A Core Curriculum Guide for

Penguin Young Readers

A Leveled Reader Program for Beginning Readers

Guided Reading Leveling System

Lesson Plans for Use in Schools

Highlights Popular Fiction and Nonfiction Titles in the Series

Aligns to Common Core State Standards
Penguin Young Readers takes you from A-B-C to Mastery! In Penguin’s comprehensive leveled reading program, teachers can identify books for every reader. You can use the assortment of titles in a sequence of texts exploring the same topic or bundle titles together for a classroom unit.

In this brochure, we are providing twelve lesson plans to use in conjunction with the Penguin Young Readers program. Written by teachers for teachers, this digest provides the proper tools you’ll need to integrate the books into your school day as soon as you are able!

EACH PLAN HAS:

- The book’s Guided Reading Level and corresponding Penguin Young Readers Level
- The book’s reading level label: emergent, progressing, transitional, or fluent
- A step-by-step guide to conducting the lesson, broken out into “before,” “during,” and “after” reading prompts
- Teacher prompts to conduct a guided reading of each text
- Additional Penguin Young Readers titles that can be used within the context of the lesson
- Activities to extend the lesson after reading, helping readers build comprehension
- The specific Common Core State Standards addressed in each lesson

We know that you will find this brochure both accessible and resourceful, and we look forward to hearing from you as you integrate the Penguin Young Readers books into your classroom libraries!

Your friends from Penguin School & Library

This guide was written by Jerry Michael, M.A., Lara Galicia, M.A.T., and Frances Collins, M.A.T. Jerry has been involved in literacy education for more than twenty years as a classroom teacher, literacy coach, consultant, and school administrator and uses these experiences to help educators link quality children’s literature to meaningful curriculum goals. He is currently the principal at Willard Elementary School in Evanston, Illinois, and is the coauthor of Can You Hear Me Now?: Applying Brain Research and Technology to Engage Today’s Students. Lara and Frances have taught kindergarten, first, and second grades in a Chicago suburb. They are passionate about guiding young children to think critically about the world around them and their place in it. They have served as literacy teacher leaders in their district, and their writing has been published in the Illinois Association for Gifted Children’s journal.

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WHEN TINY WAS TINY

by Cari Meister and illustrated by Rich Davis

In this sweet story about a boy and his puppy, the author utilizes a back-and-forth pattern to share the similarities and differences that emerge as the tiny puppy grows into a very large dog.

BEFORE READING:
- Set a purpose: Today we are going to read When Tiny Was Tiny. This is a story about a boy and his growing puppy.
- Ask the students to point to the title and the author.
- Discuss puppies/pets briefly to activate background knowledge.
- Take a picture walk. Ask the students to make predictions based on the illustrations.
- Review a selection of high-frequency words from the text, such as this, when, my, was, and still.

DURING READING:
- Read aloud page 5. Model pointing to each word as the word is read.
- Discuss the story by asking questions, such as: (page 9). Let’s pause in our reading and check that we understand the story so far. Can you describe some of the things Tiny did because he was small? (page 18). Let’s make sure that we understand the story up to this point. Can you add to your description of the things Tiny did because he was small? Did that change as he grew?
- Reinforce recognition of high-frequency words.

AFTER READING:
- Discuss how the illustrations also can be used to understand the text. Look at the illustration on pages eighteen and nineteen. The author tells us, “Tiny thinks he is still Tiny.” Let’s use the picture to help us figure out what the author means. Look at the illustration on page twenty-one. The author tells us, “I tell him big is good.” What clues in the picture can help you understand why the boy thinks big is good?

EXTENSION:
- Have students create a Venn diagram showing the similarities and differences between Tiny as a small puppy and Tiny as a big dog.

COMMON CORE STANDARDS ADDRESSED: RL K.1 K.7 RF K.3a K.3c K.4

OTHER SUGGESTED TITLES IN THE PENGUIN YOUNG READERS SERIES:
BAKE, MICE, BAKE!
by Eric Seltzer and illustrated by Natascha Rosenberg

Enjoy reading about a group of mice who spend their day baking and selling cakes and pies.

