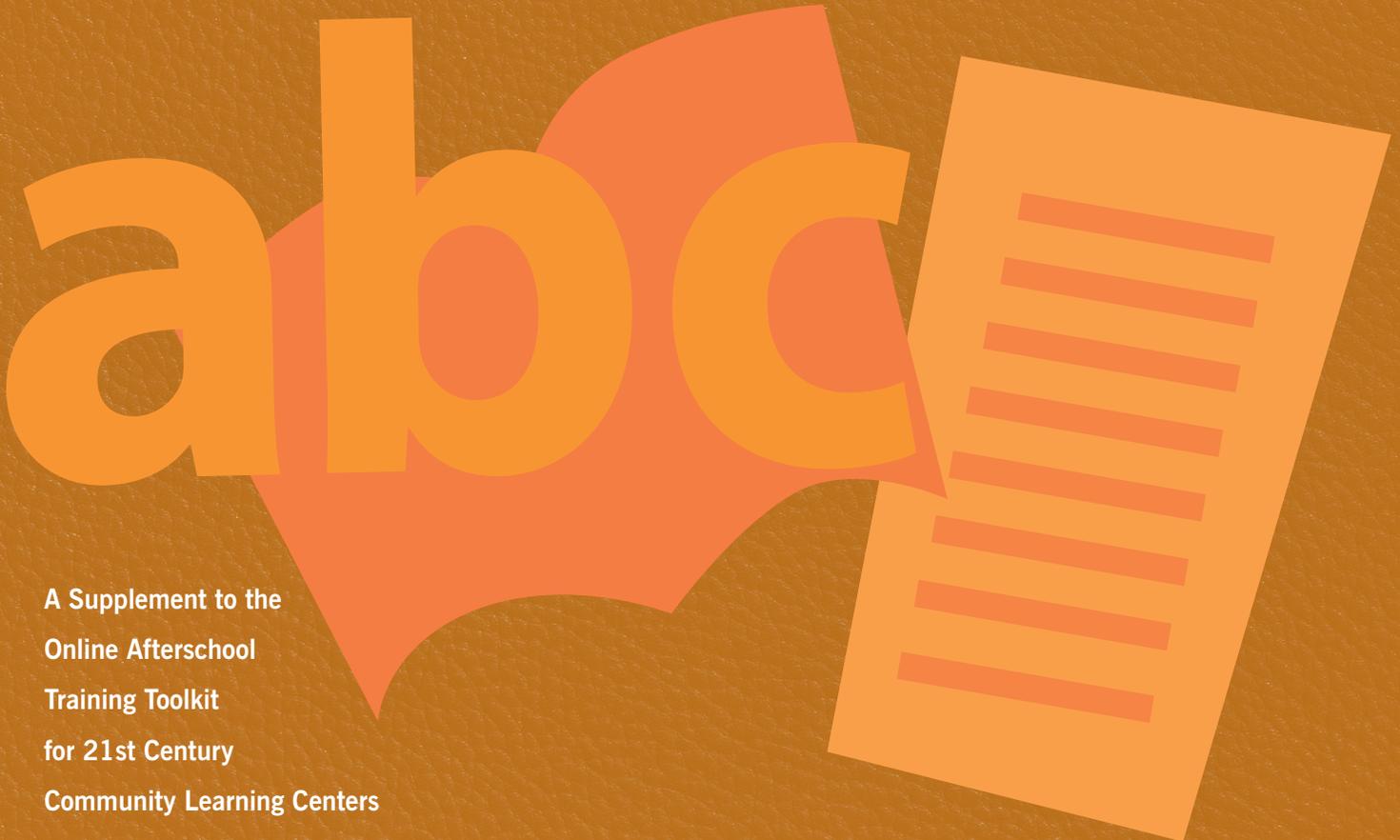


LITERACY IN AFTERSCHOOL



An Instructor's Guide to **Read Alouds** with the

AFTERSCHOOL TRAINING TOOLKIT



A Supplement to the
Online Afterschool
Training Toolkit
for 21st Century
Community Learning Centers
www.sedl.org/afterschool



Produced for the U.S. Department of Education by the National Partnership for Quality Afterschool Learning.

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This publication was produced in whole or in part with funds from the Office of Academic Improvement and Teacher Quality Programs, U.S. Department of Education under contract number ED-03-CO-0048. The content herein does not necessarily reflect the views of the Department of Education, any other agency of the U.S. government, or any other source.

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Suggested citation in APA format:

Britsch, B., Douglas, R., Martin, N., McDermott, E., & McNeir, G. (2008). *Literacy in afterschool: An instructor's guide to read alouds with the Afterschool Training Toolkit*. Austin, TX: SEDL.

