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Reading Independently with the Bluford Series

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Introduction

Students are not provided with the opportunity during their academic day to engage in independent reading. The pressing accountability to pass standardized tests is a key reason for the lack of time provided to "drop everything and read" within the school day. Students carry various books around throughout their day. A math book, an English book, a literature book, a spelling book, a science book, and a social studies book weigh them down. Students read for a grade in a class or to earn Accelerated Reader Points. Motivating students to read independently for the intrinsic reward becomes a complicated task. The once positive attitude towards reading is replaced with a negative connotation that reading is work. Therefore, the idea of carrying around another book to read for entertainment declines.

Producing a mind set in a young child that reading can be a life-long enjoyment does not happen instantaneously. Sculpting a successful reader is analogous to building a puzzle. Each puzzle piece represents different elements of a story. Plot, theme, characters, setting, climax, and resolution represent the different types of puzzle pieces. After opening the box and dumping the pieces on to a table there is an unwritten protocol that all of the edges are put aside and the border is completed. The borders of the puzzle are the components of pre-reading skills. The four components are decoding, phonics, phonemic awareness, and fluency. The same is true for independent reading. There are things that need to be in place to successfully connect reluctant readers or have a positive introduction of reading to a new reader. First, just like picking out the puzzle of interest to build, students are in need of a well-stocked classroom library. With the diversity within each class, libraries need to vary in reading levels, styles, genres, authors, and topics. Putting the puzzle together does not happen by accident. There is a strategy that is involved. Group pieces together that are similar in color or image. Next, students need strategies. If a student is unable to comprehend what he or she reads, then what is the purpose of continuing to turn the pages? Strategies may include, but are not limited to, summarizing, talking to the text, and think-alouds. Finally, nothing is more frustrating to get to end of the thousand piece puzzle and only nine hundred ninety-nine pieces are on the table. Opportunity and practice are the equivalents of that missing piece and if it is not provided, then the puzzle will never be complete.

Literacy, at any grade level, is a concern that crosses all curricula. Merriam-Webster defines literacy as the ability to read and write. All educators have an obligation to their students to shape them into productive

members of society. It is my opinion that being literate, being able to read and to write, would qualify as one criterion for being a productive member of society. So I ask this question, "Isn't it obvious that literacy is important?" In order to foster literacy, I feel that it is important to get kids reading at an early age.? By the time a student is in middle school, the selections of readings are chosen from a textbook. Time is not set-aside during the school day for students to read independently. The question next is, "How do I get students to read independently?"

This unit will start out by having students learn about themselves, as readers. I will introduce the first book to them in The Bluford Series, Anne E. Schraff's *Lost and Found*. I will read the book to them outloud. The goal of reading to the students is to captivate them as listeners. The book will be broken up into small sections. An average of two chapters a day will be read. Progressing through the book, structured teacher led focus switches to a student led discussion of what has happening in the story. Various strategies and activities will be done before, during and after reading to demonstrate comprehension/understanding. At the conclusion of reading and discussing the first book, other books in the series are available in the class for students to read. If the students are not intrigued by this particular series, there are other age appropriate books listed in the Appendix.

Rationale

I am a teacher with nearly a decade of teaching experience. I am currently serving as a sixth grade mathematics and a Response to Instruction and Intervention teacher who provides instructional intervention based upon student need in a demographically inner city public school. The city has a low tax base that funds the district. There are three housing projects that feed into the district. Several large tax-exempt buildings are housed throughout the district. Examples of these buildings are: a private college, hospital, county correctional facility, city government buildings, local library, an abundance of nonprofit organizations, and the county office building. The district also qualifies as a Title I School-Wide school. My grade level does not measure up to the set 63% goal of proficiency on Pennsylvania System of State Assessment (PSSA) Reading. According to the Report Card that was issued at the beginning of the 20010-2011 school year, the Accountability Report for students in grades 3 through 6 within the district fell 9% below the projected goal. In accordance with the Pennsylvania Department of Education, Reading Independently is one of the lowest scored Elementary Reading Standards. When I delved into the subcategories, statistically the deficits are significantly lower amongst males, African Americans, special education students with an Individual Education Plan (IEP) and economically disadvantaged students. Many students find themselves crossing all four of those categories; therefore, encouraging non-proficient students to read independently is not the easiest of tasks.

