

Teachers College Reading and Writing Project  
Second Grade Curriculum Calendar for Reading Workshop  
2007-2008  
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### Overview of Second Grade Curriculum Calendar for Reading

Reading instruction happens moment-to-moment in the classroom as teachers establish the conditions in which children learn to read and to write, to assess what children can do, and then to teach children to grow as readers. Starting in kindergarten and continuing through to higher-education, teaching is always *responsive* to the needs and strengths of our students; it is always *assessment-based*. But this doesn't mean that teachers cannot imagine beforehand how the classroom work will likely evolve across the year.

Of course, many aspects of the teaching of reading will *not* evolve across the year but will instead remain constant. In any workshop, for example, children learn from direct and explicit-strategy instruction (minilessons), from the opportunity to read independently and in partnerships, from small-group, guided reading and strategy instruction, from individual conferences. These ongoing structures (or learning opportunities) remain mostly consistent across the school year and, indeed, across a child's elementary school career.

This curricular calendar suggests one possible way that a second grade reading workshop might unfold across a year. We are mindful that these curricular units probably do not exactly match what any one of us (or of you) might do in any one particular situation, but we are excited about this as a highly recommended template. However, the best curricular calendar is one which is planned by a teacher, working with a group of colleagues (preferably those across a grade level), taking into account the teacher's own areas of expertise and curiosity, his or her students' needs and interests, the standards and assessments to which teachers and children are held accountable, and the school's larger curricular plans.

The Teachers College Reading and Writing Project will provide calendar days and a website to support this curricular calendar.

#### Assessment

At the start of the year, it's crucial that we assess students' independent reading levels and quickly match them to just right books. (A just right book is one that a child can read with at least 96% accuracy, fluency, and general comprehension.) Because we want to move second graders into their just right books as quickly as possible (preferably by the end of the first week of school), you may

Teachers College Reading and Writing Project  
Second Grade Curriculum Calendar for Reading Workshop  
2007-2008  
DRAFT

decide to use their end-of-first grade reading levels as an indicator of what level to immediately assign them. Many teachers assign students to one, sometimes two levels below their end-of-first grade reading levels in order to account for summer reading loss. These levels are to be considered temporary place-holders for the early days of school while you quickly assess your students for yourself. You will probably want to have students read aloud benchmark books that correspond with the levels in your classroom library, while taking running records and paying attention to the types of miscues (ie: meaning, structure, visual) the child makes. After your students read the assessment text, you'll also want to prompt them to retell or ask them some open-ended comprehension questions to assure that they are making meaning as they read. We recommend the Teachers College Reading and Writing Project Reading Assessments for this process. You can use the set of texts and corresponding running record recording sheets to note student miscues, self-corrections, reading behaviors, fluency and comprehension. The comprehension tasks require students to retell what they have read and answer a few questions about the text. This ensures the students have made meaning as they read. It will also give you an idea of how well students can infer, synthesize and retell.

You will find these assessments on our website: <http://rwproject.tc.columbia.edu/assessment/>  
The texts used for the primary levels, A-I are from Bee Bop Books. On the website there is information telling you how to order them.

Many second grade teachers find that although a great number of students can read with accuracy, they have difficulty when they are asked to talk about what they've just read. If students are merely decoding proficiently without carrying meaning, you'll want to make note of this. It's crucial that we teach them strategies to make and hold meaning across a text. Also, you may find that you have several students who may not read with appropriate automaticity, phrasing, and intonation. It's very important that we use this information to develop instructional plans for teaching fluency. Fluency is a prerequisite for deeper comprehension, and second grade is a powerful time to make sure that fluent reading is emphasized and taught to all readers.

You will also want to assess your students with the other parts of the TCRWP Reading Assessments. The Spelling Assessment and High Frequency Word List scores will help you make decisions about Word Study Instruction by providing information that will help you group students for word study and plan fine-tuned instruction in spelling strategies. As you read through the calendar month by month, you will see boxes to help guide your word study instruction. Keep one eye on your students' needs as determined from the assessments and another eye on the suggested plans for word study each month. You can go back or forward a month on your word study plans depending on the strengths and needs of your students.

Once your students have each been assessed and you've matched them to just right books, you will want to be sure that they know where to get their just right books in your classroom library. Students will need help, especially early in the year, as they learn to manage their independent book choices. You will establish a system for checking out and returning books that travel between home and school.

Teachers College Reading and Writing Project  
Second Grade Curriculum Calendar for Reading Workshop  
2007-2008  
DRAFT

It's important also to plan for how you'll continue to assess your students throughout the year. Many teachers institute a system for keeping track of children's reading levels and growth (both individual and by class) and for moving readers along to more challenging texts when they are ready.

### Read Aloud

It's important that second grade teachers plan for daily read aloud times with accountable talk. You will also want to consider picture books and chapter books that are of interest to your students, and in second grade, this often means texts with engaging characters and strong story lines that offer opportunities for conversation and interpretation. You may also want to choose a read aloud text according to how it can support or lead the work that students do independently. For example, if the class is engaged in the unit of study on character, it would be very supportive to the work of the unit if the teacher reads aloud a chapter book which contains strong characters, which change over the course of the story. If the class is studying nonfiction, the teacher will want to read aloud nonfiction texts to show students how readers can think and talk about nonfiction.

In addition to planning what book to read aloud, teachers need to plan the work they'll do within the book. We suggest that you post-it the book ahead of time to mark places where you'll either think aloud to model a reading skill or strategy or places where you'll ask students to turn and talk to each other about the text. The prompts for getting children to turn and talk could be something like, "Turn and tell your neighbor what you think will happen next," or "Let's think about what's going on here." "Turn and tell your neighbor about what you think is happening in this part." Often after you read aloud a chapter or two, you'll also want to engage the class in a whole group conversation.

After a couple of weeks of school, many teachers assign read aloud partnerships so that children turn and talk to the same person throughout a period of time, say a few weeks, or throughout a whole chapter book. In most classrooms, rather than assigning ability-based partnerships, teachers tend to assign read-aloud partnerships according to the students' interpersonal skills, their oral language ability and their comprehension skills.

Across the year, you'll want to support your students' growing abilities to participate in accountable talk. You might imagine a talk curriculum that progresses from stating ideas, to building on ideas, to critiquing ideas. You will want to support your students so they're able to clarify and extend their own ideas as well as the ideas of others. For example, to illustrate the growth in talk, imagine a student states an idea like, "Frog and Toad are friends even though they are so different." To build on this idea, others might add text evidence that supports the idea. Perhaps they'll connect Frog and Toad with their own relationships or the relationships of characters in other books. They might go underneath the idea that friends can be very different from one another in order to grow theories about why this is the case. A child might say, "Maybe Frog likes Toad so much because he IS different. Maybe it's just not as exciting to have a friend who is just like you." Another child might say, "Well maybe Toad is the only one he could be friends with so he just has to deal with Toad." Someone else might add that maybe Arnold Lobel was trying to teach the readers a lesson about friendship. Eventually we hope students would be able to evaluate and critique their ideas by

Teachers College Reading and Writing Project  
Second Grade Curriculum Calendar for Reading Workshop  
2007-2008  
DRAFT

checking them against what they know from experience, thinking about how their ideas stand up to other points of view, and so on. Incidentally, the ability to have a significant conversation about a story or the characters requires that students use a variety of higher level thinking skills, such as being able to envision the story and to imagine the characters' behavior and actions 'off the page,' being able to synthesize swaths of text, making connections within the events and actions of the story, among other skills.

In second grade, many teachers have decided to teach their students how to write and jot about the read aloud text, often in the midst of the read aloud. At first, teachers might stop reading to provide students with a few moments to jot or sketch their ideas about the story at that point. Eventually, some teachers invite their students to bring post-its and a pencil to the read aloud so they can jot or sketch their ideas as they have them. This can be difficult for students because they can become engrossed in their sketch and miss large chunks of the story or they struggle to jot in a brief, concise, almost short-hand manner.

#### Small Group Instruction

In second grade, you may have a handful of children who still need extra support in using print strategies, applying them efficiently, and orchestrating the sources of information so that they're reading with accuracy, fluency and comprehension. For those readers, you'll want to make sure you're taking time early in the year to meet with them regularly in guided reading groups or strategy lessons.

Throughout the year, you may pull children together for small group instruction when you find several children who share the same needs as readers. For example, based on your assessments, you might decide that you have six children who still need help in reading with fluency. You can meet with them in small group strategy lessons to offer them support and a variety of strategies for reading with fluency. The work you might do in the small group could involve using shared reading, repeated readings, readers' theatre, choral/echo reading and other methods that encourage fluency. You'll want to support your students in second grade with print strategies as needed and with a variety of comprehension strategies they'll need to apply in order to understand their longer, more layered chapter books.

#### Shared Reading

Many teachers have found that shared reading is a component of balanced literacy that can be effective in all grades and that all different types of texts can be used, including poems, text excerpts, charts, and many, many more. The main criterion for shared reading is that all of the students' eyes are on one text that is large enough for everyone to see it well.

In most second grade classrooms, many teachers begin the year with daily shared reading time (often no more than 10-15 minutes), and they use shared reading to work on fluency and to practice the print strategies that they've determined many of their students still need to internalize. Additionally, the act of gathering all students around a text in the beginning of the year helps to build community and to inspire enthusiasm for reading.

Teachers College Reading and Writing Project  
 Second Grade Curriculum Calendar for Reading Workshop  
 2007-2008  
 DRAFT

As the year progresses, many second grade teachers might refocus the work of whole-class shared reading to provide comprehension instruction in addition to fluency and print work as needed. Often, teachers will use poems for shared reading in an effort to highlight particular comprehension strategies, including envisioning, inferring, and synthesizing.

Shared reading is also highly effective as a small group activity. Teachers may pull together students who share the same need, and instead of a guided reading lesson, they decide to gather around a shared reading text. This is particularly helpful when working with students who are English Language Learners (ELLs) and for students who need continued support with fluency.

**Suggested Curricular Calendar for Reading Workshop  
 Second Grade**

<i>Suggested Time of Year</i>	Unit of Study
<i>September</i>	Careful Readers Have Good Habits: Reading with Stamina, Engagement, Fluency, Accuracy and Comprehension
<i>October</i>	Readers Use Strategies to Figure Out Words and to Understand their Stories
<i>November</i>	Readers Think and Talk about the Characters in their Books and They Can Become Experts about Characters in Character Centers
<i>December</i>	Careful Readers Build Comprehension by Reading with Fluency, and Pay Attention to the Story Elements / <i>Careful Readers Monitor For Meaning As They Read</i>
<i>January</i>	Nonfiction Reading Strategies: Readers Can Get Information and Grow Ideas from Nonfiction Texts
<i>February</i>	Readers Have Strategies for Monitoring for Meaning, Problem-Solving Words, and Maintaining Fluency: <i>Readers read with word power and build their vocabulary</i>
<i>March</i>	Readers Become Experts about Series They Love by Looking Closely at Character Relationships
<i>April</i>	Readers Read Just-Right Fiction Books in Theme-Based Centers: Partners learn to grow ideas as they read a collection of related books
<i>May</i>	Readers Read Nonfiction (Either Within Social Studies or Science or in Interest Centers)
<i>June</i>	Find Your Niche as a Reader: Return to your Old Favorites, Create Your Own Reading Centers, and Make Plans for Your Reading Life.

**Unit 1 – Careful Readers Have Good Habits: Reading with Stamina, Engagement, Fluency, Accuracy, and Comprehension**

Overview

*Septembe*

This first unit of study in second grade sets the stage for the year ahead in reading. During this month, you'll want to create an environment during reading workshop characterized by high expectations and joy, and to teach students strategies to read with engagement and focus. To do this, you will want to make clear to students the routines and expectations for the reading workshop,

Teachers College Reading and Writing Project  
Second Grade Curriculum Calendar for Reading Workshop  
2007-2008  
DRAFT

especially around issues of noise level, quiet transitions, and purposefulness during reading time, while also providing texts that enable children to feel powerful as readers. This requires quick and early assessments to match children to just right books as soon as possible (by the end of the first week of school) so you can soon begin teaching them the strategies and skills they need to grow as readers. (Please see the paragraph on assessment in the Second Grade Curriculum Calendar Overview section on page two for more information about beginning-of-the-year assessments.)

Most of the teaching during September tends to fall into one of these broad categories or bends in the road:

- Routines, procedures and expectations for reading time in second grade
- Strategies for staying focused and building stamina for reading
- Strategies for being a careful reader – reading just right books with accuracy, fluency, and comprehension
- Ways to read and talk about books with partners

#### How Might This Unit Go?

In the first week or two of school, you'll want to assess and match all of your students to just right books and to a reading partner who's reading at or near the same level. You're likely to have some sort of student records from last year and you'll be able to estimate what level your students should be able to read with fluency, accuracy and comprehension. For this reason, you may want to guide them toward the appropriate bins, but even so, you'll still want to observe how students choose books from the leveled library, watching to see if they pick books that they understand. Even though you may know where each student left off last year, it's still worth taking time in these early days to do your own quick assessments in order to match your students to just right books. You'll want to account for the fact that some kids will have experienced reading loss over the summer, while others who spent the summer reading may have made some reading gains.

If you don't have reliable or complete assessment information from the previous year, you may want to begin the first couple of days of reading workshop with tabletop bins of books. These bins would contain a variety of levels and kinds of text, and you would then spend your first few days of school conducting assessments to determine just right reading levels. When you observe how children choose books from these mixed-up bins, you can glean important information about your students. You'll learn whether or not children can find just right books when they haven't yet been formally assigned to a just right level; you'll find out what they know and understand about themselves as readers; and you'll see what kinds of books most interest them.

Children will read privately from these tabletop bins for as long as possible (which many teachers find to be about 15 minutes in the first week or so of the year), and then they'll talk about their books with a reading buddy for 5-10 minutes. The reading buddy will most likely be a child who is sitting nearby, and the reading buddies may change from day to day in the first week of school. This buddy talk may include retelling, talking about favorite parts, sharing thoughts about characters, or many other types of book talk your children might recall from previous instruction.

Teachers College Reading and Writing Project  
Second Grade Curriculum Calendar for Reading Workshop  
2007-2008  
DRAFT

By second grade, many of your students will have had a couple of years of reading workshop, so they may already know many of the routines that they'll be asked to follow this year. Even so, you will probably want to spend at least a few days either reviewing routines in general or introducing them to the routines and expectations that are specific to your classroom, such as how to find their reading spots, getting their own books, turning and talking and noise level, and so on. Although you may only decide to spend a couple of days explicitly teaching routines and expectations, you'll probably find opportunities to revisit these throughout the month. For example, rather than using minilesson time to teach management expectations, teachers often use the share time at the end of reading workshop to go over issues that arise and to provide guidance, opting to use the minilesson for more of the comprehension and fluency work. It's helpful if workshop routines are consistent, whether it's writing workshop, math workshop, or reading workshop.

As students grow familiar with the routines and expectations specific to reading workshop in your classroom, you'll want to teach them ways to build stamina and increase their focus on texts during reading time. One way to do this is to teach children how to set quantity goals for themselves ("Today, I'm going to read eight pages.") which they will gradually increase over the month. You'll also show children how to make plans for themselves as readers by saying things like, "Today I'm going to read Chapter 3 and then retell the important parts to myself."

One of the ways to help children stay focused on texts during reading time is to teach them to stop and think about the story as they read. Many teachers provide children with a tool early in the year, such as sticky notes or book marks that have the message "Stop and Think" written or typed right on the tool. You may decide to teach a variety of strategies for what readers do when they lose focus in their books, such as taking a little break to stretch, rereading the part they just missed, and stopping to envision what's going on in the story by making a vivid picture in their minds that uses all of their senses. In many classrooms, teachers and students co-create a chart that contains these strategies and is entitled something like: "How Readers Help Themselves Stay Focused on their Books." Depending on your group of students, a typical hope of second grade teachers is that their class is able to sustain about 20 minutes of focused private reading time by the end of the first unit of study.

