



Independent Reading

Independent Reading is a time when students self-select and independently read appropriate books. **Independent Reading** is the component of the balanced literacy program that provides opportunities for students to read from self-selected and teacher-selected materials. Students **must have time each day** to achieve fluency by practicing on appropriate materials. It is also important for students to have opportunities to browse well illustrated books that are of personal interest, but are too difficult for the students to read independently.

Independent Reading provides an opportunity to apply strategies that are introduced and taught during teacher read aloud, shared reading, and guided reading. When materials are appropriate and students can read independently, they become confident, motivated and enthusiastic about their ability to read.

Children make great gains in their own learning when they are given some control and ownership of the reading process. The self-selection process of **Independent Reading** places the responsibility for choosing books in the hands of the student. This teaches them that they have the ability to choose their own reading materials and that reading by themselves is a valuable and important activity.

It is important to allow students the opportunity to choose what they like at the same time encouraging them to select a variety of literature as well as to select materials at their independent level. Independent level means 95% to 100% accuracy as defined by running records. These materials should be able to be read without teacher support. It is at the independent level that comprehension, vocabulary extension, and fluency are improved. During **Independent Reading** the teacher holds brief individual conferences with a few children a day about their book.