

**VIDEO VIEWING GUIDE**

**Patrick A. Allen**

**WHAT ARE YOU  
THINKING?**  
**Conferring in Reader's Workshop**



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# INTRODUCTION

Sitting one-on-one with a student in a reading conference is the best way to differentiate instruction and help the student wisely use specific skills and strategies to negotiate and comprehend text. In this DVD, join Patrick Allen, author of *Conferring: The Keystone of Reader's Workshop*, as he confers with fourth-grade students in his classroom.

Patrick has been a classroom teacher for more than twenty-five years and currently teaches in the Denver metropolitan area in Colorado. Patrick's favorite part of reader's workshop is when he sits next to a reader to confer and asks, "So . . . what are you thinking?" He believes that each reader's response is unique, personal, and insightful. In the reading conferences shared in *What Are You Thinking? Conferring in Reader's Workshop*, Patrick provides a strong model for navigating the open-ended possibilities and personal inquiry that readers bring to a reading conference.

*What Are You Thinking?* features nine reading conferences with Patrick's students. The conferences were filmed over a period of two days. Patrick's students represent a heterogeneous group of readers with varied abilities, interests, and backgrounds.

During filming, Patrick and his students were delving into a close study of how wise readers determine what's important in text. Students were using this comprehension strategy to help strengthen their thinking at the word level, sentence level, and whole-text level. Using the gradual release of responsibility model, Patrick designs strategy studies that last for a four-to-six-week period. The strategy of determining what's important in text helps students recognize and identify important themes, note big ideas and concepts, focus on critical vocabulary, and connect ideas across texts to create overall meaning. The DVD includes a snapshot of two crafting lessons and one reflection session of reader's workshop.

In Patrick's classroom, students choose their reading materials independently from a vast classroom collection of texts that comprises narrative, nonfiction, and poetry. Patrick's students are encouraged and expected to make choices that match their needs as individual readers and thinkers. Patrick, in turn, helps guide and support his students through text and differentiates instruction based on their work within texts that they choose or that he encourages them to read based on interest, genre, and ability.

This viewing guide offers several suggestions to help guide your personal reflections or group discussions about reader's workshop and reading conferences. As you view the DVD, the guide will provide a template to nudge your thinking, encouraging you to contemplate the power of conferring and help strengthen your own conferring practices.

The guide also provides reflective questions for each chapter. You may use these questions for self-reflection or to guide conversation during study groups or professional development sessions. The guide is divided by chapter headings for each section. You are encouraged to take notes while viewing this DVD.

## BEFORE YOU BEGIN

Before watching the DVD, spend some time reflecting on your conferring practices. How have you made conferring a valuable thinking routine in your own classroom?

As you reflect on your own conferring practices, you might consider the following:

- Ⓒ Spend a few minutes writing in response to this prompt: Think about the reading conferences you have with your own students. How would you describe your conferring practices? As a conferrer, what is going well and what do you want to improve?
- Ⓒ Talk to a colleague about your conferring practices. Together, create a two-column chart, labeled “What is going well?” and “What do we need to think more about?”
- Ⓒ Complete the reflection form “Thinking About Conferring with Readers” (Figure 1) before watching the DVD. Reflect individually and then collectively, perhaps with another colleague or a small group of colleagues. This form can be used as a pre- or post-reflection during a study of conferring with readers.

You may want to use a two-column note format to record your observations or to launch discussions after viewing. Using two-column notes offers you a chance to record specific insights, thoughts, or wonderings. Two-column notes help focus your observations and provide fodder for further discussion. They provide thinking points for personal or small-group reflection, or dialogue points for large-group gatherings.

*Focus possibility:* What do you notice about the language both Patrick and the student use during reading conferences? You may choose column headings based on your purpose, or you can use the following:

What I Am Noticing	What I Am Wondering

The possibilities for two-column notes are endless. A few other possibilities follow.

- Ⓢ Language Patrick Uses/Language Students Use
- Ⓢ In This Conference I Noticed/Here’s What I Might Try
- Ⓢ In Patrick’s Classroom/In My Classroom
- Ⓢ I Am Noticing/Possible Instructional Considerations
- Ⓢ Patrick’s Questions and Comments/Student Responses and Comments

Patrick uses a conferring model he calls the RIP Model (for more on this model, see Chapter 4 in *Conferring*):

R—Review, Read Aloud, Record  
I—Instruction, Insights, Intrigue  
P—Plan, Progress, Purpose

Included in this viewing guide is a blank version of one of Patrick’s reading conference forms (Figure 2). During each conference, you may choose to record your notes on this conference form and then compare them to the notes Patrick took during each conference. His conference notes are also included throughout so that you may compare your notes and discuss each reading conference.

