

Grade 1: Grouping Considerations for Students Who Place in Set 5 and Beyond

By Gina Fugnitto | Categories: Being a Reader, Implementation

For our youngest readers, we want to intentionally plan experiences that develop their love of reading as they learn to read! We also want our grade 1 students to develop automaticity and accuracy. The reading experiences in Shared Reading, Small-Group Reading, and Individualized Daily Reading (IDR) are designed to meet these goals by providing students with a variety of opportunities to read large amounts appropriate text.

Small-group instruction is one important part of the grade 1 reading experience and decisions around appropriate placement and grouping require concerted attention. You will need to consider both the needs of the students and the teaching opportunities and texts to determine which instruction best meets students' needs. With that in mind, we are providing a few considerations to support your grouping, planning, and instruction.

Instructional Recommendations

For students who place into Small-Group Reading Set 5 or below:

Provide the instruction as intended in those sets. By the end of Set 5 students have mastered single consonants, consonant diagraphs, short vowels, consonant blends, long vowels (final e), inflectional endings, and complex vowels.

For students who successfully complete Set 5:

- Review the high-frequency words from Sets 4 and 5 as needed using the handheld cards. Identify high-frequency words that are hard for students by taking note of their mastery tests as well as their reading and writing.
- Teach Sets 6–8.

For students who place beyond Set 5:

- Provide on-going phonological awareness practice using the phonological awareness routines in Sets 4 and 5.
- Continually review the high-frequency words from Sets 4 and 5. Focus on the high-frequency words that are hard for students by taking note of their reading and writing.

Determine if the students will benefit from Set 6 instruction. Set 6 supports:

- Fluency (prosody) development
- The transition from controlled-vocabulary text into trade books

- Language development for deeper conversations with others about texts

To learn more about Set 6 lessons, read the blog post, “What is the purpose of Set 6 in Being a Reader? Which students might benefit from the instruction in this set?”

For students who successfully complete or do not require the instruction in Set 6

Continue instruction in Set 7. Even if the texts are easy for the students to decode, Sets 7 and 8 are essential for grade 1 students because they develop comprehension, build the social skills students need to take more responsibility for their own reading, and prepare students for the level of independence required for IDR. Sets 7 and 8 instruction features:

- Fluency development
- Focus on retelling
- Expository text strategies
- More complicated narrative texts and chapter books
- *Wondering* as a foundational skill for comprehending text
- The introduction of *identifying topic* as a basis for more sophisticated work
- Specific lessons on self-monitoring for comprehension
- The introduction of *generating independent thinking*

We do not recommend using Sets 9–12 for grade 1 students because of the sophistication of the texts in those sets. In addition, beginning with Set 10, students are required to read outside of the small-group lesson, journal about the reading, and bring their thinking to the small-group table. This requires a level of maturity grade 1 students may not have. If you complete all the lessons in Sets 7 and 8 with a particular group, provide ample reading material at about Guided Reading levels J–L. Use the focus for IDR within each *Making Meaning* unit to meet with these individual readers regularly to confer about their reading. If you have text sets at these levels, you might use the lessons in Sets 7 and 8 as models for developing instruction around the new texts.

Planning Considerations

To plan for instruction, select a set and [watch](#) a recorded discussion of Collaborative Classroom colleagues sharing their planning considerations and how they use materials during small-group reading instruction. Each discussion addresses the Introduction and the Set Overview and supports planning for instruction for the identified book.

The following books are featured in the recorded discussion

- Set 6: *New School*
- Sets 7 and 8: *What's It Like to Be an Ant?*

For additional planning support, watch the Small-Group Reading Instruction Sets 7 and 8: The Power of Pause archived webinar.