The Beginning Reader

My love for reading began when I was a little girl. Every night my mother would tuck me into bed and read me a story from a large book of bedtime stories. As a parent, I continued the tradition and tucked my daughter into bed with her favorite book. My daughter is now eighteen years old. At any given time I can turn to her and mutter the phrase, "In the great green room." and without any hesitation, she responds, "there was a telephone and a red balloon." This dialogue between us came from the starting lines from Margaret Wise Brown's *Goodnight Moon*. This was a book that was read to her when she was only three years old. The strategy of being read to worked for both of us because we grew up to be avid readers.

Engaging a young reader can be done. At some point in his or her life, either the child was or was not introduced to reading. If he or she is reminded of the pleasurable experience he or she had as a child, it is favorable to rekindle that suppressed positive emotion. Alternatively, if the student is gaining the experience for the first time, the experience needs to be introduced. My objective is to create a union between the reluctant reader and the concept of reading for personal delight by introducing or reintroducing a love for reading.

Response to Instruction and Intervention (RtiI)

In order to achieve this goal, I will initiate this plan during a forty minute daily Response to Instruction and Intervention (RtiI) group. RtiI is a nationally recognized program. It is a comprehensive, multi-tiered, standards aligned strategy to enable early identification and intervention for students. RtiI allows educators to identify and address academic difficulties. The goal of RtiI is to improve student achievement using research based interventions matched to the instructional need and level of the student. The curriculum that drives the class is based on student data. Students are grouped homogeneously. Grouping students is done differently from school to school. Based on data from various standardized tests, students are placed into one of five groups. We create the following groups: DIBELS, Intensive, Strategic, Benchmark Focus, and Benchmark.

The first group of students tested in the at-risk category on the Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS) test. The test assesses seven specific literacy skills: phonemic awareness, alphabetic principle, accuracy and fluency with connected text, reading comprehension, and vocabulary. The Intensive group derives from students that scored at the Below Basic level on the most recent standardized test. Individual student progress is monitored in the Intensive group weekly and is given instruction on their weakest academic skill three days a week. The Strategic group is made up of students that scored at the Basic level on the most recent standardized test. Progress is monitored for students in the Strategic group; however, the occurrence is only biweekly. Benchmark and Benchmark Focus are students that are making expected grade level progress and scored proficient and/or advanced on the most recent standardized test. The only difference between these two groups is that students that scored below 50% on the Open-Ended questions will be assigned to the Benchmark Focus group. Progress is monitored for students in the Benchmark groups; however, the occurrence is only three times a year. As progress is monitored within the groups, students can move up and/or down to meet their needs.

Importance of Data

It is easy to teach the same subject, year after year, without ever changing the content. The problem is that year after year the students are different. Data analysis helps you to differentiate your instruction and identify the gaps between the student's performance and state standards. Low performance areas set the priorities for your teaching instruction.

My school district administers 4-Sight Benchmark tests four times a year. The results of these tests are a way to monitor student progress. Having the right data helps to identify a place to start at the beginning of a

school year. Progress is tracked throughout the school year with quarterly tests. Reports are available to all teachers in the district. There are multiple types of reports that can be generated. I create individual classrooms on the website. Each classroom that I created contains the students from my roster. By creating these classrooms, I can generate a report for each individual class and differentiate instruction based on the students' data.

Content Data

After the test was given, I generated my report. The following is an example of the test data that I obtained that correlates to the Pennsylvania Standards, developed from the Reading Grade 6 Assessment Anchors and Eligible Content (2008) and the Standards Aligned System (2009).