## CRAFTING LESSON: DAY ONE

### *Determining What’s Important in Text*

In this lesson on determining importance in text, you will watch Patrick demonstrate strategies with his students about how readers make decisions concerning what is most essential in the texts they are reading. This whole-class crafting lesson takes place before Patrick invites students to read independently for the day. As they read, students are invited to practice and apply a variety of strategies in their own reading.

As part of a long-term study, Patrick uses the gradual release of responsibility to nudge students toward independence. The lesson on the DVD is a shared experience—not only are students hearing Patrick think aloud, but he also invites them to participate in the thinking. Jointly, they develop clarity around how this strategy looks and the thinking it elicits.

## Points to Ponder

- Ⓢ In the introduction, Patrick clarifies his decision to use the terms *crafting*, *composing*, and *reflecting* to label the three components of reader’s workshop (based on the work of Ellin Keene). He discusses the notion of crafting one’s thinking over time to extend knowledge. He differentiates the meaning of crafting and mini-lessons.
  - What are your thoughts on the concept of crafting in regard to strategy instruction?
- Ⓢ During a previous crafting lesson, Patrick used the book *That Book Woman* (Henson 2008) to do a think-aloud. At the end of that lesson, Patrick had students create a sticky note, on which they wrote what they noticed he did as a reader. During the first portion of the crafting lesson on this DVD, he has organized their thoughts and discusses the most important things they noticed him doing as a reader. By doing so, he invites students to reflect on the previous day’s learning.
  - How might you use this reflective strategy with your readers to tie your instruction together over time?
  - How does explicit modeling help students internalize strategies that they use as readers?
- Ⓢ Patrick uses the concept of straining pasta as an instructional metaphor to help students connect to the strategy of determining importance in text. The strainer metaphor provides students with a visual representation, showing them how to “trap” the important information from text as well as their own thinking as they read.
  - What connections do you see students making in the DVD between the strainer metaphor and determining importance in text?
  - What metaphor might you use to explain determining importance in text?
  - How might you incorporate the use of metaphor within your own instruction?

## READING EXTENSION

### *Conferring: The Keystone of Reader’s Workshop*

- Ⓢ In the initial crafting session with his students, Patrick focuses on the question, What does it mean to be a wise reader? Read pages 25–29 for more background on how he lays the foundation for conferring with his students.
- Ⓢ Patrick uses the terms *crafting*, *composing*, and *reflecting* to describe the individual components of reading workshop. Read pages 80–92 to focus on the specific reading structure that Patrick introduces to his students.

# COMPOSING AS READERS: DAY ONE

## A Close Look at Individual Conferences

Patrick believes that conferring helps him learn about individual readers and that conferences provide an intimate opportunity for a shared “coming to know”—everything from the types of texts students choose to how life cycles work during a nonfiction read. Conferring becomes a natural thinking routine that is valued and appreciated by both Patrick and his students.

Each of the reading conferences provides a glimpse into the reading life of a student in Patrick’s classroom. Each student is thinking through a specific metacognitive aspect of his or her reading. Patrick has synthesized the purpose of the reading conference; thus, each conference includes the phrase *thinking through* followed by a short summation of its topic. Each synopsis includes four snippets of essential conferring language meant to serve as a discussion point, although the dialogue in each conference is not limited to these four points. Patrick also makes note of specific conference discoveries—a brief summary of each student’s skills on display during the conference.

### Isaac: Thinking Through a Writer’s Eye

In this conference, Isaac is reading the nonfiction book *100 People Who Changed America* (Freedman 2004). He focuses his thinking on what the author needed to know to write the book and how that relates to his understanding. Isaac shares his thinking about how many facts the author used and how he must have researched it carefully. Isaac discusses his knowledge about the famous people mentioned in the text. Patrick and Isaac discuss how Isaac is reading, as well as what he is learning.

