

Title and Purpose	Before the Read	During the Read	After the Read
<i>Build excitement for the books and the journey of discovery they represent. Get your students excited about launching into this unit.</i>	<i>Set the stage, say the purpose, and get students thinking right from the start.</i>	<i>Stop periodically to share thoughts, observations, or inquiries about the text, or connect the author to the purpose of the day.</i>	<i>Restate what was learned. Make connections between the author and the students.</i>

Day One			
“Reading Like Writers”	Before the Read	During the Read	After the Read
<p data-bbox="155 688 636 834"><i>The most important lesson students will learn in this unit is how to use writing to become better writers. During this lesson, students will be introduced to the phrase “reading like writers” and will begin to practice doing so.</i></p> <p data-bbox="155 867 323 894">Preparation:</p> <ul data-bbox="155 906 636 1398" style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Display all the books in the collection.</i> • <i><u>Home Run</u>—Select a line early on in the text that stands out to you as well crafted. Be prepared to name what you noticed Burleigh doing.</i> • <i>Notice how the author uses long and short sentences to create a rhythm in the text.</i> • <i>Notice how the author uses and repeats the word “then” to begin each of his sentences.</i> • <i>Notice how Burleigh creates a new word using a dash to push a reader’s voice to read faster.</i> • <i>On chart paper, prepare a chart modeled after Appendix 2. Tailor your chart to reflect the craft choices you wish to emphasize.</i> • <i>Students should have copies of the typed text and highlighters.</i> 	<p data-bbox="661 688 1142 1333"><i>My friend, Justin, loves baseball. He loves not only to play but to watch the game, too. When we go to a baseball game or watch a game on television, he notices all kinds of things that I miss or fail to notice. “Did you notice that batter’s stance? He’s expecting a curve ball! Notice how the pitcher angled his arm. You just watch, a fastball is going to zoom past home plate.” The next time Justin and I play, his game is so much better because he has learned to watch baseball in a way that will lift the level of his own game and enhance his performance on the field. In effect, he has learned from the best teachers: professional ball players. Writers are no different. Just as Justin watches baseball like a baseball player, writers read like writers. Jane Yolen offers the following advice to young writers: “read, read, read! You must read every day, and try to read a wide range of books.” If we want to become stronger and more capable writers, we need to first learn to let stories affect our heart and pay attention to how a particular scene makes us feel. Then we need to ask, “What did the author do to make the writing sound so good? How did the author create that particular effect in their writing?”</i></p> <p data-bbox="661 1354 1142 1515"><i>Point out the collection. Over the next few days, we will be reading these familiar titles and shift our stance from appreciating them as readers to looking at them as writers, noticing the author’s craft and experimenting with learned techniques in an attempt to lift the quality of our writing.</i></p>	<p data-bbox="1167 688 1604 943"><i>Introduce <u>Home Run</u> by Robert Burleigh. Explain that although the book has already been read, this time they will read it as “writers.” This time they will read it to notice the writing and think about the author’s craft and decisions. Have the students follow along in their copies of the typed text so that they can think about the look and sound of the text while it is read aloud to them.</i></p> <p data-bbox="1167 976 1566 1089"><i>Stop early in the text to point out the line of text you have selected to share. Discuss why it stood out to you and name what Burleigh did.</i></p> <p data-bbox="1167 1122 1566 1179"><i>Explain that what you just did is read like a writer.</i></p> <p data-bbox="1167 1211 1587 1325"><i>As you continue to read, ask students to underline writing that sounds good to them and to begin to think about what Burleigh does.</i></p>	<p data-bbox="1625 688 1959 769"><i>Fill in the first column of your chart with lines of text students noticed.</i></p> <p data-bbox="1625 802 1959 859"><i>Help them begin to name what they noticed.</i></p> <p data-bbox="1625 891 1927 976"><i>Explain that the work you began with them today is the work of reading like writers.</i></p> <p data-bbox="1625 1008 1940 1146"><i>Explain that over the next few weeks you will continue to read like writers and study the craft of the books in your collection.</i></p> <p data-bbox="1625 1179 1927 1268"><i>Reinforce that writers do this work to improve their own craft.</i></p>

Day Two

Explore the Endless Possibilities in a Single Touchstone Text!

Come On, Rain! is an excellent touchstone text because it is filled with interesting word choice, punctuation, and structures. During this lesson you will continue to practice reading like writers by pointing out some of Karen Hesse's crafting techniques.

Preparation:

- *Come On, Rain!* by Karen Hesse
- Students should have copies of the typed text along with highlighters or pencils. (See Appendix 3 for text ideas.)
- Prepare a three-column chart to work through with students (see Appendix 3 for a model).
- Be familiar with craft and writing techniques used by Hesse.

Before the Read

When asked what advice she would give to aspiring writers, Karen Hesse replied, "I say go for it! Anyone who wants to write can." Karen has given us some wonderful writing instruction with her book *Come On, Rain!*

Today, we will see what we can learn from *Come On, Rain!* by reading it like writers.

During the Read

The best way to notice a craft move made by a writer is to find the parts that speak to us as readers. What parts make us stop to notice the sound, flow, or feelings of the words when we hear them read aloud?

