

CAFE Book Study

Chapter 1 – *Introduction: The Beginnings of the CAFE Menu Assessment System*

- Reflect on your current teaching practice. How do you differentiate reading instruction for your students to ensure each child is receiving instruction at their level?
- What reading assessment do you currently use? How do you use this assessment to inform your instruction and set student goals?
- The CAFE Menu of strategies reflects the skills we've researched and used in our own classrooms. Look through the strategies on the menu. Visit www.thedailycafe.com and search under the CAFE link for the Common Core alignment to your grade level. Peruse the Menu, Common Core Standards, and your State Standards; reflect.
- Pgs. 6 – 8 highlight the core elements of the CAFE system: the conferring notebook, individual conferences, small-group instruction, and purposeful whole group instruction. How does this compare to your current reading block?
- Good-fit books are essential to productive independent reading. What can you do to get good-fit books in the hands of your students? How do you define a “good-fit” book?
- The end of Ch. 1 discusses the concept of *instructional fairness*. What does *instructional fairness* mean to you?

Chapter 2 – *The CAFE Notebook and Record-Keeping Forms*

- The beginning of Chapter 2 gives a glimpse of the different methods Gail and Joan have tried in keeping anecdotal records. What do you currently use to keep record of student progress? What are the benefits and challenges of what you currently do?
- Reading this chapter helps with understanding what is to be included in the conferring notebook, however just as we use hands on teaching with our students, it helps us solidify new information when we are hands on ourselves. It would be most beneficial to the reader to find a 1 – 1 ½ inch binder, use the CD in the back of the book or visit www.thedailycafe.com, to print the correct forms, and put together a conferring notebook for use in the classroom.

Chapter 3 – *CAFE Step-by-Step: The First Days of School*

- At the beginning of the year, the CAFE board should be up with the headings posted, but no strategies on the board. This is because the children's learning must be anchored to the strategy prior to it being posted. Figure 3.1 (p.29) highlights the strategies most likely to be introduced by the end of the year with primary students. Examine the CAFE menu, look at your curriculum, and determine what strategies you feel are most essential to your students' learning. Keep in mind student assessment will also impact this decision.

- Pages 30 – 37 highlight three different strategy lessons used on day 1. Read and discuss what you notice taking place during these lessons. Pages 31-32 list possible choices for 1st day read-alouds. What texts will you use on the first day?
- Pages 39-47 introduce the seven steps from assessment to instruction. Keeping the assessment you currently use in mind, read through these pages and reflect on what this will look like for you.
- You will need to have a structure in place for the whole class while you are working with students individually. The Daily Five literacy structure is what has worked for us. What will you use?
- It is often helpful to have a list such as the one in figure 3.2 (p.39) when using the seven steps the first few times. (Page 153 provides sample need and strategies to get you started.) Practice this process with 2-3 students and then reflect on what took place. What did you learn about the students? How does this process differ from your past practice? What benefits do you foresee will come from using this process, along with the conferring notebook?

Chapter 4 – *Conferring with Children*

- Prior to reading chapter four, think about your idea of conferencing with children. Write down or discuss with colleagues: What do you envision the room to look like, feel like, and sound like? What concerns or questions do you have? Then, read chapter four and revisit your initial thoughts. Has your thinking changed? What questions do you still have?
- Chapter four presents the seven elements of successful conferences (p. 57 – 67). Read and reflect on this section, use p. 151 as a guide, grab your notebook and practice conferring with 2-3 children. Reflect on the conferences you held. How long did each conference take? Did you complete all seven steps? What did you find most difficult? How do you see this working in your daily routine?

Chapter 5 – *Eavesdropping on Some Conferences*

- This chapter provides nine examples of conferences from different goals at different levels. Using p. 151 as a guide, read each scenario and see if you are able to find the various elements in each conference as Gail and Joan confer with students and “coach towards a target”. Highlighting each element will support you in understanding the whole picture.
- A few of the conference examples in this chapter provide a picture of the conferring form after the conference is over (figures 5.1 – 5.4). Select an example that does not have a form pictured, and practice on a form as though you were the teacher in the example. What would you write down?

Chapter 6 – *Whole-Class Instruction*

- Reflect on your current whole-group instruction time. How much of your day is spent teaching whole group? How long is one lesson from start to finish? How much of the lesson are you teaching and how much of the lesson are students doing?
- Whole group CAFE lessons are driven by assessments, one-on-one conferring, and small-group observations (p.89). The goal is to plan whole-group lessons around skills and strategies that a majority of our students need assistance with. Looking at your data, your individual students, and

your small groups, what strategies do you find will be most beneficial for whole-group instruction in your classroom?

- Review the whole-class lesson elements (p.95-97). How does this compare with the way you currently teach whole-group lessons? How can you integrate these elements into your current teaching practice? What adaptations need to be made?

Chapter 7 – *Strategy Groups*

- Reflect on the following statement found on page 107, “Why not start grouping kids together by strategy need rather than reading level?” What would this look like?
- What is the true meaning of “flexible” groups? What does it look like? How does it compare to your current practice?
- Think of a time you have been “grouped” and it was not a good fit for you. How did you feel? Were you motivated to do your best or were you discouraged?
- View figure 7.2 (p. 112). (You will notice it is very similar to the form you viewed on p.151.) Using this form, read a few *sample strategy groups* (beginning on p.116) and highlight the elements of *coaching towards a target* that you find. Then, use a strategy group form to practice filling out what you would include when coaching a small group.

Last Words – *The Never-Ending Stories of CAFE – Ours and Yours*

- In this short entry, Gail and Joan speak of the advantage to living in the digital age where new thoughts, ideas, and learnings can continue to be shared ~ even after publication of the text. They encourage readers to visit their website, www.thedailycafe.com to read and view some of their latest thinking. This website has a plethora of resources available, some open to the public and some for those who subscribe. Take a few minutes to visit this site, sign up for the *free tip of the week*, and view all of the additional material this site provides. New information is added weekly so be sure to check back frequently!

Appendix –

- View the many forms included in this section, along with the CD. Pay close attention to the *Ready Reference Guides*, as they will provide a deeper understanding of each strategy and ideas to use in teaching the strategy. Visit www.thedailycafe.com and under the CAFE heading, view the *Book Look* and the *Lit Lesson* links to see how various texts are used with these strategies.