Once children are matched to just right books, usually after a week or so, you'll probably want to give students a baggie (or a book bin or any other container that works for you and your students) to store the just right books they've shopped for from the classroom library. Meanwhile, the table top book bins are dismantled and the books are integrated into the baskets in the classroom library. When children have a book bin full of just right books, you will want to teach them that careful readers are resourceful at getting the words right and at understanding what they are reading. Because the next unit of study addresses these issues in greater detail, many teachers might spend the time in this unit teaching children what it means to be an active reader who works hard to get the words and get the story. On the word level, you will demonstrate for children that an active word-solver uses a variety of strategies to figure out tricky words. You will teach children to be flexible with strategies to figure out tricky words because careful readers are not over-reliant on just one or two strategies. Only about 45% of words in English are phonetic, so simply saying, "Sound

Teachers College Reading and Writing Project  
Second Grade Curriculum Calendar for Reading Workshop  
2007-2008  
DRAFT

it out” will probably *not* work. We need to teach students how to use multiple strategies to figure out words.

Our goal is for children to orchestrate the sources of information (meaning, structure, visual) when they word-solve. So, we might demonstrate a place where we get stuck on a word by showing them how we try several things to figure out the tricky part, instead of simply mumbling through it or letting it stop us cold. As you assess and confer, you’ll want to notice the miscues your students tend to make. For example, if you have a student who most often uses the graphophonic source of information (visual cues) to figure out words, you’ll want to teach her about how to check to make sure her attempt at the word sounds right (structure cues) and makes sense (meaning cues). So when this child reads a sentence that says, “OK, I can go now because the show is finished,” and reads “finished” as “fished,” you’ll want to prompt her by asking, “Does that make sense?” rather than saying, “Read through the word,” or another prompt for using visual cues. In this situation, the child is already relying on visual cues, so the teaching she needs is about monitoring for meaning. If on the other hand, the child read ‘finished’ as ‘over,’ it would be helpful to prompt her to use visual cues by saying, “does that look right?” or by pointing under the first letters of ‘finished’ and saying, “Could that be ‘over?’”

Another aspect of active word-solving we want to introduce right away is how careful readers try to understand what the words and phrases mean in the books they read. You will teach them some beginning strategies for figuring out what words mean, such as reading back and reading on to use the context of the passage. This topic will reappear in future units of study, but it makes sense to begin the year by setting the expectation that careful readers monitor for meaning, both on a word level and on a story level.

In addition to being active word solvers, we want to teach students to be active meaning makers during this unit. You will teach them that one of their most important jobs as they read is to make sure their reading makes sense. You’ll show them how to monitor for sense by asking themselves, “What is going on so far?” or “What’s happening in this part?” You will teach your students how rereading can help them get back into the story when they’ve lost their place or lost track of what’s going on. You’ll want to spend a few days teaching them how to fix up places where they’ve lost comprehension by doing things such as rereading both silently and aloud.

During conferences or in small groups, you’ll want to quickly address some dysfunctional reading habits that you might notice. There are often quite a few new second graders who may still point under words which has the effect of hindering reading rate and fluency. Once a reader is reading Level D or higher, they should only use their pointer finger for those instances when they are word solving. Another habit you may notice is that some readers will sub-vocalize or even continue to read aloud to themselves. You’ll want to teach students who are reading texts higher than Level H how to read with the voice in their head not the voice in their mouths. Perhaps you’ll decide that while these students are learning to read in their heads, it might be helpful to have them shop for texts at a slightly easier reading level. You might also suggest that they select easy practice books to practice reading with a voice in their head. The easy, highly-patterned books could be good

Teachers College Reading and Writing Project  
Second Grade Curriculum Calendar for Reading Workshop  
2007-2008  
DRAFT

practice texts for this purpose because the pattern itself will help them get a strong voice going in their heads.

After private reading time, second graders will have time to meet with reading partners to retell and talk about their books. Initially these partnerships will be informal and flexible, but by the end of the second week of school or so, you may want to assign long-term, ability-based partners based on your assessments. For the first couple of weeks of school, you might remind students of what they already know about talking about books with partners. You might revisit how partners can retell their books (or parts of their books) to each other, how partners can ask each other for clarification or for more details, or how they use text evidence to support ideas. You may want to co-create a chart with your students, which addresses the question, “What might reading partners talk about?”

Many second grade teachers begin immediately meeting with children who are struggling as readers in either guided reading groups or strategy lessons to support them with print strategy instruction. Any children who begin the year in second grade reading at TC Group 4 or lower should be part of your plans for small group instruction right from the start of the year. Most often, teachers meet with small groups of students during the reading workshop itself. For example, after the minilesson and a few reading conferences, a teacher might call together a group of readers for either guided reading or a strategy lesson. Then, during partner reading time, a teacher might conduct a conference or two before pulling together another group of readers.

### Read Aloud

During the first month of the school year, you may want to begin by reading aloud picture books or short chapter books that enable your students to have necessary conversations about friendship and community. You’ll want to remind them of the expectations for their work during read aloud, especially their responsibilities for actively listening, for having ideas about the text, and then for sharing those ideas with a read aloud partner or with others during whole class conversations.

Depending on your students’ experiences with read aloud in previous school years, you may find that it’s necessary to model how to turn and talk and to revisit the conversation techniques of staying with an idea, sticking with the book, and including a variety of voices in conversation.

At this early point in the year, you might decide that you want to begin read aloud by reminding your students about the importance of monitoring for meaning as they listen to the text. You might also select a comprehension strategy or two to focus on during these early read alouds. Besides planning for the reading instruction that goes along with the read aloud, you’ll also want to consider a curriculum for talk. Early in the year, you might want to spend a couple of weeks warming up to accountable talk by revisiting some fundamental characteristics of a high-level conversation, such as speaking clearly, listening actively, disagreeing with civility, adding on to what someone has said, staying with the text instead of going off-track, and so on. Many teachers use their first couple of read alouds to assess their class and then plan instruction that draws upon their strengths and targets their needs. To do this type of accountable talk assessment, you might decide to use picture books or short chapter books early in the year. Then as you facilitate turn-and-talk opportunities

Teachers College Reading and Writing Project  
Second Grade Curriculum Calendar for Reading Workshop  
2007-2008  
DRAFT

and whole group conversations, you'll want to take the stance of a researcher. You might transcribe the talk a bit so you can reflect on what went well and what aspects need work.

### Shared Reading

In these first few weeks of school, it's helpful to have a daily shared reading session included in your schedule. Often, this component takes no longer than fifteen minutes. You'll probably want to use a variety of texts during this unit, including poems and big books. There are many poems about the beginning of school or about friendship, and these can help to support the work you're doing on building community, as well as the reading work you're launching. In second grade, students participate in shared reading by reading with fluency, by dramatizing texts, and by having conversations about the texts. In this way, shared reading can support many of the other components of balanced literacy, such as reading workshop, word study, and read aloud with accountable talk.

### Word Study/Phonics

There is so much that second graders need to learn about letters and words and how they work. Therefore, an effective word study curriculum covers phonemic awareness, letter/sound work, spelling patterns, high-frequency words, word structures, and strategies for problem-solving words.

Teachers begin making plans for word study by administering assessments to determine what children already know about letters and words and what they are ready to learn next. One assessment we recommend is the Spelling Inventory in *Words Their Way*. This is administered similarly to the way you would administer a spelling test. This assessment helps teachers determine what stage of spelling development students are in. Other assessments might include letter identification and reading and writing high-frequency words. Our work in letter/word study should ultimately help children become better solvers of words in reading and writing. In other words, there should be a Reading Workshop, Shared Reading, a Writing Workshop, and Interactive Writing to show children how to transfer what they know about letters and words to reading and writing. Once you have assessed all of your children, you will have a better sense of what your word study instruction will look like for small groups of children.

While you are assessing students, you will want to get ready for small group work. Begin to teach the routines for a few word study activities. One activity teachers start with is sorting. Once children are assessed and you have formed groups all students can sort at their own stage of spelling development. For example, you might have one group working on beginning sounds, one group working on ending sounds and another on blends. As you are teaching the routines for word study activities, you might want to review some of the work from 1<sup>st</sup> Grade, such as short vowels, blends and digraphs. For suggested concepts and lessons see the 1<sup>st</sup> Grade curriculum.

Teachers will also want to create a word wall where they can add three to five words a week. High-frequency words (which, through, until) and words which contain frequently used spelling patterns such as "-ake" and "-ink" are the types of words you might put on the word wall. The examples you put on the wall should be a reminder of and a resource for the concepts you've taught.

Teachers College Reading and Writing Project  
 Second Grade Curriculum Calendar for Reading Workshop  
 2007-2008  
 DRAFT

These words need to always be spelled correctly in context.

If you decide to teach	Suggested Lessons in <i>Words Their Way (3<sup>rd</sup> Edition)</i>	Suggested Lessons in <i>Phonics Lessons Grade 2 – Pinnell &amp; Fountas</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Short and Long Vowels</li> </ul>	6-1, 6-2, 6-4 (pp. 198-200)	LS3, LS4 (pp. 79-84), SP3 (pp. 173-176)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Long Vowel Spelling Patterns</li> </ul>	6-2, 6-4 to 6-19 (pp. 200- 213)	SP3 to SP6 (pp. 173-178)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consonant Blends (Ex. sc, cl)</li> </ul>	5-7 to 5-13 (pp. 166-169)	LS1 (pgs. 71-74), LS5 (pp. 87-90), LS6 (pp.91-94) adapt to teach different consonant blends
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High-Frequency Words</li> </ul>		HF1 to HF 9 (pp. 235-270)

Ideas for Reading Celebrations for This Unit

By the end of the unit, your reading workshop is likely to be running smoothly and your students are developing increasing stamina and focus for their texts. You may want to celebrate the work so far by conducting a Read-a-Thon in the classroom. One way to do this would be to invite families or school personnel to bring a book to the classroom and join the students in reading with stamina and focus for a pre-determined length of time.

Another type of celebration would be to invite a kindergarten class into the second grade so your students can read a favorite picture book to a kindergartner. After the reading, your student and the kindergartner could do a little sketch of a part of the book that they particularly liked or a part of the book they felt was most significant or important.

A variation on the idea of celebrating that you might consider would be to have a goal-setting session with your students. You might decide to extend a share time following reading workshop to talk about the idea of setting goals for oneself as a reader. You could talk about some goals you have, and let your students turn and talk about their own goals. Then, you can give them time to write a list of goals. These lists are worth saving in the classroom and bringing out at various points of the year, such as right before the holiday vacation in December so the students can check in with themselves. They might realize that they've met several goals that they can cross off their list, and they might decide to add more goals or revise the ones they've already listed. In addition to setting individual goals, you might want to set whole-class goals (which can also be morphed into some sort of reading workshop rubric, if necessary.) For example, if students say they want to have quiet reading time, you can use that item on a rubric to evaluate how well the reading workshop went.

Getting Ready for the Next Unit

The focus of the next unit is teaching students to be active word-solvers who have a variety of strategies to deal with difficult words and expressions. To get ready for this unit and to plan instruction that will be immediately helpful and effective, it will be worth it to analyze running records so you can figure out what strategies they tend to rely upon and which strategies are underutilized. At some point during this unit, you'll want to make sure to take a running record of

Teachers College Reading and Writing Project  
Second Grade Curriculum Calendar for Reading Workshop  
2007-2008  
DRAFT

each of your students and then take the time to analyze the miscues. You'll want to look for trends across students.

## **Unit 2 – Careful Readers Use Strategies to Figure Out Tricky Words and to Understand their Stories**

*October*

### Overview

By now, it's our hope that students are settling down into the life of the classroom and that they know where to find their just right books for reading workshop. They're developing a rapport with their reading partners. This unit of study then provides the traction children need to move along as readers. This unit is designed to provide an opportunity very early in the year for teachers to revisit the strategy work children learned in the previous year but may have forgotten, and it gives students time to learn more sophisticated strategies that will help them read more challenging books. Teachers have found that the time they spend in this unit depends on the needs of their children. In some classrooms, teachers may need to spend a month strengthening children's print and comprehension work, whereas other teachers may only need a couple of weeks.

During September, you assessed your students in order to match them to books and to partners, and the strengths and needs of the readers in your classroom most likely became clearer. You will want to use this information to help you plan the specific instruction necessary for this unit of study. You'll want to consider the strategies that most of your children need to enable them to read with accuracy, fluency, and comprehension and you'll make plans to teach these strategies during whole class instruction. Keep in mind, however, that you will also plan for small group instruction to meet the needs of both the children who struggle and the children who read at levels well beyond the rest of the class.

Most of your teaching during this unit will tend to fall into one of these broad categories or bends in the road:

- Strategies for decoding tricky words that may often be polysyllabic
- Strategies for figuring out the meaning of unfamiliar words and phrases
- Strategies for monitoring for meaning and having thoughts while reading
- Ways to read and talk about books with partners

### How Might This Unit Go?

You'll begin this unit by teaching your students that careful readers are resourceful when they get to tricky words. You'll want to quickly break them of the habits of mumbling through hard words, skipping them altogether, or making ineffective attempts and moving on if those are the strategies they use to cope with difficulty. Depending on your students' needs as readers, you might teach them how to read through a word part-by-part, from left to right. So when they try to figure out a word like "illustration" they'll move through it part-by-part and read 'ill-us-tra-tion' rather than looking for familiar words within the word. When they do this, they might end up reading it like "I'll-us-tr-at-I-on," which distorts the word in such a way that it may be undecipherable to a young reader. Other strategies you'll want to either revisit or introduce (depending on your students and

Teachers College Reading and Writing Project  
Second Grade Curriculum Calendar for Reading Workshop  
2007-2008  
DRAFT

their previous instruction) are things like: reading through the whole word; playing with the word in your mouth (trying alternate pronunciations); and using what you know about other words to help figure out unfamiliar words. In this case, a child might encounter a word like “education” and realize that the beginning is like the ‘ed’ in ‘bed’ and the ending is like the ‘cation’ in vacation. It’s important to note that regardless of the print strategy, it’s critical that you teach students to always ask themselves, “What would make sense here?” You’ll want to teach this as a companion to any strategy they use to figure out hard words.

It’s very helpful to look at running records to see which sources of information your students tend to rely upon. Then during shared reading, minilessons, conferences and small group instruction, you can reinforce the other sources of information in an attempt to help your students become more flexible and more able to orchestrate strategies. For example, when some students get to a tricky word, they’ll first use the visual cues of the word without including the other cueing systems in their problem solving. For some of these students, if the visual cues don’t help, the reader gets stuck for good. If you notice that most of your students tend to rely on graphophonics or visual cues when they encounter difficulty, you’ll want to counter this by showing them how readers also use structure and semantic cues, or meaning cues.

Another word-solving issue many second graders face is what to do when they encounter words and phrases that they don’t understand. As they progress along a gradient of difficulty, their books include a wider range of vocabulary and idiomatic expressions that may be unfamiliar or confusing. Too often, they may simply let their eyes pass over these words without even pausing for a second to consider what the word or phrase means. Right away, you’ll want to teach your students that strong readers are curious about words, and that they try their best to always understand what words and phrases mean as they read. You’ll want to teach them that they can build up their speaking and writing vocabulary through reading, and that one of the fun jobs for readers is to collect words. You’ll teach your children how to read back and read ahead and use the context to figure out the word or phrase in question. You’ll show them how they can replace unfamiliar vocabulary with synonyms to help them hold on to meaning. So, if a student got stuck on the word ‘prized’ in an excerpt that reads something like, “Lily finally admitted to her mother that she was playing catch with the neighbor’s dog when he ran through and ruined her prized rose bush,” you could teach him to think about what would make sense and substitute a word. The child might say, “Hmm, it sounds like it must have been a special rose bush, so maybe it means something like special.”

