Reading and Writing Genre with Purpose in K-8 Classrooms

Nell K. Duke, Samantha Caughlan, Mary Juzwik, Nicole Martin

Too many U.S. classrooms lack a colorful compelling context for reading and writing, resulting in flat, uninspired, formulaic writing by students. *Reading and Writing Genre with Purpose in K–8 Classrooms* is designed to help pre- and inservice teachers, literacy coaches, and reading specialists question status quo ways of working with language and texts, replace weaker practices with better ones, and change the way genre is taught.

Drawing from theory and research that suggests students learn better and more deeply when learning is contextualized and genuinely motivated, the book presents five guiding principles for teaching genre. Emphasizing purposeful communication, it will guide you through teaching students to read, write, speak, and listen to different real-world genres that inspire and engage them. Nell Duke, Samantha Caughlan, Mary Juzwik, and Nicole Martin:

- identify commonly used assignments and practices for teaching genre that are fundamentally flawed and explain why
- offer inspiring alternative practices, grounded in research and illustrated in real projects in real classrooms
- show how the five guiding principles come to life in reading and writing projects across the whole K–8 grade span
- provide planning sheets and other tools and tips that will allow you to manage genre-with-purpose instruction in your classroom.

This book is about teaching genre differently—with purpose. *Reading and Writing Genre with Purpose in K–8 Classrooms* will help you reinvigorate your teaching.

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Text Complexity
Raising Rigor in Reading

Douglas Fisher, Nancy Frey, and Diane Lapp

"Close" reading of this text will reward educators with the most insightful, information-rich, and practical foundation and perspective on text complexity available to date. In the context of the Common Core State Standards for English/Language Arts, the authors provide (1) a masterful synthesis of traditional and more contemporary research exploring those factors in the text, the context, and the reader that contribute to the complexity of any text; and (2) substantive, practical instructional applications that will lead to the types of deep and consequential student engagements with texts for which educators have always strived.

—Shane Templeton
Foundation Professor Emeritus of Literacy Studies
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Selecting appropriate reading material for students is hard. For decades, teachers have known that quality instruction requires a careful matching of materials to students. The goal is to select materials that are neither too difficult nor too easy for students—a phenomenon sometimes called the Goldilocks Rule. To ensure that students learn to read increasingly complex texts, teachers have to understand what makes a text hard. The introduction of the Common Core State Standards has also placed a spotlight on text complexity. This book focuses on the quantitative and qualitative factors of text complexity as well as the ways in which readers can be matched with texts and tasks. It also examines how close readings of complex texts scaffold students understanding and allow them to develop the skills necessary to read like a detective.