BEFORE READING:
- Set a purpose: Today we are going to read BAKE, MICE, BAKE. This is a story about a group of mice that bake and sell cakes and pies.
- Ask the students to point to the title and the author.
- Build excitement for this story by explaining that the author has used many rhyming words in the book to help students read accurately and enjoy the rhythm of the story.
- Take a picture walk. Ask the students to make predictions based on the illustrations and to describe the characters they see.

DURING READING:
- Read aloud page 4. Model pointing to each word as the word is read.
- Prompt students to use the pictures and text to retell in their own words how the mice ended their work day. Use the illustrations to help you.
- Discuss the story by asking questions, such as: (page 9) Let’s pause in our reading and check that we understand the story so far. Can you describe where our story takes place? What has happened in the story so far? (page 21) Let’s make sure that we understand the story up to this point. What have the mice been doing in the story? (Prompt for character names and specific details.)
- Reinforce recognition of high-frequency words.

AFTER READING:
- Ask students to recall what they read:
  Retell in your own words how the mice ended their work day.

EXTENSION:
- Have students draw and write about how they begin their days, what they do in the middle of their days, and how they end their days.

COMMON CORE STANDARDS ADDRESSED: RL K.1, K.7, RF K.3a, K.3c

OTHER SUGGESTED TITLES IN THE PENGUIN YOUNG READERS SERIES:

TURTLE AND SNAKE GO CAMPING
by Kate Spohn

In this story, two friends, Turtle and Snake, decide to go camping. They venture out and discover camping can be a little frightening. The two friends return home to the “perfect spot to camp.”

BEFORE READING:
- Set a purpose: Today we are going to read Turtle and Snake Go Camping. This is a story about two friends, a snake and a turtle, who have decided to go camping.
- Ask the students to point to the title and the author.
- Discuss camping briefly to activate background knowledge.
- Take a picture walk. Ask the students to make predictions based on the illustrations.
- Review a selection of blends the students will encounter as they read, such as sl, tr, spl, br, and sp.

DURING READING:
- Read aloud page 4. Model pointing to each word as the word is read.
- Discuss the story by asking questions, such as: (page 14) Let’s pause in our reading and check that we understand the story so far. Can you describe where our story takes place? What has happened in the story so far? (page 23) Let’s make sure that we understand the story up to this point. What has happened? How did the characters react?
- Reinforce accurate reading of words with blends.

AFTER READING:
- Discuss how the illustrations also can be used to understand the text: Look at the illustrations on pages four and five. What details has the illustrator included to help us understand how Turtle and Snake prepared for their trip? Look at the illustration on pages thirty and thirty-one. Turtle and Snake think this is “the perfect spot to camp.” What do you think they mean?

COMMON CORE STANDARDS ADDRESSED: RL K.1, K.7, RF K.3a, K.3c, K.4

OTHER SUGGESTED TITLES IN THE PENGUIN YOUNG READERS SERIES:
**WATER**

by Emily Neye and illustrated by Cindy Revell

Find out how much fun water can be as it changes from ice to water to steam.

**BEFORE READING:**
- Set a purpose: Today we are going to read a book called Water to learn about the water cycle.
- Ask the students to tell you what they know about the water cycle to activate their background knowledge.
- Review a selection of verbs with the -ing ending that appear in the book, such as drinking, cooking, and cleaning.

**DURING READING:**
- Discuss the story by asking questions, such as: (page 11) Let’s pause in our reading and check that we understand the book so far. What have we learned about water? What information do you think the author will share next?
- Reinforce accurate decoding of inflectional endings as needed.

**AFTER READING:**
- Support the students in identifying the main idea within the text: What was this book mostly about?
- Ask students to look back in the text and use Post-it notes to mark each stage of the water cycle. Provide opportunities for each student to share the sections they marked.

**EXTENSION:**
- Have students create a diagram of the water cycle using the text and their Post-it notes.

**COMMON CORE STANDARDS ADDRESSED:** RL 1.1 1.2 1.7 RF 1.2c 1.3f 1.4

**OTHER SUGGESTED TITLES IN THE PENGUIN YOUNG READERS SERIES:**
- Turtles
- Spider’s Lunch
- The Garden That We Grew
- Frogs
- My Tooth Is Loose!
- My Friend is a Cheerleader
- Pal and Sail
- What a Hungry Puppy!

