



## Dennis-Yarmouth Regional School District

### Instructional Office Newsletter

### Jennifer Gonzalez on Five Teaching Strategies She Stopped Using

"So many of us teach the way we were taught," says Jennifer Gonzalez in this *Cult of Pedagogy* article. "We may not even realize we're doing it. And that means certain practices get passed down year after year without question, methods that are such a normal part of the way we do school, we perpetuate them without realizing there are better alternatives." She describes five classroom practices that she has resolved to stop using, or to use only occasionally, because better alternatives exist.

• **Round robin reading** – There are variations on this practice, but the basic idea is students taking turns reading aloud from a text while other students silently follow along. Gonzalez rationalized this practice thus: (a) it filled class time; (b) it maintained a quiet and orderly climate; (c) it "covered" material and ostensibly gave all students a chance to digest it; and (d) it allowed her to hear students reading and assess their skills.

*What does the research say about round robin reading?* That it does nothing to improve students' comprehension and reading skills; that lots of students mentally check out when they're not reading, reducing comprehension; that it embarrasses students who don't read well; that it gives each student only a tiny amount of active reading time; and that it subjects the whole class to models of not-so-good reading, perhaps leading students to pick up bad habits. "When I was a student, I hated round robin reading," says Gonzalez. "My comprehension plummets when I listen to something read out loud, rather than reading quietly to myself, so any time a teacher had us do round robin, I knew I would have to re-read the whole thing later."

*What are the alternatives?* To build fluency and  
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## November

### Volume 6, Issue # 3

#### IMPORTANT DATES

**November 4**

Daylight Savings Time ends (Fall Back)

**November 6**

Election Day

**November 11**

Veteran's Day

**November 12**

**No School** in observance of Veteran's Day

**November 21-23**

**No School**

**November 22**

Thanksgiving Day



- Child Safety Protection Month
- National Adoption Awareness Month
- National Novel Writing Month

#### IMPORTANT NOTICE:

Central office is a **fragrance-free zone** so please be respectful and plan accordingly when you visit.

**D**ue to one of our members at the CO being highly sensitive to any type of fragrance, we ask that staff visiting/meeting at the Administration building refrain from using any scented products. Fragrances from personal care products, air fresheners, laundry and other cleaning products have been associated with adversely affecting a person's health. We ask that we all work together to make the environment a safe and healthy workplace for everyone.



Thank you very much for your cooperation!





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proper expression in younger students, try a teacher read-aloud, choral reading, or fluency-oriented reading instruction (FORI): students choose their own books and then use a variety of methods to build skills. To boost older students' reading proficiency, schedule regular periods of silent reading scaffolded by an anticipation guide or KWL chart, or have students do reciprocal reading in small groups.

• **Giving students a copy of PowerPoint slides or lecture notes** - The rationale for this well-intentioned practice is to make sure students get all the substance of a class and don't have to frantically take notes throughout. It has the additional benefit of making it easier for students to catch up on a missed class. But brain research (as summarized in *Make It Stick* by Brown, Roediger, and McDaniel) says that when students don't have to put in effort to capture content and put it into their own words, they're much less likely to process and remember the material. The bottom line: providing notes actually handicaps students.

**What are the alternatives?** Teach students note-taking skills, providing several options and letting them decide on the one that works best for them. Have students compare their notes with those of other students, discuss them, and make revisions. Provide before-class diagrams – visual structures that help them see the relationship among concepts in the class.

• **Whole-class punishment-**

All students suffer for the sins of a few, usually by missing recess or some other privilege. Gonzalez says she frequently promised her middle-school classes a reward (perhaps free time toward the end of the period) if students worked quietly or finished early, hoping it would serve as an incentive. When this tactic failed, which happened frequently because some students didn't comply, she deprived the whole class of the reward. Whole-class punishments are faster and easier than trying to figure out which students caused a problem, but they're widely despised by students and parents. There isn't much research on the subject, but one study of collective punishment concluded that it was "fairly ineffective at best and strongly counterproductive at worst in shaping group behavior."

