What Really Matters: Kids Need to Read a Lot

“A powerful contributor to the development of accurate, fluent, high comprehension reading” (35) is READING

Research on Volume of Reading

How Much Reading is Enough Reading?

“Evidence suggests that volume is linked to attaining the higher-order literacy proficiencies” (35)

? What are the higher-order literacy proficiencies that we expect at each grade level?

“added reading time was just as effective as, or more effective than, traditional instruction in enhancing reading comprehension performance.” (36)

? Are there traditional approaches that the research suggests should be replaced with increased reading time?

Contrastive Studies

Daily reading minutes correlates to achievement (see chart on page 37)

“more proficient fourth-grade readers engage in reading at least two and one half hours a day whereas our poorest readers read for about a half hour a day, if that- a 500 percent difference.” (38)

? How do we get all students reading this large amount?

“Struggling fourth-graders may need as much as 3-5 hours a day of successful reading practice to ever hope to catch up with their more proficient peers.” (38)

Correlational Studies

“a strong positive relationship between teacher reports of time allocated to silent-reading in their classrooms and reading comprehension proficiency of their students.” (39)

An interesting question that Allington poses: “Does better reading lead to more reading or does more reading lead to better reading?” (40)

Explanatory Studies

? Taken from page 41- Some districts and states require a certain number of books to be read and words to be written each year. Can a quantity like this really be set? This is the requirement and it is a shared responsibility in all subject areas. In elementary school, could we add more reading and writing to specials?
“Kids spent substantially more time in activities called reading than they did actually engaged in reading.” (42)

“power of direct silent reading time in predicting reading growth” (42)

Who does DEAR or silent reading time? Eric has posed the question asking whether this should be a school-wide expectation.

However a “reanalysis substantially reduced the effect of silent reading time on achievement and suggested that oral reading time had a greater impact on achievement.” (42) They stated this finding because oral reading had higher demands (more accountability).

Silent reading findings are not as reliable for LD students.

“the minutes or reading per day during reading period contributed significantly to individual reading achievement growth, whereas time spent on home reading did not.” (43)

Why not? How can we hold parents and students more accountable for home time? Can we even do this?

“reading volume predicted reading comprehension.” (43)

“children who received reading instructional support from either program often had the volume of reading reduced rather than expanded as remedial and resource room lessons focused on other activities.” (43)

What do the typical activities look like in the LRC at different levels?

**Thinking about Volume of Reading**

**How Much Reading Do Children Need?**

“dramatic increases in reading volume is critically important in developing thoughtful literacy proficiencies.” (44)

“one and one-half hours of daily in-school reading would seem a minimum goal given the data provided” (44)

“150 minutes of actual reading would still leave from three to three and one-half hours each day to accomplish other instructional activities.” (45)

Is this amount of time realistic?

“research does not provide clear evidence on whether one type of reading is better than another. In other words, increasing the volume of oral or silent or choral or paired reading, or almost any combination of these, has been shown to enhance achievement.” (46)

“as long as children and adolescents are reading, the type of reading seems less critical.” (46)

Which types of reading do you use in your classroom? Which more than others? Any that seem more powerful based on your observations?

**Restructuring School Days to Make Time for Reading**

**Capturing More Academic Time**

Time is wasted during the school day for attendance, lunch, announcements, etc. Allington suggests eliminating all of these. He suggests that these things be handled before or after school with the help of support staff.
How is this possible? Announcements would not be heard. Aren’t we responsible (legally?), as classroom teachers for attendance? There are certain procedures, while not direct learning, that are essential to a properly functioning classroom. If all of these things were taken out of the normal day, how would the overall functioning and learning be affected, perhaps negatively?

Reading Lessons with Too Little Reading

“As a guide, 100 words per minute is an average silent reading rate for a second-grader and 200 words per minute is about average for a fifth-grader.” (48)

“no basal reading series contains enough reading material to develop high levels of reading proficiency in children.” (49)

Suggested to add reading volume by incorporating Science and Social Studies narrative texts to go with units and concepts.

