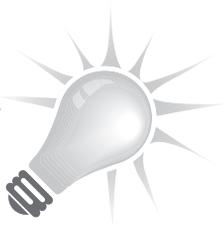


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# SECTION 1

## **Guiding Reading Response in Your Classroom**



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# An Introduction **1**

**“I want to teach my students to do well on the test, but I’m against the idea of ‘teaching to the test.’”**

**“I can keep them reading, but they can’t answer those test questions!”**

**“How do I get from a list of questions to helping my students truly understand how to answer those questions?”**

**“My students don’t even understand the vocabulary in the questions!”**

**Have you had these thoughts? Maybe you’ve had these conversations with your colleagues, with your friends, or even with your administrators?**

Read on and discover a process that will give your students the skills to take apart any reading response question and answer in organized, clear paragraphs. Your students will be prepared to answer comprehension questions both in daily classwork and on standardized tests!

## Overview

### Organized Into 30-Minute Lessons

10 minutes: Teacher introduces the response sheet and leads class discussion

10 minutes: Teacher reads selected text aloud or students read silently

10 minutes: Students respond to the question

### Includes 102 Questions

Teacher chooses question order, format, and schedule

### Provides Built-In Scaffolding

Starts with teacher reading aloud

Progresses to teacher reading aloud while students read along silently

Accelerates to students reading independently

### Prepares Students for Statewide Assessment

### Supports Standards-Based Learning

### Builds Reading and Writing Skills Simultaneously

### Meets Needs for Teacher Flexibility

- Useful across content areas in any class
- Language arts, reading
- GT, ESLL, special education
- **Wherever you need it!**

## Development

Faced with the tremendous task of helping fifth graders broaden their reading response capabilities, I developed a process that teaches students to analyze any constructed response question and synthesize their answers into clear, well-supported paragraphs. *102 Reading Response Lessons* applies this process by dismantling 102 questions into ready-made, easy-to-teach lessons.

This reading response process consists of five steps that take 30 minutes:

1. Students review the vocabulary words on the response sheets with their teacher. Each response sheet addresses one constructed response question, so the students gain an understanding of each word and begin to plan how to respond.
2. The class reviews the Reading Response Rubric together so expectations are clear about what should be included in the students' responses.
3. The teacher reads an appropriate book aloud. The students progress to reading texts independently. The 102 lessons include questions that address all three genres: narrative, informational, and functional. Chapter 6 includes suggested texts for each question type.
4. Each student writes his or her response with the support of the response sheet and the rubric.
5. The teacher guides the students in self-assessment using the rubric. Chapter 7 contains examples of quality work.

After applying this process of written response, my students' response writing skills improved considerably, as evidenced by their rubric scores. The rubric provides an authentic assessment tool for teachers to document their students' progress.

My students have become accustomed to breaking down each question for understanding, responding in a clearly written paragraph, and assessing their own work. These are higher-order thinking skills that today's students need to succeed.

The data collection charts in Chapter 5 facilitate the management of assessment data.

### **Development of the Process**

I created *102 Reading Response Lessons* while working with my fifth-grade students. I started by reading picture books aloud and analyzing a few reading response questions on the board. The students listed synonyms for the words in the question. We then discussed what the question meant and what a good answer would include.

The first constructed response question I chose was "Explain how the author's message connects to your own life" because *author's message* is mentioned specifically in the state standards of Hawai'i, where

I teach. After reading my students' responses, I realized that we would need to repeat the exercise several times before they could really grasp the meaning of *author's message*. We repeated the question a total of five times before my students were writing quality responses.

I found that using picture books with explicit authors' messages supported my students' understanding. *The Berenstain Bears and Too Much TV* by Stan and Jan Berenstain has an explicit author's message. After using passages with very clear authors' messages, the students were able to succeed with passages in which the author's message was more difficult to infer.

In developing our rubric, my students and I determined that a quality response would show an understanding of the question, begin with a thesis statement, and include at least three supporting details from the book. Although I believe that what students have to say is far more important than their punctuation, spelling, and grammar, we included conventions criteria because responses have to be readable.

As I shared this process with my colleagues, they encouraged me to publish the process so other teachers and students could benefit from it as well.