**What's the alternative?** "The best way to deal with a rowdy class is prevention," says Gonzalez. Make sure

students understand what they're supposed to be doing. Make the work engaging and interesting. Build interaction and movement into lessons. Clarify rules, routines, and consequences. And deal quickly with small disruptions before they escalate. Gonzalez mentions several other strategies and provides links to two articles on managing all-class behavior.

• **Using learning styles to plan instruction-**

This involves trying to differentiate lessons for groups of students to match visual, auditory, or kinesthetic learning styles. "This one I didn't do too much," says Gonzalez. "What I did instead was beat myself up for not doing it." What does the research say? Yes, we may believe that we learn best through a particular learning style, but that is just a preference. "There is no research that supports the idea that you actually learn better through that modality," says Gonzalez. "And attempting to label students and narrow our teaching strategies with them can ultimately limit them, making them believe they are only capable of learning in one way."

**What's the alternative?** Provide a variety of learning experiences that reach all students through different pathways – for example, teaching students to recognize text structures helps them develop mental models for understanding challenging texts; using culturally responsive teaching strategies helps students from all backgrounds absorb material more readily; the "mind's eye" strategy helps students visualize rich vocabulary in a text before they read it; and the concept attainment strategy gets students constructing concepts before the teacher presents them. "In the same way that eating a variety of foods helps ensure you get all the nutrients you need," says Gonzalez, "using a variety of instructional strategies will help you reach every student."

• **Differentiating by having advanced student help struggling students-**

The teacher pitches the lesson to the middle of the class and then has students who are quick to grasp the material help those who are having difficulty. For a while, this made perfect sense to Gonzalez. "I couldn't be everywhere to help all the students who needed it, and my more advanced kids were just sitting around with nothing to do (*red flag!*), so it seemed like an obvious solution. The kids who needed help got it, and the advanced kids got to learn the material *really well* by teaching it to someone else."



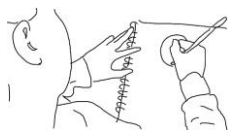


*What does the research say?* That this isn't really differentiation. Yes, struggling students get help, but this peer helping does nothing to challenge higher-achieving students. What the high flyers need is regular opportunities to work with students at their level of attainment on appropriate tasks and projects. This should be part of a truly differentiated classroom using learning stations, tiered assignments, orbital studies [see the link in the full article], and learning agendas where students are given a list of tasks to complete over a period of time.

**"5 Common Teaching Practices I'm Kicking to the Curb"** by Jennifer Gonzalez in *The Cult of Pedagogy*, September 3, 2015, <https://www.cultofpedagogy.com/ineffective-teaching-methods/>

## Helping Students Remember What's Taught

"Teachers need to understand how memory works," says Bryan Goodwin (McREL) in this article in *Changing Schools*. "The brain plays all kinds of tricks to get us to remember some things but forget others, and we need to know how to trick it back. That's right: The human brain can be outwitted." Most of what we see, hear, smell, taste, and touch is quickly forgotten, which is okay since there's way too much information coming in every day to digest and retain. Cognitive scientists have mapped out the highly selective pathway to long-term memory:



- Sensory register – This fleeting awareness lasts mere seconds.
- Immediate memory – Information can be held here for about 30 seconds.
- Working memory – By focusing on information (perhaps by jotting notes or underlining a text) we can hold a limited amount of data for 5-20 minutes.
- Long-term memory – To get this far, there must almost always be repetition, rehearsal, contextualization, or application.

What are the implications of all this for classrooms? Goodwin has the following suggestions for getting important knowledge and skills past students' mental filters:

### • *Sensory register and immediate memory:*

- Capture students' interest. Create a safe and comfortable learning environment and then hook

their emotions and curiosity.