Reading Conferences for Isaac

Date 9/14 Title 100 People Who Changed America Page[s] \_\_\_\_\_

REVIEW/READ ALOUD/RECORD	INSTRUCTION/INSIGHTS/INTRIGUE	PLAN/PROGRESS/PURPOSE
s/ I figured took author time to gather facts "Some people I never heard of..." Author helped. T/ "Go to something new..." s/ Shirley Chisholm. Ran for president... read differently when new. "Head getting more info." •retell vt "Dad born in 1972..." funny!	T/ Paying more attention to bullets or paragraphs "How are you deciding what's imp.?" s/ People I've heard of and how much... T/ Suggested T-chart to gather information • Focus on text features	s/ To do some writing about learning T/ "Taught me diff. between skimming and focusing in..." s/ "Wright Brothers" - interested T/ Recommended another text

Additional Comment(s): Thinking about author's purpose and process - cold ☺

**Essential Snippets of Conferring Language**

- What was going on in your head?
- How do you read differently when you come to a person you don't know anything about?
- What sticks in your head?
- What are you going to do now?

**Conference Discoveries**

- Isaac knew that delving into unknown territory helps a reader determine a thoughtful purpose.
- Isaac knew that a reader sometimes skims and sometimes focuses on detail.
- Isaac knew that determining importance plays a key role in grappling with the unknown.

**Mauri: Thinking Through Vocabulary Issues**

In this conference, Mauri discusses how she uses her reader's notebook to record difficult vocabulary that she encounters in *Bulldog Won't Budge* (Sutherland 2009) from the Pet Trouble series. Patrick uses this opportunity to embed several strategies within the context of this conference to enhance her vocabulary development. Mauri can, in turn, use the strategies as she encounters unknown words. Patrick discusses with Mauri the value of keeping the one or two most important details of her reading metacognitively.

Reading Conferences for Mauri

Date 9/14 Title Bulldog Won't Budge Page[s] \_\_\_\_\_

REVIEW/READ ALOUD/RECORD	INSTRUCTION/INSIGHTS/INTRIGUE	PLAN/PROGRESS/PURPOSE
<p><i>psychic</i> - related to "psycho" used B.E./B.K.</p> <p><i>receptionist</i> - broke down, word parts/suffix - T/ explained</p> <p>Notebook "I do not know this word" - writing too much</p> <p>T/ "Keep in head?"</p> <p>S/ discussed the note in text and explained...</p> <p>retell ✓ knows purpose ✓</p>	<p>grappling w/ vocab. - gave S/ suggestions to keep list...</p> <p>T/ "How are you reading differently?" Compares to home</p> <p>S/ Explains connection to "home" reading and "at-home" notebook</p> <p>T/ Mention D.W.I. strainer</p>	<p>S/ Keep reading and using notebook</p> <p>T/ meet again - find out more about D.W.I strategy</p> <p>Vin - How is she keeping track of new/unfamiliar vocab. changes?</p>
<p>Additional Comment(s): <i>relates text: text - connecting home/school; knows when meaning breaks down, developing strategies</i></p>		

**Essential Snippets of Conferring Language**

- What struck you as most important?
- Are you reading this book differently than the one you read at home? How is that?
- Which works better for you as a reader . . . ?
- Anything else you would like to share with me?

### Conference Discoveries

- Ⓐ Mauri knew that connections between “reading at home” and “reading at school” are important.
- Ⓐ Mauri knew that her reader’s notebook was a useful tool for tackling unknown vocabulary.
- Ⓐ Mauri knew that making meaning when reading a new book in a familiar series is critical.

### Tyler: Thinking Through Expository Text Choice

In this conference, Tyler shares with Patrick the strategies he has developed to comprehend the text *Physics: Why Matter Matters* (Greene 2009). The narrative of the book is written in first person and details the essential facts of physics. Tyler discusses the strategy he has developed to determine essential elements of the text and how he goes about understanding its components. He discusses the difference between determining what’s interesting and what’s important.