The next focus of the unit is to support children as they make meaning that goes beyond the word level. As children read longer texts with more involved story lines, it’s very important that they have efficient strategies to monitor for meaning and to fix up comprehension when it breaks down. You’ll want to teach your students strategies to monitor for meaning which means strategies they can use to make sure they are ‘getting it.’ One way to do this is to revisit retelling, and to teach your students that they can check themselves to make sure they’re getting the story by retelling it to themselves at different points along the way. You’ll want to remind your students that they can retell across their fingers by using cue words such as, “first,” “then,” “next,” “after that,” and “finally.” If students get stuck as they retell, you can teach strategies they can use to get back on

Teachers College Reading and Writing Project  
Second Grade Curriculum Calendar for Reading Workshop  
2007-2008  
DRAFT

track. For instance, you can teach them to touch each page and retell the big thing that is happening on each page, although this strategy works best in shorter texts with lots of picture support. You can teach them to be resourceful and use illustrations in the text to remind them of the story as they say, “Oh, yeah, this is the part when...”

Careful readers also make sure they are able to envision what is going on in their books as they read, especially when their texts do not have lots of picture support. If you have many children reading books that are at least as challenging as early chapter books, you may want to teach them the skill of envisioning. You can do this by teaching them to make pictures in their minds that include the characters, the actions, the setting, and the sounds of the scene. You’ll want to find ways to help students understand that when readers envision a text, it closely resembles making a movie in their minds rather than accumulating snapshots of the story. You might also teach your students to use all the clues the book gives them when they envision. For example, they can refer to any illustrations, the chapter titles, the cover picture, and other resources to jump start their mental images of the story. You will also want to make sure your students understand that when they ‘lose’ their mental picture, they will want to go back and reread the part in order to picture it.

You may also want to include inferring work in this unit, depending on the needs of your students. Inferring, the act of having an idea about what is not on the page or in the words, is necessary for all readers, but as your students’ texts become more difficult, their inferring needs grow as well. For example, they’ll need to be able to understand what a jealous character really means when she says, “Gee, nice haircut, Lizzie!” to her class rival. You’ll want readers to ask themselves things like, “What is this character thinking right now?”

When students become better at monitoring for meaning, you’ll want to teach them strategies to fix up their comprehension when it breaks down. At this point, the most helpful and universally useful strategy to teach is rereading.

During any unit of study that focuses on print strategies and word-solving, it’s important to support reading partnerships by showing them how they can help each other with words. You’ll want to teach them to offer helpful prompts rather than simply calling out the word in question. Another by-product of these units that focus on print is that the partner talk tends to stagnate a bit. For this reason, you’ll probably want to do some partnership lessons that offer students a larger repertoire for what to talk about and how to talk well.

### Read Aloud

You’ll use your read aloud to give students lots of practice with envisioning, for those students who are reading chapter books with little picture support and for those students who are still reading books with comprehensive illustrations. Both kinds of readers will benefit from the practice. However, it’s important to bear in mind that one of the main purposes of the read aloud is to model the behaviors and habits of proficient readers, so you’ll want to make sure you’re also modeling that readers do all sorts of work as they read, not just envisioning. Perhaps when you think aloud during a read aloud, you’ll model a wide range of thinking work, from envisioning to predicting, from

Teachers College Reading and Writing Project  
Second Grade Curriculum Calendar for Reading Workshop  
2007-2008  
DRAFT

rereading to understand to using context clues to figure out vocabulary. For the turn-and-talk work, you may want to highlight envisioning, especially if that is something that your students are working on during independent reading workshop.

In addition to reading strategy work, you'll also want to support students' conversations about books. At this point in the year, you might work on helping your students to be sure that both partners have time to share ideas, and that the partners hold themselves accountable for understanding what the other is talking about. You could teach them how to ask for clarification or for more details. To do this, you could teach your students to use conversation stems like, "Why is that important?" or "So that tells me..." and "What you're saying makes me think that..."

### Shared Reading

During shared reading throughout this unit, you'll want to model strategies for word-solving with regard to figuring out how to decode tricky words, as well as how to determine what unfamiliar words mean. As you model particular strategies for word-solving, you'll also want to demonstrate how proficient readers use the strategies with flexibility, always confirming their guesses by checking that the guess makes sense. You'll want to invite your student to chime in during shared reading to support their abilities to read with fluency. This is also a good time to reinforce the qualities of good retelling by providing opportunities for your students to retell the shared reading text once it is finished.

### Word Study/Phonics

By now you will have probably have assessed all of your students and are ready to begin to do small group work. You may find that some children still need to work on blends while some of your students are ready for work with long vowel spelling patterns. For those students who still need support with blends, you might pull them together in a small group to work on blends through picture and word sorts. Children who need to work on long vowel patterns can also sort words which contain the same long vowel. For example, cane/rain/make.

One of your goals for your year-long phonics and word study curriculum is to help children become flexible with their knowledge of letters and words and how they work. The goal in phonics instruction is to help children transfer what they know to their own reading and writing. This means that during word study, you will want to teach children how they can change the first letter, the last letter, the first part, the last part of a word to make a new word. If you are reviewing some of the phonics concepts from 1<sup>st</sup> grade you might work on those phonics concepts in this way. Pat Cunningham's Making Words activity is a great way to work on this. Also in *Phonics Lessons for 2<sup>nd</sup> Grade* by Pinnell and Fountas there is a whole section devoted to this work called "Word-Solving Actions" (pg. 419 to the end). These activities can be done in whole group or small group instruction. For children who are having difficulty with transferring these concepts to their own reading you might also do some word work at the end of a guided reading lesson.

If you find you still need to do some whole group work, make sure the concepts you choose to focus on are ones which most students are already using in their writing but confusing. For example, if

Teachers College Reading and Writing Project  
 Second Grade Curriculum Calendar for Reading Workshop  
 2007-2008  
 DRAFT

most of your students are using long vowel spelling patterns but sometimes misspelling them, they are then ready for long vowel pattern work.

If you decide to teach...	Suggested Lessons in Words Their Way (3 <sup>rd</sup> Edition)	Suggested Lessons in Phonics Lessons Grade 2 – Pinnell & Fountas
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Short and Long Vowels</li> </ul>	6-1, 6-2, 6-4 (pp. 198-200)	LS3, LS4 (pp. 79-84), SP3 (pp. 173-176)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Long Vowel Spelling Patterns</li> </ul>	6-2, 6-4 to 6-19 (pp. 200- 213)	SP3 to SP6 (pp. 173-178)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consonant Blends (Ex. sc, cl)</li> </ul>	5-7 to 5-13 (pp. 166-169)	LS1 (pgs. 71-74), LS5 (pp. 87-90), LS6 (pp.91-94) adapt to teach different consonant blends
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High-Frequency Words</li> </ul>		HF1 to HF 9 (pp. 235-270)

Ideas to Celebrate the Work of This Unit

One of the outcomes we hope for during this unit is that the students will become active word solvers and meaning makers. A way you might want to celebrate this proactive reading stance is to give students a folder in which they can collect words and expressions they learn as they read. Perhaps for the last week or so of the unit, you can encourage students to jot down new words and expressions they've encountered and what they think these words and expressions mean. Then, as a class, you could have each child teach a couple of the words or expressions they've learned to the rest of the class or they can list them on a chart. Although this isn't exactly a celebration of reading, it is a celebration of the power of reading – it acknowledges that the best place for people to develop their vocabularies is within the pages of a text.

Getting Ready for the Next Unit

The next unit focuses on getting to know the characters in text in ways that help readers to deeply understand their stories. To get ready for this unit, you may want to begin gathering baskets of books that feature particular characters, such as Judy Moody, Biscuit, and others. You'll want to make sure you have character baskets that are at levels appropriate for the range of readers in your classroom. Many of these character baskets will be similar to series book baskets and for this reason, you are easily able to estimate the reading levels of the books. Some teachers put the corresponding color dot on the character baskets to indicate the reading level of the texts in the baskets.

During read aloud, you'll want to begin to focus on the characters of the text and provide opportunities for your students to turn and talk about characters. You can model inferring character traits and motivations. You can show the students how to follow a character throughout a text to determine the changes the character makes, the problems he or she encounters, the relationships he or she has with secondary characters in the texts. You'll also want to use the work of building vocabulary that you're doing in this unit to encourage the students to talk about characters with

Teachers College Reading and Writing Project  
Second Grade Curriculum Calendar for Reading Workshop  
2007-2008  
DRAFT

precise language. Instead of saying, “Oh, she’s bad,” a child might say, “She’s mischievous. She likes to play tricks on people, but she isn’t really trying to hurt anybody’s feelings.”

**Unit 3 – Readers Talk and Think about the Characters in their Books and They Can Become Experts about Characters in Character Centers**

*November*

Overview

When adult readers think back on beloved books from when they were young, it’s usually the characters in the stories that first come to mind. The characters in books often stay with us even when we put down a book, and our strongest reactions to what we read often arise from the ways we are attracted to or repulsed by a character, the ways we connect with, wonder about, and understand a particular character’s personality, motivations, and tendencies.

By this time of the year, it’s likely that your students will be reading with more accuracy, fluency, and comprehension across a wide range of text levels. The characters in many of your students’ books are now more developed than just simply being an illustration on a page, and they offer an authentic way for children to invest in the world of the story. For these reasons, a unit of study in which you teach second graders to understand their characters is well-placed at this time.

How Might This Unit Go?

At the beginning of the study, your students will shop for just right books as usual. However, they will read with a lens on the characters in their text and your minilessons will teach them strategies for reading with such a lens. When your students meet with their reading partners, they will share what they’ve learned and noticed about the characters in their books. So, for example, one partner might spend a bit of the partner reading time sharing his thoughts about his character, Mr. Putter, and then the other partner might share ideas she’s developed about her main character, Nate the Great.

You will begin by building off of what your children learned about studying character in first grade. You’ll remind them of strategies readers use to get to know the characters in their books, such as paying close attention to what characters say and what they do and then thinking about what these things teach us about the characters. So, for example, when Cherry Sue invites Poppleton over for meals again and again, a student might name the action and then add what it teaches them about the character by saying something like, “Cherry Sue keeps inviting her new neighbor, Poppleton, over for meals. Hmm, what a friendly, outgoing neighbor she is!” You might add on to this work by teaching your students that although authors provide us lots of information about characters, we can sort through the information to decide what seems really important. For example, we can identify the important parts of the book or moments in the character’s life. These might be parts where a reader gets a very strong feeling about the character or places where the character has very strong feelings about a situation, an event, or another character. A reader can pay attention to the parts where the character experiences conflicts or problems, as well as places where the character seems to change.

Teachers College Reading and Writing Project  
Second Grade Curriculum Calendar for Reading Workshop  
2007-2008  
DRAFT

You may decide that after the first week of the character study, partners will select a character to study together in reading centers. Of course, the character each partnership chooses to study needs to be in books that the partnership can read with fluency, accuracy, and comprehension. Often, children will study one character for a week or so and then the teacher will let the children switch to another appropriate character, so by the end of the unit, children will have had an opportunity to deeply study at least one or two characters in reading centers.

If you launch reading centers on characters, there are a few things to consider and a few tips we can offer. Of course, the reading centers will look different from class to class, but there are some things we know that will help them run smoothly in any class. First, when launching character centers, it's important to have character baskets that reflect the range of readers in your classroom. If you have students who are struggling, you'll want to make sure you have character centers at their levels, such as *Biscuit* or *Mrs. Wishy-Washy*. Each reading center basket will probably contain at least 4-6 books so that the partners have enough books to make connections among, but not so many books that they never stop reading long enough to talk. Teachers have found that if two sets of partnerships are studying *Poppleton*, it is helpful to have about 6- 8 books in the basket.

It's also very helpful when teachers select a character center to use for minilessons because then they can model the very work the students will be doing. In a second grade class, the teacher may decide to use texts from the *Titch* basket for teaching demonstrations, and the class might consider themselves the teacher's reading center partner. It is helpful when teachers model from the basket that the most struggling students are using for a reading center because then they can offer more support for them.

One of the things you can teach students to notice is when their characters change within a book by showing them how readers can connect pages within a book. In *Henry and Mudge and the Careful Cousin*, readers might notice how Annie changes across the pages. A child might say something about Annie like, "At first she's sort of prissy. She doesn't like Mudge's drool and she doesn't want to get dirty. But later in the book, she gets her dress really dirty and she smiles at Mudge." If her partner read the same book, he might respond by saying, "Henry changed too. Look at this page. He doesn't want to be around Annie, and I can tell by his face. But here on this page, his face changes and he looks like he's having a good time with her." To help children hold on to these connections across pages, you might teach them to jot quick notes on post-its and leave them on the pages to keep track of the parts that go together. You might teach them to jot things like, "This part is like page..." to help them remember intra-text connections they've discovered. You might also teach them to indicate their ideas about the characters using symbols (Annie=uptight) or (Henry=disappointed). You'll want to be sure that they are quickly jotting their ideas rather than writing lots on post-its or copying text on them.

Another way you might teach your children to understand their character is by paying attention to places in their books when the character acts 'out-of-character.' You might hear a reader say something like, "Junie B. Jones is acting weird. She's being really quiet in this part and she's usually sort of a loud kid." Once they notice places where the character is acting unusual, you'll

Teachers College Reading and Writing Project  
Second Grade Curriculum Calendar for Reading Workshop  
2007-2008  
DRAFT

want them to extend their thinking by supplying a reason for the anomaly. In the example mentioned above, the child might add on to her thought about Junie B. by saying, “Maybe she gets quiet when her feelings are hurt. That boy was kind of mean when he said she couldn’t go to his birthday party, so maybe that’s what made her kind of quiet.”

Another strategy for getting to know characters in books is to pay attention to ways that characters solve their problems and to consider what this says about the character. While reading a version of *Poppleton*, children might begin by naming the problems that Poppleton is having and then paying attention to what he does to solve the problem. They may notice that when Poppleton has trouble of some sort he reaches out to his friends. A child might say, “Poppleton is the kind of character who relies on his friends to help him when he’s having a hard time.” You’d want the child to continue with the thought and to offer text evidence to support his idea.

You’ll also spend time in this unit teaching children ways to grow ideas and theories about characters and how these theories sometimes need to be revised as one reads on in his book or across books about the same character. One of the strategies that provide foundation for theory development is accumulating the story across pages and chapters. You’ll teach readers that they can stop after chunks of texts (or chapters if their books have them) and ask themselves, “What is going on with my character so far?” or “What do I know about my character so far?” You might teach your students to use some kind of graphic organizer, such as a T-chart, to keep track of their thoughts. In some classrooms, students have listed theories they were developing about their characters on index cards and taped them horizontally on a sentence strip. Every time they discover more evidence to support particular theories, they would jot the evidence on a post-it and stick it under the appropriate index card. This note-taking method offers a clear visual to see how some theories are more valid than others.

Finally, for the last week or so in this unit, some teachers may decide to reorganize the texts, grouping books according to traits of their characters. For example, one collection of books may bear the label, “Misunderstood Characters,” others may be “Strong Girl Characters,” “Only-Child Characters,” “Characters Who Are Bullied” (or who bully others), or “Best Friend Characters.” The purpose of this study is that it gives children opportunities to read and talk across characters that go together in some way. It’s important to note that this type of categorizing works best in classrooms where most all of the students are reading rather proficiently, which means most all of your students are able to read books at TC Group 7 or higher.

As mentioned above, you’ll show children how to use graphic organizers and post-its to hold their ideas and to support their talk, and students will learn to value strategies such as rereading passages in order to compare them, and revising their theories in light of new evidence. Students will be taught to post-it sections where the characters are acting in particular ways (i.e. out of character, like other characters, etc.) or to mark sections of a text where the characters surprised them, where the characters change, where the characters remind him of his own life, or sections in which the book resembles another book. You may also want to remind your students that people who talk about

Teachers College Reading and Writing Project  
Second Grade Curriculum Calendar for Reading Workshop  
2007-2008  
DRAFT

books often discuss the parts of the book that hold significance for both the reader and for the characters in the story.

As you listen in on the partner conversations about character, you'll want to teach in a way that lifts the level of the conversation, but you'll also want to notice ways to support the form of conversation. You'll want to see if your students are transferring the skills and strategies they're learning during the read aloud into partner conversations during independent reading workshop. If you've worked on getting your students to elaborate and clarify when necessary in conversation and to request elaboration and clarification if necessary, you'll want to see evidence that they've transferred these conversational moves into their book talks with their reading partner.

