

Book Selection Is Key To Student Acceleration

Activity Directions: Envelopes are designed for groups of four people.

Part 1:

Spread out the books in the envelope labeled Levels 1-4. Notice the numbering system on the texts:

- Identify the text level
- Identify the word count

Read some of the leveled books aloud within your group.

Discuss with your partners the following thoughts:

1. What captured your attention first?
2. How does the number of lines of text change from Level 1 to Level 4?
3. What do you notice about the size and layout of the print and the pictures?
4. How do the pictures support the story line?

Part 2:

Open the envelope labeled Levels 5-8.

- Identify the text level
- Identify the word count

Read some of the books aloud with your table partners.

Discuss the following questions with your table partners:

1. How has font size or size of illustrations changed?
2. How do the opening and closing sentence patterns change?
3. What do you notice about the decoding challenges in the texts?

Part 3:

Open the envelope labeled Levels 9-12.

Continue the process of word count and level identification, reading the stories at your tables and discussing the changes you see within this gradient of difficulty of texts.

Part 4:

Move through the other envelopes at your tables until you have looked at all of them and read some of the stories to your table partners.

Part 4 continued:

Additional questions to ponder:

1. Why is language structure a key component in propelling readers forward on their path to literacy?
2. How has “the language of talking like a book” become apparent?
3. How has font size, text layout, and picture support played a role in higher leveled texts?
4. How would a gradient of difficulty in text selection support struggling readers and writers?
5. Offer your own thoughts.

Thank you for your participation today.