Reading Conferences for Tyler

Date 9/14 Title Physics: Why Matter Matters Page[s] \_\_\_\_\_

REVIEW/READ ALOUD/RECORD	INSTRUCTION/INSIGHTS/INTRIGUE	PLAN/PROGRESS/PURPOSE
s/ mass-vs- density T/ Reread for meaning s/ "Einstein, E=MC <sup>2</sup> " confused "what is mass?" reread made sense • recommend <u>Odd Boy Out</u> • grappling with narrative =vs- facts • Discussed 1st person and text structure	? Text choice appropriate s/ "The way it's written makes it fun to read" • discuss energy: sound s/ "As I read more, I understand more" "Reread what I don't get" ? Lots of notebook entries	• A lot of cross checking for understanding T/ Left w/ ? "what do I do with this new learning?" • Offered suggestion v-in later • Recommend v w/ fellow readers, similar text
Additional Comment(s): <u>fidgeting? Planning for future read; science interest; willing to endure difficult text</u>		

### Essential Snippets of Conferring Language

- Ⓐ How are you going about . . . ?
- Ⓐ How are you keeping this straight in your head? Story versus fact?
- Ⓐ What will you do with this new learning?
- Ⓐ Anything else you want to share with me?

### Conference Discoveries

- Ⓐ Tyler knew that stumbling upon an unfamiliar text format, with equally intriguing content, challenges metacognition.
- Ⓐ Tyler knew that rereading leads to better understanding.
- Ⓐ Tyler knew that connecting with fellow readers provides insight into new explorations.

## Jordan: Thinking Through Metacognitive Moves

In this conference, Jordan shares her previewing strategies about the book *Starting School* (Hurwitz 2001). She shares her thinking about book choice and why she thinks this book is appropriate for her. Jordan explains to Patrick how she is developing an initial understanding of the essence of the text.

Reading Conferences for Jordan

Date 9/14 Title Starting School Page[s] \_\_\_\_\_

REVIEW/READ ALOUD/RECORD	INSTRUCTION/INSIGHTS/INTRIGUE	PLAN/PROGRESS/PURPOSE
<p>· just started - wrote down thinking from cover</p> <p>s/ "I've noticed that..." (language)</p> <p>· Uses text for retell-specific "all through this page"</p> <p>s/ "We don't know much about Mrs. Cott yet..."</p> <p>· Beginning to "know" the characters</p> <p style="text-align: right;">retell vt</p>	<p>T/ "Do you think that's important?"</p> <p>· Using text or "her actions" to learn about characters - lang. and text clues</p> <p>T/ Question about imp.</p> <p>s/ "It keeps saying..."</p> <p>so "I can tell..."</p> <p>? Can't figure out "double trouble."</p>	<p>· Do a bit more thinking</p> <p>· V-in in a couple of days</p> <p>? Notice trouble</p> <p>s/ "when character..." (inferring)</p> <p>→ Reading like Writer! s/ "Lists... I like how she..."</p>
<p>Additional Comment(s): <i>vocabulary improving - lexical ; Reading like Writer ; previewing ; using notebook as a tool</i></p>		

### Essential Snippets of Conferencing Language

- Ⓐ What do you mean you were "writing down your thinking"?
- Ⓐ What were you thinking about when you picked [the book] up?
- Ⓐ What are you going to do to figure that out?
- Ⓐ Explain to me . . . I'm a little bit confused . . .

### Conference Discoveries

- Ⓐ Jordan knew that readers develop an awareness of "reading like a writer."
- Ⓐ Jordan knew that strengthening characters' schema enhances engagement.
- Ⓐ Jordan knew that going slow in the beginning will benefit understanding in the long run.

## Joshua: Thinking Through Text Discoveries

In this conference, Joshua is reading the book *It's a Deal, Dogboy* (McDonnell 1998). Joshua talks about text choice and the characters in the text. Joshua shares with Patrick the ways that he is connecting to the text and how his understanding is developing.

Reading Conferences for Joshua

Date 9/14 Title It's a Deal, Dogboy Page[s] \_\_\_\_\_

REVIEW/READ ALOUD/RECORD	INSTRUCTION/INSIGHTS/INTRIGUE	PLAN/PROGRESS/PURPOSE
T/ "Discovered?" s/ "Leo is a lot the same as me @ home... i.e. he has friends, I do too." s/ "Sister bosses him around... a lot of sisters are bossy." • Connecting to characters, lots of thinking retell ✓	• Discuss char. empathy (nudge Josh to text) • read aloud - T/ "Part you love..." rough start, smoothed out s/ "I like that..." related to friend's dog ? Think time - nudge T/ "Write it down..."	Leo { Me Things Leo does... } Things I do... - possible t-chart in reader's notebook • noticed connection to writing s/ List... "becomes writing" ✓ - in later
Additional Comment(s): <i>lots of connections; relates to family; read aloud?</i>		

### Essential Snippets of Conferring Language

- Ⓐ Tell me about that . . .
- Ⓐ Find a part that you really loved and share that with me. Why did you like it?
- Ⓐ Are you willing to try this?
- Ⓐ Anything else you want to share?