**MADELINE AND HER DOG**

by John Bemelmans Marciano

Madeline’s dog takes a bath and then… she gets dirty all over again! Will that dog ever get back in the bath?

**BEFORE READING:**
- Set a purpose: Today we are going to read Madeline and Her Dog. This is a story about a girl who’s dog is always finding a way to get dirty.
- Activate background knowledge: What do you know about giving a dog a bath?
- Ask the students to point to the title and the author.
- Take a picture walk. Ask the students to describe what the dog is doing.
- Review -est and -ed endings.

**DURING READING:**
- Read page 5 aloud to the students. Prompt students: What did you notice about my voice as I was reading the text? What did you notice in my reading when I got to the end marks?
- Discuss the story by asking questions such as: (page 23) Why do people on the street think Genevieve is stinky? (page 32) Why does Genevieve end up in the bath again? (page 15) Why do people on the street think Genevieve is stinky?
- Reinforce reading of words with -ed and -ing endings.

**AFTER READING:**
- Discuss the story. Ask students to find three clues in the illustrations or text that tell the reader how Genevieve feels about being clean.
- Ask students to share connections (i.e., feelings about taking a bath).

**EXTENSION:**
- Have students create a story map of the important events in the beginning, middle, and end of the story.

**COMMON CORE STANDARDS ADDRESSED:** RL 1.1 1.3 1.7 RF 1.2c 1.3f

**OTHER SUGGESTED TITLES IN THE PENGUIN YOUNG READERS SERIES:**
- Turtles
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- My Friend is a Cheerleader
- Pal and Sail
- What a Hungry Puppy!
THE VERY LONELY FIREFLY
by Eric Carle

In this sweet story, Eric Carle uses a repetitive structure to take readers on a journey with a lonely firefly in search of companionship.

PROGRESSING READER
- Longer sentences
- Simple dialogue
- Picture and context clues
- More in-depth plot development
- Nonfiction and fiction

Teacher Prompts to Support Progressing Readers During Guided Reading
- Use the middle or end of the word to help you.
- Let’s chunk the word.
- Use the picture as you reread.
- Does it make sense?
- Can you read that group of words together smoothly?
- Read it like the character might say it.
- Is there another word you know that might help you?

BEFORE READING:
- Set a purpose: Today we are going to read The Very Lonely Firefly. This is a story about a lonely firefly who is searching for some friends.
- Activate background knowledge: What do you know about fireflies? Have you ever felt lonely? What did you do?
- Ask the students to point to the title and the author.
- Take a picture walk.
- Review a selection of words from the text with -ing endings, such as searching, flickering, shining, glowing, and reflecting. Model taking off the ending as a decoding strategy.

DURING READING:
- Read aloud page 6. Prompt students: Notice how I am reading the text with my eyes. Notice the way I pause in my reading at the end marks.
- Discuss the story by asking questions, such as: [page 12] Let’s pause in our reading and check that we understand the story. Who is the story about? What has happened to the firefly so far? [page 27] Let’s make sure that we understand the story. What has happened? How does the writing pattern in the story help us understand the story?
- Reinforce chunking of multisyllabic words and/or words with -ing endings.

AFTER READING:
- Discuss the story: How did the story end for the lonely firefly? How did the author change the structure of the story at the end?
- Discuss the genre: Was this book fiction or nonfiction? What are some text clues to support that? How would this book have been different if it were an informational (nonfiction) book about fireflies?

EXTENSION:
- Explore the process Eric Carle uses to make tissue paper collages by viewing the available slideshows at www.eric-carle.com. Have students use his process to create their own tissue paper collages.

