



## The Balanced Literacy Classroom

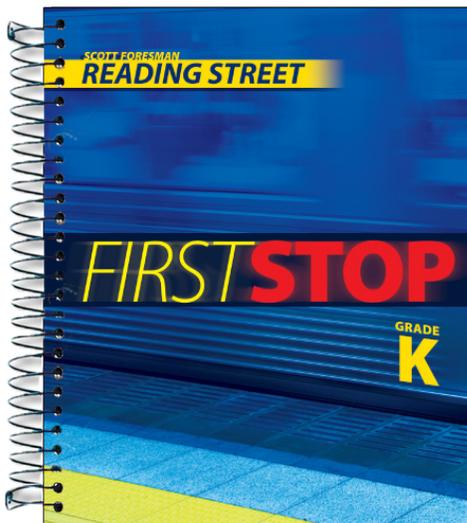
### Introduction

Many schools want the benefits of a well-structured reading program but still want to maintain a balanced literacy classroom with guided reading, reader’s workshop, literature circles, or book studies. Schools also may want to adjust the scope and sequence of a program to match their calendar or testing needs but are not given the resources to make the process manageable. Schools customize their literacy programs because it helps develop students’ strengths and supports their needs. It is a responsive and rewarding way to teach.

On Reading Street and Calle de la Lectura, customizing this approach is possible. Section 7 of First Stop helps teachers create a program that balances direct skill instruction with a variety of approaches to meet students’ needs. Teachers can use the Guide on the Side as a roadmap for research-based instructional routines. The Customize Literacy tab at the back of every Teacher’s Edition provides flexibility to make curricular adjustments and still follow Reading Street with fidelity. This guide explores the information in First Stop, Guide on the Side routines and activities, and each section of the Customize Literacy tab in the Teacher’s Editions to help teachers create a program best suited for their school, themselves, and most importantly, their students.

Contents		Customize Literacy
<b>Section 1 Planning</b>	Pacing Guide Teaching Record Chart	2
<b>Section 2 Instruction</b>	Comprehension Mini-Lessons • Sequence • Author’s Purpose • Literary Elements • Summarize (includes <i>Check One</i> ) Using Multiple Strategies Glossary of Literacy Terms	8
<b>Section 3 Matching Books and Readers</b>	Leveled Reader Skills Chart What <b>Good Readers</b> Do Conversation Starters: Asking Good Questions Connecting Books and Readers	24
<b>Section 4 Building Community</b>	Planning Teacher Study Groups Trial Lessons Books for Teachers	42

### First Stop



In First Stop, teachers learn how to organize and carry out a customized literacy program. Section 7, Customize Literacy on Reading Street, explains that when using assessment tools and observations, teachers learn about students’ strengths and weaknesses. This data allows them to make better grouping decisions. The groups may address strategy and skill instruction, children’s interests, children’s social abilities, or students’ instructional levels. The charts in Section 7, Alignment with DRA2 and Leveled Reader Skills Chart, help match materials and text to groups. Reading Street is aligned with DRA2; use the chart to match Reading Street instruction to DRA2 benchmarks. The Leveled Reader Skills Chart provides Fountas and Pinnell reading levels if teachers are using guided reading groups. This chart also allows teachers to search for text by skill, strategy, vocabulary, and content so

that they can match the right reader to each student. First Stop is a great place to begin when customizing a program, but the Customize Literacy tab in the Teacher’s Editions can be an even greater benefit.

## Guide on the Side

Guide on the Side is a great alternative to the Reading Street Teacher’s Editions. The Teacher’s Editions are divided into two volumes per six week unit. For the balanced literacy teacher, a suggestion is to start the unit in the Teacher’s Edition for the first three weeks of instruction, and then use a balanced literacy approach for the next three weeks. Guide on the Side provides the support needed to teach skills and strategies that correspond to unit objectives. It provides support for progress monitoring, grouping, differentiation, and ELLs. Teachers have research-based strategies, routines, and example lessons at their fingertips. Flip to the skill being taught, such as Main Idea and Details, and there are routines and tips for instruction. Corresponding Reading Street materials are listed, but teachers are free to select their own literature.

