



Things Principals Should Know About.....

Independent Reading

1. Independent reading is not a reward for good behavior or a punishment for misbehavior. It is an integral part of the literacy block.
2. Emphasis should be placed on the joy of reading great books.
3. A teacher just beginning with independent reading must first focus on matching kids with books and creating a positive feeling about reading in her room.
4. During independent reading, we want students to read books that are fun, easy to read, and interesting. Once they are hooked on reading, they can be guided toward more challenging books.
5. Independent reading is more than just giving kids time to read. It involves a **book talk** to share a book that students might like, a **mini lesson** to give students a focus, **reading & responding** time, and **sharing** time.
6. The mini lesson (about 10 min.) can be based on a skill or strategy emphasized through whole group work, a procedure, or a literary concept.
7. Teachers walk around and quietly conference with individual kids in their spaces. This is valuable time for individualized instruction and for getting to know kids as readers.
8. When teachers begin to conference with students, they can just listen to them read a little. This will quickly reveal the students reading strengths and instructional needs.
9. During conferences, the teacher should help students identify what they CAN do as readers and what they could try next. Teachers and students can also use this time to have authentic conversations about the text.
10. Student should be given less time to read than they can manage. Therefore, if a class can read quietly for 10 minutes, they should be given only 8 minutes. We want to build successful experiences and gradually increase the students' reading stamina.