### Unit Assessment

Toward the end of this unit, you'll want to begin to assess your students' understanding of what it means to know their characters well. During assessment conferences, you may want to ask your students specific questions ("Oh, how do you think she feels about that?" or "What is she thinking right now?") that will enable them to infer. When your students offer their ideas about a character from their text, you'll want them to offer text evidence that supports their ideas. You might ask your students a simple question: What are you thinking about this character? Their responses to this simple question may reveal their depth of understanding of what it means to get to know a character. For example, a student who replies, "My character is named Cherry Sue, and she's a llama that lives next to Poppleton," suggests that this student needs more instruction in strategies for really getting to know one's character well and moving beyond a literal, surface-level idea. Another student might reply, "Cherry Sue lives next door to Poppleton, and she's really very outgoing. She keeps inviting him over for meals. She is a good neighbor and a good friend to Poppleton." Yet another student may respond, "Cherry Sue is a friendly neighbor and one of Poppleton's closest friends. She takes care of him and is sort of like a mother to him sometimes, even though she's his friend. Sometimes she goes too far, like in the story where she invited Poppleton over for all the meals. She sort of trapped herself because she didn't know how to stop asking him. She didn't want to hurt his feelings." In comparison, these responses show very different applications of the skills and strategies for getting to know characters.

In addition to assessing students with regard to the instruction particular to this unit of study, you'll also want to be continually observant and vigilant about your students' growing strengths as readers and emerging needs by assessing in an ongoing manner throughout all of the balanced literacy components.

### Read Aloud

During this unit of study, it's helpful to read aloud chapter books or picture books that have rather well-developed characters so that your students have opportunities to practice the work they're expected to do independently and within their partnerships. You'll want to be sure to provide time for students to turn and talk, and it may be helpful for the read aloud partners and the reading workshop partners to be one in the same. This will give the reading workshop partnerships extra chances to practice proficient talk.

Teachers College Reading and Writing Project  
Second Grade Curriculum Calendar for Reading Workshop  
2007-2008  
DRAFT

If you plan to have students use graphic organizers or note-taking sheets to accumulate their thinking about characters in reading centers, you might want to model how to use them during the read aloud. Also, you can provide students with character study language during read aloud. Saying things like, “The paperboy got up so early to deliver his papers. This makes me think that he’s a hard worker,” or “I noticed that Junie B. Jones is often having trouble with other kids. In this part, she... and then in this part she...,” helps to provide a language model for students and will improve their talk about characters.

You might also find it helpful to provide opportunities for your students to act out the characters in the read aloud book. You might do this by stopping at the end of a dialogue exchange and asking read aloud partners to continue the conversation “as the characters.” You’ll want to emphasize that in order to best depict the characters is to think about all they’ve learned about them so far, and to envision how they’d look, feel, and sound in the particular conversation that you’re role-playing. Another way to dramatize the read aloud text is to select the important scene(s) from a chapter and act them out in order to better understand the motivations of the characters.

#### Shared Reading

During this unit of study, you may want to revisit previously read shared reading texts that have strong characters. Even going back to ‘kindergarten’ texts like *The Hungry Giant* or *Mrs. Wishy-Washy* can offer opportunities to grow ideas about characters, to practice fluency, and to learn how to read in a way that reflects the characters’ thinking, mood, and feelings.

If you have students who continue to struggle with print and decoding, you might decide to pull them together in a small group and use shared reading to support their decoding skills.

#### Word Study/Phonics

By now, most teachers have small group word study happening on a daily basis in their classrooms for about 20 minutes. Typically in a 2nd grade classroom, you might see one group working on blends, one group working on vowel sounds, and another working on long vowel spelling patterns. Each day, the teacher conducts lessons with a different group to introduce concepts to students. If you are doing more whole group teaching, you will want to look at students’ writing to determine what most students are ready to work on. You will want to work on introducing long vowel spelling patterns once children know short vowel spelling patterns and are beginning to use long vowel spelling patterns in their writing. It is also helpful to bring children’s attention to known spelling patterns during reading and writing to help children transfer their knowledge to the problem-solving of words. For example, during whole class shared reading, you might select a text which contains spelling patterns already studied. During the reading of the text, stop at the spelling pattern and prompt them to notice the spelling pattern by saying, “Do you see a part in this word we know?”

Teachers College Reading and Writing Project  
 Second Grade Curriculum Calendar for Reading Workshop  
 2007-2008  
 DRAFT

If you decide to teach...	Suggested Lessons in <i>Words Their Way (3<sup>rd</sup> Edition)</i>	Suggested Lessons in <i>Phonics Lessons Grade 2 – Pinnell &amp; Fountas</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Short and Long Vowels</li> </ul>	6-1, 6-2, 6-4 (pp. 198-200)	LS3, LS4 (pp. 79-84), SP3 (pp. 173-176)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Long Vowel Spelling Patterns</li> </ul>	6-2, 6-4 to 6-19 (pp. 200- 213)	SP3 to SP6 (pp. 173-178), SP 9 (pp. 197-200), SP 11 (pp. 205-208), SP 13 to SP 15 (pp. 213-224), SP17 (pp. 229-232)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consonant Blends (Ex. sc, cl)</li> </ul>	5-7 to 5-13 (pp. 166-169)	LS1 (pp. 71-74), LS5 (pp. 87-90), LS6 (pp.91-94) adapt to teach different consonant blends
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High-Frequency Words</li> </ul>		HF1 to HF 9 (pp. 235-270)

Ideas for Celebrating the Work of this Unit

There are lots of ways that teachers celebrate a unit of study on getting to know characters. Because it's likely that your students studied characters in first grade, you might decide to let your students come up with a celebration idea. You can set parameters around the celebration such as making sure the celebration is an opportunity for students to share what they've learned about their characters. In some classrooms, a day is set aside for students to come to school dressed as their favorite character. In other classes, the students write letters to a favorite character that express their feelings for the character and that ask any questions they might have about the character. A low key sort of celebration would be to ask reading center partners to introduce their main character to another set of reading center partners

Getting Ready for the Next Unit

During the next unit, your students will learn about the other story elements and how to integrate them for a deeper understanding of the text. You might begin to focus on the story elements toward the end of this unit during read aloud and shared reading. You'll also want to begin re-integrating some of the books from the character baskets into the leveled library.

**Unit 4 – Careful Readers Pay Attention to Story Elements and Read with Fluency to Help Them Understand their Books Better**

*December* Overview

During the last unit, the main emphasis was on comprehension and making meaning through a close look at the characters in books. This unit offers a complement to the previous one because in this month, your readers will learn how to use the other story elements to further support their understanding of texts. You'll also spend some time revisiting and introducing strategies to read with fluency because many of the students in your class are likely to be reading silently and you will want to ensure that the reading voice in their heads is a fluent one. Research shows that reading with fluency is a prerequisite for reading more complex texts with comprehension, so it's never too early nor too repetitive to work on fluency.

Teachers College Reading and Writing Project  
Second Grade Curriculum Calendar for Reading Workshop  
2007-2008  
DRAFT

How Might This Unit Go?

To begin this unit, you'll want to teach children that most stories have certain story elements in common, such as characters, setting, problem and solution, and time change. You'll want to teach your readers to integrate what they learned about characters and use that information to help them predict, understand, and critique the story. You will want to teach them about how stories tend to be written in a predictable structure that contains typical elements. You'll also want to teach your readers to envision the scenes in their stories and to accumulate the story across pages by connecting scenes from one page to the next, and from one chapter to the next.

In this portion of the unit, you might begin by teaching children that readers don't just pay attention to the characters, but they also attend to the setting where the story is taking place. You'll teach them to do this by paying attention to place words that tell a reader where the action is happening. You'll want readers to notice when the scene changes within their books and how the setting usually stays more or less the same. For example, in *Koala Lou*, the setting is the Australian Bush, although the scenes change from Koala Lou's home tree, to the Bush Olympics and the gum tree where the climbing event takes place, to Koala Lou's tree again. Likewise, in *Poppleton*, the setting is his new neighborhood, but the scenes change across stories from his home, to the library, to Fillmore's house. You'll teach children to notice evidence that reveals the setting and scene changes, such as illustrations, location words (at school; while riding the train...), and prepositional phrases ('under the bridge,' 'in the bathtub,') although you probably wouldn't refer to them as prepositional phrases in the second grade classroom.

You may want to teach children to identify the problem and the solution in the stories they read. You'll want to teach them to post-it the page where the problem emerges and then post-it the page where the problem is resolved. Once they can locate the problem and the solution, you'll show children how they can begin to predict or expect what the problem might be by noticing that some events in a story recur, and this can lead to a problem (like the way Cherry Sue keeps inviting Poppleton over for meals). One way to help students integrate story elements is to teach them that when they identify the problem and solution, they can also pay attention to how the character deals with the problem, because that reveals important information about the character. You'll also teach them to pay attention to the rest of the story that happens after the problem is solved because that is often the part of the text where any changes in the character are revealed. You'll also show your students that they can find clues for the problems in their stories by looking for places where the main character has some sort of negative feelings, such as frustration, worry, upset, fear, concern, sadness, jealousy, etc. In *The Empty Pot*, for example, Ping is worried and frustrated because his plant didn't grow. This is the big problem in the text.

Another story element you will want to teach children is to notice how time changes or passes in a book. Understanding passage of time becomes especially important as your students read longer, more complex stories. In these texts, time may move back and forth between past and present, and readers need to realize when this happens. However, in most of the texts your students are probably reading at this point, time is likely to simply move forward in clear and obvious ways.

Teachers College Reading and Writing Project  
Second Grade Curriculum Calendar for Reading Workshop  
2007-2008  
DRAFT

You will want to teach students some strategies for figuring out when time is changing in a text. You'll show them how to use changing details in illustrations. Children might notice that characters are wearing different clothes which may signify a new day, or that the sky changes from light to dark, indicating movement from daytime to nighttime. You'll want to teach your readers to pay attention to the language, which an author uses to indicate change in time. For example, authors might use words and expressions such as "later that day," "early one morning," "meanwhile," "the next thing that happened was..." among others. It's important that children learn to pick up these language cues now in their more simple texts, so they'll be ready for them when their texts become longer and more involved.

At this point, the focus of your unit of study switches from story elements and retelling to reading with fluency. Many second graders are moving toward more challenging texts, and they are beginning to consistently read in their heads. You may find, however, that when you ask your students to read aloud to you during a reading conference, they still need support with fluency, and their needs may vary. Some children may need more instruction about phrasing and intonation, while others may need to learn how to 'read' the punctuation in the story. You'll want to spend a day or so of conferring time during reading workshop to listen to children read aloud familiar texts in order to assess their fluency. You will most likely see aspects of fluency that are going well for most students as well as aspects that could benefit from instruction. You'll be able to plan both whole class and small group instruction that will address your students' particular needs.

For this portion of the unit of study, you may want to have children shop for some familiar books that are a level or two below their just right book level. These books will be the ones they'll read during the workshop when you teach them strategies for reading with fluency. (Some teachers have found that it is necessary to send a note home to families explaining why their children are reading books that appear to be easy.) The rationale for having your students read these familiar and easier texts at this time is that they don't require your readers to work hard on the words or meaning, so they can expend their reading energy on reading with fluency. As children read these texts, you can teach them to 'read' the punctuation by pausing, stopping, inflecting, and exclaiming. You'll want to teach them that their reading voice should match the tone and mood of the story. You can demonstrate this by contrasting what it sounds like to read aloud two texts that evoke different types of moods, such as "Poem," by Langston Hughes, and "Things," by Eloise Greenfield.

You'll want to teach your students to read dialogue with an understanding of who is talking and with a voice that expresses the feeling or mood of the character. You also will spend time teaching students how to bring out the meaning and sound of the text by using punctuation marks for guidance.

When students meet with their reading partners during this unit of study, they will be able to do many different things, from talking about characters, to retelling using story elements, to acting out scenes with each other. You may also want to help your students write post-its of significance rather than post-its that retell events. This synthesis work requires students to pay attention to both the story and their ideas or reactions to it.

Teachers College Reading and Writing Project  
Second Grade Curriculum Calendar for Reading Workshop  
2007-2008  
DRAFT

A Possible Extension/Variation for This Unit of Study: Careful Readers Monitor for Meaning as They Read

You may decide that it makes more sense for your students to spend extra time learning how to monitor for meaning as they read and learning how to use strategies to fix their comprehension when it breaks down. If this is the case, you may decide to begin this unit with the work on fluency as described above, and to tuck the work on story elements into your read aloud and shared reading sessions. Without spending days on story elements during this unit, you will have more time to work on helping your children understand their texts well.

Often our youngest readers believe that if they can figure out the words, then they are reading with competence and strength. In some ways, that is true, and we want to celebrate their growing abilities to decode print. On the other hand, we know that figuring out the words is only part of the job that a reader must do. The other big work for readers is to make sure they understand the story when they read. We need to be clear that getting the words is only half of the job.

During this unit extension, you can revisit the work you did on monitoring for meaning from the November unit of study. You might begin by asking children to talk about what it feels like when they truly understand a story and what it feels like when they sort of understand a story. Some teachers help their students do this by having them shop for a familiar text or two from an easier basket than their just right level so they can reread and experience solid comprehension. Then, during a lesson, you might provide them with a text (a poem, perhaps) that is just a bit too tricky. This may be a text they can decode with relative ease but struggle to understand well. Your students can share what that feels like as a reader, so that they have the two ‘gut feelings’ to compare, the feeling of understanding and the feeling of mild to serious confusion.

Your goal is to help your students be advocates for themselves as readers, to protect their right to understand by first noticing when they don’t understand. They may notice their comprehension is fading when they are no longer picturing what is going on in the story, when they can’t retell the story or a part of a story, and when their minds are focusing on other things as they read, like lunch, the scrape on their elbow, or the person next to them. Once they’re able to identify when they are no longer following the story as they read, you’ll want to teach them strategies for getting their comprehension back on track.

You will teach them how careful readers often reread parts just to make sure they understand what’s going on. You can suggest that when they are confused by a part of the story that they read it aloud because sometimes, that can help clear up confusion. You’ll teach them that sometimes readers start a book and then after the first chapter or two, go back and reread the beginning because that can help them solidify their understanding. You’ll teach them to pay close attention to the characters the authors introduce, and suggest that they may want to jot on a post-it the characters’ names and relationships with each other. You may decide that it would be helpful to co-create a chart with your class where you accumulate the strategies to clear up confusion. You might call it something like, “Strategies Readers Use When They Get Confused” or “What We Can Do to Help Ourselves Understand our Books.”

Teachers College Reading and Writing Project  
Second Grade Curriculum Calendar for Reading Workshop  
2007-2008  
DRAFT

Assessment

At this point of the year, you may decide to do some formal assessments before the holiday break. These assessments will help you fine-tune your instruction when you return to school after the new year, and it will help you realign small groups and partnerships, if necessary, and move readers who may be ready for the next level. For those readers who are reading high level texts with accuracy, you'll want to pay close attention to their fluency and their comprehension. You might want to find time to have extended conferences with your strongest readers in which you talk about their books with them in order to figure out their comprehension needs.

Read Aloud

Whether you do the main unit or the extension, you'll probably want to help your students pay attention to the story elements as you read aloud chapter books or picture books. You might think aloud by saying things like, "Oh, now she's in school. I can tell because she's talking to the teacher." You will also want to model what it means to read in a fluent voice, and you'll reread if your fluency breaks down. So for example, as you read dialogue in a text, you might say to your class, "Hmmm. I don't think the character would sound like that. The book says that he is sad and tired after looking all over for his puppy. Let me reread and try to make my voice sound more like a sad and tired voice."

If, during partner reading time, you're helping your students to jot post-its that contain original ideas rather than brief retellings, you'll want to model this during your read aloud. You might read a chunk of text and then have students turn and talk about an idea or reaction they're having at that point. Meanwhile you can jot yours on a sticky note and then share it with the students.

Shared Reading

During this unit, you might decide to do some readers' theatre during shared reading. One way to do this is to copy onto chart paper some dialogue exchanges from texts your students know well. You can study the dialogue together, and then your students could 'perform' it by considering the characters' feelings and the tone of the dialogue to make their voices reflect the meaning. You may even decide to provide opportunities for envisioning and inferring by creating extensions to the dialogue exchanges and then giving students time to dramatize the dialogue. Of course, there are also big books in the form of plays that you could use to reach the same ends. All of this work can complement the more conventional shared reading sessions, where you will work on the print and comprehension strategies that your students need to internalize.

