

The Literacy Squad Show Notes

02 | How to set up literacy rotations in a K-2 classroom.

Links:

[Running Record Calculator](#) (free online version)

[Teacher Tools Grader app](#)

[Running Record Assistant](#)

Be Prepared

Ensuring you have everything you need to get each student working in their small group is key to not only keeping them on task but also to help ensure you maximise the benefit of each session. This means having everything you need, from worksheets, visuals, graphic organisers, technology, and lesson plans. If you are well prepared, you can focus on getting them working right away and keeping them focused on the task at hand.

Regular Routine

If you want your students to be prepared to work in small groups, it is also important to give them a routine where they expect to be learning in small groups each and every week, preferably about 3 - 5 times a week. In that way, your students are prepared to engage in more personalised instruction and they are in a routine where they know what to expect and what is expected of them. Doing small group instruction regularly is also giving your students regular opportunities to reinforce what they are learning - known as spaced repetition.

“Just Right” Grouping

To help ensure each student gets the most out of each session, it is also really important to place them in the right group that is “just right” for them. The first thing you will need to do is understand where your students are working at, so that you can organise them into ability groups. This will be determined by testing whatever skill you are focusing on, whether it is spelling, grammar, reading or writing. Once you’ve collected enough data, you have what you need to place students into groups where they will be able to learn skills that will help them develop their knowledge and understanding, where what they are learning is not too easy but not too hard, it is just right. This would mean that they are still being challenged but are not bored or frustrated by what they’re learning.

Collect Data

As you work with your students in these ability groups, you will collect information that will let you know how they are learning and what types of learning each student needs in order to further develop their skills. (This will help with your future planning and for making

instructional adjustments when needed). A literacy continuum that illustrates the progression of literacy skills is an excellent tool to help you evaluate where your students need to begin and what targets they need to aim towards.

Keeping On Task

The biggest challenge with small group work is while you are working with a group of students, keeping the other groups on task without you working directly with them. The best way to help ensure that the other groups remain on task is to try and ensure that the activities that you have got them working on is challenging enough to keep them focused, as one of the biggest reasons children get off task is because they are bored or they don't understand what they are doing and even why they are doing it. Some good strategies are to give them activities that require ...

Teacher Rotation

Another important thing to remember is that as your students are working in small groups, keep rotating amongst the groups, checking in on them, and encouraging them as they work, even asking questions to get them thinking more deeply about the topic, or to get them focusing on the task. Encouraging students to look to each other for help is also a good idea, as they won't be as dependent on you, freeing you up to move around more. Also remember, you, as their teacher, have the most influential effect on how your students learn and if they see you are interested in what they are learning, they become more interested in what they are doing.