### Conference Discoveries

- Ⓐ Joshua knew that connecting characters to his own life extends his comprehension beyond the text.
- Ⓐ Joshua knew that his reader's notebook serves as a tool for further writing explorations.
- Ⓐ Joshua knew that finding great lines helps enhance understanding.

## CRAFTING LESSON: DAY TWO

### *Determining What's Important in Text*

The second day of crafting includes a discussion that occurred following a shared think-aloud from *Dear Willie Rudd* (Gray 2000). Patrick talks to the class about their goal: getting the flavor for determining important ideas in text. He emphasizes that this is going to take time and that they will keep working on the concept of determining importance in

text for the next few weeks. The goal is that they will learn strategies and work on them together before playing with each strategy independently in the books they are reading.

### Points to Ponder

- Ⓢ Patrick revisits the metaphor of the strainer with his students. He invites them to think about how they might label the strainer during the next few weeks.
  - How might you create a visual representation to use with your own students?
- Ⓢ Patrick talks about words students might start to notice that jump out at them as important. Noticing key words is another aspect of determining important information in text.
  - In what ways do you invite students to learn vocabulary within the context of their own reading?
- Ⓢ The students share specifics that they are noticing in their own reading. Patrick points out that, as they start to notice how this strategy works metacognitively, they will begin to see it working in different places. He specifically asks students how this strategy might help them.
  - What opportunities do you give your students to talk about things they notice as readers?
  - How are the student conversations in your classroom different or similar from those in Patrick’s classroom?
- Ⓢ Patrick talks a lot about building endurance and strengthening stamina.
  - What are the strategies that can be used to support students in building endurance as learners?

## READING EXTENSION

### *Conferring: The Keystone of Reader’s Workshop*

- Ⓢ Read “Exploring the Gradual Release of Responsibility Model,” pages 75–80.
- Ⓢ Read “Strengthening Endurance and Stamina,” pages 51–62.

# COMPOSING AS READERS: DAY TWO

## *A Close Look at Individual Conferences*

### Peyton: Thinking Through Important Ideas and Vocabulary

In this conference, Peyton is reading the book *Naya Nuki: Shoshoni Girl Who Ran* (Thomasma 1983). Peyton explores how the language of the text is causing her to slow down her thinking. She grapples with some of the language specific to a text about Native Americans. Peyton uses context clues and her notebook to notice and clarify her thinking.

Reading Conferences for Peyton

Date 9/15 Title Naya Nuki Page[s] \_\_\_\_\_

REVIEW/READ ALOUD/RECORD	INSTRUCTION/INSIGHTS/INTRIGUE	PLAN/PROGRESS/PURPOSE
s/ began w/ "daylight as an enemy" - jotted down "to think about it" s/ "going good, but some lang. is slowing me down" <u>tabbaborne</u> (white man) <u>eddy</u> s/ "thinking about bluff what they could mean" retell ✓+	• Figuring out text specific lang. T/ "Nudge for glossary (nope)" s/ "It might be a slave owner" (tabbaborne) • Searching text for clues T/ "Needs clarity..." • Related to <u>Trouble River</u> s/ "wondering about..." (previous annotations) T/ "How D.W.I.?" s/ "Clues"	T/ "Figure out answers to questions" Relate to N. American study of Shoshoni s/ "Enemies of Shoshoni" - making guess and rereading Note: Uses text clues to D.W.I. and enhance vocab...

Additional Comment(s): *metacognitive; challenges herself; uses notebook; returns to specific points in text; understands use of strategies*

### **Essential Snippets of Conferring Language**

- Ⓐ What's your best thinking about what *tabbaborne* might mean?
- Ⓐ What are some of the things that you've gleaned as most important from this book?
- Ⓐ What's caused you to pick up on this strategy so quickly?
- Ⓐ What are you going to do to figure out answers to those questions?