Word Study/Phonics

Many teachers begin to reassess their students' knowledge of letters and words at this point to plan for the upcoming months. You might decide to re-administer the same spelling inventory from *Words Their Way* you administered in September. Teachers will also assess students' knowledge of high frequency words to determine what words children still need to work on.

Teachers College Reading and Writing Project  
 Second Grade Curriculum Calendar for Reading Workshop  
 2007-2008  
 DRAFT

During this month, you might want to continue to review and introduce long vowel spelling patterns. As you are working on VCe spelling patterns, you'll want to help children understand the silent *e* rule since it is very consistent. You might show them how you can go from *can* to *cane* and change the sound of *a* by adding *e* to the end of the word.

Also, in this month, you may decide to introduce r-controlled vowels (*ar*, *ir*, *er*) to children who are ready. To work on these concepts you can have children do word sorts. For example, to work on r-controlled vowels with children who need this work, you can have children sort words which contain *ar* and *ir*, while other students are working on blends.

If you decide to teach...	Suggested Lessons in <i>Words Their Way (3<sup>rd</sup> Edition)</i>	Suggested Lessons in <i>Phonics Lessons Grade 2 – Pinnell &amp; Fountas</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Long Vowel Spelling Patterns</li> </ul>	6-2, 6-4 to 6-19 (pp. 200- 213)	SP3 to SP6 (pp. 173-178), SP 9 (pp. 197-200), SP 11 (pp. 205-208), SP 13 to SP 15 (pp. 213-224), SP17 (pp. 229-232)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• R-Controlled Vowels</li> </ul>	6-3 (p. 199)	LS7 (pp. 95-98)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High-Frequency Words</li> </ul>		HF1 to HF 9 (pp. 235-270)

Getting Ready for the Next Unit

After the holiday break, you may begin your nonfiction unit of study, so you'll want to lay the groundwork for that. You might decide to read aloud some nonfiction texts, or excerpts of nonfiction texts, to your students. You may also want to begin reading aloud some nonfiction texts in order to get ready (and to whet your students' appetites) for the nonfiction unit that follows.

You may also want to begin getting the library ready for the upcoming nonfiction unit by making sure your leveled book baskets contain nonfiction texts and by creating several nonfiction topic baskets.

**Unit 5 – Nonfiction Reading Strategies: Readers Can Get Information and Grow Ideas from Nonfiction Texts, and They Can Gather Books on a Topic of Interest in a Reading Center**

January

Overview

Nonfiction units of study in the reading workshop are often one of the times in the year when the level of engagement and energy for reading rises for all children. Perhaps it's because children love nonfiction texts, laden with photographs, illustrations, and other features that make them so different from children's usual diet of books. Perhaps it's due to the feeling of accumulating new information, of learning new things, that engages children so deeply.

In second grade, the nonfiction unit is important for another reason. It's the first unit of study we do after the holiday break, and many teachers say that these weeks after the vacation are often the most

Teachers College Reading and Writing Project  
Second Grade Curriculum Calendar for Reading Workshop  
2007-2008  
DRAFT

powerful weeks of the year. Children are rested, yet familiar with the routines and expectations of your classroom. Our hope for this first unit after vacation is to harness their readiness to learn and to recapture their enthusiasm for reading in a way that sets them up to make great progress in the months that follow.

In this second grade nonfiction study, children will extend the things they've already learned about reading nonfiction. For example, they may have learned about many features of nonfiction in kindergarten and first grade, but this year, you'll expect your students to use the features to serve their reading purposes. You'll expect your students to do more conventional reading of nonfiction texts than they may have done in either kindergarten or first grade because now, they are more proficient readers. In second grade, part of the work we have is to teach our students strategies to deal with difficulty, envision what is happening, and use strategies to read and learn simultaneously.

Before moving to the plan for the unit, it's important to mention some things that all teachers must keep in mind during a nonfiction study. First of all, in second grade, it's crucial that children are spending most of their nonfiction reading time with nonfiction texts that are just right for them. So, for example, if a child is able to read level L books with fluency, accuracy, and comprehension, you may ask them to shop for nonfiction books around level J. Research shows that children often read two levels below their regular level when they read nonfiction texts. This fluctuates, however, according to children's prior knowledge of the topic. A child who is an expert on dinosaurs could probably read a nonfiction text on dinosaurs that is closer to her just right reading level, but she may need to read an easier book on gemstones if she has no schema or background knowledge about the topic.

Although it is preferable that students read nonfiction books that are just right for them, in reality, there may be occasions where your students read nonfiction books of interest that may be too difficult to read conventionally. For example, if partners are studying sharks together in nonfiction reading centers, they may want to read a book on sharks that is too hard but that has engaging photos and illustrations. This is understandable and even desirable providing they know that they will need to read this book differently than how they read their just right books. You may need to teach them how to synthesize the information in pictures. For example, you could teach them to say what they see in the picture and then add what it makes them think. You might teach them to read with an overview in mind which means they will read the chapter titles, section headings and captions as much as possible to help themselves understand what's going on in the difficult text. Most importantly, you'll want to make sure that they are not spending an inordinate amount of time reading these difficult texts to the exclusion of their just right books. If you notice that the interest books are simply too tempting during a nonfiction study, you could either set aside a time during the workshop where they can pore over these texts, or you may decide to keep the books separate from their baggies or their center baskets.

The reading workshop structure might change during this unit to accommodate both nonfiction reading and just-right book reading (which still needs to occur each day):

Teachers College Reading and Writing Project  
Second Grade Curriculum Calendar for Reading Workshop  
2007-2008  
DRAFT

Minilesson to support nonfiction reading (less than 10 minutes)  
Partner time with nonfiction texts – just right and look books (15 minutes)  
Private time with nonfiction texts – just right books (15 minutes)  
*(teachers have found that having partner time first helps to scaffold children’s private reading of nonfiction texts, but you may choose to carry on as usual, with private time first, followed by partner time)*  
Mid workshop interruption (1-2 minutes)  
Private time with just-right books (15-20 minutes)  
Partner time with just right books (5 minutes)  
Share time (less than 5 minutes)

### How Might This Unit Go?

You may begin this unit by teaching children how readers of nonfiction help themselves by getting their minds ready to read their texts. You’ll teach them to activate their prior knowledge about the topic by thinking to themselves, “What do I already know about snakes?” When children do this important work, it helps them to get ready for the vocabulary and concepts they might encounter in their texts.

In addition to this pre-thinking about the topic, you might want to teach your students how to take a book walk in nonfiction texts. This helps them to think about what they’re about to learn, and it helps them figure out how their book goes so they can make a plan for how they’ll read it. As children turn the page of their texts, they’ll say things like, “Oh, this section is about what snakes eat. I bet there’s a part in here about how they can eat huge things,” or “This is the kind of book that you can jump around in,” or “The pages in this book have tons of information. I have to make a plan for where I’ll start to read first.”

This preliminary work in your unit may take a week or so, and children will do this work in the nonfiction texts they shop for from the leveled library and the nonfiction look books they’ve chosen.

At this point, the structure of the nonfiction study changes to reading centers. Your students will choose topics they are interested in learning more about and then gather texts around the topic. (In many classrooms, teachers may create nonfiction topic baskets, and students choose which one of these topics they want to study.)

When children (or you, in many cases) gather books around a topic, it’s important to make sure there are accessible texts within the topic basket. Once topic baskets are formed and children have chosen the nonfiction topic they want to study, you’ll begin to teach them strategies for reading to learn. For example, you’ll want to spend at least a couple of days teaching children about synthesizing text by telling them that careful nonfiction readers always try to put what they’ve read into their own words. You’ll demonstrate by reading a passage from a big book or read aloud text and then putting the text down and saying, “What the author is saying is that…” or “What this means is…” This synthesis is very difficult, and some children may struggle to do this. You can reinforce this work by doing some synthesis and paraphrasing activities during your morning meeting or at other times of the day. When children have a hard time with this, you can help them

Teachers College Reading and Writing Project  
Second Grade Curriculum Calendar for Reading Workshop  
2007-2008  
DRAFT

by teaching them to reread and then close the book and use prompts like, “I just read that...” or “What I just learned was...”

As children read across books about a topic, they may begin to make connections between books and formulate questions about their topics that spur on new purposes for their reading. You’ll want to help them to extend their thinking about their topic by having thoughts as they gather information. As a child reads and relates a fact she gleaned from the text, you want to teach her to think about the topic with more depth by saying the fact and adding her own thoughts. For example, after reading a chunk of text, a child might say something like, “Hmm. I learned whales are mammals.” What you want to teach the child to do is to say what that makes her think. She may add, “I didn’t know they were mammals because I thought they were fish. They live in the water and look like fish.” What she has done is take a fact from the text and put her own ideas or preconception alongside the fact. Another way of doing this is to stretch the idea from the book. That would sound something like, “Whales are mammals. Hmmmm. That means they are like people and dogs and horses. I always thought they were more like fish,” or “Whales are mammals. Hmmmm. That must mean they nurse their babies and have warm blood because that’s what I know about mammals.”

As your students read nonfiction texts, you’ll want to teach them strategies for accumulating information, laying the text’s information alongside their prior knowledge in a way that adds to what they already know, revises what they already know, or allows them to critique the information in the book based on what they already know. For example, a child who wants to learn about sharks is in a shark center. As he and his partner read, they encounter a line of text that says, “Sharks are the most dangerous and ferocious fish in the ocean.” We would hope a child could do any of these things with the information: add that information to what they know about sharks by saying, “Oh, I didn’t realize that. That’s new information for me,” or revise what they already know about the topic, “Wow, I thought that killer whales must be ferocious. I didn’t know that sharks were the most ferocious,” or critique the information based on prior knowledge by saying something like, “I don’t think this is really true. There are lots of sharks that aren’t even a bit dangerous, like the whale shark. Also most sharks won’t even bother people. I think this part of the book is not exactly right.”

Another way you might direct the students’ work during a nonfiction study is to teach them to consider why particular information is important to their understanding of the topic. For example, as they read a chunk of text, you’ll teach your students to stop and think about the important thing they picked up as they read that text. Related to this is the idea that it’s important for our students to also notice the confusing parts and to have a repertoire of strategies to deal with nonfiction difficulties. You can teach them the strategies of rereading, checking the illustrations, rereading the confusing part out loud, and so on.

You may decide to have a couple of cycles of reading centers in this study, which means that your students will become experts about two nonfiction topics. The strategies you teach them will be universal nonfiction strategies that can be used no matter the topic of study. It’s also helpful during this unit to remind them that careful readers have thoughts as they read, and when reading

Teachers College Reading and Writing Project  
Second Grade Curriculum Calendar for Reading Workshop  
2007-2008  
DRAFT

nonfiction texts, readers tend to notice when they encounter new information or information that contradicts something they thought they knew. Nonfiction readers also grow ideas by saying, “Hmm...I learned that....and it makes me wonder/think/want to know more about...”

When the reading partners meet, you’ll want to up the ante for accountable talk by reinforcing what they already know and helping them apply it to nonfiction. As they read and talk about their nonfiction topics, you’ll want them to get in the habits of thinking and talking about the answers to questions like, “Why is this important to know about \_\_\_?” or “What does the author mean by that?” You’ll want your students to summarize their ideas saying things like, “This teaches me..” “I’ve learned that...” or “I think the author wants us to know...”

Many teachers find it helpful to use post-it notes and other graphic organizers, such as webs, during this unit. Often, students will have a note-taking folder in their center basket, where they compile their ideas about their topics. Finally, you may decide to provide opportunities for students to share their new information with others, either informally during partner exchanges or in a more formal way, such as creating posters or whole class big books. Of course, the work of creating these artifacts takes place outside of the reading workshop. Often teachers will provide a period of choice time for students to work together on their presentations.

As you look at the second grade curriculum calendar for writing, you’ll see that nonfiction writing takes place around this time as well. You may find it helpful to begin the nonfiction reading unit of study a week or two ahead of the writing study, so that students have had opportunities to immerse themselves in the genre.

### Read Aloud

During the nonfiction unit of study, you will want to continue to read aloud a variety of nonfiction texts so you can provide opportunities for students to synthesize, have thoughts off of the text, make connections, activate prior knowledge, and put other nonfiction reading skills into action. You’ll also want to show them how nonfiction readers make plans for how they’ll read their texts, whether they’ll start from the beginning and move to the end, whether they’ll zero in on a particular part, or whether they’ll focus on pictures, illustrations and diagrams. Some students will pursue a very specific part of their topic. Maybe, they’ll try to learn about the shark’s body and how it uses it to survive. Maybe they’ll be interested in reading mostly about its habitat. It will be helpful to read aloud a variety of nonfiction text structures, especially the structures that your students are most likely to encounter. You may also want to read aloud the easier nonfiction texts in your class so you can model ways to think deeply and talk well off of the easiest texts. When you do this, you’ll be able to model having thoughts about illustrations, activating prior knowledge, growing new ideas, etc.

You’ll also want to show students how the familiar skills of envisioning, inferring, monitoring for meaning and retelling are necessary when reading nonfiction. As you read aloud, you might stop and say, “Oh, it says whales move through water by moving their tails up and down, whereas fish move their tails side to side. I just want to take a second to picture that. I’m imagining that I’m

Teachers College Reading and Writing Project  
 Second Grade Curriculum Calendar for Reading Workshop  
 2007-2008  
 DRAFT

watching a whale swimming and I can see the tail going like this (hand gesture). Meanwhile, a school of fish swim by and their tail fins are going like this (hand gesture.)”

During read aloud conversations, you might want to begin supporting students as they learn to evaluate and critique the information they are getting from their nonfiction texts. For example, as they read a book that features many different kinds of sharks, they might say, “After reading this book that shows lots of sharks that aren’t dangerous, I think it’s unfair that these other books try to scare us by showing all the gross, frightening stories and pictures of sharks.” Another comment might be something like, “Most of the books on sharks tell about the great white shark. It’s like the great white shark is the main character of sharks. That makes people really freak out about sharks. It makes me think that what if all the dog books made pit bulls the main character. That would freak people out because everyone thinks pit bulls are scary. That would make people more scared of dogs.”

Shared Reading

During a nonfiction unit of study it’s helpful to read nonfiction texts during shared reading. You will be able to model the different ways to approach nonfiction texts and how to read them, how to decide where to start on a particular page, how to deal with unfamiliar vocabulary or polysyllabic words, how to study a topic of interest, and how to synthesize text into one’s own words.

Word Study/Phonics

If you assessed your students’ phonics knowledge in December, chances are there are some concepts you will need to review at this point. If up until now, you have been doing mostly whole group work, you might devote one or two days each week to small group word study work. For example, based on your assessments, you may have noticed that some students still need to work on some of the concepts you introduced in the previous months, such as blends and digraphs, while others still need to work on r-controlled vowels. Both groups can work on sorting pictures and words, but the content would be different. If you haven’t done so already, you might also introduce word hunts. During word hunts, children can look for concepts they have been working on in word study in their own independent reading texts. You might also spend the first couple of weeks reviewing some of the concepts taught in the previous months in whole group if most children are still having difficulty with them.