<i>Category</i>	<i>Percentage Correct</i>
Comprehension and Reading Skills	74%
Interpretation and Analysis of Fictional and Nonfictional Text	66%
Reading Independently	73%
Reading, Analyzing, and Interpreting Text	67%
Reading, Analyzing, and Interpreting Literature-Fiction and Non-Fiction	68%
Open-Ended Response	69%

Based on these scores, the lowest categories are Interpreting and Analyzing of Fiction and Nonfiction and Reading, Analyzing, and Interpreting Text. Each question on the test is from one of these six categories. The category is then broken down to a specific anchor and eligible content. The item analysis by subscale report further guides instruction by identifying specific questions to the state standard it is testing. All of the following information is provided for each question on the test.

- (a) all four choices
- (b) the number of students that answered the question
- (c) the number of students that chose that answer
- (d) the percentage of students that chose that answer

This, for example, suggests what can be learned by looking into one question in detail:

Question:

Which word best describes how Paul and Evie feel when they decide to collect hats, gloves, and scarves?

		(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)
A	<input type="checkbox"/>	thankful	103	57	55%
B	<input type="checkbox"/>	worried	103	2	2%
C	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	eager	103	44	43%
D	<input type="checkbox"/>	angry	103	0	0%

This information is extremely valuable and useful. The question is testing the specific Pennsylvania Anchor of Reading, Analyzing and Interpreting Literature - Fiction and Non-Fiction. The student is being tested on his or her ability to compare the literary elements within and among texts used by an author, including characterization, setting, plot, theme, and point of view. The eligible content breaks down the skill to a very specific skill: character. The student will identify, explain, interpret, compare, describe, and/or analyze character actions, motives, dialogue, emotions/feelings, traits, and relationships among characters within fictional or literary nonfictional text. It is advantageous to interpret each question that will guide instruction.

Sometimes data needs to be looked at even more deeply. It is important to look at each question and analyze why a large percentage of students chose the same wrong answer. In this example, it is worth looking deeply into why 55% of the students chose choice A. In my experience, students often miss a question, not because they do not understand the skill, but because they lack vocabulary.

Reading Inventory Data

Administering a simple reading attitude survey provides a different type of data. The results indicate student attitude towards reading. A non-threatening elementary reading attitude survey available is one that was designed by Dennis Kear. There are no right or wrong answers on this survey. His survey is commonly referred to as the Garfield reading survey. The survey consists of twenty questions. The first ten questions focus on the attitude of the readers' recreational reading. The last ten questions of the survey relate the readers' attitude to academic aspects. The student chooses from one of four images of Garfield. Each image Garfield is posed in different emotional states, ranging from very positive to very negative. It is important that results are given back to the students. Giving insight to the student empowers them with something that can be worked on.

Implementing the Data

Once the content is determined, the next step is implementation. When reading the book to the students, the skills that show deficit become the target for the activities. Some examples of these skills are: identifying purpose before reading, expanding a reading vocabulary, identifying and correctly using idioms and words with literal and figurative meanings, or having to use root words and/or context clues to understand specialized vocabulary in the content areas during reading. (Resources to find alternate series books can be found in Appendix A)

Why start with The Bluford Series/Background

There are several reasons why students reach for one of the many books written in The Bluford Series published by Townsend Press. Students relate to the setting. The school, Bluford High, is a contemporary urban high school. The school was named after America's first black astronaut, Guion Bluford. The characters within the book are African American. Each book focuses on modern day concerns and struggles. For example, family, friendship, trust, violence, and peer pressure are all real life topics in today's society. These trials and tribulations that impact the lives of the characters within the novel are parallel to the demographics of my students' personal lives.

Books are written with an audience in mind. A book written about sports is gender biased to males, whereas, a book written about romance is generally intended for females. The Bluford Series focuses on both male and female protagonists. The benefit of having male and female characters woven throughout the series is that it allows both males and females to be drawn towards these books.

With the number of books that are now available within the series, it allows the reader opportunity to continue to follow the characters. At the present time there are eighteen books in the series. When the series started in 2002, there were only seven books. The demand for more books had grown and over the past few years and eleven more books were added.

The old adage "never judge a book by its cover" doesn't apply to a reluctant reader. One look at a 300-page book and many readers are instantly turned away. A benefit for using this series is that each novel within this series averages 175 pages; therefore, intimidation by a book's size is eliminated. The paperback books, with average size print and colorful graphic covers are very appealing and non-threatening.