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Introduction	1
About Literacy in Afterschool	1
Promising Practices in Literacy.....	4
How to Use This Instructor's Guide	6
Read Aloud	9
Lesson 1: Newcomers.....	14
Lesson 2: Who Am I Without Him?	18
Lesson 3: The Eighty-Yard Run	22
Resources	26





Introduction

The National Partnership for Quality Afterschool Learning developed this instructor's guide to accompany its Afterschool Training Toolkit, a free online staff development tool available at www.sedl.org/afterschool/toolkits. Both the guide and the toolkit materials are designed to give afterschool instructors the resources they need to build fun, innovative, and academically enriching activities that not only engage students, but extend their knowledge in new ways and increase academic achievement.

For afterschool instructors, this guide offers the opportunity to enhance your teaching skills in literacy by seeing read alouds modeled and getting a chance to try them out in your classroom. Site directors and afterschool training coordinators can use this guide in combination with the toolkit to plan staff development in literacy instruction and create tailored training highlighting the best practices most appropriate to your sites. In addition, trainers and coordinators can access professional development train-the-trainer modules at www.nwrel.org/ecc/21century/training.

About Literacy in Afterschool

Literacy skills include speaking, listening, reading, and writing—the essential communication skills students need to succeed in school and the world beyond. Students need confidence in their ability to communicate effectively and to think critically in all aspects of their lives.

Early elementary students engage in speaking, listening, and writing activities to build fundamental reading skills. Upper elementary students use their literacy skills to learn: to solve math problems, conduct science experiments, and explore the social sciences. Lacking fundamental literacy skills, students will struggle throughout their school years.

Afterschool is the perfect time to build confidence in all four literacy skills. Students enjoy choosing lively, interactive, and fun activities that require all facets of language communication. The Afterschool Training Toolkit provides innovative and research-based

activities that will increase student motivation in language-based subjects. Sharing stories aloud, discussing favorite books, writing to pen pals, and acting out stories will create engaged communities of literacy learners.

What the Research Says

Research indicates that afterschool literacy activities benefit students most when staff

- target texts and integrate skills;
- identify standards, assess needs, and define goals;
- incorporate real-world activities;
- consider student choice, grade, age, and skills;
- assess student progress; and
- receive ongoing staff training.

Target Texts and Integrate Skills

Create a rich environment of texts—magazines, picture books, fiction, and non-fiction—that speak to student interests and culture. The National Reading Panel identifies five early literacy skills: phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and text comprehension. A balance of listening, speaking, reading, and writing about rich and intriguing texts will provide students with opportunities to practice these specific skills.

Identify Standards, Assess Needs, and Define Goals

Each state establishes standards for literacy instruction at various grade levels, targeting skills and content to improve academic outcomes. Observing student needs and consulting with day-school teachers will help you understand state standards and identify appropriate learning goals for your student population.

To see state standards for English Language Arts, go to <http://edstandards.org/standards.html#state>.

Incorporate Real-World Activities

Explore the world beyond the classroom with literacy activities. Engage reluctant readers with directions for cooking, carpentry, or games. Talk and write about experiences after field trips or during science experiments. Interview community members about a specific topic—work, family traditions, or history—and make books. Afterschool programs can make literacy feel less like a requirement and more lively and useful in real life.

Consider Student Choice, Grade, Age, and Skills

Ask students about their favorite books and topics, what interests them, and why. Consult with classroom teachers and librarians to identify texts that address student grade, age, and skill levels appropriately. Use this research to plan fun, engaging, and doable activities that will reinforce day-school curriculum and goals.

Assess Student Progress

Frequent informal assessment—staff and students sharing feedback about progress—will lead to growth in literacy skills. Establish learning goals that address student needs; then use journals, rubrics, displays, performances, and informal notes to frame positive discussions about student use of strategies, strengths, and areas for improvement.

Receive Ongoing Staff Training

Though the literature on afterschool literacy programs is limited, one study¹ found that, while many programs have literacy materials available, very few conduct planned literacy activities that are intentionally linked to student outcomes. Program directors in this study also report that few resources are available to support planning and development of effective literacy programs. The Afterschool Training Toolkit for Literacy materials, including this instructor's guide, have been designed to meet that need.

Literacy Standards

We encourage you to review the Standards for the English Language Arts, sponsored by the National Council of Teachers of English (www.ncte.org) and the International Reading Association (www.reading.org). In addition, the Web sites for both organizations have a wealth of useful information relating to literacy and literacy instruction.

¹ Spielberg, J., & Halpern, R. (2002). *The role of after-school programs in children's literacy development*. Chicago: University of Chicago, Chapin Hall Center for Children.

Promising Practices in Literacy

As part of the National Partnership for Quality Afterschool Learning, the Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory (NWREL) identified the following six promising practices in literacy based on current literacy education research² and site visits to afterschool programs throughout the United States that had evidence suggesting gains in student achievement in literacy:

- *Book Discussion Groups and Literature Circles*
- *Read Aloud*
- *Story and Literature Dramatizations*
- *Writing*
- *Family Literacy Events*
- *One-on-One and Small Group Tutoring*

This guide focuses on one practice—*Read Aloud*—and offers suggestions and strategies for incorporating this practice into your literacy instruction. You can learn more about all of the practices by visiting www.sedl.org/afterschool/toolkits/literacy/index.html.