If you decide to teach...	Suggested Lessons in <i>Words Their Way</i> (3 <sup>rd</sup> Edition)	Suggested Lessons in <i>Phonics Lessons Grade 2</i> – Pinnell & Fountas
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Long Vowel Spelling Patterns</li> <li>• Recognizing consonants with two sounds (c and g)</li> <li>• High-Frequency Words</li> </ul>	6-2, 6-4 to 6-19 (pp. 200- 213)	SP3 to SP6 (pp. 173-178), SP 9 (pp. 197-200), SP 11 (pp. 205-208), SP 13 to SP 15 (pp. 213-224), SP17 (pp. 229-232) LS14, LS15 (pp. 123-130)  HF1 to HF 9 (pp. 235-270)

## **Mid-Year Reflection and Planning**

*By the end of January, you'll want to be sure students have been assessed in much the same way as you assessed them earlier in the year so that their reading growth and struggles are documented at different points along the year. You will want to use these assessments to help you plan whole group, small group and individual instruction for the rest of the year.*

*Although the units of study that follow are linked to months, at this point in the year the order in which the units of study are completed becomes less important than the previous months. Keep in mind, however, the calendar days offered by Teachers College Reading and Writing Project that support the units are scheduled to coincide with this curricular calendar. It's important that you continue to maintain a balance between a print-based emphasis and a focus on comprehension as you move from one study to the next. You also will want to check that your classroom library can support the work you are planning.*

*By this time of the year, you know which students are most at-risk for not meeting grade level standards. It's crucial to make plans for small group instruction and for interventions at this point, if you haven't done so already.*

Teachers College Reading and Writing Project  
Second Grade Curriculum Calendar for Reading Workshop  
2007-2008  
DRAFT

**Unit 6 – Readers Have Strategies for Monitoring for Meaning, Problem-Solving Words, and Maintaining Fluency: Readers read with word power and build their vocabulary**

*February* Overview

This unit is meant to serve as a link between the nonfiction unit that was just completed and the unit on reading within a series that follows. This month you will take time to strengthen your students' ability to decode tricky words, to teach strategies for dealing with unfamiliar vocabulary and phrases, and to work on partner talk. Your students will once again shop exclusively for just right books during this unit. You will want to take note of the levels in which most of your students read because that information will help you determine which print strategies will be most useful to teach during whole class instruction.

This is also a time when you'll want to energize the talk students do in partnerships in order for them to get ready for the work they'll do in the next unit of study.

How Might This Unit Go?

You'll begin this unit by teaching your students to be resourceful when they get to hard words in their texts. You'll show them how careful readers use lots of different strategies when they get to hard parts by modeling what it looks like to orchestrate strategies as a reader. You may want to spend a couple of days helping children deal with polysyllabic words by teaching them to start at the left and move to the right as they try to decode parts of the words. You'll want them to think about other words they know that look like the word in question and to always think about what word would make sense in a particular part of the story. At this time when students are encountering many longer more difficult words, it's helpful to teach them strategies to trying out the word in their mouths by considering different ways the vowels might sound. For example, if a child got to the word "enchilada" in their story and didn't know the word, they could try pronouncing it in different ways by experimenting with vowels until they got the word.

You'll also want to teach children how to deal with unfamiliar vocabulary in their books. As they begin to read harder texts with less picture support, they'll begin to encounter more words they've never seen or heard before. The new vocabulary may words that hold content, like 'pedestrian' and 'pounce', or they may be words that don't hold content but hold meaning, such as 'throughout' and 'actually.' You'll teach your students that when they read new words in their books, it's like they are collecting words to add to their vocabularies, so it's very important to strive to understand the words and phrases.

Some strategies you'll want to teach your children are things like reading back and reading on to use context to figure out what words mean. You'll teach them that sometimes readers substitute a tricky word with a synonym they know. So for example, if a child is reading a sentence like, "As we walked through the playground, my friend abandoned me. She ran to go play with her new neighbor who was building a castle in the sand box." If the child doesn't know the word 'abandoned,' you could teach the strategy of envisioning what is going on in the part of the story,

Teachers College Reading and Writing Project  
Second Grade Curriculum Calendar for Reading Workshop  
2007-2008  
DRAFT

and then substituting the tricky word with a synonym that fits, such as “deserted” or “left me behind.”

In some classrooms, teachers put up some chart paper near the word wall to collect new vocabulary the students are accumulating. One way this works is to have students write their new word they’ve learned on a post-it with their name and then at the end of the week (or at the end of the day), the class learns the new words. For example, if a student wrote ‘masquerade’ on a post-it, that child would tell the rest of the class what it means and maybe he could use it in a sentence to further indicate its meaning.

Throughout the unit, you’ll also want to work on improving partner talk. You’ll teach your students to hold themselves accountable to understanding what their partners are talking about by saying things like, “Wait, I’m confused. Can you explain what you mean?” or “Would you say more about that?” You’ll teach children to hold each other accountable for using text evidence by teaching them to say things like, “Can you show me the part where that happens?” or “Let me show you the part I’m thinking of,” or “For example, in the part where...”

You’ll teach your students that they can plan for their conversations during their private reading time by putting post-its on parts they want to talk about. You’ll teach them to jot on post-it’s the ideas that they want to talk about because sometimes when they go back to a blank post-it, they forget what they wanted to say.

### Read Aloud

During read aloud time throughout this unit, you may want to focus on dealing with difficulty, from a word level (vocabulary or decoding tricky words) to the story level (“getting it.”) As you read words that you think your students may not know, you can either model strategies to figure out the word (“Hmm, I don’t know what this means. Let me read back a bit and read on a little to see if I can figure it out.”) or you may give students an opportunity to do that work during a turn-and-talk (“Readers, turn and tell your partner what this means and then tell why you think so.” You may also want to define tricky words on the run by saying something like, “*Eliza grew more and more bellicose the longer the conversation went on.* Bellicose. That means getting angry and yelling about something.” This works especially well for rare words that your students are not likely to encounter much, like ‘quell’ or ‘rhinoplasty,’ if something like that was in the read aloud. By defining some words on the run, the vocabulary work is less likely to distract readers from the story. When Tim Rasinski presented at Teachers College, he suggested that teachers pull out three words each day from the read aloud to try to use as much as possible throughout the day. If the words lend themselves to it, you may want to provide opportunities for students to act out the words. For example, you can have them turn and talk by saying, “Tell your partner you don’t want to go in a bellicose way, like Eliza.”

Through your read-aloud and your reading workshop, teach children the sorts of ideas that good readers often develop. Teach them that readers notice patterns in books and think about why those

Teachers College Reading and Writing Project  
Second Grade Curriculum Calendar for Reading Workshop  
2007-2008  
DRAFT

patterns exist. Teach them that readers ask questions about books, and then try to answer those questions.

In reading workshop, your students will be reading series books and using post-it notes to record places in texts where they have ideas. You may also teach into personality traits by suggesting that characters are sometimes one way and other times another way. For example, Poppleton is sometimes very friendly and sometimes needy. A student might write or say, "In the real world, friends need to be good to each other so that they can help each other when needed." Then, as the children's post-its begin to incorporate other characters, they can begin thinking about cause and effect. Children may begin to think about how one character's actions or dialogue affects another or how a character deals with problems.

You can teach kids how to look across post-its, thinking about which ones go together and exploring through writing how and why the post-its go together. You may also teach them how to use other graphic organizers to help them sort their ideas into categories. You may teach them, for example, how to use a t-chart to explore an idea that kids had in reading workshop. A student might write about something Mudge did on one side of a page and, on the other side, write about how and why a big brother might do similar things. Maybe the student wants to show how Mr. Putter and Henry are alike. He could use a t-chart to explore this idea. You may want to show students that they can use a web to organize and categorize all their different ideas about a character or a topic. Then have them choose one thing on their web to write more about. Students should talk frequently with their reading or writing partners to rehearse and refine their ideas.

Children will also want to accumulate text especially as they read longer books. They may extend a post-it by writing their original thought, then their newer thinking, and why their thoughts have changed. A student may also extend a post-it by thinking about what would have happened if a character acted differently. For example, a student may write "If Poppleton didn't say sorry to Cherry Sue for spraying her with a water hose, he may not have her as a friend anymore."

### Shared Reading

During this unit, you might want to use excerpts from your chapter book read aloud as texts in which your students can practice reading with fluency and figuring out tricky words and phrases. You could write a few paragraphs on a chart paper from a previously read section of the book, and model how to accumulate new vocabulary as you read. Alternatively, you can create a text of your own that is accessible to most readers, yet it also offers them opportunities to do important work of decoding and defining difficult words.

Because a unit of study on reading within a series is coming up, you may want to imagine some series of poems for shared reading. For example, you might select three poems from *Nathaniel Talking* by Eloise Greenfield that you will study over the course of a week or so. You can model how knowing Nathaniel from one poem helps a reader better understand the next poem. You and your students can notice ways each poem offers more information about the character of Nathaniel.

Teachers College Reading and Writing Project  
 Second Grade Curriculum Calendar for Reading Workshop  
 2007-2008  
 DRAFT

Word Study/Phonics

During this unit especially, you will want the work you do in word study to be closely linked to the teaching you are doing around solving words when reading. As you plan word work for your students, you will want to look at their reading and writing to notice if they are transferring what they learning about letters and words to their solving of words during reading and writing. The lessons you do will depend on the reading level and word work you are doing with small groups. During your lessons, you might provide students with explicit lessons on how to take what they have been learning about words to problem solve words in reading. Say, “We’ve been learning about long vowel spelling patterns during word study, so when you’re reading, you want to be on the lookout for those patterns because they will help you read new words.” You might have them practice this with you in shared reading texts you have read with the whole class, as well as in their own books.

If you decide to teach...	Suggested Lessons in <i>Words Their Way (3<sup>rd</sup> Edition)</i>	Suggested Lessons in <i>Phonics Lessons Grade 2 – Pinnell &amp; Fountas</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Long Vowel Spelling Patterns</li> </ul>	6-2, 6-4 to 6-19 (pp. 200- 213) 6-2, 6-4, 6-8, 6-9 (pp. 198-204)	SP3 to SP6 (pp. 173-178), SP 9 (pp. 197-200), SP 11 (pp. 205-208), SP 13 to SP 15 (pp. 213-224), SP17 (pp. 229-232)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Diphthongs and Ambiguous vowels</li> </ul>		LS9 (pp. 103-106), LS21 (pgs.151-154), SP10 (pp. 201-204)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High-Frequency Words</li> </ul>		HF1 to HF 9 (pp. 235-270)

**Unit 7 – Readers Become Experts about Series They Love By Looking Closely at Character Relationships**

*March*

Overview

If you think back over your own reading life, you will probably recall that for a number of years, you were a series reader. For some of us, the series we loved was *Nancy Drew*, for others the series was the *Boxcar* books or *Cherry Ames* (the nurse practitioner), *Sweet Valley High* or *The Hardy Boys*. Your second graders are just on the brink of all this glorious reading and you’ll want to create a unit that lets them in on the fun.

There are lots of reasons why you want to lean in to support the reading of series books. For one thing, if you do a book introduction of one book from the series, that introduction can support children’s work across the series. You might also use reading within a series as an opportunity to move some of your students up a level of difficulty because their reading will be scaffolded by the series introduction you provide and by the inherent support that reading within a series offers. Children’s comprehension is scaffolded when the same characters and places return, book after book. By teaching children to think across books, you are really setting them up for working with longer multi-chapter novels. But the best thing about series books is that they seem designed to

Teachers College Reading and Writing Project  
Second Grade Curriculum Calendar for Reading Workshop  
2007-2008  
DRAFT

hook kids into characters. Your hope is that your readers will become fans of Henry or Ramona or Poppleton or Froggie.

How Might This Unit Go?

It's important to note right away that this unit of study in reading coincides with the Writing about Reading unit for writing workshop. To make these units mutually beneficial, you might want to do some teaching throughout the unit that will lift the level of the jottings on the post-its. Instead of jotting simple noticings, you could teach your students to also jot what they are thinking by asking "Why do I think this?" or "What's my idea here?" or adding "...because..." For example, instead of jotting "Chester and Wilson – acting mean" on a post-it, one might jot "C and W acting mean—maybe they are intimidated by Lily?" You might create a chart entitled something like "What kinds of things might readers post-it?" and add things like: character feeling and reasons why, character change and reasons why, a new idea from the series and evidence to support it, new learning or lessons from the story and evidence to support it. Of course, you might have to model this first during read aloud before expecting your students to do this independently.

You'll want to begin this unit, as you begin any unit, by thinking through your resources and your children's needs. For your strongest readers, you may decide that it will be helpful for them to read a series that is at or slightly below their independent reading level so that they can have opportunities to work on fluency and to talk well about texts. They can also use these 'comfortable reads' to solidify their comprehension work, especially with regard to accumulating text across chapters. Depending on your books, you may also need to reconfigure some of your character study baskets only this time, your students will read them with the lens of the texts as a series. In any case, you'll want to create series book baskets for your classroom library. The *D or E Field Guides to Classroom Libraries* (Heinemann) could be crucial supports for you as they overview a series, identifying the easier and harder books within the series, and the main features and challenges of the series.

This unit of study lends itself easily to the structure of reading centers. Your partners can shop for an appropriate series to study for a couple of weeks, and then for the last part of the unit, they can move on to another series, so that by the end of the study, your students will feel like they are experts on two different series.

For your minilessons, you will probably need to read aloud excerpts from several short books from within a familiar series to model and demonstrate some of the special ways in which series readers read. These ways won't become apparent until you are on the second book in the series (which is why we recommend short series books within your minilesson). The first thing you will probably do is to think across books so as to accumulate knowledge of the main character, but very soon after that, you'll want to do the same sort of thinking about secondary characters and the relationships among the characters in the books. Second graders are often fascinated when they realize how the two books in a series 'go together.' Does the second book take place at the same time as the first book? Are the characters growing older? Has the main character's family changed in any way? If Mudge went to dog school in one book, does his behavior improve in another book? Does the

Teachers College Reading and Writing Project  
Second Grade Curriculum Calendar for Reading Workshop  
2007-2008  
DRAFT

character seem to learn from the problems she encountered in the one book, carrying these insights as she moves forward? When students pay close attention to character relationships, the difficulties the characters experience, and the ways characters change, we can teach them to jot these ideas on post-its because this will help students hold onto these idea for their writing about their reading.

You'll want to teach your students that when they read lots of series books, they'll find themselves predicting how the upcoming book will probably 'go' based on their prior reading. These predictions will be based especially on the reader's knowledge of characters. A child who is an avid reader of Poppleton will know that Poppleton will encounter some sort of hurt feelings or frustrations with his friends, but that he will figure out a way to work them out. Then when the child reads that next book, they're likely to think, "Oh, here it comes again... This is just like the problem he had with Zacko." Remind students that these are significant realizations and worth jotting on a post-it. When a student accumulates several of these sorts of post-its, they are more able to organize the big idea and substantiate it with text evidence in their writing about their reading.

As your students move toward their second series, you may decide to amp up your teaching a bit. In this second part of the unit, you might teach them how the secondary characters affect the main characters in the stories. For example, when Lily moves into the neighborhood in Chester's Way, she has an effect on the best friends, Chester and Wilson. Besides naming the effect (Chester and Wilson get secretive and act sort of aloof), you might support your students as they think about why the character had this effect. Was it due to Lily's personality? Was it because Chester and Wilson were unsure about inviting another friend into their relationship? Were they insecure because Lily seemed so cool? This work of noticing developments in the story and then considering the underlying reasons is sophisticated, so your students may need lots of support during conferences and reminders during partner reading time to do this, to move beyond noticing and naming to thinking about the underlying reasons or causes. Again, you'll want to encourage and support your students in using post-its to hold on to their ideas so they can talk and write about them more readily.

You might also want to focus on cause and effect in series books. Often, as readers move across a series, they'll notice that similar things happen in different books. Once your students establish recurring causes and effects in their books, you might teach them to notice the warning signs that a problem is about to begin. For example, if the main character often runs into trouble because she talks too much and says the wrong things, you could expect that when a new character is introduced in one of the books in the series, that the main character will most likely alienate the new character in some way by saying something inappropriate.

Throughout this unit, you'll want to confer with partnerships and encourage them to back up any ideas they have about characters or stories with text evidence to support their thinking. You could also help them move beyond noticing and commenting on the characters and stories toward having thoughts about what they've noticed. You may decide in some cases to help students move beyond

Teachers College Reading and Writing Project  
Second Grade Curriculum Calendar for Reading Workshop  
2007-2008  
DRAFT

the book to the world at large by prompts like, “So, what does this make you think about copy cats now?” or “Does this book or series help you think differently about best friends?”