In today's economy having a well-stocked classroom library is not an inexpensive task. I was fortunate enough to stumble across the Townsend Press, an independent educational publisher website. They sell the books directly to schools for \$1 each through their website. If you want to build your library with an even more diverse set of books, the Scholastic Book Club is a great way to get started. I invite any student in the 6th grade to take a book order. This club is a win-win situation for all involved. Students are able to purchase books at a reasonable price. The teacher earns bonus points that are redeemable towards books. Lastly, if your school is a participant in the National School Lunch Program, you may qualify for one of the several special offers on the Townsend Press website. For example, two sets of the first fifteen books in The Bluford Series can be obtained at no cost to the teacher or the district. The teacher must contact the company through mail with a letter of request stating how the books will be used in the school. The media specialist and the principal must sign the letter. The mailing address and instructions can be found on the website on the Special Offers page.

First Novel: *Lost and Found*

It requires willingness to take time and use the imagination to experience a story. Reading independently allows readers to associate themselves to character(s) in a story, relate to a similar situation, or escape for a brief moment from their current situations. The initial text to be examined in this unit is Anne E. Schraff's *Lost and Found*, the first novel in The Bluford Series. The book focuses on developing the first character in the series, Darcy Wills. Darcy is a sixteen-year-old shy, scholarly student who is perceived as stuck-up by her peers. She lives at home with her younger sister, Jamee, her mother, and her grandmother.

Darcy is presented with many complications throughout the book. The first conflict she must deal with is that she is placed in an uncomfortable situation at school that she must resolve. Darcy learns that you can't always judge a person by his or her outward appearance and gains more than just a lab partner. The only support she gets is from her best friend. Her mother does not provide sympathetic consolation because she is always working and too tired to know that a family member is facing a dilemma. Grandmother is bedridden and suffers from a stroke. Jamee, Darcy's 14-year-old sister, is more interested in boys and loud rap music. Embedded in the story is her sisters' abusive older boyfriend. To compound the lives of the two sisters, their father comes back into their lives after leaving five years ago. When Jamee doesn't come home one night, Darcy reflects on the past to find her sister.

Chunking the Text

The time frame for reading the first book is ten days. I recommend reading the first two chapters outloud to the students. Have a discussion with the students about the characters at great length. I have learned, by experience, that it is possible to look into the many facets of character. For example, take the character of Edmund Pevensie in *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* by C. S. Lewis. When reading the book there are many things about Edmund that can be pointed out. Edmund is the third oldest of the Pevensie children. This information may appear to be irrelevant but a lot can be doted on about the roles and actions of the birth order of a child. It is also noted that he is the youngest of the males in the story. The reader identifies Edmund's character throughout the story. The many things that Edmund can be called are: spiteful, mean, greedy, and remorseful. He also displays the roles of a bully, a brat and a traitor.

It is important to make the characters come alive. In the Appendix, there are *Lost and Found* guided questions. Use the questions to bring out the important details within each chapter. Asking the right questions helps develop the character traits of each individual character in the book. When students delve into the characters within the story, the reader becomes attached to that character. The first book is the catalyst to spark independent reading.

Classroom Lesson Plans

Lesson 1: Character Read n' Roll

Laura Candler is a classroom teacher that created a website that provides free online teaching resources. One of her activities is called Character Read n' Roll. In the first two chapters of the book *Lost and Found*, the Wills family is introduced. Instead of talking to the students about the character, have the students complete a character Read n' Roll on the character of his or her choice. Each student is given an 8 x 11 piece of white construction paper. The students will start out by drawing a basic stick figure of his or her character. On that piece of paper, write the book title, name of the character, and his or her name below the character. A six-sided die is rolled. Whatever number is rolled, the students follow the prompt that goes with the matching number. As each of the following is added to his or her drawing, be sure important details are included that give information about his or her character.

