

# THE FAITHFUL READER

## What are the Students Doing? What is the Teacher Doing?

Last month, different classroom structures were shared. We know that how the physical classroom is set up impacts how students learn and how teachers teach. If the room is set up in straight rows and there is a podium at the front, that gives a bold statement of what the instruction will look like. But if the teacher is hard to find because she is huddled next to two students in the classroom library, we know that student engagement is a priority.

### WHAT ARE THE STUDENTS DOING?

In an engaged, student-centered classroom, students are working on meaningful work. In reading or literacy block, students are reading, writing about what they read, working on word parts that they in particular need to work on based on their Words Their Way or other assessment information, working on reading fluency by using repeated readings, and so on. Does this sound familiar? It sounds a lot like the tasks that students do in the Daily Five or a workshop model. What's missing? Mindless packets of worksheets. Worksheets are not always bad, but they are often used as busy work to try to keep students at bay while the teacher works with small groups or individuals. When students have meaningful work that they have a say in - they got to choose their book to read - then they are much more likely to have the stamina to stay doing that work.

### WHAT IS THE TEACHER DOING?

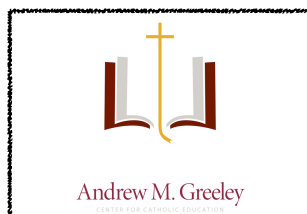
The teacher is doing one of two things: assessing students or teaching students.

**Assessing students:** administering running records, authentic assessments like having students show with pictures or blocks how to solve a math problem, etc. This could be progress monitoring ,too.

**Teaching students:** this can occur 1:1 or in small groups. It could involve really no talking on the part of the teacher - just, "tell me about your book" and conferencing and gathering information about the student's comprehension. Or it could involve a guided reading or guided math lesson no longer than 15 minutes long where students of similar skills work on improving those skills.



**Coming in December: how does a teacher provide effective feedback to students?**



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## Text Sets

A text set is a set of texts that have the same topic or theme in common but may be told from a different perspective.

Use these text sets for literature circles/book clubs focused on standards that can be achieved through these texts.

**Fantasy** - the story couldn't happen in our world

*Wishtree* by Katherine Applegate

*Flora and Ulysses* by Kate DiCamillo

*Crenshaw* by Katherine Applegate

*Hello, Universe* by Erin Entrada Kelly (I would qualify this as realistic fiction but it is a good fit with the other books)

*Hour of the Bees* by Lindsey Eagar (for grades 6 and up)

**Realistic Fiction -  
Forgiveness**

*A Snicker of Magic* by Natalie Lloyd

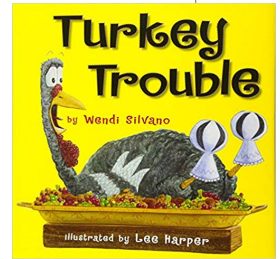
*Because of Winn-Dixie* by Kate DiCamillo

*Shiloh Season* by Phyllis Reynolds Naylor (2nd book in the quartet)

## Book Recommendations

***Turkey Trouble* written by Wendy Silvano and illustrated by Lee Harper**

Thanksgiving is a tough time if you're a turkey. But what if Turkey didn't *look* like a turkey? Fans of *Click Clack Moo* will like this story of Turkey trying to disguise himself.



**Lexile Level** Lexile 460

**Interest Level** Kindergarten and up

**Most appropriate for** age 7 and up

**Genre** realistic fiction picture book

***A Snicker of Magic* by Natalie Lloyd**

Felicity Juniper Pickle and her family have moved around a lot because her mom doesn't like to stay in one place very long. Felicity, sister Frannie Jo, and dog Biscuit end up in Midnight Gulch, her mom's hometown, to live with Aunt Cleo for a while. Felicity has a hard time getting out what she wants to say in public, but not when she's collecting words. Her journal is amazing! What Felicity wants more than anything is a friend, which is a hard thing when you keep moving. In Midnight Gulch, Felicity gets a great friend in Jonah who - SPOILER ALERT - secretly does good deeds for others but insists that the deeds are anonymous. A great mystery is unraveled by the end of the book about the 'curse' on Midnight Gulch.

A great book to study vocabulary and forgiveness.

**Reading Level** Lexile 680

**\*Appropriate for** grades 4 and up

**Genre** hybrid of realistic fiction and fantasy



### Greeley Center Mission

We are Catholic educators who challenge Catholic schools to be excellent because they are essential in preparing students for the future.