

Units of Study for Teaching Reading
A Workshop Curriculum, Middle School Grades

FAQ Video Transcripts

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Question: What advice do you have for teachers who are new to workshop teaching?

Katie Clements:

If you're a teacher who's new to reading workshop, one of the things that we're really excited about is that the books really do provide a lot of professional development for teachers. And so what you'll find is that the *Guide to the Reading Workshop* is one of the books that you'll really want to spend a long time with. It includes some critical content about workshop teaching and how it's designed for the middle school classroom. There are chapters in there that you can dive into and really read in small digestible chunks. So if you're thinking about how you launch the workshop, there's a chapter on that. If you want to get better at small groups and conferences, you can dive in and read that 10 or 15-page chapter to get your mind around that idea. So that's one of the resources that you'll find really useful.

Another thing that you'll find useful as you're getting, and if you're a first time workshop teacher, is the units themselves. What you'll find is that there are welcome letters to kick off each bend of the unit, and that you can read through those and that gives you in just about two pages a super accessible introduction to what the major work in that bend or that part of the unit will be so that you're getting to know that piece of the unit really well. You'll find that there are italics all across the lessons that give you additional teacher tips and coaching, and those will let you into what our thoughts were as we were planning those lessons. They'll give you tips about how you can streamline your mini lessons and keep those short. You'll also find that these units have suggestions for conferring and small group work that you could be doing with kids so that once you get your mini lessons down, you can look to those sections and think about how you can be supporting kids in some more targeted ways. We tried to make sure that those conferring and small group work sections would really target the major needs that your kids would have during a particular unit.

And we've got a lot of related resources that can help you if you're a new teacher to reading workshop and you're trying to wrap your arms around what's out there. So one is that we've got a Facebook group that's available, the Units of Study in Reading and Writing for Middle School. And that's a group that you can go on and post questions that you have about the middle school reading Units of Study, questions you have about getting things started in your classroom, and more. You'll find that within this community there are teachers on there who are super thoughtful who are teaching these Units of Study in their classrooms. There are also the co-authors of the units who will frequently be on there, and they'll be

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commenting on the different questions in that group. There's an archive there that you can search to get answers to a lot of the frequently asked questions that you might have. We also, for the first time, are starting some office hours that you'll have access to. And so these will be the Teachers College Reading and Writing Project office hours that will be held the first and third Thursday of every month from 4:00 to 5:00 p.m. And these will be live conversations via a webinar platform that will give you an opportunity to ask questions and then have them answered. Those will often be moderated either by staff developers or Lucy herself, which should be a treat to hear some of her answers to your burning questions.