- Help students commit to learning the new knowledge. The best way is to help them see how the new information fits into the bigger picture and affects their lives – basically answering their question, *What's in it for me?*

### • *Working memory:*

- Focus on the target knowledge. This requires an active process like taking notes, close reading, watching a process being modeled, or an active discussion.
- Make sense of it. New information will rapidly fade unless it's in bite-sized chunks, clustered with related content, and connected with prior knowledge.

### • *Long-term memory:*

- Practice and rehearse the new knowledge. "Cramming seldom works," says Goodwin. Cognitive scientists have shown that retrieval practice (quizzing oneself) and distributing practice over several days are the best way to embed lasting memories.
- Develop multiple connections. The more students think about, use, and apply new information in real-life situations, the more neural pathways they establish in their brains and the more readily students can access the information in the future. They need to use it or they will lose it.

**"Introducing a Research-Inspired Student Learning Model"** by Bryan Goodwin in *Changing Schools*, Spring 2018 (Vol. 79, p. 2-4), no e-link available; Goodwin can be reached at [bgoodwin@mcrel.org](mailto:bgoodwin@mcrel.org).

## Ideas for Improving "Circle Time" in Preschool Classrooms

In this *Elementary School Journal* article, Andres Bustamante, Annemarie Hindman, Carly Champagne, and Barbara Wasik (Temple University) report on their study of circle times in 22 preschool classrooms in an urban, high-poverty school district. These regular 15-20-minute teacher-led class meetings are almost universally used in U.S. preschools to kick off the day. Components may include taking attendance, students greeting one another, discussing and updating the calendar, reporting on the weather, updating a weather chart, singing songs with a social or academic focus, reviewing a morning message, reading a book,





and previewing the rest of the day.

As Bustamante, Hindman, Champagne, and Wasik began their study, they were aware of anecdotal evidence that circle time is often students' least favorite part of the school day and that discipline problems are common. Using video recordings and a careful analysis of teachers' full day, they tried to figure out what worked and what didn't, focusing on teacher and child talk during circle time, types of activity, student engagement, and classroom quality. Here's what they found:



- Most teachers used only three of the possible activities during circle time, most often the calendar, morning message, and singing, dancing or repeating letters and numbers.
- All these activities were mostly teacher-managed, with little student discourse, critical thinking, or problem solving.
- Teacher talk during circle time was twice as prevalent as child talk.
- The calendar activity was quite abstract for preschool children.
- The morning message, which involved close attention to letters and words, was often time-consuming; the researchers thought this important skill-building would be better handled in individual or small-group instruction.
- Both teacher and student talk consisted mostly of statements and close-ended questions rather than open-ended queries and extended back-and-forth exchanges. In other words, people were talking *at* each other rather than *with* each other.
- Few new words or concepts were introduced in circle time.
- The quality of instruction, as measured on the CLASS rubric, was low, especially in the instructional support realm.
- Children's engagement decreased significantly as circle time progressed.

In short, conclude Bustamante, Hindman, Champagne, and Wasik, "circle time is not, on the whole, closely aligned with optimal practices in early childhood."

That said, the researchers found that circle time *could* be productive when instruction was more rich, warm, and structured. Even modest improvements in pacing and instructional quality, they found, made a difference. They identified two areas that could be improved relatively easily:

• **Rich exchanges** – One of the most fruitful circle time activities was children sharing what they did the previous evening or weekend or offering a piece of information about their lives. This kind of sharing tended to promote open-ended questions from teachers and increased back-and-forth exchanges. It also gave children a chance to practice gathering and vocalizing their thoughts and allowed teachers to repeat and extend children's statements and deepen their understanding of concepts.