OTHER SUGGESTED TITLES IN THE PENGUIN YOUNG READERS SERIES:
- The Tale of Benjamin Bunny
- Process for a Day
- Good Night, Good Night

OTHER SUGGESTED TITLES IN THE PENGUIN YOUNG READERS SERIES:
- The Very Hungry Caterpillar
- The Grouchy Ladybug
- The Very Quiet Cricket

Pearl and Wagner: One Funny Day
by Kate McMullan and pictures by R. W. Alley

It’s April Fools’ Day, and Wagner is not amused. His friend Pearl and his teachers at school are having fun playing pranks, but Wagner is not enjoying the day. Will Wagner catch the April Fools’ Day spirit?

BEFORE READING:
- Set a purpose: Today we are going to read Pearl and Wagner: One Funny Day. We are going to read to find out if Wagner has fun on April Fools’ Day.
- Build background knowledge: What do you know about April Fools’ Day? Have you ever tried to trick someone?
- Take a picture walk. Ask the students to make predictions using the illustrations as support.

DURING READING:
- Discuss the story by asking questions to support students in retelling the story and including key events. [page 16] Let’s pause in our reading and check that we understand the text so far. Can you retell the story to me up to this point? How does Wagner feel about these April Fools’ Day jokes? Do other characters feel differently? Why do you think that is? [page 25] Let’s make sure that we understand the text up to this point. What has happened in the story? Why do you think Pearl does not want to be Wagner’s partner? How does Wagner feel about that? [page 39] What has happened to make Wagner feel blue? Who tries to help Wagner feel better? How?

AFTER READING:
- Discuss the story: Guide students in retelling the story, focusing on the change that occurs in Wagner’s feelings at the end of the story.
- Have students share any connections they have to the story/characters.

EXTENSION:
- Have students write a summary of the story.
- Have students write an extension of the story: How did Wagner’s friends and teacher react to his April Fools’ Day joke?
- Include dialogue.

OTHER SUGGESTED TITLES IN THE PENGUIN YOUNG READERS SERIES:
- Cork and Fuzz
- The Tale of Benjamin Bunny
- Process for a Day

COMMON CORE STANDARDS ADDRESSED: RL 1.3 1.5 1.7 RF 1.3b 1.3e 1.3f 1.4

COMMON CORE STANDARDS ADDRESSED: RL 2.1 2.6 2.7 RF 2.3a 2.4
OTHER SUGGESTED TITLES IN THE PENGUIN YOUNG READERS SERIES:

- Shocks!
- Pouch Babies
- Big Cats
- Chomp! Chomp!
- Why Do You Meow?

COMMON CORE STANDARDS ADDRESSED: RL 2.2 2.4 2.5 2.6 2.7 RF 2.3

TRANSITIONAL READER

- Multisyllable and compound words
- More dialogue
- Different points of view
- More complex storylines and characters
- Greater range of genres

Teacher Prompts to Support Transitional Readers During Guided Reading:

- Reread. What would make sense?
- Read ahead and think about what would make sense.
- Break the word into parts you know.
- Use what you know about the spelling pattern _____ to help you.
- Do you know a word that is similar?
- Can you read this the way you might say it when talking?
- Let’s think about the sound these vowels make together.

BEFORE READING:

- Set a purpose:
  Today we are going to read Pouch Babies by Ginjer L. Clarke. Do you know of any animals that have a pouch? What do they use their pouches for?
- Activate background knowledge:
  Today we are going to read about several different kinds of animals with pouches.
- Take a picture walk. Ask the students what they notice about all the headings. Draw their attention to the headings and guide the discussion toward noting that the chapter headings provide a preview of the marsupial discussed in that chapter.

DURING READING:

- Discuss the story by asking questions to support students’ comprehension. (page 8) Before we begin reading, let’s read the chapter heading to get ready. We are going to be reading about kanga and wallabies. At the end of this chapter we are going to discuss the different kinds of kangaroos and wallabies. Be thinking about how they are different and how they are similar. (page 27) Let’s pause in our reading and check that we understand the section of text that we just read. What was this section mostly about? Let’s discuss how koalas and wombats are different. How are they the same? Why do you think the author chose to group them together in this chapter?

AFTER READING:

- Chapter 4 groups a few animals together as “miscellaneous marsupials.” Why do you think the author put these marsupials together in this chapter? What do these marsupials have in common? How are they different from the other marsupials?