- 1) Clothing - Dress the character appropriately for that time period or event.
- 2) Dreams or Thoughts - Predict the characters dreams or thoughts.
- 3) Words - List a word or phrase would the character say.
- 4) Actions - Write about important actions the character has done.
- 5) Love - Identify details of the characters love or love interest.
- 6) Places - List where the character has been or where he or she wants to go.

Lesson Plan 2: Talking to the Text:

After you have read chapters one and two out loud, the teacher will model talking to the text. Chapter three will need to be projected either with an overhead projector or via smart board. As you read this chapter out loud, pause and record notes about what is read. Comments should be things that are understood or not understood. Next, give the students chapter four to silently read. Since the students cannot write on book pages, provide them with a printed copy, complete with wide margins or allow them to notate using Post-It notes, sticking them on the textbook pages as appropriate. Have students use marginal notes and other forms of annotation to comment on what they do or do not understand in their reading. Tell the students to read a page of text. As they read, they write any comments or notations on the page and in the margins that explain what they are thinking as they read. Their techniques include the following:

- Box, circle, underline, and star difficult words
- Draw arrows from nouns to pronouns when the relationship becomes clear
- Write brief notes in the margin space near hard-to-understand sentences and paragraphs

Lesson Plan 3: Think-Aloud:

This strategy asks students to say out loud what they are thinking about when reading.

The following is an example of a think-aloud:

"So, let me start by determining who Edmund really is in *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*. Let's see. The first thing that comes to mind is that he is a boy. He is also a big brother and a little brother. He is the third child in the family out of four children. So, I wonder if any of that information makes him act the way he does. "

After chapter eight, the teacher shall model a think-aloud. There are general starters that can be used to help guide any think-aloud. If you chose to use another chapter to model the think-aloud, Appendix B has guided questions from Eliza A. Comodromos Teacher's Guide to The Bluford Series. The following sample starter thoughts can also be used.

- I just thought of...
- I wonder why...
- That is interesting because...
- I think the most important part was...
- I was confused by...
- I reread that part because...
- I think ____ will happen next.
- That didn't make sense..
- This made me think of...
- So far, I've learned...

Appendix [A]: Additional Grade Level Books

Series Books	Author	Author
<i>39 Clues</i>	Authors, Various	
<i>American Girl Series</i>	Authors, Various	
<i>Dear America</i>	Authors, Various	
<i>Warriors</i>	Buckley,	Erin
<i>The Sisters Grimm</i>	Buckley,	Michael
<i>Canterwood Crest</i>	Burkhart,	Jessica
<i>Skeleton Creek</i>	Camman,	Patrick
<i>The Land of Elyon</i>	Camman,	Patrick
Various Titles	Choldenko,	Gennifer
<i>Artemis Fowl</i>	Colfer,	Eoin
<i>How to Train Your Dragon</i>	Cowell,	Cressida
<i>The Spiderwick Chronicles</i>	DiTerlizzi,	Tony
<i>The Clique</i>	Harrison,	Lisi
<i>The Inkworld Trilogy</i>	Funke,	Comelia
<i>Diary of the Wimpy Kid</i>	Kinney,	Jeff
<i>Emily Windsnap</i>	Kessler,	Liz
<i>The Wrinkle in Time Quintet</i>	L'Engle,	Madeleine
<i>Chronicles of Narnia</i>	Lewis	C. S.
<i>Comeback Kids</i>	Lupica,	Mike
<i>Travel Team</i>	Lupica,	Mike
<i>Heat</i>	Lupica,	Mike
<i>Miracle on 49th Street</i>	Lupica,	Mike
<i>Summer Ball</i>	Lupica,	Mike
<i>The Big Field</i>	Lupica,	Mike
<i>Million Dollar Throw</i>	Lupica,	Mike
<i>The Bat Boy</i>	Lupica,	Mike
<i>Hero</i>	Lupica,	Mike
<i>Alice</i>	Reynolds Naylor,	Phyllis
<i>Percy Jackson</i>	Riordan,	Rick
<i>Harry Potter</i>	Rowling,	J. K.
<i>A Series of Unfortunate Events</i>	Snicket,	Lemony