## Customize Literacy Tab

There are four sections in the Customized Literacy tab.

### Section 1: Planning

Planning and pacing instruction is always a challenge, especially when trying to meet state standards. The Pacing Guide in the Customize Literacy tab makes this easier. It provides the program’s instructional sequence for the grade. The scope and sequence is designed to use as is, or it can be adjusted to match a calendar, curriculum map, or testing schedule.

Grade 4 READING	UNIT 1					REVIEW WEEK	UNIT 2	
	Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4	Week 5	Week 1	Week 2	
Comprehension Skill	Sequence	Author’s Purpose	Literary Elements (Character, Setting, Plot)	Author’s Purpose	Main Idea/ Supporting Details		Cause/Effect	Draw Conclusions
Comprehension Strategy	Summarize	Questioning	Background Knowledge	Story Structure	Text Structure		Background Knowledge	Story Structure
Vocabulary Skill/ Strategy	Suffixes/ Word Structure	Endings/Word Structure	Multiple-Meaning Words/ Dictionary	Synonyms/ Antonyms Context Clues	Suffixes/ Word Structure		Prefixes & Suffixes/ Word Structure	Unfamiliar Words/ Dictionary-Glossary
Fluency Skill	Expression	Phrasing	Tempo/Rate	Expression	Phrasing		Phrasing	Expression
Spelling/ Word Work	Short Vowels VCCV	Long a and /	Long e and o	Long e	Long u Sounds		Adding -s, -es	Irregular Plurals

Here’s a scenario where the Pacing Guide would be helpful:

*Your school follows a curriculum map. You are a Grade 4 teacher using Reading Street but are also responsible for teaching content in the order outlined by the curriculum map. On the map it states to teach cause and effect at the start of the year since it ties well with social studies content. On the Pacing Guide, you see that cause and effect is the first lesson in Unit 2. As a school, you may decide to teach Unit 2 before Unit 1 to meet the goals of the curriculum map and still follow the program.*

**Section 1 Planning**

**Teaching Record Chart**

This chart shows the critical comprehension skills and strategies you need to cover. Check off each one as you provide instruction.

Reading/Comprehension	DATES OF INSTRUCTION		
Summarize and explain the lesson or message of a work of fiction or its theme.			
Compare and contrast the adventures or exploits of characters (e.g., the tricksters) in traditional and classical literature.			
Explain how the structural elements of poetry (e.g., rhyme, meter, stanzas, line breaks) relate to form (e.g., lyrical poetry, free verse).			
Describe the structural elements particular to dramatic literature.			
Sequence and summarize the plot's main events and describe their influence on future events.			
Describe the interaction of characters including their relationships and the changes they undergo.			
Identify whether the narrator or speaker of a story is first or third person.			
Identify similarities and differences between the events and characters' experiences in a fictional work and the actual events and experiences described in an author's biography or autobiography.			
Identify the author's use of similes and metaphors to produce imagery.			
Read independently for a sustained period of time and paraphrase what the reading was about, maintaining meaning and logical order (e.g., generate a reading log or journal, participate in book talks).			
Explain the difference between a stated purpose and implied purpose in expository texts.			

CL.6 Teaching Records • 2011

Within the Planning section, there is also a Teaching Record Chart. Use this chart as a checklist to mark the dates of instruction for the skills and strategies taught. This record-keeping system allows teachers to document that they are reaching objectives and state standards. It is helpful for report cards, locating a student's work for a specific skill, or when meeting with school administration.

## Section 2: Instruction

There are some schools using guided reading, reader's workshop, literature circles, or book studies as their selected methods of reading instruction. Reading Street and Calle de la Lectura provide opportunities for teachers to break away from the weekly lessons in the Teacher's Editions so they can continue delivering instruction in the format best suited for their class. In addition to Guide on the

Side, the Instruction section of the Customize Literacy tab provides mini-lessons to teach reading skills and strategies. The mini-lessons are not tied to a specific story, so students have opportunities for self-selected reading and teachers can make literary choices that meet students' needs and interests.

