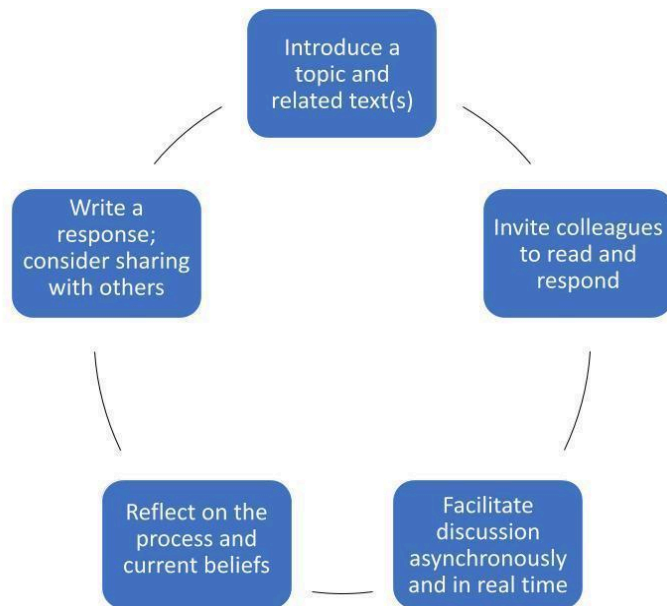


May 2023 Professional Conversation:

Trusting Readers



Professional Conversation Guide

Date, Time, Location: Tuesday, May 9, 2023, 5:30pm CST, [Zoom](#)

Topic (Idea, Issue, Challenge): Independent Reading

Text(s): Introduction, Part 1, and Chapter 1 of [Trusting Readers: Powerful Practices for Independent Reading](#) by Jennifer Scoggin and Hannah Schneewind (Heinemann, 2021)

Guiding question: When you have trusted readers, what is the best thing that has happened?

Discussion intention:

- To build knowledge and awareness around this topic
- To practice coaching skills while engaging in conversation around professional topics



Template developed by Matt Renwick for the [Read by Example](#) community.

Learning Progression

1. Review purpose and norms for professional conversation
 - Purpose: To build knowledge about literacy and to model collaborative leadership
 - Norms (Source: [Peloton Group Newsletter/Those Who Listen, Change the World](#))
 - Dialogue should be a basic attitude.
 - Create safe spaces.
 - Include all relevant parties.
 - **In a dialogue, you must listen.**
 - TIPS FOR GOOD LISTENING:
 - Listen to what is being said. Do not let your own thoughts and prejudices interfere with your ability to listen. Your perceptions can easily lead you to judge others long before they have finished speaking, and thereby limit your listening skills.
 - Do not give advice unless it is required.
 - Do not interrupt. Let the person finish talking.
 - Do not capture the conversation by drawing parallels to your own experience, e.g., "I have experienced that too!" Allow the other person their time; you will get yours.
 - Be empathetic and show understanding for the other person's situation. Being empathetic means that you understand the other person's feelings, without necessarily feeling them yourself.
 - Do not presume to know other people's opinions
 - Let everyone share their experiences.
 - Ask questions.
 - Talk about difficult topics.
 - Contribute to forgiveness and reconciliation.
2. Inclusion activity: *What are you reading right now?*
3. Guests introduce themselves.
4. Share your initial responses to the text, or expand on what was posted in the asynchronous discussion thread.
5. Build on what others are saying through questioning and clarifications.
6. At the end of the conversation, ask for one one takeaway or closing thought.
7. After the conversation, you are invited to write about what was learned today, reflecting on what you believe to be true and how you will lead today.



Conversation with Jennifer Scoggin and Hannah Schneewind

Date, Time: Tuesday, May 9, 2023, 5:30pm CST

Zoom link:

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/87979353195?pwd=MDVPaG5PY29DTjYrK09QdEh2OWdyZz09>

Post any questions you have below, left column. We will document responses during the conversation.

Questions	Responses
What is the goal of independent reading, and why does this goal so often get lost in instruction?	Goal: to become skilled and strategic readers; too often becomes something to do at the last 15 minutes of the day. Cannot make a student love reading; only can create the conditions for students to love reading. It gets lost because the teacher is trying to also do small groups at that time.
You noted on page 1 that the number one obstacle for teachers trying to increase independent reading time is the demands of the literacy curriculum. At the same time, you share ways to prioritize independent reading that can exist alongside a curriculum resource. How can teachers make better use of their time to increase independent reading?	One scenario is teachers believe they have to follow the resource and don't have time. Another scenario is teachers have the resources and support, but don't feel they can do it well. Scenario #1: One approach is to tuck it within the current program. Another approach is to devote the first ten minutes to conferring with two students per class (h/t Kelly Gallagher). Scenario #2: Teachers ask "What do I do when I confer?" Checking in is a great start. Now make it intentional. Follow a simple structure.
To trust readers, you make the point that teachers need to be trusted as well. What specific actions can leaders take to convey that trust, as well as to ensure that students are being trusted as readers in every classroom?	What has worked: - Trust teachers to make their own schedules, at least some wiggle room. - Give flexibility to switch things around, e.g. flipping reading/writing around. Difficult to balance curriculum coherence and teacher autonomy, but it's important to try as a school leader.



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Additional resources

- [Asynchronous discussion thread](#) (5/4/23)
- [Substack Chat](#) (5/4/23)
- [Video recording of conversation](#) (5/27/23)
- [Audio recording of conversation](#) (5/27/23)



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