### Read Aloud

Predictably, it would be helpful to read books within a series as you begin this unit. You can begin to help them think like series book readers during read aloud time, and you can support their partner talk as well. It may be efficient to pick a series in which you’ve already read a couple of the books so that your students have prior knowledge. You may also find it effective to read picture books with strong characters and clear relationships whether or not the books are part of a series. Titles like *Recess Queen*, *Amos and Boris*, *Ruby the Copy Cat* and many Kevin Henkes’ books work really well.

### Shared Reading

During shared reading, you might want to complement the unit on series books by working on fluency and teaching students how to ‘get into a character’s head.’ You might decide it makes sense to continue with the work on dramatization that you’ve begun because you notice pay-offs in terms of improved fluency and increased student engagement.

It’s also important to continue supporting students with word-solving strategies and vocabulary building work. For example, you could cover words in a shared reading text and ask students to think of a word that would make sense in that place in order to active their vocabularies. You could do work on synonyms by reading a text and then saying, “How else could we say that?” or “What other words would work here?” For example, when the hungry giant says, “I’ll hit you with my bommyknocker!” you could say, “What other words could the author have used?” and then try out the other words through dramatizing that part. Your students will find that word choice matters because “I’ll hit you with my bommyknocker!” is undoubtedly more effective than “I’ll hit you with my mallet!”

### Word Study/Phonics

As children move into reading new text levels, you will want to think about the types of texts they are reading. It’s important that our word study time is carefully designed to help students meet the challenges of problem solving words in their texts. For example, for students moving into Group 6, you will want to work on recognizing syllables in words to support them with the strategies for solving longer words. Along with considering the levels your students are reading, you will also want to assess children’s use of beginning and ending consonant blends, short and long vowel spelling patterns, contractions, inflectional endings, and high-frequency words. You may use the assessment in the *Phonics Lessons 2<sup>nd</sup> Grade* binder by Pinnell and Fountas.

Examine your students’ writing as well to notice whether or not they are transferring what has been taught to their own work. Notice their spelling attempts with words. For example, if they are writing *parkt* for *parked* you might work with -ed endings. Take this opportunity to assess their knowledge of the words on the word wall as well. For example, if all of your students can read and

Teachers College Reading and Writing Project  
 Second Grade Curriculum Calendar for Reading Workshop  
 2007-2008  
 DRAFT

write the word *through* consistently you can retire that word and replace it with words they need to learn.

If most of your students cannot read and write most of these words independently, you might begin January with practicing the ones already on the word wall without adding more for a couple of weeks. Otherwise, continue adding 3-5 words a week, making sure that your students can read and write most of the words that are already there. Also, help children use word study charts when they are reading and writing.

If you decide to teach...	Suggested Lessons in <i>Words Their Way (3<sup>rd</sup> Edition)</i>	Suggested Lessons in <i>Phonics Lessons Grade 2 – Pinnell &amp; Fountas</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Diphthongs (oy and ai) and Ambiguous Vowel patterns</li> <li>• Complex Blends (str)</li>   <li>• Contractions</li> <li>• High-Frequency Words</li> </ul>	<p>6-2, 6-4, 6-8, 6-9 (pp. 198-204)</p> <p>5-7, 5-9, 5-10, 5-13 (pp. 166-169)</p>	<p>LS9 (pp. 103-106), LS21 (pgs.151-154), SP10 (pgs. 201-204)</p> <p>LS1 (pp. 71-74), LS5 (pp. 87-90), LS6 (pp. 91-94) adapt to teach different consonant blends</p> <p>WS10 to WS12 (pp. 339-350)</p> <p>HF1 to HF 9 (pp. 235-270)</p>

Celebrating the Work of this Unit

Because this unit of study is so closely connected to the writing unit of study at this time, you might want to consider a combination celebration during which students are sharing their writing about their reading in some celebratory way. Perhaps you'll invite guests into the classroom or you'll have students share their writing with each other in small groups.

Getting Ready for the Next Unit

During the next unit, your students will be reading books that are connected thematically, so you might want to begin to list some themes your students are noticing in their series books. For example, the theme of friendship is bound to come up in several series.

**Unit 8: Readers Read Just Right Fiction Books in Theme-Based Centers: Partners learn to grow ideas as they read a collection of related books**

*April*

Overview

This unit invites you and your children to invent ways to sort books into “texts-that-go-together” and then to become strong at talking between the texts. The real goal is to light a fire under readers by inviting them to think and talk across books.

You could do the work behind the scenes, putting your Kevin Henkes books in one basket, books that feature mice as characters in another basket, but frankly, we suggest you let kids in on the fun. It's amazing to sit with one book and realize it could go in a ‘Friendship’ basket or a ‘Characters

Teachers College Reading and Writing Project  
Second Grade Curriculum Calendar for Reading Workshop  
2007-2008  
DRAFT

Who Go on Picnics’ basket or a ‘Characters Who Have Tag-Along Siblings’ basket. So we suggest you put a bunch of leveled texts out on a table, with readers who belong with those texts, and you give the kids a few empty containers such as baskets, bins, or baggies and ask them to go at it! You might, in that day’s minilesson, have shown kids how you can sort through 6 books that the class knows well, putting them into baskets-of-like books. Then, during that day’s workshop, clusters of readers will scan the books you put out for them (it’ll appear as if these are just an armful of your favorites, though you might be a bit manipulative about which books you pile at the center of a table) and soon you should have kids who are all fired up over a really cool study that they invented all by themselves.

The driving question in this unit will be, “How do these books go together?” Children will see ways in which the books are similar, and ways they are different. The different stories all contain picnics, but the picnics are totally different. Why might this be? What explains this? Children will also mark pages in one book that remind them of another book; they’ll open pages in two books that go together and talk between them.

The important thing here is that children have a reason to look closely at texts, to make big ideas and to support these ideas with specific text references, to ask questions that evoke higher level thinking, saying things such as, “I wonder why...” or “I bet this is true because...” or “Why would...” or “How could...” Children also learn that by reading books that go together, they develop expertise on something. Finally, children learn that any one book can be read with different lenses. They will probably progress from one basket of books gathered on a theme to another theme-basket, and will really enjoy finding that a book from the first basket might conceivably belong also in the second.

As children move into their second theme-based reading center, you will probably want to highlight the reading comprehension strategies that will deepen their thinking. For example, you may focus on growing ideas based on students’ own reactions and connections to the text. This deepens the work of making connections because you’ll want to have students not just make connections but say why the connection helps them understand the story or the character better. You’ll want to reteach or introduce inferring strategies by teaching students to name characters’ feelings and thinking based on what the author provides in the text. Finally, you may want to spotlight the idea that careful readers have reactions when they read. Often the reactions we have as we read arise from our own similar experiences, our prior knowledge, what we infer, and what we envision. They notice when a story or a character is making them feel something, whether it’s the feeling of wanting to laugh out loud, the feeling of disappointment, the feeling of sadness, or the feeling of anger. You could encourage your students to put post-it notes on parts of their stories where they had reactions and to jot the reaction and the reason for it on the post-it.

### Read Aloud

During this unit of study, you’ll want to continue modeling the strategies that proficient readers use to make sense of stories, but you’ll also want to teach your students the habit of getting lost in the world of a story. Perhaps you’ll read several books consecutively that connect by a theme of importance, such as a social justice theme like bullies, being left out and bothered, fitting in, or

Teachers College Reading and Writing Project  
 Second Grade Curriculum Calendar for Reading Workshop  
 2007-2008  
 DRAFT

other such topics. Besides the strategies for ‘getting it,’ you can model how readers empathize with characters and how readers carry characters with them throughout the day, not just when they’re reading the book. You may also want to direct your attention again toward the whole group conversations during read aloud by making sure your students include many voices, stick with the topic, and stay with the book as they talk.

Shared Reading

In this unit of study, you will want to design shared reading sessions that best address the needs of your particular class at this point of time. Throughout the year, we’ve suggested moving among fluency, print work and comprehension, and you might, at this time, decide that something in particular needs your attention.

You might also use shared reading time to get ready for the next unit of study in which your students will be reading texts about a science or social studies topic.

You might also provide opportunities for students to work in shared reading clubs in which groups of four gather around favorite shared reading texts. They now have a repertoire of things they can do with shared reading texts, especially with regard to fluency and dramatization. You’ll want to make sure that each group makes time to read the text aloud chorally, which is an important characteristic of shared reading.

Word Study/Phonics

By this point of the year, you will want to work with students to either solidify word study concepts you’ve already taught or to introduce new and more sophisticated word study concepts. Your word study time might become more of a small group work time rather than whole class instruction because this would allow you to fine tune your teaching to the needs of your particular students.

If you decide to teach...	Suggested Lessons in <i>Words Their Way (3<sup>rd</sup> Edition)</i>	Suggested Lessons in <i>Phonics Lessons Grade 2 – Pinnell &amp; Fountas</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Vowel patterns ou, ow, aw</li> <li>• Complex Blends (scr)</li> <li>• Contractions</li> <li>• High-Frequency Words</li> </ul>	6-2, 6-4, 6-8, 6-9 (pp. 198-204) 5-7, 5-9, 5-10, 5-13 (pp. 166-169)	LS21 (pp. 151-153)  LS1 (pp. 71-74), LS5 (pp. 87-90), LS6 (pp.91-94) adapt to teach different consonant blends  WS10 to WS12 (pp.339-350) HF1 to HF 9 (pp. 235-270)

Teachers College Reading and Writing Project  
Second Grade Curriculum Calendar for Reading Workshop  
2007-2008  
DRAFT

May

**Unit 9 – Readers Read Nonfiction (Either Within Social Studies or Science or in Interest Centers) or Readers Find Authors They Love and Get to Know Their Books or Readers Read Poetry with Expression, Fluency and Understanding**

Overview

As you plan for this unit, you need to think first about your resources. First, if you're considering doing the nonfiction study, it is always tempting to combine nonfiction reading with a content area study so that you can "kill two birds with one stone." And this unit can certainly be a time when you rally the class around one of your social studies or science topics. However, a word of caution—the really crucial thing to remember is that your children need to be reading books they can read with ease and comprehension. If a child is reading a J fiction book, chances are good this child will need to be reading an H or perhaps an I nonfiction text. Of course, the level of difficulty a child can handle in his or her nonfiction reading will vary tremendously based on the child's knowledge of the topic. Look over your books. Then decide whether your library can sustain a whole class study of one of your social studies or science topics. An alternative is to convene the class to read around a theme that you choose simply because you have lots of accessible books on this topic. The theme that comes to mind especially is animals, but insects might be another option.

It is helpful to begin by imagining how your whole unit of study will proceed. Let's imagine your class is studying animals. You will probably want to choose one animal for the class to study together—say, a bear. At the start of the month, in your read aloud work and your minilessons you might teach children to look over all their bear books and think about which one they want to read first, choosing a really easy book that can give them an overview of this animal. Meanwhile, you will probably have grouped children into ability-based partnerships around a particular animal. You might have a D-E partnership and an L-M partnership that are both reading about cats, and sometimes those children will meet as a foursome but they'll read from their leveled bins. You do not need duplicate books for the partners as long as they are both reading about cats. They'll have lots of information to synthesize.

Presumably, your reading workshop will contain time for each child to read alone, marking pages he or she wants to share, as well as time for children to convene with their partners or foursomes.

As the unit proceeds, you and the class will do lots of reading work in order to learn a lot about bears, and the children will draw from the repertoire of strategies when they disperse to study their own animals. You can demonstrate that one thing a reader does is think over the main chunks or categories of information that a text contains. For example, in your bear books, you will undoubtedly find information about the bear's eating habits, the bear's family, the bear's habitat and other kinds of information about the bear. The marvelous thing is that when your kids read about their giraffes or whales, they'll find similar categories—and many more as well!

Of course, all of this will be trickier if your children are reading in interest centers, with one partnership reading about trucks and another, about dogs. In this instance, you can still teach children that non-fiction readers often think about the main chunks of information, but your

Teachers College Reading and Writing Project  
Second Grade Curriculum Calendar for Reading Workshop  
2007-2008  
DRAFT

demonstrations will be less closely aligned to their individual work. If your students are in interest centers (rather than whole class topic centers, like animals or insects), you will want to teach them strategies for reading to learn, such as how readers accumulate knowledge about a topic, and how readers grow ideas about their topics by saying, “I learned that...and it makes me think that...” For example, if two students are studying trucks and they learn that eighteen wheelers aren’t able to stop quickly or change direction because they are so heavy, the students might move toward thinking about how dangerous big rigs can be on the highways and that maybe they need their own lanes.

Over the course of the unit, you will also teach readers that they should be able to read a section (or a book) and then pause and think, “What has the author taught me?” They should be able to say to themselves, “The main thing I have learned here is...” and then to paraphrase the content of the text. When readers meet with partners, they can teach each other the important things they learned during that day’s reading time. Of course, it will be important for children to think and talk over what they learn, saying things like, “This is weird because...” or “I am surprised that...” or “Then how come....”

### Read Aloud

During any study, you may decide that you want your read aloud time to either support your unit of study by providing opportunities for students to practice using the same skills or strategies they’ll need for reading workshop, or you may decide that you want your read aloud to complement the unit of study. In this case, the read aloud work might offer students opportunities for other kinds of reading work. If you’d like to offer other kinds of reading work, you may decide that during this unit of study, your read aloud will focus on an author study or poetry.

If you decide to study authors, you’ll probably want to pick three or four texts by a particular author to read and reread within a week’s time. The format for the read aloud will be typical, with think-alouds and turn-and-talks while you read the text, followed by whole group conversations. You may decide to steer these whole group talks toward conversations about what readers notice about the work of the author. Your students might notice that the author writes about the same sort of topic over and over or that she uses the same characters across books. They might notice aspects of the author’s craft across books, and they might wonder about the author’s process or origination of the ideas for the texts. There is a world of ways to study authors, and this work can be done either as a unit of study itself or as a temporary curriculum for read aloud time.

### Shared Reading

During this unit of study, you might decide to read nonfiction big books, or you might decide to do something completely different. Perhaps you will want to read poetry as a class, so you might select some wonderful poems for your students to learn and talk about during shared reading. Of course there will be ample opportunities to do word work and print strategy instruction during shared reading of poetry. At this point of the year, you’ll probably want to select more complex poems that will likely lead to compelling conversations.

Teachers College Reading and Writing Project  
 Second Grade Curriculum Calendar for Reading Workshop  
 2007-2008  
 DRAFT

Word Study/Phonics

By this point of the year, you will want to work with students to either solidify word study concepts you've already taught or to introduce new and more sophisticated word study concepts. Your word study time might become more of a small group work time rather than whole class instruction because this would allow you to fine tune your teaching to the needs of your particular students.

If you decide to teach...	Suggested Lessons in <i>Words Their Way (3<sup>rd</sup> Edition)</i>	Suggested Lessons in <i>Phonics Lessons Grade 2 – Pinnell &amp; Fountas</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Beginning and Ending Complex Blends</li>   <li>• Contractions</li> <li>• Inflectional Endings for Plural and Past Tense</li> <li>• Homophones</li> <li>• High-Frequency Words</li> </ul>	5-7, 5-9, 5-10, 5-13 (pp. 166-169)  7-3 (pp. 235), 7-8 (pp. 239)  6-20, 6-21, 6-23 (pp. 214-216)	LS1 (pp. 71-74), LS5 (pp. 87-90), LS6 (pp. 91-94) adapt to teach different consonant blends LS10 (pp. 107-110), LS18 to LS20 (pp. 139-150), SP16 (pp. 225-228) WS10 to WS12 (pp. 339-350) WS5, WS6 (pp. 319-326), WS9 (pp. 335-338) WS4, WS5 (pp. 285-292) HF1 to HF 9 (pp. 235-270)

June

**Unit 10 – Find your niche as a reader: Return to your old favorites, create your own reading centers, and make plans for your reading life**

Overview

At the end of the year in second grade, you will want to provide your students time to reflect on and celebrate their growth as readers, time to make plans for their summer reading, and also time to invent and carry out their own independent reading studies.

How might this unit go?