Appendix [B]: Guided Questions for *Lost and Found*

Chapters 1 and 2

- 1) What was Darcy and James's relationship like in the past?
 - a) How has it changed?
- 2) Why was Darcy upset when she was teamed up with Tarah Carson on the biology report?
 - a) How does Darcy feel about Hakeem Randall?
- 3) How did Jamee respond when her father first left the family?
 - a) What did she do rather than believe that he had abandoned them?
- 4) From overhearing Bobby Wallace talking, what does Darcy learn that Jamee has been doing?
 - a) What does Darcy worry that Jamee might become involved in later?

Chapters 3 and 4

- 1) How long has Grandma been ill?
 - a) What was she like before her stroke?
- 2) Who or what was Bluford High School named for?
- 3) As Darcy waits for the bus to take her home, what happens?
 - a) How does it make her feel?
- 4) What are some of the reasons that Darcy, Jamee, and their mother don't enjoy visiting Aunt Charlotte?
- 5) Why did Darcy and Jamee's father leave the family?

Chapters 5 and 6

- 1) Why hadn't Mrs. Wills told the girls everything she knew about why their father had left?
- 2) How does Jamee say her face got bruised?
 - a) What does Darcy really think happened?
- 3) Who is the man in the silver Toyota?
 - a) When Darcy finds out who it is, what does she tell the police to tell him?
- 4) What is Mrs. Wills's response to the news that Mr. Wills is in town?

- a) How does his re-appearance seem to make her feel?
- 5) What do Cooper and his friends do when they see Bobby attacking Darcy?
- a) How does Tarah explain Cooper's response?

Chapters 7 and 8

- 1) What does Cooper suspect when Darcy says that she wants to eat lunch with Tarah and Cooper instead of Brisana?
- a) What does Darcy tell Cooper in response?
- 2) When Darcy tells Tarah the story about her father disappearing and coming back, what does Tarah advise Darcy to do?
- a) How does Darcy feel after her conversation with Tarah?
- 3) During his date with Darcy, Hakeem admits he had certain opinions about Darcy before he got to know her. What were his impressions of her?
- a) What does he think of her now?
- 4) How did Jamee respond when she heard Darcy had a date?
- a) What was unusual about her actions?
- 5) Why was Darcy so concerned to think that Jamee might be at the canyon?

Chapters 9 and 10

- 1) What does Mr. Wills' car look like inside?
- a) What does its appearance make Darcy think?
- 2) Hakeem leaves Darcy and Mr. Wills alone together in the diner so they can talk privately. What does Darcy ask her father?
- a) What emotion does he seem to feel most strongly?
- 3) What gives Darcy an idea about where Jamee might be?
- 4) What two people does Darcy call when she needs help in searching for Jamee?
- a) How do they respond?
- 5) In the hospital cafeteria, who does Darcy see sitting in the corner?
- a) What are they doing?
- b) How do you think this makes her feel?

Appendix [C]: Additional Activities

The following activities can be used anytime throughout the book. Activities are successful when matched to students' interest level.

Activity 1 Scene illustration: Think of your favorite scene from the book. Write a paragraph explaining why this was your favorite scene. In addition, draw a picture of how you imagine that scene would look. Try to include as much detail as possible about all the characters involved and the surrounding scenery.

Activity 2 Postcard activity: Pretending you are a character in the book, write a postcard to another character from the book. In the postcard, you should ask that character a question about his or her actions or behavior. Then pass your postcard to another student in class, who will write a reply to your postcard in the voice of that other character.

Activity 3 Character diagram: On a separate sheet of paper, draw five boxes. Label each box with the name of one member of the Wills family: Mr. Wills, Mrs. Wills, Grandma, Darcy, and Jamee. In each box, do the following:

- a. Write two facts that you've learned about that person.
- b. Write two descriptive words that seem right for that person.
- c. Identify one or two key quotations from the story that helps illustrate each person's personality.