Interruptions During the Day

Three types—specials, support services, announcements

Creating Uninterrupted Blocks for Instruction

“provide every classroom with at least two and one half hours of uninterrupted time—no pull-outs, no push-ins, no specials.” (50)

How much time is actually uninterrupted in classrooms? How can we realistically cut down on interruptions?

Students need to build “reading stamina” and “have opportunities to read longer texts and to read for longer periods of time.” (50)

Reading stamina is a problem—“as the length of passages increases, the number of students who can demonstrate an understanding of the passages decreases.” (51)

Rethinking the Design of Special Programs

Allington’s idea of longer blocks suggests that “children receive special education services twice a week for fifty minutes rather than four times a week for twenty minutes” (51)

Can we have longer blocks, that meet less frequently, with the LRC? Is this possible?

Allington also suggests that we move traditional, during the school day services to a before or after school time. (51)

Is this possible?

Creating Standards for Reading Volume in the Elementary Grades

“guided reading, self-selected reading, partner reading, buddy reading, and every other sort of actual reading would be considered in establishing school-day reading volume.” (52)

Allington suggest that we “set a thirty – to forty five-minute daily volume standard for writing.” (52)

“it takes a while to “get lost in a book” but getting lost in a book is the essence of skilled reading.” (53)
Whole-Day Plan suggests the idea that certain days should be completely devoted to one subject in order to have blocks of time (53)

**Reading and Writing Volume in Grades 6 to 12**

U.S. textbooks used in grade K-12 have been described as offering a curriculum plan that is ‘a mile wide and an inch deep.’” (55)

“they are so rarely well written and are frequently written at difficulty levels two or more years above the reading level of the typical student.” (55)

**Summary**

“Voluntary engaged reading (where students are internally motivated), in school and out, seems most powerfully linked to high levels of proficiency.” (56)

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**How to Grade for Learning**

Ken O’Connor

**Chapter 1: Linking Grades**

Lynne Best

**Guideline 1: Relate grading procedures to learning goals (i.e. Standards)**

“Teachers must understand clearly what learning results are expected and then base their grading plans on these learning goals” (pg 50).

Determine (as a grade level) what is important for kids to know at certain points in the school year. (We have done this with our Power Standards and curriculum mapping!)

Use of student tracking sheets, which break down subjects by specific learning goals-examples on page 53 and 54.

Shift thinking for teachers’ grade books-columns should represent standards instead of specific assignments (page 57)

If teachers determine a concept as critical, students only pass when all the concepts are met. For example: If students have not mastered basic addition, but have mastered all other math concepts, should they receive a “passing” grade. (page 57)
Guideline 3: Limit the valued attributes included in grades to individual achievement.

“For grades to have real meaning, they must be relatively pure measures of each student’s achievement of the learning goals for each course” (pg 87).

Achievement Equals Standards (pg 87)

“Grades should reflect current level of academic achievement with nothing else factored in to interfere with that message” (pg 87). Interfering factors are referred to as grade pollution.

Leave out of grades: attendance, participation, answers they share in class, discussions, effort, conduct, teamwork, leadership, etc. (pg 88)

? So, should work that is turned in late be graded down just because it is late? Is there another practice that will enforce due dates and responsibility? (The chapter discusses this later on!)

Make grades individual for students. When working with a group, students should not receive a “group grade” because this does not show what each has learned individually. (pg 90-96) A chart is suggested on page 94 to use to track cooperative work within groups.

Bonus marks distort achievement grades-better not to use them (pg 95).

? Effort should not be factored into a grade (pg 99), but what if a child’s lack of effort is greatly hindering their achievement and performance? Isn’t this inadvertently “factored” in?

Our Homework Policy practices (4th and 5th grade) do not fit what this book suggests. Grading students down for late work sends misinformation about student knowledge. (pg 100-103)

? Can we find other ways to penalize students who do not turn work in on time? The book has some suggestions.