You are given suggested texts to use when teaching mini-lessons. These are selections from the Student Editions or leveled readers. You may also want to use the Leveled Reader Database on [readingstreet.com](http://readingstreet.com) or [calledelectura.com](http://calledelectura.com) to locate appropriate texts for your lessons. Or, perhaps you have a story or novel in mind that you'd like to use. The Instruction section allows for flexibility with delivery and text selection while still maintaining program integrity.

It is important to know that not all of a unit's targeted skills and strategies have corresponding mini-lessons, so use the Skills Overview pages in the unit front matter as a guide. Use the blue Read and Comprehend section to see all of the skills and

**Section 2 Instruction**

**Summarize**

**Mini-Lesson**

**Objectives:**

- Develop a summary as a part of an article or story.
- Evaluate the importance of summarizing in this text.
- Develop an awareness of the text's structure.

**Tests for Teaching**

Student Edition

- *Because of Winn-Dixie*, 4.1, pages 26–37
- *Encanto! Pink Dolphin of the Amazon*, 4.2, pages 18–71
- *Jim Thorpe's Super Run*, 4.2, pages 356–371

Leveled Readers

- See pages 22–27 for a list of Leveled Readers.

**Understand the Strategy**

Summarizing means picking out the important ideas in a story or an article and restating them in your own words. Summarizing enables readers to organize information and evaluate the importance of what they read.

**Teach**

Use the **Envision** III lesson on page EI+23 to visually review summarizing.

**Remind students** that summarizing what they read can help them organize and understand what they read and that this can be a helpful study tool. Using a piece of familiar text, model asking questions to identify important information that should be a part of a summary as well as the unimportant ideas. Then, write a summary in your own words.

Questions for Nonfiction	Questions for Fiction
What is the selection about?	What is this story about?
What are the main ideas?	What do the characters want to do?
Which information is important?	What problems do they face and how do they solve the problem in the end? Can they?
Which information is interesting, but not that important? Why?	

**Practice**

Supply students with a text and a good summary of that selection. Have them talk about what parts of the text were important to include and what parts were not important to include and why they thought so. Then provide a new text and have students read the text and write a summary, using student ideas, work together to write a summary all agree on.

**W...** Students have difficulty summarizing.

**Then...** chunk the text for them and have them determine important points and summarize a small portion of the text. Later they can put their summaries together.

**Apply**

Ask students to write a summary of a text on their own. Students can use a graphic organizer to help them organize information for a summary.

**Anchor Chart**

Anchor charts help students make their thinking visible and permanent. With an anchor chart, the group can clarify their thinking about how to use a strategy. Display anchor charts so readers can use them as they read. They may wish or need to review and edit the charts as they gain more experience with strategies. Here is a sample chart for writing a summary.

CL.4 Teaching Records • 2011

**Let's Talk About**

**Good Solutions**

- Pose and answer questions about how you can help a solution to a good solution.
- Make partner comments on how you might reach a good solution.
- Express opinions in words about how good solutions help others.

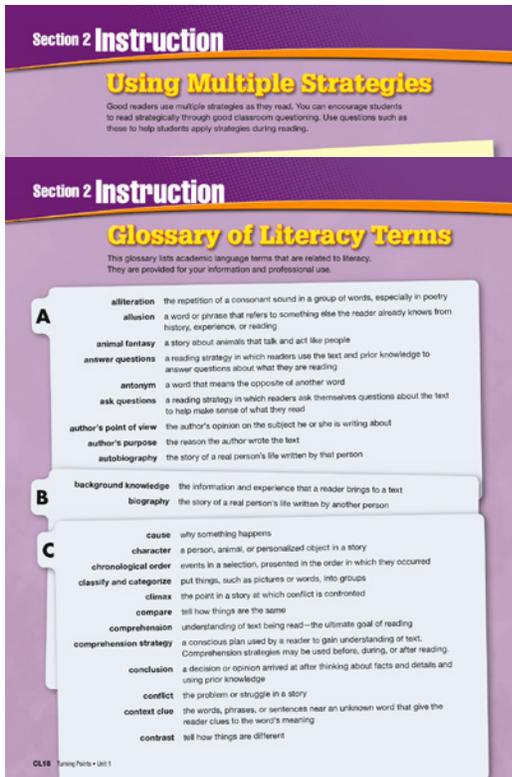
**Oral Vocabulary**

**You've Learned**

**Amazing Words**

232

strategies taught in the unit. Compare these pages to the mini-lessons in the Instruction section of the Customize Literacy tab. By using the Teacher Record Chart in Section 1 of the Customize Literacy tab to track the skills and strategies taught, teachers know which skills and strategies students still need to learn.