• **Maintaining engagement** – The researchers noticed that children were quite engaged at the beginning of circle time but much less so as the minutes ticked by. This happened more often when circle time went longer than 20 minutes and when teachers devoted more time to managing behavior and less to content. "One critical consequence," say Bustamante, Hindman, Champagne, and Wasik, "is that because circle time is generally the first organized activity in the day, children exposed to low-engagement circle times may deplete their resources for managing attention, emotion, and behavior at the very outset of the school day, setting the stage for difficulty throughout subsequent instructional periods." This suggests that teachers should shorten circle time, keep the pace brisk, and use more-engaging activities "so that children remain challenged and interested within the context of a comfortable structure."

"Moving forward," the researchers conclude, "researchers and practitioners alike should focus on how we can more effectively capitalize on circle time to improve the depth of the content and the quality of teacher-child interactions. With time and attention at such a premium in early-childhood classrooms, especially in high-poverty communities, it would be unfortunate not to maximize the quality of circle time and start the day on a path toward quality learning and engagement."

#### **"Circle Time Revisited: How Do Preschool**

#### **Classrooms Use This Part of the Day?"**

by Andres Bustamante, Annemarie Hindman, Carly Champagne, and Barbara Wasik in *The Elementary School Journal*, June 2018 (Vol. 118, #4, p. 610-631),

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## A Consumer Reports-Type Review of Online Literacy Resources

In this Thomas B. Fordham Institute white paper, Melody Arabo, Jonathan Budd, Shannon Garrison, and Tabitha Pacheco (all frontline K-12 educators) analyzed online tools for improving K-12 reading and writing skills:

### • **Newsela** <https://newsela.com> –

This website provides high-quality news articles, historical documents, and other texts for students in grades 2-12, covering science, law, health, arts, sports, opinion, and economics. Users can toggle between five levels of reading difficulty (on the Lexile scale). There are also real-time assessments testing comprehension with multiple-choice questions and writing prompts. Teachers can get free access, with content suitable for elementary and secondary students, or pay for Newsela PRO with additional features. The Newsela website also has an annotation tool and text sets of news articles, biographies, speeches, and historical documents organized around central themes or topics. “Overall, Newsela is an excellent resource for classroom teachers,” concluded the Fordham review. “Its articles are interesting, gathered from trusted media sources, and presented at multiple levels of complexity so that students with varying reading skills can access the text. The site is easy to use, and.. students find it engaging.”

### • **Readworks**

<https://www.readworks.org> –

This free site has more than 2,600 classroom-ready K-12 informational and literary passages, paired texts, text sets, lessons, comprehension units, and novel study units, all accompanied by question sets. All passages are searchable by keyword, grade, Lexile level, topic, text type, and skill or strategy. Topics include civics and government, technology and engineering, and world history; skills include author’s purpose, cause and effect, drawing conclusions, and vocabulary in context. Many of the paired passages have “StepReads” – slightly more accessible versions of the original passages.

The Fordham review was critical of the accessibility of some material on the ReadWorks site, but said it was “a valuable resource that provides teachers with a wealth of reading comprehension resources at no cost.”



### • **Achieve the Core**

<https://achievethecore.org> –

This free website has resources to help implement Common Core and other college-and-career standards, including PD modules, classroom lessons with annotations, videos, planning tools, student writing samples, math tasks, and assessments. “Achieve the Core is well organized,” said the Fordham review. “Though its sheer number of resources can be overwhelming at first, once familiar with it, the site is easy to navigate.” The review gave special praise to the site’s “expert pack” text sets.

The Fordham review compared Newsela, Readworks, and Achieve the Core on six key features:

- Provides high-quality texts aligned to Common Core: *All three*
- Texts are intentionally ordered: *Achieve the Core only*
- Assessments are available for each passage: *Newsela and Readworks*
- Assessments are available for the text sets: *ReadWorks only*
- Classroom activities are provided for each text within a text set: *Achieve the Core only*
- Texts are available at multiple reading levels: *Newsela and ReadWorks*

### • **Curriculet** <https://www.waterford.org/curriculet/>

This online grade 3-12 digital library (with free and paid versions) has books and news articles for students’ independent reading, and to supplement a standard curriculum. Texts contain periodic “checkpoints” to assess student engagement and comprehension. “One significant weakness,” said the Fordham review, “is the store’s search feature, which does not allow users to select texts based on Lexile level or interest outside of basic categories such as new releases, poetry, children’s literature, and historical fiction. Despite this limitation, however, Curriculet is a helpful resource for teachers looking for reputable reading texts and accompanying assessments that can be used for either individual students or small groups, depending on reading level and need.”

