

Some of Our Favorite Resources and Tips for Selecting Your Own Texts

Selecting resources for English language arts can make or break your day! You are in a powerful position as a teacher. Select resources that are engaging and allow you to share your love of reading and writing with students. Here are some things we look for when selecting texts:

WHOLE-GROUP READING

- **What to Look For**
 - Fun, diverse characters that students can connect with
 - Unique writing styles that draw the reader in
 - Creative illustrations that grab students' attention before reading
 - A story line or organizational structure that facilitates the reading comprehension goal
- **Red Flags**
 - Overwhelming length or amount of text
 - Small font and few pictures
 - Content that you are unable to "sell" to students
 - A topic that students have very little understanding of (no background knowledge)

INDEPENDENT READING

- **What to Look For**
 - High-interest content (students can often read above their reading levels when they are motivated by a particular text)
 - Well-written style
 - Variety of supports for students (decodable words, pictures that support the meaning, appropriate font size)
 - A balance of fiction and nonfiction
 - Familiar characters
- **Red Flags**
 - Decodable texts that are not easy to comprehend
 - Outdated books ("hand-me-downs" that no longer match student interests)
 - Books that are too hard or too easy for individual students
 - Books that are the appropriate reading level, but do not engage an individual child

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Here are some of our go-tos when planning English language arts:

FAVORITE SUBSCRIPTION SERVICES

- Reading A–Z
 - *Time for Kids* magazines
 - *Scholastic News* magazines
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FAVORITE AUTHORS, BOOKS, AND SERIES FOR WHOLE-GROUP INSTRUCTION

- *Tacky the Penguin*
 - *The Day the Crayons Quit*
 - Laurie Keller
 - Leo Lionni
 - *Magic Tree House*
 - Kevin Henkes
 - *Junie B. Jones*
 - Jan Brett
 - Tomie dePaola
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FAVORITE BOOKS AND SERIES FOR INDEPENDENT READING

- Beginning to Middle of the Year
 - *Biscuit*
 - Alphabet books
 - Mo Willems
 - Dr. Seuss
 - Middle to End of the Year
 - *Henry and Mudge*
 - *Frog and Toad*
 - *Amelia Bedelia* (I Can Read series)
 - James Marshall
 - *Who Would Win?* series
 - *National Geographic Kids* magazines
 - *Fancy Nancy* (I Can Read series)
 - *Fly Guy*
 - *A True Book* series
 - *Clifford the Big Red Dog*
 - Eric Carle
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