Literacy for English Language Learners

Despite limited research on literacy for English language learners (ELLs) in afterschool programs, available evidence strongly suggests that the practices outlined in the toolkit will support English literacy development for culturally and linguistically diverse students.

Read alouds offer students who are less proficient in English the chance to hear appropriate oral pronunciation and fluency modeled. Writing activities allow ELLs to practice written language skills and boost comprehension. Book discussion groups, literature circles, and story and literature dramatizations provide crucial opportunities for interaction between native and non-native English speakers while engaging students in higher-order thinking skills and helping them make connections to their own experiences.

One-on-one tutoring can provide ELLs with much needed academic support as well as fostering positive relationships between adults and youth or among peers. And family literacy events assist English learning students and their families in building proficiency while strengthening connections between home and school.

² For more information about the research base for these best practices, see *Literacy in Afterschool Programs: Literature Review* (www.sedl.org/afterschool/toolkits/literacy/pdf/AST_lit_literature_review.pdf) and *Literacy in Afterschool Programs: Focus on English Language Learners* (www.sedl.org/afterschool/toolkits/literacy/pdf/AST_lit_literature_review_ell.pdf).

Before implementing these practices in the afterschool setting, practitioners should be aware of the complex factors influencing second language development and make every effort to identify individual students' varying levels of background knowledge and English language proficiency. At a minimum, educators should ask the following questions:

- What is the student's native language?
- Does this language have a Roman alphabet? Does it have a written form?
- Can the student fluently speak, read, and write the language?
- How well does the student speak English?
- How old is the student?³

Afterschool providers must also attempt to incorporate culturally responsive practices into their programming. Successful programs hire staff members that reflect the cultural and linguistic backgrounds of their students and provide employees with training in cross-cultural awareness and techniques for working with culturally and linguistically diverse students.

³ Antunez, B. (2002). Implementing Reading First with English language learners. *Directions in Language and Education* (No. 15). Washington, DC: George Washington University, National Clearinghouse for English Language Acquisition & Language Instruction Educational Programs.

How to Use This Instructor's Guide

This guide will allow you to master promising practices through the following steps:

- Watch a video clip from the National Partnership's online Afterschool Training Toolkit.
- Teach the sample lessons included in this instructor's guide to your students.
- Reflect on the student lesson.

Video Clips

The Afterschool Training Toolkit (www.sedl.org/afterschool/toolkits/index.html) includes video segments taken from outstanding afterschool programs across the United States. Watching these video segments allows you to observe afterschool instructors in action as they use promising practices. Take notes on what you see, and think of ways that you can use these practices in your program.

Lessons

The lessons included in this instructor's guide allow you to practice the instructional techniques once you have watched the video. Each lesson includes step-by-step instructions on preparing for and teaching the lesson as well as a list of supplies you will need.

Reflection

After each lesson you will find a reflection space with questions addressing the topics of preparation, student engagement, enrichment, and academics. The purpose of the reflection piece is to allow you to be intentional in your instruction—to think about what aspects of a lesson worked well and what changes you might want to make for future lessons. Reflection is an important part of becoming a successful instructor and will help you apply what you have learned from one lesson to another.⁴

The following pages offer a sample of a reflection piece that a teacher might write about a read-aloud activity based on the book *Summertime: From Porgy and Bess* by Dubose Heyward and illustrated by Mike Wimmer. The complete lesson plan is available in the literacy section of the Afterschool Training Toolkit at www.sedl.org/afterschool/toolkits/literacy/pr_read_aloud.html?tab=sample%20lessons.

⁴ McEwan, E. K. (2002). *Ten traits of highly effective teachers*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press, Inc.

Reflection [Sample]

Preparation

- Did the lesson planning help you feel prepared as you began to teach?
- What did you learn about lesson planning?

Although I was already instinctively using a lot of the recommended techniques for reading aloud, consciously planning what I was going to emphasize before, during, and after reading our selection gave the activity more focus.

I spent more time than usual really familiarizing myself with the text and the song lyrics. This was good in some ways because it allowed me to develop targeted comprehension questions to ask at key points in the story. One drawback is that I realize I enjoy discovering a new story as much as the students do! Also, I really believe in student choice and in letting them select the book sometimes, even if it's one I don't know. I'll need to practice finding the balance between keeping things fresh and student-centered while still being intentional with preparation.

Student Engagement

- What did you notice about student engagement as you were reading the story aloud?
- Were you satisfied with the level of student engagement?
- What changes can you make to increase student involvement?

Story time is always a favorite activity in our classroom and—aside from the normal afternoon fidgets—the level of engagement was pretty high for this activity. Involving students by asking questions that create suspense—“What do you think will happen now?”—especially seems to hold their attention.

Making connections between what's happening in the story and what they may have experienced in their own lives was also a great way to keep students involved, although a couple of times students became so caught up in sharing their own stories we started to stray away from the book a little bit. I like to encourage that kind of dialogue, but when time is so limited, I also want to keep us on task.