### • **Lexia Reading Core5**

<https://www.lexialearning.com/products/core5> –

This paid PreK-5 literacy site, aligned to Common Core standards, is adaptive and operates like a game: students begin with on-grade-level texts, activities, and assessments, and the program adapts to become more





or less challenging based on their performance. The site also has a scope and sequence, lesson scripts, and suggestions for students who are struggling with an online activity. The Fordham review said this site was “well-organized, thorough, and easy to follow, covering many components of reading instruction... engaging for students, aligned to the Common Core State Standards, and provides real-time actionable performance data for teachers...” However, the “biggest weakness is its cost. Teachers looking to enhance their classrooms may need to look for something more affordable – or free.”

• **Quill** <https://www.quill.org> –

This free website has grade 1-12 Common Core-aligned digital worksheets in grammar, vocabulary, and writing skills (there’s also an \$80-a-year teacher premium package (as of 2017) that provides more detailed student reports). The site has a variety of materials and genres, including fiction, mythology, and historical documents. This site has no multiple-choice questions; students have to respond to reading passages by writing complete sentences, and if their response is incorrect or incomplete, they have to try again. Quill also has a diagnostic assessment that can place students at appropriate lessons.

“After poring over this site and exploring its activities,” concluded the Fordham review, “I definitely recommend Quill to elementary language arts teachers. The most significant advantage is that the tool measures proficiency on the grammar-specific skills that students are expected to acquire under the Common Core standards. It also reduces the amount of grading, so it will save teachers time...” The site specializes in grammar, editing, and sentence-writing skills, so it’s not the place for writing lengthy essays. It’s not a game-based site, so it’s not ideal for students who need the motivation of earning points or having a cartoon avatar to keep them engaged. In addition, it’s necessary to get the paid version of Quill to have access to more-detailed reporting on student progress.

• **Writelike** <http://writelike.org> –

This free, game-like middle-grade site aims to improve students’ writing craft through analysis, writing exercises, and emulation of master authors. The site has self-guided lessons that scaffold learning on key writing topics like semicolons, similes, and metaphors and ask students to mimic a particular writer’s



language and style. The site also has exercises, including:

- Reading a sentence, clearing it from the screen, then attempting to reproduce it verbatim from memory;
- Reordering sentences to get them in the proper narrative sequence;
- Rewriting the content of a text into a different style – such as a fable or book review.

Drills are grouped by different challenges, e.g., spelling and punctuation practice that can be accessed by students or teachers.

“Writelike’s greatest strength,” concluded the Fordham review, “is the creative way in which it exposes students to numerous authentic literary excerpts and strong texts that they can read and emulate. The interactive exercises are fun and will likely keep students engaged, while helping to improve important writing skills such as writing in different styles, rearranging sentences into the correct order, and proper spelling, punctuation, and grammar...” Among the site’s downsides: it may initially be overwhelming to a teacher; it’s not explicit enough about the Common Core standards it covers; certain literary texts may be too sophisticated for typical middle-school students; some of the directions are cryptic and informal; and students aren’t required to write a particular number of words before progressing to the next level (they could proceed by typing a single character).