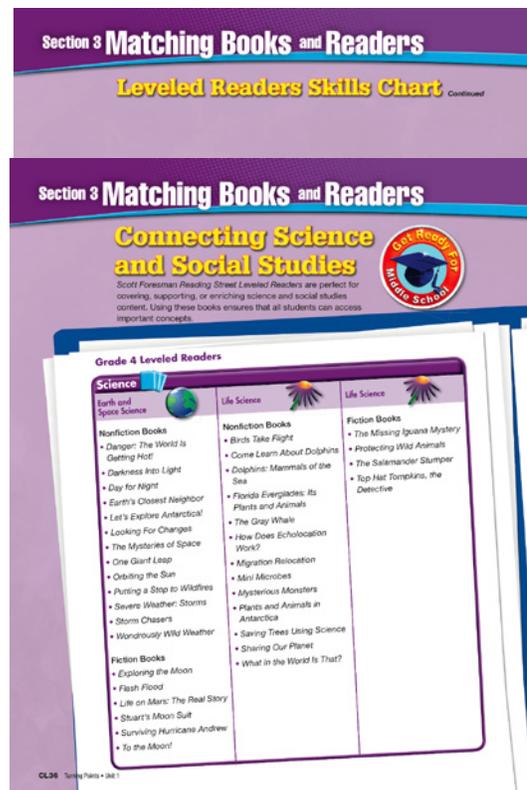
Teachers may want to reinforce some of those skills and strategies with instruction during a main selection reading or through the visuals in the EnVision It! Skills and Strategies Handbook. The Student Editions are great teaching tools as well. Use them in conjunction with the Teacher's Editions or alone as an instructional guide by referring to features such as Let's Talk About, Let's Think About, and Let's Learn It. And, refer to Guide on the Side for additional skill and strategy support.

The Using Multiple Strategies and Glossary of Literacy Terms pages are also in Section 2. The strategies pages provide questions to ask students before, during, and after reading to engage them with the text. The glossary is a good reference tool for professional use. It provides teachers with definitions of academic language in simple words so they can also share this knowledge with their students.

### Section 3: Matching Books and Readers

Section 3 talks about matching text to readers. There are over six hundred leveled readers in the Reading Street and Calle de la Lectura programs. Therefore, there is always an opportunity to match books to students. The Leveled Readers Skills Chart is a list of all the leveled readers for the grade, similar to the chart in First Step. Teachers are given the DRA and Fountas and Pinnell level for each leveled reader. They can also use the Leveled Readers Database on ReadingStreet.com and CalledeLectura.com to assist them in selecting texts for readers. Information about the skills, strategies, and vocabulary for each leveled reader is also listed in the chart so if a student is struggling in a specific area, teachers can find a text that will assist their instruction.