One thing I notice is that some kids are naturally more vocal and participatory than others. You'll get the same four or five students raising their hands or responding every time, while the shier ones hang back, even though they may have a great answer. I need to find ways to draw out the quieter kids and make participation more balanced. I also wonder about alternative ways for kids to share, like having them hold a “talking stick” or write down an answer and hold it up instead of raising their hands or calling it out.

Enrichment

- What topics related to the story could students continue to explore that might extend learning?
- What variations of the review activity could you do?

Something that really worked about this activity was that it allowed for lots of different learning styles. Reading the book along with listening to the song “Summertime” and then providing materials for students to construct dioramas or write and sing their own songs gave kids the chance to tap into their creativity in exciting ways.

I knew a lot of my students enjoy music and movement, but I wasn’t aware how effective that could be as a learning tool, especially for new vocabulary! And the kids who love to paint and draw really got into their dioramas, actually creating miniature worlds with lots of detail. One way to enhance the review activity even more could be to combine the different creative products of the kids to have them develop their own musical production, maybe with a painted summertime mural as a backdrop and the kids performing their summertime songs and dances, or acting out their version of the story.

There are many different directions we could go to deepen enrichment with this text. We could explore more music from Gershwin or Billie Holiday or watch clips from the musical Porgy and Bess. We could also visit a museum or the historical society to learn more about that period in time and view large-scale dioramas up close.

Academics

- How did this lesson support other academic content areas like science, math, or social studies?
- What changes could you make to strengthen academics while still keeping the activity fun?

The first time I read this story aloud my main goal was to support literacy learning for my students by modeling fluency and building vocabulary. But I realized how much potential tie-in this story has with American history and social studies, particularly the struggles and accomplishments of African Americans during this time period. I’d love to align this lesson with what the day school teachers are covering in this area, especially during Black History Month or around Martin Luther King Jr. holiday celebrations.

Read Aloud

What Is It?

Reading aloud is a group reading activity that models fluent reading, provides exposure to new concepts and literature, and enhances students' listening, comprehension, and critical-thinking skills.

What Is the Content Goal?

The goals of reading aloud are to engage students in reading; to model fluent, expressive reading; and to build important literacy skills such as comprehension. Asking questions before you begin and as you read can keep students engaged. Questions and answers can also help you determine if students are understanding what's being read.

What Do I Do?

With younger children, reading aloud entails an afterschool teacher reading to students. Older students can take turns reading aloud. Whatever the grade level, choose books that are appropriate for your students, with engaging story lines that tap students' interests. Ask students for their ideas and talk to their day-school teachers to get suggestions.

Before you begin, ask questions about the cover and title of the book. What do the cover and title suggest about the book? Pre-reading discussion helps activate prior knowledge. While you are reading aloud, use expression to bring the story and characters to life. Pause to ask questions and check student engagement. When the story ends, ask students to share their opinions. What did they like the most? Why? What, if anything, surprised them? Could they relate to the characters?

Why Does It Work?

Research indicates that reading aloud is the single most important activity for reading success. It builds students' interest in reading, helps them develop understanding, and exposes all readers to great books. Reading aloud is an ideal activity for the afterschool setting because it can be done in a large group, in a small group, or one-on-one.

Enhancement for English Language Learners

Students reading in their first language have already learned 5,000–7,000 words before they begin formal reading instruction. In contrast, English language learners (ELLs) whose parents are not fluent in English typically do not have large vocabularies in the second language. When introducing new vocabulary prior to a read aloud, be aware that ELL students may be unfamiliar with words that their native English-speaking peers readily identify. Acting out words, using props, and using a “word wall,” where vocabulary words, definitions, synonyms, etc., are displayed, will help all students broaden their vocabulary.

Lengthy instructional conversations between instructors and students are a powerful tool in aiding reading comprehension, an area in which ELLs often struggle. Struggling readers are often given remedial instruction instead of being exposed to authentic texts and challenged to think critically or inferentially about stories. When conducting a read aloud, pausing frequently to model “think alouds” and higher-order questioning strategies will increase engagement and help develop students' understandings of more complex concepts.

Getting Started



Go to the *Read Aloud* practice found in the literacy section of the Afterschool Training Toolkit (www.sedl.org/afterschool/toolkits/literacy/pr_read_aloud.html) and click on the video.

- Before watching the video, use the reflection guide on the following page to write down what you are currently doing before, during, and after a read aloud to enhance literacy learning for your students.
- Next, click on the video.
- As you observe the read-aloud session on the video, note what the teacher on the video does during each of these phases of reading and add these techniques to your list.



Reflection Guide: Strategies for Before, During, and After Read Aloud

Before Reading . . .	During Reading . . .	After Reading . . .