• **iCivics Drafting Board**

<https://www.icivics.org/products/drafting-board> –

This free online tool is part of the middle- and high-school civics education site, founded by retired U.S. Supreme Court Justice Sandra Day O’Connor. The iCivics site has curriculum units, lesson plans, games, and other resources on the Constitution, civil rights, and the three branches of government, as well as mini-lessons and brief readings and activities on historical figures, events, and court cases.

iCivics Drafting Board is an interactive writing tool designed to help students develop strong argumentative writing skills while exposing them to important social studies content. Each unit introduces a contemporary civics topic (for example, the electoral college, voting age, military intervention) with brief readings that summarize diverse viewpoints from real and/or fictional people. Students then select evidence to complete a fictional news story summarizing the





issue, then choose one side of the issue and make their claim in an argumentative essay. As they draft their essays, students can get one of five levels of support – such as having evidence within the text highlighted or being given a topic sentence. As students draft their essays, a helpful bar tracks progress on their introduction, multiple claims, evidence, a counter paragraph, and the conclusion.

“Overall,” concluded the Fordham review, “iCivics Drafting Board is interactive, easy to use, engaging, and real-world relevant... It is also clear about what it intends – and does not intend – to do.” Drawbacks include the time required to complete each segment (two hours), the need for more clarity on what constitutes mediocre and effective evidence, and insufficient emphasis on judging the quality and quantity of students’ responses.



• **ThinkCERCA** <https://thinkcerca.com> – This grade 3-12 site focuses on close reading and writing argumentative essays in history, current events, science, and math (CERCA is an acronym for making claims, supporting claims with evidence, reasoning, counterarguments, and using audience-appropriate language). After an initial assessment of students’ reading levels, texts can be customized by Lexile level and students’ prior knowledge. ThinkCERCA can be used as a complete ELA curriculum covering Common Core standards, as a supplementary tool, and as a writing program to cultivate cross-curricular ties between ELA and content areas. Lessons are organized in three formats: direct instruction, applied reading and writing, and additional reading practice. ThinkCERCA recommends teaching lessons to the whole class at first until students understand the program.

“Whichever method the teacher chooses,” said the Fordham review, “the paid premium subscription is a must to access the writing portions of the site.” The price as of 2017 was \$40 per student. The site does give students access to their accounts so they can work on assignments from a home computer. Logging into the website can be overwhelming at first because of the “sheer volume of available materials,” but there’s support in a 20-minute introductory webinar. Teachers can also explore the website using a filter to find grade

level, subject, Common Core standard, theme, or lesson type.

**“The Right Tool for the Job: Improving Reading and Writing in the Classroom”** by Melody Arabo, Jonathan Budd, Shannon Garrison, and Tabitha Pacheco, edited by Victoria McDougald, Thomas B. Fordham Institute, March 2017, <https://bit.ly/2M0namr>

## Irene Fountas and Gay Su Pinnell on Effective Literacy Instruction

“Many good ideas flounder and fail because of haphazard implementation, conflicts, unintended consequences, an inability to sustain effort, and a simple lack of communication,” say Irene Fountas (Lesley University) and Gay Su Pinnell (The Ohio State University) in this article in *The Reading Teacher*. “It can be easy to get discouraged.” The key to an effective literacy program for all students, they say, is four key elements:

- **Element #1: Shared vision and values** – To stay focused through changes in literacy mandates, leaders, and programs, here’s what research and common sense tell us has worked – and will work going forward:
  - High expectations for all students, valuing linguistic, ethnic, and cultural diversity;
  - Teams taking collective responsibility for the success of each student;
  - Using evidence gained from systematic observation and ongoing assessment;
  - Effective practices appropriate to whole-class, small-group, and individual contexts;
  - Students engaged in authentic inquiry about topics that fuel their intellectual curiosity;
  - Students as powerful agents in their own learning, frequently making choices;
  - Students thinking, talking, reading, and writing about their world;
  - Lots of texts providing rich, diverse examples of genre, theme, topic, setting, and other literary qualities;
  - Students reading and processing more than 2,000 texts by middle school;
  - Students gaining an understanding of their physical, social, and emotional world and their roles as informed global citizens.

