

Book Review / Recension d'ouvrage

Morgan, D.N., Mraz, M., Padak, N.D., & Rasinski, T. (2009). *Independent reading: Practical strategies for grades K-3*. New York: The Guilford Press.

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In *Independent Reading: Practical Strategies for Grades K-3*, the authors discuss the importance of independent reading in the classroom and strategies for making independent reading a successful experience for the teacher as well as the students. The book begins by discussing why it is so important for students to take part in independent reading and some of the research findings that are directly linked to independent reading. The authors then discuss what can be done to improve independent reading practices, how to manage independent reading programs in the classroom, and a variety of different methods and routines used to engage students in independent reading. This book also includes information and tips on setting up a classroom library, the importance of a classroom library, and some recommended titles to include in a classroom library. The authors outline some of the major components of a reading program, such as phonemic awareness, phonics, vocabulary, fluency, and comprehension and how each of these components are connected to guided reading. Throughout the book, assessment tools such as rubrics are discussed, but there is also a specific chapter devoted to how to assess independent reading. Finally, the authors discuss the importance of literacy at home and suggest ways to develop a successful literacy environment at home.

In the preface, the authors state, "we have written this book as a way to help interested teachers, administrators, reading specialists, curriculum specialists, interventionists, and other concerned educators find ways to support independent reading in the K-3 classroom." This statement shows that the authors had a variety of people in mind when they were writing this book. To help readers find topics of specific interest, the authors provide descriptive chapter titles making it unnecessary to sift through the entire book to find desired information.

Overall, this book is very well organized and each chapter is arranged in an easily accessible style. All of the chapters are organized by using headings and subheadings, which make this a very user-friendly resource for the wide range of users it is intended for. Throughout many of the chapters in this book, there are figures which help explain and elaborate on what was written in the text. Some of the figures are also helpful reproducibles, which could be used in the classroom to help with organization and assessment.

Chapter 2 had many great ideas for independent reading in the classroom. This chapter discussed a variety of ways to incorporate mini lessons into independent reading sessions. They provided a list of many possible mini lesson topics, which could be used in the classroom during independent reading time. One section of this chapter that I particularly liked was about the importance of sharing time and the universal appeal to share what one loves with others. The authors discuss how to incorporate this concept into the classroom post silent reading time to help give the students time to process what they

have read, allow a positive or pleasant experience to remain, and allow excitement about a book to continue and expand. This section about sharing time is a key concept to use during independent reading time because it is an excellent way for teachers to gather information about each student for assessment, children are being exposed to a variety of different books, and also students have the opportunity to learn from each other.

In my view, this book would be useful for any teacher who is trying to implement independent reading into their classroom in a successful and effective way. It provides a great combination of research-based knowledge, as well as practical examples for making independent reading a success for students in the primary grades. This book provides many strategies for engaging students in independent reading, gives many ideas for short mini lessons, and has a lot of information about how to create and organize an accessible classroom library. The basic strategies and ways to help struggling readers described within will be very helpful for any teacher, especially in the primary level. I would highly recommend this user-friendly book as a great resource for educators.