Comprehension Guide for Read Aloud Conversations

Thinking Strategy Mental process that good readers use	Description What the mental process entails	Questions Questions that promote this thinking strategy
Activate prior knowledge	Recall previous experience and knowledge, making connections with text content, meaning, and style	What has happened in your life that is like this story? What have you read about or seen that relates to this topic?
Analyze formats	Predict characteristics and content of a book based on a review of formats—organization, graphics, and presentation of the text	Based on the title, cover, table of contents, headings, charts, tables, and pictures, what do you think this book is about? Can you predict what will be in each section?
Visualize	Identify and describe mental pictures and images that occur to the reader as the text is read	What pictures and images pop into your head? Can you imagine what the scene/person/item looks like?
Form predictions	Apply growing knowledge of author and content to predict story developments or upcoming content	What clues hint at what will happen next? Based on the information we've read, what else will the author(s) discuss?
Make inferences	Combine analysis of the text with what you know of the world to form educated guesses about meaning	What is the characters' relationship, based on how they're acting? How will information in this graph influence public choices?
Generate questions	Wonder about text—what's the purpose, why this detail, what's missing, and what remains to be learned?	What questions do you have about what's coming up in the story? Does the chart on this page make you wonder about anything?
Monitor understanding	Identify points of confusion about the text and analyze why they occur	Where did you lose track of what's happening in the story? Are there terms/ideas you don't understand on this page?
Fix confusion	Apply fix-up strategies for areas of confusion so that reading can continue	Can you reread that passage and look for clues about what's confusing you? What words do you need to know more about to move on?
Synthesize content	Identify main ideas, summarize content, identify contrasts, and make comparisons	Can you summarize the main points of this passage in a few sentences? How are the main characters in each story the same? How are they different?



Lesson 1

Newcomers

This lesson is one example of how you can implement a read aloud. After reviewing the book cover, title, key themes, and new vocabulary, read the book aloud. Pausing to ask questions throughout the story engages students in the literature. A follow-up activity prompts students to extend what they know, apply it in writing or drawing, and make connections to their lives and to the world.

Grade Level(s):

2–3

Duration:

55 minutes

Student Goals:

- Read for a variety of purposes
- Read different kinds of literature
- Use different strategies to comprehend, interpret, and appreciate texts
- Use language, writing, and art to show understanding



What You Need

- ❑ *Marianthe's Story: Painted Words/Spoken Memories* by Aliko (New York: Greenwillow Books, 1998)
- ❑ *Going Home* by Eve Bunting (New York: HarperTrophy, 1998)
- ❑ Crayons, markers, and paper

Getting Ready

These books allow children to explore the experience of being new to a place or situation and to share their own stories about being newcomers. As you plan the read aloud, think about your own experience as a newcomer to share with children. Review each story, noting key themes and new vocabulary. Jot down questions to generate discussion and prepare for activity.

What to Do

- Review the title and cover of *Marianthe's Story*, inviting students' predictions.
- Read *Marianthe's Story* aloud, pausing to ask questions and introduce any new vocabulary.
- Share an experience or story of being a newcomer and invite children to share theirs.
- Review the title and cover of *Going Home*, inviting students' predictions.
- Read *Going Home* aloud, pausing to ask questions and introduce any new vocabulary.
- Reread these lines from *Marianthe's Story*. "People were leaving our poor village. They were going to a new land, hoping for a better life." This will emphasize the connection between the two books.
- Ask students to find the connections and similarities between the two stories.
- In *Marianthe's Story*, Mari, the main character, shares her life story through art. Invite students to create drawings depicting their experiences as newcomers. Students can share and explain their pictures to the group.

Teaching Tip

What do you do if you ask a question while reading to students, and there's no answer? Many young readers are just beginning to learn how to think about stories. Providing models of your thoughts by demonstrating an answer or "thinking out loud" will put students at ease and help them develop good reading comprehension strategies. You can use the Comprehension Guide on p. 13 for ideas on what questions promote various thinking strategies.

Outcomes to Look for

- Student engagement and participation
- Comments and answers that reflect an understanding of the stories, key themes, and new word meanings
- Comments, answers, and drawings that reflect students' ability to connect the stories to their own lives and the world around them

Teaching Tip

This lesson could also be taught as a series of read alouds of books relevant to your students' home cultures that address the topic of moving to a new place. The culminating activity can be extended to become a community involvement event, such as creating a mural about the newcomers to your area or planning a welcoming event for newcomers at the afterschool site.

Reflection

Preparation

- Did the lesson planning help you feel prepared as you began to teach?
- What did you learn about lesson planning?

Student Engagement

- What did you notice about student engagement as students listened to the stories and shared their own experiences with being newcomers?
- Are you satisfied with the level of student engagement?
- What changes can you make to increase student involvement?

Enrichment

- How could this activity be enhanced to deepen cross-cultural awareness and appreciation of students' diverse backgrounds?
- What resources in the community might you tap into for further enrichment?

Academics

- How did this lesson support other content areas like history, social studies, or geography?
- What changes could you make to strengthen academic enrichment while still keeping the activity fun?

Lesson 2

Who Am I Without Him?

This lesson, designed for girls, is another example of how you can implement a read aloud. Students select a text they want to read and work with on an ongoing basis. Although the group meets four times a week, this read-aloud activity occurs once a week. The instructor reads a chapter from the text each week, gradually working through the entire text.