EXTENSION:

- Students will choose two marsupials to compare using a Venn diagram and specific examples from the text.
- The author ends by comparing marsupial mothers to human mothers. Have students write an expository paragraph that describes this relationship with specific details from the text and examples from their own lives.
**ANNA SEWELL’S BLACK BEAUTY** 4/N adapted by Cathy East and illustrated by Christina Wald

Black Beauty is a beautiful black horse with a white mark on his forehead. He works hard, but keeps getting sold to new owners. Will Black Beauty ever find a good home?

**BEFORE READING:**
- Set a purpose for reading: Today we are going to read Anna Sewell’s Black Beauty. The story is told by the horse, Black Beauty. As we read, we will be stopping when we notice the use of descriptive language that helps us visualize and understand the story, especially when settings and characters are unfamiliar to us.
- Take a picture walk: This story takes place long ago. Sometimes when we read books that take place long ago, we really need to rely on the illustrations to help us understand the text. Let’s do a picture walk and discuss the information we can get from the illustrations.

**DURING READING:**
- As the students read, discuss how the descriptive language helps them understand the story. Possible words to draw their attention to are: large, pleasant meadow (page 30), kind eyes (page 34), bitter cold (page 43), grow young.
- Discuss how the illustrations help the reader understand when the story is taking place. What do these illustrations tell you about the setting of the story?

**AFTER READING:**
- Assess the students’ comprehension by discussing the challenges Black Beauty faced during his life.
- Discuss the author’s craft: This story was told from Black Beauty’s point of view. Why do you think that the author chose to write it that way? How would this story be different if it were told from another character’s point of view?

**EXTENSION:**
- Have students write a poem from the point of view of a pet or animal in the zoo.

**COMMON CORE STANDARDS ADDRESSED:** RL 3.1 3.4 3.7 RF 3.3 3.4

**I AM ROSA PARKS**

by Rosa Parks with Jim Haskins and illustrated by Wil Clay

One day in 1955, Rosa Parks refused to give up her seat on a bus. Her brave act helped start the civil rights movement. Rosa worked hard to help African American people. This is her story in her own words.

**BEFORE READING:**
- Create and display an anchor chart with the headings Initial Thinking and Confirmed Thinking.
- Set a purpose and activate background knowledge: Today we are going to read I Am Rosa Parks. We will find out many things that Rosa Parks did to help African American people during the civil rights movement. Please read the table of contents. What chapter seems the most interesting to you? Why? Let’s start a list of things we think that we know about Rosa Parks, the civil rights movement, segregation, and/or boycotts. Use Post-it notes to write down your thoughts, and put them on the side of the chart marked Initial Thinking. As we read today, you will stop at the end of each chapter and move your Post-it notes to the Confirmed Thinking side if you confirm your thinking by reading the text, a text feature, or an illustration.

**DURING READING:**
- As students come to the end of each chapter, guide them to reread their original Post-it notes and write new ones in order to monitor their comprehension. Explain that they should write new learnings on Post-it notes for the chart and move any Post-it notes of their prior thinking if it was confirmed by the text, a text feature, and/or an illustration.

**AFTER READING:**
- Celebrate all their learning on the chart.
- Discuss the text: Have the students answer questions about Rosa Parks, such as: Why did Rosa Parks refuse? What happened when she refused? Why was Rosa Parks ordered to give up her seat? What did many African American people do when they heard what happened to Rosa?

**EXTENSION:**
- At the end of the book, Rosa suggests that there is still work to be done. Invite students to list several things that they personally could do to help make their community a better place.

**COMMON CORE STANDARDS ADDRESSED:** RL 3.1 3.4 3.7 RF 3.3 3.4

**OTHER SUGGESTED TITLES IN THE PENGUIN YOUNG READERS SERIES:**

- ALICE'S ADVENTURES IN WONDERLAND
- TRUE BLUE
- TITANIC: The Story Lives On
- SABRETOOTH CAT

- Other titles available at penguinyoungreaders.com

- PenguinClassroom

- @PenguinClass

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Civil War Sub: The Mystery of the Hunley
by Kate Boehm Jerome and illustrated by Frank Sofo

On a cold, winter night in 1864, the Hunley became the first submarine in the world to sink an enemy ship. But the 40 ft. sub never returned to shore. What happened to the Hunley?

