

# Mine Mentor Texts for Powerful Craft Moves

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**A NOTE TO ALL PARTICIPANTS:** Please check the password-protected mobile app for the typed text we'll be using in the session. You'll want to bring a printout of the text to the session. Please note: Permission from the publisher includes reproduction of the picture book for our session, but does not include publishing it on Literacy for All's public webpage.

**Quotes on Reading-Writing Connections:**

“In the fall, as my students and I get to know each other as readers and writers, I share with them the things I do as a reader and a writer. For example, I tell them about my mentors. I have mentors for teaching, mentors for parenting, and mentors for writing. We discuss what a mentor is and how mentors can help them become better readers and writers.” –Aimee Buckner

“There will always be a few texts that evoke particularly strong responses within the classroom, and these become our touchstone texts, the texts we examine and re-examine, talk about, and admire and learn from. Our students read and evaluate, muse over and analyze, learn from and model themselves after texts that are like those they will write.” –Lucy Calkins

“The mentor texts we learn the most from, the ones that have the biggest impact on our own writing, are the pieces we truly enjoy.” –Ralph Fletcher

“The first reading of a book should be a gift. When you’re at the movies, the screen doesn’t pause 17 minutes in and a voice doesn’t announce ‘Turn and Talk’.” –Lester Laminack

**Lifelong writers write well when they:**

- ▶ Communicate *meaning*
- ▶ Use *genre* knowledge
- ▶ *Structure* their writing
- ▶ Write with *detail*
- ▶ Give their writing *voice*
- ▶ Use *conventions*

(Anderson, 2005, 58)

**Six Steps to Help You Mine Picture Books for Craft Moves to Teach to  
Students**

- ▶ Read a book for pleasure first.
- ▶ Read like a writer.
- ▶ Look for craft moves.
- ▶ Reread the book.
- ▶ Sort through notes.
- ▶ Plan your teaching.

(Shubitz, 2016, 8-11)

**Picture books are powerful resources at any grade level.**

- ▶ Picture books are:
  - ▶ Short
  - ▶ Visual
  - ▶ Engaging
  - ▶ Community Builders
  - ▶ Anchors
  
- ▶ Picture books also:
  - ▶ Provide high-level opportunities for inference and interpretation.
  - ▶ Spark empathy.
  - ▶ Ignite creativity.

(Shubitz, 2016, 14)

**Immersing Students in Mentor Texts**

- ▶ Whole-class Reading and Discussion (~20 minutes)
- ▶ Partner Work (~20 minutes)
- ▶ Independent Writing Time (~10 minutes)
- ▶ Share Session (~10 minutes)

(Shubitz, 2016, 20-22)

**Another way you might approach this text as you prepare to teach with it is...**

► Read like a writer:

1. *Notice* something about the craft of the text.
2. *Talk* about it and *make a theory* about why a writer might use this craft.
3. Give the craft a *name*.
4. Think of *other* texts you know. Have you seen this craft before?
5. Try and *envision* using this craft in your own writing.

(Ray, 1999, 120)

**RESOURCES:**

Anderson, Carl. 2005. *Assessing Writers*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

Boelts, Maribeth. 2012. *A Bike Like Sergio's*. Illus. Noah Z. Jones. Somerville, MA: Candlewick.

Ray, Katie Wood. 1999. *Wondrous Words: Writers and Writing in the Elementary Classroom*. Urbana, IL: NCTE.

Shubitz, Stacey. 2016. *Craft Moves: Lesson Sets for Teaching Writing with Mentor Texts*. Portland, ME: Stenhouse.