### **Conference Discoveries**

- Ⓐ Peyton knew that text-specific vocabulary provides an outlet for long-term inquiry.
- Ⓐ Peyton knew that it takes time to understand difficult text and that unfamiliar language is worth contemplating.
- Ⓐ Peyton knew that text clues help support understanding.

## Paige: Thinking Through Word-Level Issues

In this conference, Paige is reading *Sable* (Hesse 1994). Paige talks about how “sad” the book is, and Patrick uses this gentle conversation to help Paige discover how word confusion interrupts meaning. She has read the word *apron* as *harpoon*. Together, Patrick and Paige discover how one miscue can change the meaning of text.

Reading Conferences for Paige

Date 9/15 Title Sable Page[s] \_\_\_\_\_

REVIEW/READ ALOUD/RECORD	INSTRUCTION/INSIGHTS/INTRIGUE	PLAN/PROGRESS/PURPOSE
s/ "really sad" read "she marched across kitchen..." "I asked Isaac what harpoon was..." s/ "I think she shot the dog..." T/ "where harpoon?" harpoon/apron whipping/wiping "Look at word again..." • Big ah-ha! retell(?)	T/ "Harpoon would start w/ 'h'" "Go back and reread..." s/ Oh... "that makes more sense" • One word changes meaning - focus gave <u>peering</u> to her • harpoon-vs-apron? s/ "s.i.o., ask <u>and</u> show the word" - strategies	✓ in on Friday T/ "Slow down" Look @ words that don't make sense... Keep list T/ ? good fit? ✓ in about reread; slowing down for meaning
Additional Comment(s): <i>Continue decoding work in context; reading w/ peer; using notebook to record thinking</i>		

### Essential Snippets of Conferring Language

- Ⓐ Where does it talk about the *harpoon*?
- Ⓐ Is this book as sad as you thought it was?
- Ⓐ What have you discovered about yourself as a reader today?
- Ⓐ Do you think this is a good fit?

### Conference Discoveries

- Ⓐ Paige knew that having a community of fellow readers helps support her questions about vocabulary.
- Ⓐ Paige knew that meaning breaks down at the word level.
- Ⓐ Paige knew that having a partner to read enhances understanding.

## Bella: Thinking Through Personal Connections to Text

In this conference, Bella shares her excitement about the book *The War with Grandpa* (Smith 1984). During the conference, we see Bella thinking through the characters and her personal connections with the story. She makes predictions about the story based on events in the story and shares her point of view about the story elements.

Reading Conferences for Bella

Date 9/15 Title The War With Grandpa Page[s] \_\_\_\_\_

REVIEW/READ ALOUD/RECORD	INSTRUCTION/INSIGHTS/INTRIGUE	PLAN/PROGRESS/PURPOSE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• jumps right into text retell ✓</li> <li>• "laughing" enjoying text-retells w/ joy and animation</li> <li>T/ "How to retell?"</li> <li>s/ referred back to text and notebook</li> <li>T/ "How to keep important thoughts?"</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>s/ "Writing them down so I can remember..."</li> <li>"That's a whole different story..." (s/ language)</li> <li>• Notice lots of inferring i.e. Peter's room, sounds she heard, etc.</li> <li>• Refers often to text</li> <li>T/ "There's something that's connecting you..."</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>s/ "I'm really nosy about the characters..." (possible crafting?)</li> <li>• Tells story about her being "nosy" - possible writing topic</li> <li>T/ ? "Habit of nosy?"</li> <li>• Figure out why you doing that helps you relate to character...</li> </ul>

Additional Comment(s): *reading wider diet; expanding thinking; using craft of book shopping and notebook; joyful!*

### Essential Snippets of Conferencing Language

- Ⓒ How were you able to remember so much?
- Ⓒ How are you keeping track of those important details, other than keeping them in your head?
- Ⓒ When do you think that's going to happen?
- Ⓒ How do you take that habit of being nosy and put it into a book?

### Conference Discoveries

- Ⓒ Bella knew that book choice plays an important role in her reading diet.
- Ⓒ Bella knew that inferring helps a reader understand text.
- Ⓒ Bella knew that joy and laughter are attributes of a reader.

## Isaiah: Thinking Through Book Choice Decisions

In this conference, Patrick confers with Isaiah about his choice of *Out of the Dust* (Hesse 1999). What do you do when a student makes a choice that might go beyond his or her ability? Patrick nudges Isaiah to think about his choice. He invites Isaiah to decide whether he will stick with the text or make a different choice based on their time together.

