

## Classroom Lesson Plan 8

# Independent Reading

**Teacher:** Bileni Teklu, Fair Oaks Elementary School, Marietta, Georgia

**Grade Level:** Fifth

**Topic:** Choosing Books

## Materials Needed:

- Classroom library and/or school library with a wide range of titles
- A copy of *Behind the Bedroom Wall*
- Sticky notes for student use
- "Reading Assessment Checklist" (see Teacher Tools)

## Background Information:

When many of the students in Bileni Teklu's class arrive in September, they lack the most basic experience with school literacies. Even using sticky notes to track their responses to literature is difficult to manage. As a result, Ms. Teklu believes she must do whatever is necessary to help them develop the patience to be students. In the process, she helps them recognize that learning is something they do for themselves, and something they can take with them, no matter how often they move.

In this context, Ms. Teklu works to create a community of shared values about literature. She hopes her students will come to see that books provide ways of understanding their own lives. She believes strongly that her students come to love reading because she is not dictating what they must read and when. These students have few choices in their personal lives, and so are especially appreciative of being able to choose what they read.

Because Ms. Teklu allows her students to choose their own books for independent reading, she feels it is especially important to teach them how to make good choices. In this lesson she uses her own experiences with *Behind the Bedroom Wall* to model the ways in which the book had personal meaning for her. Additionally she encourages students to share some of the personal connections they are making with books they are reading as additional models for their classmates.

## Lesson Objectives:

Students will:

- choose books for independent reading.
- spend independent reading time (one hour each day) reading and enjoying literature, or conferencing with Ms. Teklu.
- use sticky notes to identify connections, comments, and reading strategies to share later during the "Buzz Session."
- meet for five to ten minutes with two to three classmates to "buzz" (talk about) their readings and their responses to it. Students choose their own "buzz partners" who may or may not be reading the same book they are reading.

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- confer with Ms. Teklu individually to discuss their reading.
- develop increasing independence as envisionment-building readers of literature.

### **Expected Products From Lesson:**

- Sticky notes marking text passages and recording connections, questions, and reading strategies
- Effective conversation about reading

### **Instructional Strategies Implemented:**

- Mini-lessons modeling effective envisionment-building strategies
- Student discussion of their readings
- Individual conferences

### **Collaborative Structure of Class:**

Bookcases for the library and student desks for her 23 students fill Ms. Teklu's classroom. Without the luxury of an area where the whole group might meet, Ms. Teklu makes do by running discussions while seated in front of a chart paper stand at the front of the room. On this, she records key points. When students move to their independent reading time, they grab pillows and scatter around the room, nestling against the walls or between their desks. When they regroup to "buzz" about their reading, they typically remain on the floor clustered in small groups wherever they find room.

### **Lesson Procedures/Activities:**

- Students meet at their desks for a whole-class five- to 10-minute mini-lesson on choosing books and making connections to the reading.
- Students move to quiet areas of the classroom and read independently for 50 to 60 minutes.
- Students meet with two or three classmates and (using their sticky notes to guide them) discuss their reading.

### **Assessment:**

Students may be assessed on a daily basis through:

- participation in class discussion, and
- informal observation of reading choices and discussion.

See the "Reading Assessment Checklist" for a tool you might use for such daily assessments.

The following activities might receive holistic or scaled evaluation (see the Teacher Tool Assessment and Evaluation: Some Useful Principles for a detailed explanation of holistic and scaled evaluation).

- Individual reading interviews