Grade Level(s):

6–8

Duration:

60–90 minutes (once a week on an ongoing basis)

Student Goals:

- Practice reading fluently and expressively
- Make connections among literature, students' lives, and their world
- Apply a wide range of strategies to comprehend, interpret, and appreciate texts
- Use spoken and written language to communicate effectively



What You Need

- ❑ A copy of the text *Who Am I Without Him? Short Stories About Girls and the Boys in Their Lives* by Sharon Flake (New York: Hyperion, 2005) for each student
- ❑ A journal and pen/pencil for each student

Getting Ready

Ask your students to choose a book they want to read. In this example, the class chooses *Who Am I Without Him? Short Stories About Girls and the Boys in Their Lives* by Sharon Flake. This is a good choice for middle school girls, but you and your students may choose any book that everyone agrees to read. Read the book yourself, making notes of key themes, any new vocabulary, and possible discussion questions for each chapter.

What to Do

- Each week, ask students to read a chapter and write notes on a note card about the narrator and characters, including any questions and thoughts the chapter raises.
- After students have read the assigned chapter independently, read the chapter aloud or let students take turns reading aloud. During the read aloud, pause to ask questions, invite predictions, or introduce new vocabulary. Questions may include: What is Erika's dilemma? Why is it a dilemma? What do Erika's fellow students think of her? How do you know?
- Ask students to pause and jot answers in a journal to share later or pair and share (discuss their response to the question with a partner).
- After reading and discussing the chapter, give students a choice of two writing prompts and ask them to write in their journals for approximately 15 minutes. Writing prompts may include: What would you do if you were Erika? How do you feel about Erika having feelings for someone of a different race?
- When the students finish, collect the journals. Before the next meeting, read journals and respond to entries in writing so that they can hear your thoughts.



Teaching Tip

Current research points to a gender gap in literacy between boys and girls. Achievement data show that boys tend to struggle in language arts classes compared to girls and that they score lower on state and national reading assessments. If you decide to implement this lesson in your classroom, consider designing a parallel read-aloud activity for boys. You can learn more about the different literacy needs of boys at www.learnnc.org/lp/pages/boysread0602-1 and find ideas for what books appeal to them at Guys Read, a literacy program that recommends books boys say they like (www.guysread.com).

Outcomes to Look for

- Student engagement and participation
- Comments and answers that reflect an understanding of the stories, key themes, and new word meanings
- Comments and answers that reflect students' ability to connect the stories to their own lives and the world around them



Teaching Tip

Students who don't have experience with keeping a journal may need practice and encouragement in writing to prompts for an extended period. One way to help students overcome resistance to writing is the freewrite technique. The ground rules of this practice are to write continuously, for a specified period of time, whatever comes to mind after the prompt is given. Emphasize that during freewriting, we kick out our inner critic and—for the moment—don't worry about grammar, punctuation, or spelling. When you first introduce the practice, start with very small (2–3 minute) increments of time and build to longer sessions.

Reflection

Preparation

- How did having the students choose the book impact your preparation?
- What was different about preparing for a series of read-aloud sessions rather than a single activity?

Student Engagement

- What did you notice about student engagement?
- Did some aspects of the activity appear to be more engaging than others?
- If you are conducting both a boys' and girls' read-aloud group, did you observe any differences between the two groups in the type and level of engagement?

Enrichment

- How could this lesson be enhanced to deepen awareness of gender roles and stereotypes and promote dialogue about larger societal issues?
- Would you be able to explore these issues in the same way if the activity were co-ed?
- What resources might you tap into in the community to help students continue to explore their gender, race, and identity?

Academics

- At first glance, this lesson appears to focus more on social/emotional development than academic content.
- In what ways might this lesson support other content areas, such as science or social studies, while still allowing for students' reflection and self-discovery?



Lesson 3

The Eighty-Yard Run

Considered one of the best American short stories, Irwin Shaw's "The Eighty-Yard Run" provides an account of a young football hero's finest moment from the perspective of the player 15 years later. This dynamic tale provides excellent material for an adolescent read aloud, addressing key components of high school culture: football and first love. The story also provides a picture of Depression-era events, life in New York City, and a marriage over time. For adolescents, read-aloud sessions will have greater impact if they relate the story to their own experiences. For students of different cultural backgrounds, frame questions that allow for cultural comparisons (i.e., different sports, courting, and marriage customs). This activity requires a series of four or five 30- to 40-minute sessions.