Reading Conferences for Isaiah

Date 9/15 Title Out of the Dust Page[s] \_\_\_\_\_

REVIEW/READ ALOUD/RECORD	INSTRUCTION/INSIGHTS/INTRIGUE	PLAN/PROGRESS/PURPOSE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• reads back of book</li> <li>T/ "What are you thinking?"</li> <li>S/ "I'm thinking that..."</li> <li>scaring/scarring</li> <li>de-vasting/devastating</li> <li>S/ "How is she going to make things..."</li> <li>Text choice?</li> <li>retell-vague</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• creating list of new or interesting words - related to <u>How to Steal a Dog</u></li> <li>• schema T/ "Do you have enough?" i.e. Dust Bowl, text structure</li> <li>S/ "Dates...behind story..."</li> <li>• Discussed decision making, dates, structure</li> <li>T/ "Almost like poetry..."</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pay attention to words/ talk through vocab.</li> <li>• "Let me know what you decide to do..."</li> <li>• Continue reading or make another choice</li> <li>• Gave S/ option... ✓ in later ?choice?</li> </ul>
Additional Comment(s): <i>decision making; interest in poetry; recognizes effort "one mistake changes meaning and a lot of thinking..."</i>		

### Essential Snippets of Conferencing Language

- Ⓒ What does that say to you? What are you thinking about?
- Ⓒ Is there a difference between *scaring* and *scarring*?
- Ⓒ When you read this word (points to word), what were you thinking?
- Ⓒ Has some of that been happening to you as you've been reading?

### Conference Discoveries

- Ⓒ Isaiah knew that meaning breaks down at the word level and that readers develop strategies to enhance understanding.
- Ⓒ Isaiah knew that text structures are a key to understanding.
- Ⓒ Isaiah knew that his reader's notebook is a perfect place to record his thinking.

# READING EXTENSION

## *Conferring: The Keystone of Reader’s Workshop*

- ④ Patrick uses the RIP Model to structure his reading conferences. Read pages 94–116 for more information regarding how to structure a reading conference.
- ④ Patrick discusses the possibilities that emerge from reading conferences. Read “So, What Emerges in a Conference?” on pages 11–19.
- ④ Learning to confer is an important focus when investigating reading conferences. Read pages 29–32 to learn more about Patrick’s initial thoughts on conferring.

## DAY TWO: REFLECTION (SHARING)

### *As You Were Reading Today, What Did You Discover?*

During the reflection component of the workshop, Patrick asks students to discuss their discoveries about themselves as readers. He invites students to spend time at the end of each reader’s workshop talking about their discoveries, asking questions about their reading, and listening to fellow readers discuss their burgeoning thinking.

On this day, students were asked to talk knee-to-knee with peers about their discoveries and to share their thoughts with the whole group.

### Points to Ponder

- ④ How do you invite students to reflect on their learning during reader’s workshop?

# Figure 1

## THINKING ABOUT CONFERRING WITH READERS

My current definition of conferring:

	<b>A Little</b>	<b>Somewhat</b>	<b>A Lot</b>	
I confer with readers on a regular basis.	1	2	3	4
I have structures in place to support conferring.	1	2	3	4
I use an effective note-taking system.	1	2	3	4
I practice and use effective questioning strategies.	1	2	3	4
Students understand the purpose of conferring.	1	2	3	4
Students take an active role in reading conferences.	1	2	3	4

My big questions about conferring:

# Figure 2

## READING CONFERENCE FORM

Reading Conferences for \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_ Title \_\_\_\_\_ Page[s] \_\_\_\_\_

REVIEW/READ ALOUD/RECORD	INSTRUCTION/INSIGHTS/INTRIGUE	PLAN/PROGRESS/PURPOSE

Additional Comment(s):

Date \_\_\_\_\_ Title \_\_\_\_\_ Page[s] \_\_\_\_\_

REVIEW/READ ALOUD/RECORD	INSTRUCTION/INSIGHTS/INTRIGUE	PLAN/PROGRESS/PURPOSE

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REVIEW/READ ALOUD/RECORD	INSTRUCTION/INSIGHTS/INTRIGUE	PLAN/PROGRESS/PURPOSE

Additional Comment(s):

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