These values should guide every literacy decision the





school makes and translate to a clear consensus on what a visitor should see and hear in every literacy classroom.

“Educators need to grapple with beliefs, values and a forward-thinking vision,” say Fountas and Pinnell, “until they fully understand and believe in them and agree that they can commit to act in unison when they walk out of the meeting room and into their classrooms.” The vision and values should be written up and revisited regularly, ensuring that everyone is on the same page, “moving beyond an approach where each teacher applies his or her own methods or philosophy...” This is not about cookie-cutter teachers and classrooms but a deep consensus about what good teaching looks like. “The critical value of an articulated vision for literacy,” they say, “is that students are guaranteed access to a coherent educational experience regardless of the teacher, the grade level, or the latest educational mandate.”

• **Element #2: Common goals and language and collective responsibility** – Once a shared vision is in place, say Fountas and Pinnell, “The language naturally shifts from *my* students and *my* classroom to *our* students, *our* classrooms, *our* curriculum, *our* school, *our* data, *our* goals, *our* professional learning opportunities, and *our* expectations for students and one another.” The school becomes more coherent for students – “they get the same messages about the role of literacy in their lives year after year from all members of the school community.” There’s also a collective effort to understand the increasingly diverse students in our classrooms and build cultural proficiency in all staff. For educators, common aims and collective work reduce stress. “You have a shared pool of expertise and support upon which you can draw and to which you contribute,” say Fountas and Pinnell. “The burden is lighter, the anxiety lower, and your own ability to improve student outcomes is enhanced.”

• **Element #3: A high level of teacher expertise** – To prepare students for the literacy demands of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, teachers need to bring their A game and help each other develop in four critical areas:

- A repertoire of techniques for observation and assessments – “The most effective teaching is scientific,” say Fountas and Pinnell: “You analyze and respond minute by minute to the precise reading or writing behaviors you observe.”
- A clear vision of proficiency in reading, writing, and



talking – For reading, this includes thinking *within* the text (searching for and using information, monitoring and self-correcting, solving words, maintaining fluency, adjusting, and summarizing), thinking *beyond* the text (predicting, making connections, synthesizing, and inferring), and thinking *about* the text (analyzing and critiquing).

- A deep knowledge of texts, their characteristics, and their demands – Fountas and Pinnell recommend a using a wide variety of texts (not one core text), implemented in interactive read-alouds, shared reading, guided reading, book clubs, and independent reading. Leveled texts are used only in guided reading.
- Expertise in implementing a range of research-based instructional practices – “The result,” say Fountas and Pinnell, “is a coordinated series of instructional contexts that take into account a student’s current abilities but are designed to stretch the student in new ways every day.”

This level of teacher expertise and teamwork should produce “thoughtful, literate, and socially responsible young people moving into our society.”

• **Element #4: A culture of continuous professional learning** – “Effective teaching is complex and demanding,” say Fountas and Pinnell. “It requires far more expertise, information, resources, and problem solving than any one of us could have alone.” That’s why reflection, collaboration, conversation, communication, open classroom doors, regular team meetings, and mutual support are so essential, fueling energy, teacher agency, and individual acts of leadership. Support and communication are especially important for new teachers.

“It is not as hard as it sounds,” conclude Fountas and Pinnell. “Your school may already be engaging in many of these practices, so much is already in place... The key is implementation of good ideas – trying them on with care, studying them over time, and getting better and better.”

**“Every Child, Every Classroom, Every Day: From Vision to Action in Literacy Learning”** by Irene Fountas and Gay Su Pinnell in *The Reading Teacher*, July/August 2018 (Vol. 72, #1, p. 7-19),

<https://ila.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/abs/10.1002/trt.r.1718>; the authors can be reached at [ifountas@lesley.edu](mailto:ifountas@lesley.edu) and [gspinnell@yahoo.com](mailto:gspinnell@yahoo.com).