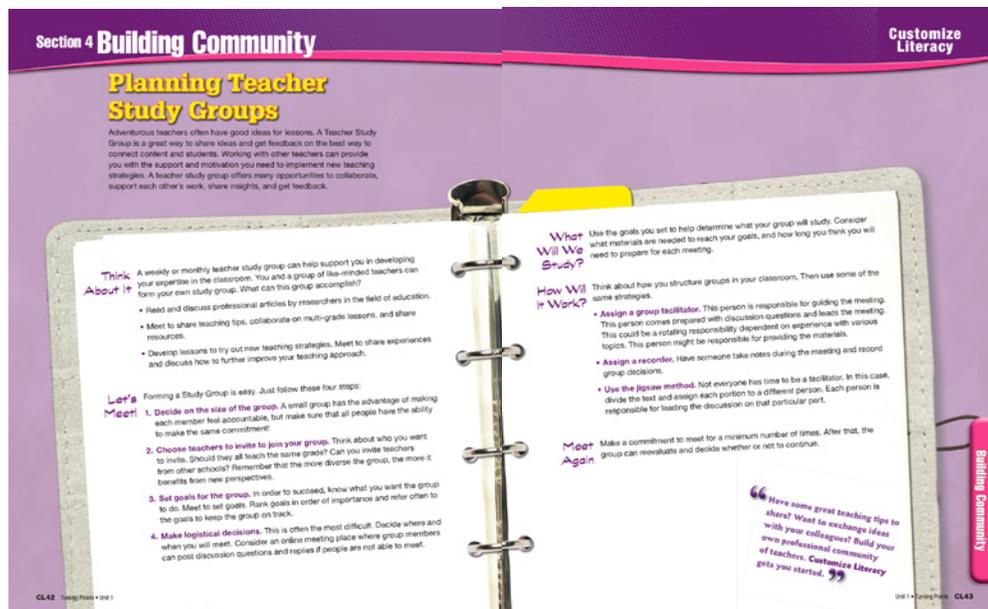
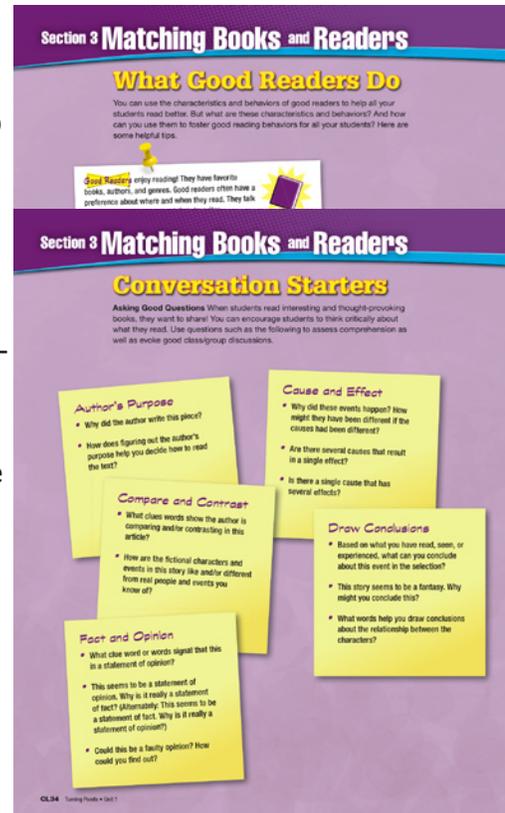
The Connecting Science and Social Studies pages are helpful in matching books to readers as well. Teachers can help students find books on topics that interest them or select reading for the next science or social studies lesson.



Not only is it important for students to have appropriate texts, but they should also use good reading habits. The What Good Readers Do and Conversation Starters pages will help teachers develop proficient readers. Read the good reader tips to see how to develop these behaviors in the classroom and why they are important. Use the conversation starters to engage students with the text. The questions allow students to share information about author's purpose, main idea, and more.

## Section 4: Building Community

The Building Community section is where teachers find information about Professional Development. Here they will find information about designing teacher study groups or professional learning communities. It provides basic guidelines and suggestions such as using a jigsaw method to share out information, a self-evaluation sheet for trial lessons, and professional books to read and discuss. This could be a school-wide effort or done among a grade level. Teachers may even be able to get Continuing Education Units for their efforts. At the very least, they will be able to support and connect with colleagues to discuss educational resources, collaborate, share lessons, and get feedback which is a powerful experience.



## Review

This guide explained that on Reading Street and Calle de la Lectura, teachers can customize their literacy programs. They can adjust the scope and sequence of the program to fit their school's needs or use mini-lessons to teach skills and strategies with the format and literature best suited for the class. Also, teachers can find text that matches students' needs

and support them with questioning strategies and good reading habits. They can get a teacher study group started at their school by following the planning sheet in the Building Community section. It is the flexibility teachers need, while maintaining the Reading Street philosophy.