Grade Level(s):

9–12

Duration:

Four or five 30-minute sessions

Student Goals:

- Practice expressive reading of descriptive passages and dialogue to develop fluency
- Make connections between students' lives and events of past generations
- Identify similarities and differences in American culture and other cultures past and present
- Comprehend and interpret the effect of events and choices on a marriage
- Use spoken and written language to communicate about great literature



What You Need

- ❑ Articles or books about the Great Depression that have several illustrations of the era. The Modern American Poetry site has a photo essay on the Great Depression at www.english.uiuc.edu/maps/depression/photoessay.htm.
- ❑ Brief accounts of Irwin Shaw's life, available in books and online
- ❑ Copies of "The Eighty-Yard Run" from *Short Stories: Five Decades* by Irwin Shaw (Chicago: University of Chicago, 2000)
- ❑ List of discussion questions for the story (possible choices at www.unl.edu/sbehrend/html/)

Getting Ready

Divide the class into small groups. Ask each group to review a different set of pictures about the Great Depression and list their key observations on a piece of chart paper. Then ask each group to review a different short biography of Irwin Shaw and list key events from his life on a different piece of chart paper. Post biography lists on one side of the room and Depression observations on the other to fuel a whole-group discussion about the writer's life and times. Assign teams made up of staff and students and ask them to prepare and read specific sections of the story with expression (three voices: narrator, husband, and wife).

Teaching Tip

While we often think of reading aloud as an activity that is only appropriate for younger students and beginning readers, this practice can be a powerful technique for engaging older students as well. Read alouds help adolescent readers increase fluency, deepen comprehension, and gain confidence in public speaking. A key to successful adolescent read alouds is finding a text with themes that are compelling and relevant to teen readers and/or letting them select their own story.

What to Do

- Over four sessions, read "The Eighty-Yard Run" aloud.
- At the end of each section, ask students to share observations about "that was then/this is now" and predict what might happen next in the story.
- After you have finished reading the story, work with the class to generate ideas for a contemporary story following a similar plot line: 15 years after great success as a youth, a person revisits the scene of that success and reflects on ways later events have challenged his or her career and relationships.
- Allow small groups or individuals to create their own stories if interest is high.
- Compare contemporary student versions of these plots with "The Eighty-Yard Run."

Outcomes to Look for

- Student engagement in the story as both listeners and readers
- Ability to make connections between student lives and culture with a story from a different generation and perhaps different cultures
- Increased student interest in and knowledge of American history during the Depression
- Insight into the impacts of economic pressures and work choices on marriage over time

Teaching Tip

Today's students are more tech-savvy than ever, and this is especially true for adolescents. Older students will be more motivated and engaged if there are opportunities to incorporate technology in this activity at all stages, from researching the historical background of the period to creating their own contemporary versions of the story. Consider combining this activity with the "Digital Storytelling" lesson in the technology section of the Afterschool Training Toolkit (www.sedl.org/afterschool/toolkits/technology/pr_developing.html?tab=sample%20lessons).

Reflection

Preparation

- This project has several steps and stages. What helped you feel prepared for the different parts of this activity?
- What challenges and rewards did you encounter having students work in small groups to prepare for this activity?

Student Engagement

- As this activity progressed through several sessions, what did you notice about student engagement at different points in the process?
- Were some students more engaged than others?
- What could you do to increase student involvement?

Enrichment

- What other methods or media could you have used to help students make connections between “then” and “now”?
- How do you think the author’s style of storytelling influenced how students told their contemporary versions of the story?
- How might the stories be different if students told them in another format, such as a webcast or a rap song?

Academics

- This activity is designed to tie in with content areas in American history and social studies. What other content areas, such as math or science, could you connect to through this lesson?

Additional Resources

Print Resources

Fox, M. (2001). *Reading magic: Why reading aloud to our children will change their lives forever*. New York: Harcourt.

Hahn, M. L. (2002). *Reconsidering read-aloud*. Portland, ME: Stenhouse Publishers.

Laminack, L. L., and Wadsworth, R. M. (2006). *Reading aloud across the curriculum: How to build bridges in language arts, math, science, and social studies*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

Serafani, F., and Giorgis, S. (2003). *Reading aloud and beyond: Fostering the intellectual life with older readers*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

Trelease, J. (2001). *The read-aloud handbook* (4th ed.). New York: Penguin Books.

Online Resources

Family Literacy Foundation Read Aloud Resources

(www.read2kids.org/readaloud.htm)

This site contains links to the research and rationale for reading aloud, recommended books, reference guides, and a wealth of other information to make the most of reading aloud.

International Reading Association's Read, Write, Think

(www.readwritethink.org)

This site provides interactive graphic organizers to help students map their thoughts and ideas as they read.

Literacy Connections: Reading Aloud

(www.literacyconnections.com/ReadingAloud.html)

This site provides a collection of articles on the benefits of reading aloud as well as helpful hints, guidelines, and recommended books.