After we have noticed the really good parts as readers, we can open up to those parts and talk about Karen's craft.

Begin reading. Stop to demonstrate how and why you would highlight a certain line of text before continuing. See Appendix 3 for ideas.

I am going to continue and read the book all the way through. As I do, read along like writers. Every time you hear a line that makes you stop and take notice, underline or highlight it so that we can add it to our list and discuss it.

After the Read

Before asking students to share what they notice, have them share their findings with a partner. Begin collecting the lines of text they noticed and work through your three-column chart with them.

Time may not allow you to put everything on the chart. If this is the case, leave the chart up in the classroom and ask students to continue to fill it in during writing time. Reread the chart when it is completed.

Day Three

Reading Like Writers

Students will continue to practice reading like writers by zooming in on punctuation.

Preparation

- *Canoe Days* by Gary Paulsen
- Prepare a three-column chart to work through with students that highlights the crafting techniques used by Paulsen. (See Appendix 4 for a chart of punctuation techniques.)
- Students should have typed versions of the text along with highlighters or pencils.

Before the Read

Read aloud the following line from *Canoe Days*: "Sometimes when it is still, so still you can hear the swish of a butterfly's wing—sometimes when it is that still I take the canoe out on the edge of the lake."

As you read, point out the punctuation, like how the comma or dash in the middle of the sentence makes your voice change—in pace or inflection.

Most students should notice that your voice pauses with the comma and that the dash places emphasis on the word that follows it.

Gary uses a lot of different kinds of punctuation across the text, but he also does a lot of other things.

Explain that you will be reading the text like writers. Remind students of the work from days one and two. Instruct them to follow along in their copy of the text as you read it aloud. Students should highlight or underline text they find interesting.

During the Read

Read aloud *Canoe Days* by Gary Paulsen. As you read aloud, pay close attention to the punctuation and use your voice to highlight language, tone, and rhythm of the text.

Students will follow along with a highlighter or pencil to underline places in their copies of the typed text where they find interesting writing.

After the Read

Ask students to share their discoveries with a partner and then the rest of the class.

Use a three-column chart modeled after Appendix 4 to collect and organize students' findings.

Day Four

Reading Like Writers (cont.)

Students will read like writers and look for interesting craft, language, and writing techniques in *My Mama Had a Dancing Heart*.

Preparation

- *My Mama Had a Dancing Heart* by Libba Moore Gray
- Prepare a three-column chart to work through with students, filling in the various crafting techniques used by Gray. (See Appendix 5 for a sample chart of Gray's crafting techniques.)
- Students should have copies of the typed text along with highlighters or pencils.

Before the Read

For the last two days, we have been practicing the skill of reading like writers. We have noticed craft and writing techniques used by two authors. Today, we will look at the work of a third author, Libba Moore Gray.

I am going to read this book aloud. As I do, I want you to follow along using your copy of the text. As you have been doing, mark places in the text you find interesting or that sound good to you. We will take time after we have read the text to discuss what you have noticed.

During the Read

As you read the text aloud, use your voice to highlight craft and language. Help students to notice the following:

- Nouns and verbs connected with a dash to create new words that make her writing sound like a song;
- How the author uses ellipses for a slow motion effect; and
- Same sound words or, in technical language, alliteration—such as the “green grass.”

After the Read

Ask students to share things they found interesting. Fill in the chart to list and discuss things students noticed. Before concluding, be sure to draw attention to how the first line is repeated on the last page.

Ask: Why did Libba Moore Gray decide to end with the same line that started her story? Have students turn to a partner to discuss possible reasons for this decision. Lead students toward thinking about the feeling of connectedness that the daughter had with her mother even after she was all grown up.

Often, authors will end their stories with the same powerful line or image with which they started their stories. Authors will sometimes even wait until they write the end of their stories so they can see if they can begin with their closing words as well.

Also, draw attention to the passage of time and how the book is structured in a series of snapshots.

Day Five

Reading Like Writers (cont.)

Students will read like writers and look for interesting craft, language, and writing techniques in *Coming On Home Soon*.

Preparation

- *Coming On Home Soon* by Jacqueline Woodson
- Prepare a three-column chart to work through with students, filling in the various crafting techniques used by Woodson. (See Appendix 6 for ideas.)
- Students should have copies of the typed text along with highlighters or pencils.

Before the Read

We are getting really great at reading like writers. We have studied a lot of texts and noticed a lot of interesting craft and writing techniques. Later in the study, we will look more closely at the things we noticed and select certain things to try out on our own. Today, we will gather even more information as we practice reading like writers using *Coming On Home Soon*.

Students should have copies of the typed text so they can follow along as you read.

During the Read

As you read the text aloud, use your voice to highlight craft and language. Help students to do the following:

- Notice how Woodson uses small details;
- Notice how Woodson uses descriptions to make character/reader connections; and
- Notice how Woodson uses dialogue and setting descriptions.

After the Read

Ask students to share their discoveries with the rest of the class.

Use the three-column chart in Appendix 6 as a model for the chart your class will create by collecting and organizing students' findings.