One way teachers often begin this unit is by asking children to look back on how much they've changed as readers since the beginning of the year. Many teachers have saved a variety of reading artifacts across the year, such as reading log pages, post-it notes, writing about reading, and they use these to help children remember the kinds of readers they were and to compare this to the kinds of readers they've become over the course of the year. Sometimes teachers invite children to reread the books they read earlier in the year to see how their thinking has changed. Another way you might ask your children to reflect is to have them consider their reading tastes (What kinds of things do I like to read?), their reading tendencies (What kinds of things do I tend to do as a reader?) and their reading needs (What do I want to get better at as a reader?).

For the first few days of this unit, you might gather the class in the meeting area and have a discussion that leads to reflection rather than the usual minilesson. For example, you might say something like, "Readers, one of the things I know that grownup readers do is to reread books that

Teachers College Reading and Writing Project  
Second Grade Curriculum Calendar for Reading Workshop  
2007-2008  
DRAFT

they've read before that have been important to them for some reason. Strong readers know that when you reread, you often have new thinking about the story. I was thinking that we could all look back over some old favorite books this week and reread trying to notice the new thinking that we're having about the stories." You could reread some old favorite read alouds and ask your students to shop for old favorites of their own from the classroom library to reread for the next several days.

Many teachers might spend some time during this unit supporting children as they create their own reading projects and reading centers. For a couple of weeks, you'll support children in planning, carrying out, sustaining, and finishing projects of their own choice. In order to help children pick the projects they'll do, you will suggest that people make projects in their lives to pursue topics of interest, to get better at something, and to try something new. You might spend a few days helping your students to envision the kinds of projects that would go along with these three categories, such as "I want to learn more about mummies, so I'm going to read books on mummies and ancient Egypt," or "I want to get better at reading aloud to my little sister, so I'm going to find lots of good picture books she'd like, and I'm going to practice reading them," or "I never really read much poetry, so I'm going to read a lot to find the kinds of poems I like." You may have to have a slightly heavy hand in helping students figure out their projects. Many teachers say this is the trickiest part of independent projects.

Once children determine their project, you'll want to help them make a plan for how they'll proceed and gather materials. Once they're engaged in the projects, your teaching may change to support them when they hit glitches, when they lose momentum, or when they lose focus. You might also have a tricky time ensuring that students have access to whatever materials they may need to execute their projects. However, once these obstacles are overcome, the skills you're teaching for these reading projects are transferable to any kind of project.

During this study, you'll also help children make their own summer reading plans that will enable them to continue to grow as readers and also diversify their tastes and habits. Remember, that when students don't read over the summer, their reading level usually drops two entire levels. Therefore, you have a critical obligation to send them off to July and August wanting to read a lot! Teachers may want to have conferences with students to talk about what they hope to accomplish over the summer. In this way, you help students make reading goals and look forward to their accomplishments.

### Read Aloud

In this final unit of the year, it may offer closure to reread excerpts from favorite read alouds from throughout the year. You might talk to your students about how some readers love to go back and read parts of favorite books because they offer comfort and they might sound different the second time around. They may also notice different things when they reread something. You might begin by saying something like, "I want to reread a part of *Charlotte's Web* because I think that when we read this, it changed our class," or "You know, I think one of the best talks we had was when we read *Ruby the Copy Cat*. I thought we could reread it and have another conversation to see if our

Teachers College Reading and Writing Project  
 Second Grade Curriculum Calendar for Reading Workshop  
 2007-2008  
 DRAFT

ideas have changed.” It helps to keep the post-its that you put inside the read aloud books so that you have reminders of the work that your class has done.

Some teachers ask students to write a little blurb for homework about which read aloud books they think the teacher should read again in the upcoming school year. The students say which title and then add their reasons for their thinking.

Shared Reading

In this last month of school, you may want to do similar work with shared reading that you’ll do with the read aloud – revisiting old favorites. If your students kept poetry notebooks in which they compiled the poems they learned during shared reading, you might have a poetry recitation near the end of the year in which you ask students to select a favorite poem to memorize and say aloud to the class.

Word Study/Phonics

During this last month of school, you’ll want to take some time to assess your students with regard to their understanding of phonics and word study. You’ll probably look at their writing to see that they spell word wall words conventionally and fluently (they write them quickly), and that your students’ attempts to spell unknown words are grounded in all they know about how words work. You’ll want to see that your students transferred what they learned in words study to their writing, and to their reading.

If you decide to teach...	Suggested Lessons in <i>Words Their Way (3<sup>rd</sup> Edition)</i>	Suggested Lessons in <i>Phonics Lessons Grade 2 – Pinnell &amp; Fountas</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contractions</li> <li>• Inflectional Endings for Plural and Past Tense</li> <li>• Homophones</li> <li>• High-Frequency Words</li> </ul>	<p>7-3 (pp. 235), 7-8 (pg. 239)</p> <p>6-20, 6-21, 6-23 (pp. 214-216)</p>	<p>WS10 to WS12 (pp.339-350)</p> <p>WS5, WS6 (pp. 319-326), WS9 (pp.335-338)</p> <p>WS4, WS5 (pp. 285-292)</p> <p>HF1 to HF 9 (pp. 235-270)</p>

Teachers College Reading and Writing Project  
 Second Grade Curriculum Calendar for Reading Workshop  
 2007-2008  
 DRAFT

**Recommended Big Books For Shared Reading in Second Grade**

The following is a list of some of the favorite shared reading texts used by second grade teachers across New York City. In addition to these texts, you may want to gather short poems and songs that are engaging, instructional, and effective for your students.

<b><u>From The Wright Group</u></b>	<b><u>ISBN #</u></b>
<u><i>The Pirate Feast</i> (H)</u>	<u>0780224159</u>
<u><i>Superkids</i> (H)</u>	<u>0780257766</u>
<u><i>The Morning Queen</i> (H)</u>	<u>0780257715</u>
<u><i>Jim's Trumpet</i> (K)</u>	<u>0780257936</u>
<u><i>The Strum Family Band</i> (I)</u>	<u>0322019176</u>
<u><i>The Super Smile Shop</i> (I)</u>	<u>0322003016</u>
<u><i>Richie The Greedy Mouse</i> (I)</u>	<u>0780238834</u>
<u><i>The Wicked Pirates</i> (I)</u>	<u>0780257774</u>
<u><i>The Little Yellow Chicken</i> (I)</u>	<u>0322039215 ***</u>
<u><i>Clyde Klutter's Room</i> (I)</u>	<u>0780257642</u>
<u><i>Dinosaur Morning</i> (J)</u>	<u>0322019230</u>
<u><i>The Alphabet Game</i> (J)</u>	<u>0322002966</u>

\*\*\* This big book comes with 6 student books, a poster, cassette, teaching guide and hanging bag.

**Poetry Resources for Shared Reading**

Updike, John. *A Child's Calendar*. Illustrated by Trina Schart Hyman. New edition: Holiday House, 1999. Ages 5 – 11 (ISBN # 0823414450)

Wong, Janet S. *Night Garden : Poems From The World Of Dreams*. Margaret K. McElderry, 2000. (ISBN # 0689826176)

\*This is sold with a big book, 6 pack of small books, cassette, poster and teaching guide.

\*\*\* *The Meanies Collection* is purchased as a collection of big books under one ISBN Number.

**Other Big Books to support phrasing and fluency from Rigby Literacy:**

Wiggly Squiggly	07635-67434-CR7
Adventure Sports on the Edge	07635-67505-CR7

**Other Big Books to use for building phrasing and fluency from Rigby Sails:**

Alley Cats	ISBN 0-7578-2557-5
A Party for Alley Cats	ISBN 0-7578-6816-9
Mr. McDoodle and His Scooter	ISBN 0-7578-6815-0
Captain Quake and Boss Bird	ISBN 0-7578-6818-5
A Surprise for Mrs. O'Malley	ISBN 0-7578-6817-7
Chicken Food	ISBN 0-7578-2559-1
The Giant of Ginger Hill	ISBN 0-7578-2563-X
The Feast	ISBN 0-7578-2561-3
No Queen Today!	ISBN 0-7578-2564-8

Teachers College Reading and Writing Project  
Second Grade Curriculum Calendar for Reading Workshop  
2007-2008  
DRAFT

**Recommended Texts for Read Aloud in Second Grade**

This is a list of read aloud suggestions for each unit of study. This is by no means exhaustive, and it's our hope that you and your colleagues will add your favorite titles to the list.

**Unit 1: Careful Readers Have Good Habits: Reading with Stamina, Engagement, Fluency, Accuracy and Comprehension (September)**

Barracca, Debra. *The Adventures of Taxi Dog*. (ISBN # 0140566651)  
English, Karen. *Hot Day on Abbott Avenue*. Illustrated by Javaka Steptoe. Clarion, 2004. 32 pages. Ages 5 – 9 (ISBN # 0395985277)  
Hooks, Bell. *Skin Again*. (ISBN# 078680825-X)  
Lowry, Lois. *Gooney Bird Greene*. Yearling, 1994 (ISBN # 0440419603)  
Myers, Christopher. *Wings*. Scholastic, 2000. Ages 5 – 11 (ISBN # 0590033778)

**Unit 2: Readers Use Strategies to Figure Out Words and To Understand Their Stories (October)**

Bunting, Eve. *One Green Apple*. c. 2006. (ISBN# 978-0-618-43477-0)  
Bunting, Eve. *A Picnic in October*. (ISBN # 0152050655)  
Choi, Sook-Nyul. *Halmoni and the Picnic*. Houghton Mifflin, 1993. (ISBN # 0395616263)  
Choi, Yangsook. *Peach Heaven*. c. 2005. (ISBN# 0-374-357-61-7)  
Cruise, Robin. *Little Mama Forgets*. c. 2006. (ISBN# 0-374-34-613-5)  
Livingstone, Star. *Harley*. Illustrated by Molly Bang. SeaStar, 2001. 64 pages. Ages 5–7 (ISBN # 1587171503)

**Unit 3: Readers Think and Talk About The Characters in Their Books and They Can Become Experts About Characters in Character Centers (November)**

Rylant, Cynthia. *Mr. Putter and Tabby Bake the Cake*. Harcourt Children's Books. (ISBN # 0152002146) \*\*\*  
Rylant, Cynthia. *Mr. Putter and Tabby Catch the Cold*. Harcourt Children's Books. (ISBN # 0152047603) \*\*\*  
Rylant, Cynthia. *Mr. Putter and Tabby Make a Wish*. Harcourt Children's Books. (ISBN # 015205443X) \*\*\*  
Rylant, Cynthia. *Mr. Putter and Tabby Pour the Tea*. Harcourt Children's Books. (ISBN # 0152009019) \*\*\*  
Rylant, Cynthia. *Mr. Putter and Tabby Row the Boat*. Harcourt Children's Books. (ISBN # 0152010599) \*\*\*  
Rylant, Cynthia. *Mr. Putter and Tabby Stir the Soup*. Harcourt, 2003. (ISBN # 0152050582) \*\*\*

**Unit 4: Careful Readers Build Comprehension By Reading With Fluency, and Pay Attention to the Story Elements (December)**

Look, Lenore. *Ruby Lu, Brave and True*. Illustrated by Anne Wilsdorf. Atheneum, 2004. 105 pages. Ages 5 – 9 (ISBN # 1416913890)  
Look, Lenore. *Uncle Peter's Amazing Chinese Wedding*. c. 2006. (ISBN# 978-0-689-84458-4)  
Ludwig, Trudy. *Just Kidding*. c. 2006. (ISBN# 1582461635)  
McDonald, Megan. *Judy Moody Saves the World*. Illustrated by Peter Reynolds. Candlewick Press, 2002. 144 pages. Ages 6 – 9 (ISBN # 0763620874)  
Rodman, Mary Ann. *My Best Friend*. c. 2005. (ISBN# 0-670-05989-7)  
Spirin, Gennady. *Martha*. c. 2005. (ISBN# 0-399-23980-4)

**Unit 5: Nonfiction Reading Strategies: Readers Can Get Information and Grow Ideas From Nonfiction Texts (January)**

Allen, Judy. *Are You A Ladybug?* (ISBN # 0753456036) \*\*\*  
Arnosky, Jim. *Beachcombing, Exploring the Seashore*. (ISBN # 0525471049)  
Hatkoff, Craig and Greste, Peter. *Owen and Mzee*. Scholastic, 2006. Ages 4-8 (ISBN # 0439829739)  
Llewellyn, Claire and Watt, Barrie. *Earthworms*. Franklin Watts, 2002. (ISBN # 0531148254) \*\*\*

Teachers College Reading and Writing Project  
Second Grade Curriculum Calendar for Reading Workshop  
2007-2008  
DRAFT

Llewellyn, Claire and Watt, Barrie. *Ladybugs*. Franklin Watts, 2002. (ISBN # 0531148262) \*\*\*

**Unit 7: Readers Become Experts about Series They Love By Looking Closely at Character Relationships (March)**

Howe, James. *Pinky and Rex and the Bully*. Aladdin, 1996. (ISBN # 0689808348) \*\*\*

Howe, James. *Pinky and Rex and the Mean Old Witch*. Aladdin, 1999. (ISBN # 0689828799) \*\*\*

Howe, James. *Pinky and Rex and the New Neighbors*. Aladdin, 1997. (ISBN # 0689812965) \*\*\*

Kline, Suzy. *Horrible Harry and the Dungeon*. Puffin Books; Reprint edition. June 1998. (ISBN # 0140386203) \*\*\*

Kline, Suzy. *Horrible Harry in Room 2B*. Puffin Books; Reissue edition. April 1997. (ISBN # 0140385525) \*\*\*

**Unit 9: Readers Read Nonfiction (Either Within Social Studies or Science or in Interest Centers) (May)**

Joel, Billy. *New York State of Mind*. (ISBN # 0439553822)

Kathy Jakobsen. *My New York*. (ISBN # 0316927112)

Laura Krauss Melmed. *New York, New York!: The Big Apple from A to Z*. (ISBN # 0060548746)

Leyla Torres. *The Subway Sparrow*. (Sunburst Book). (ISBN # 0374471290)

Miroslav Sasek. *This is New York (This is...)* (ISBN # 0789308843) \*\*\*

**Unit 10: Find your niche as a reader: Return to your old favorites, create your own reading centers, and make plans for your reading life (June)**

Rylant, Cynthia. *Gooseberry Park*. Scholastic, 1998. (ISBN # 059094715X)

Rylant, Cynthia. *The Relatives Came*. (ISBN # 0689717385)

\*\*\* There are other books in these series.

**Other Recommended Nonfiction Titles**

Ice Cream: The Full Scoop by Gail Gibbons

Construction Zone by Cheryl Wilson Hudson, photos by Richard Sobol

How to Survive in Antarctica by Lucy Jane Bledsoe

A Killer Whale's World (narrative) by Caroline Arnold ISBN 1-4048-1321-7

Hurricane Hunters: Riders on the Storm (narrative) by Chris L. Demarest ISBN: 13: 978-0-689-86168-0

Crinkleroot's Guide to Knowing the Birds by Jim Arnosky ISBN 0-02-705857-3

**Poetry**

Kuskin, Karla. *Moon, Have You Met My Mother? The Collected Poems of Karla Kuskin*. Illustrated by Sergio Ruzzier. Laura Geringer Books/HarperCollins, 2003. Ages 6 – 10 (ISBN # 0060271736)

Hopkins, Lee Bennett, editor. *Hoofbeats, Claws & Rippled Fins: Creature Poems*. Illustrated by Stephen Alcorn. HarperCollins, 2002. Ages 8 – 12 (ISBN # 0688179436)

Creech, Sharon. *Love That Dog: A Novel*. Joanna Cotler Books/HarperCollins, 2001. Ages 8 – 12 (ISBN # 0064409597)

Grimes, Nikki. *It's Raining Laughter*. Photographed by Myles C. Pinkney. Dial, 1997. Ages 4 – 8 (ISBN # 1590780779)

Stevenson, James. *Candy Corn*. (ISBN # 0688158374) \*\*\*

Stevenson, James. *Just Around the Corner*. (ISBN # 0060291893) \*\*\*

Norman, Lyssette. *My Feet Are Laughing*. (ISBN 0-374-35096-5)

Walker, Alice. *There is a Flower at the Tip of My Nose Smelling Me*. (ISBN 978-0-06-057081-1)