Read Aloud America

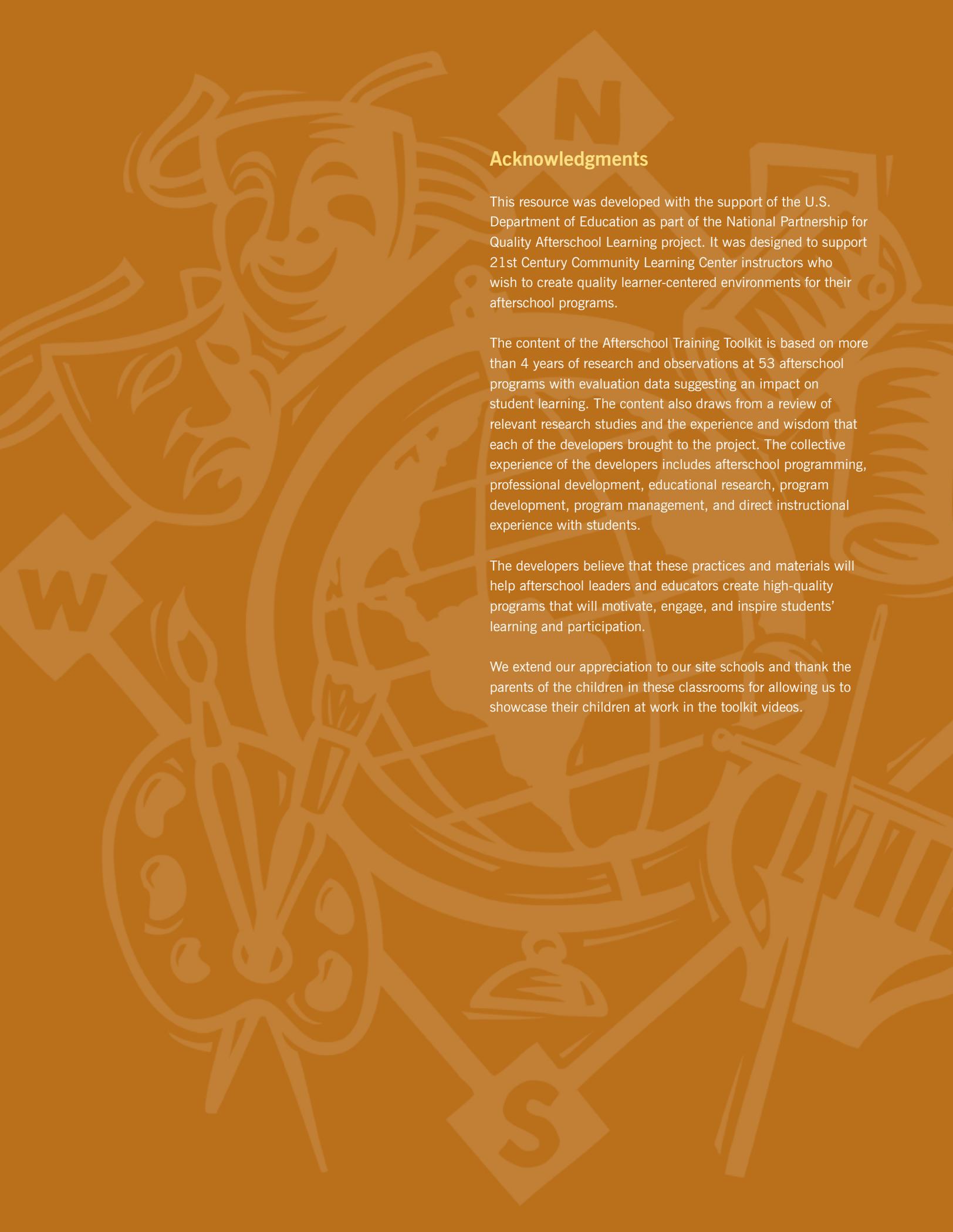
(www.readaloudamerica.org/booklist.htm)

This site features annual read-aloud book lists, organized by age level and selected by a committee of literacy specialists for appeal, diversity, strong writing, and positive messages.

RIF (Reading is Fundamental) Reading Planet

(www.rif.org/readingplanet/content/read_aloud_stories.msp)

This site features read-aloud stories online, with audio, pictures, and page-turning controls.



Acknowledgments

This resource was developed with the support of the U.S. Department of Education as part of the National Partnership for Quality Afterschool Learning project. It was designed to support 21st Century Community Learning Center instructors who wish to create quality learner-centered environments for their afterschool programs.

The content of the Afterschool Training Toolkit is based on more than 4 years of research and observations at 53 afterschool programs with evaluation data suggesting an impact on student learning. The content also draws from a review of relevant research studies and the experience and wisdom that each of the developers brought to the project. The collective experience of the developers includes afterschool programming, professional development, educational research, program development, program management, and direct instructional experience with students.

The developers believe that these practices and materials will help afterschool leaders and educators create high-quality programs that will motivate, engage, and inspire students' learning and participation.

We extend our appreciation to our site schools and thank the parents of the children in these classrooms for allowing us to showcase their children at work in the toolkit videos.

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Technical Assistance and Professional Development for
21st Century Community Learning Centers



This guide to the Afterschool Training Toolkit was created with the support of the U.S. Department of Education for the use of 21st Century Community Learning Centers. Used with the online Afterschool Training Toolkit, this guide will give you the resources you need to build fun, innovative, and academically enriching activities that not only engage students but also extend their knowledge in new ways and increase academic achievement.



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