**BEFORE READING:**
- **Set a purpose:** Today we are going to read Civil War Sub: The Mystery of the Hunley. As we read about the first submarine in the world to sink a ship, we will keep notes on significant dates and events in order to create a timeline to show when it was built, when it disappeared, and when it was finally found.
- **Activate background knowledge by asking students what they know about the Civil War and submarines.**
- **Introduce key vocabulary, such as hatch, blockade, and crank.**

**DURING READING:**
- **Explain to the students that they will monitor their own comprehension at the end of each chapter by rereading their notes, making sure that they have included the significant dates and events. Guide them to write additional notes if needed.**

**AFTER READING:**
- **Have students create a timeline using their notes. Invite them to share their timelines. Challenge students to prove why certain dates were included. Provide time for the students to revise their timelines to include any significant dates or events that they may have overlooked.**

**EXTENSION:**
- **Go to www.hunley.org to find out more about the history of this amazing submarine.**
- **Create a poster titled “The Top Ten Reasons You Should Know about the Hunley.”**

**FLUENT READER**
- More advanced vocabulary
- Detailed and descriptive text
- Complex sentence structure
- In-depth plot and character development
- Full range of genres

**Teacher Prompts to Support Fluent Readers During Guided Reading**
- **Does that make sense?**
- **Use the word parts (prefix, suffix) to help you.**
- **Use what you know about the spelling pattern ___ to help you.**
- **Show me the tricky part. What can you do?**
- **Think about what you know about this (character, story, topic).**
- **What can you do to figure out what the word means?**
- **What is the character feeling? How might they say it?**

**COMMON CORE STANDARDS ADDRESSED:** RL 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 3.4, 3.5, RF 3.3c

**OTHER SUGGESTED TITLES IN THE PENGUIN YOUNG READERS SERIES:**

**TITLES BY THEME**
- **NONFICTION TITLES**
- **ANIMALS**
- **POPULAR CHARACTERS**
- **FAVORITE AUTHORS**

**FOR A COMPLETE LIST OF ALL OF OUR LEVELED TITLES, PLEASE VISIT WWW.PENGUINYOUNGREADERS.COM**

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HEAR FROM THE EXPERTS

“I love that there is one more level to help differentiate instruction... not just below, on, and above grade level for my students. The variety of genres were a hit, and the pictures and plot helped to motivate and engage them from beginning to end.”

— Lauren Shea, Reading Specialist

“It is so important for beginning readers to have authentic, interesting text to read & learn from, as found in the Penguin Young Readers!”

— Elizabeth Maine, Literacy Specialist, 1st grade teacher

“I really enjoyed the introduction to each of the books. Namely, listing the sight words enabled me to save precious scanning time because I could focus on preparing lessons that taught comprehension strategies rather than counting how many times various words were used! The pictures were appropriate for the content and gave appropriate clues to emergent readers!”

— Eugenie Armangau, Literacy Specialist, 4th grade teacher

“Many states are adopting the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) in 2014. As a result, a major focus for teachers has been exposing students to complex texts, and especially informational texts. Schools are looking for texts that address the same topic in a unit but build on complexity. These leveled texts appropriately address the foundational reading skills that are part of the CCSS.”

— Mary Hurley, District Elementary Literacy Coach, Department of Curriculum & Instruction

“I can read it myself,’ will be the new slogan in primary classrooms thanks to the careful attention to reading development used to organize titles in the Penguin Young Readers collection.”

— Susannah Richards, Associate Professor of Education, Reading/Language Arts, and Children’s Literature, Eastern Connecticut State University

“Finally a beginning reader series that has it all. The series is attractively designed and easily recognizable — just look for the Penguin!”


E-mail us at schoolandlibrary@us.penguin.com and let us know what you think of the program and the lesson plans.

Penguin Young Readers are leveled by independent reviewers applying the standards developed by Irene Fountas and Gay Su Pinnell in Matching Books to Readers: Using Leveled Books in Guided Reading, Heinemann, 1999.