Activity 4 Twenty-Five-Word Summary: Pair a student with a partner. Ask each student to write a summary using exactly 25 words. Have each student read his or her summary to his or her partner. Next, the task is to rewrite the 25-word summary using both partners' elements. You can't just use one person's summary. Highlight the text in the new summary that belonged to one person in one color, and the other person's text in another color. Now, share your summary with the rest of the class.

Activity 5 Ticket out the Door: Students must give the teacher feedback in written format in order to leave the class. The ticket should frame the work done in class and establish a purpose for the upcoming class. The teacher stands at the door to collect the tickets. The important thing for the teacher to remember is that the work should be used immediately to generate the lesson, answer questions, or frame the concepts to be explored.

Items that can be placed on the "ticket" can vary. Ticket ideas include:

One question I still have is...

One connection I would like to share...

My prediction is...

I am confused about...

Appendix [D]: Pennsylvania Academic Standards for Reading, Writing, Speaking and Listening

1.1. Learning to Read Independently

- A) Locate appropriate texts for an assigned purpose before reading.
- B) Identify and use common organizational structures and graphic features to comprehend information.
- C) Use knowledge of root words as well as context clues and glossaries to understand specialized vocabulary in the content areas during reading. Use these words accurately in speaking and writing.
- D) Identify basic facts and ideas in text using specific strategies (e.g., recall genre characteristics, set a purpose for reading, generate essential questions as aids to comprehension and clarify understanding through rereading and discussion).
- E) Expand a reading vocabulary by identifying and correctly using idioms and words with literal and figurative meanings. Use a dictionary or related reference.
- F) Understand the meaning of and apply key vocabulary across the various subject areas.
- G) Demonstrate after reading understanding and interpretation of both fiction and nonfiction text, including public documents.
 - Make, and support with evidence, assertions about texts.
 - Compare and contrast texts using themes, settings, characters and ideas.
 - Make extensions to related ideas, topics or information.
 - Describe the context of a document.
 - Analyze the positions, arguments and evidence in public documents.
- H) Demonstrate fluency and comprehension in reading. Analyze the positions, arguments and evidence in public documents.
 - Read familiar materials aloud with accuracy
 - Self-correct mistakes.
 - Use appropriate rhythm, flow, meter and pronunciation
 - Read a variety of genres and types of text
 - Demonstrate comprehension

1.2 Demonstrate fluency and comprehension in reading

1.3. Reading, Analyzing and Interpreting Literature

1.4. Types of Writing

1.5. Quality of Writing

1.6. Speaking and Listening

Resources

Student Resources

Langan, John, and Paul Langan. *Search for Safety*. West Berlin, N.J.: Townsend Press, 2007. This is the thirteenth book of The Bluford Series following sophomore Ben Mckee. Ben's mom marries an abusive man.

Langan, Paul. *The Gun*. West Berlin, N.J.: Townsend Press, 2001. This is the sixth book of The Bluford Series showcasing the revenge of freshman bully Tyray Hobbs.

Langan, Paul. *The Bully*. West Berlin, N.J.: Townsend Press, 2002. This is the fifth book of The Bluford Series based on freshman Darrell Mercer that is the object of the school bully, Tyray Hobbs.

Langan, Paul, and Ben Alirez. *Brothers in Arms*. West Berlin, NJ: Townsend Press, 2004. This is the ninth book of The Bluford Series about Martin Luna wanting revenge of his brother's drive-by shooter.

Langan, Paul. *Summer of Secrets*. West berlin, NJ: Townsend Press, 2004. This is the tenth book of The Bluford Series following Darcy Wills.

Langan, Paul, and D. M. Blackwell. *Blood Is Thicker*. West Berlin, NJ: Townsend Press, 2004. This is the eighth book of The Bluford Series is based on Hakeem Randall's move to Detroit.

Langan, Paul. *The Fallen*. West Berlin, N.J.: Townsend Press, 2007. This is the eleventh book of The Bluford Series about Martin Luna turning his back on gang life.

Langan, Paul. *Shattered*. West Berlin, N.J.: Townsend Press, 2007. This is the twelfth book of The Bluford Series focuses on the return of Hakeem Randall from Detroit.

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