

# Tips for Managing Guided Reading with Large Class Sizes

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- Create a guided reading group meeting schedule. Vary the frequency that you plan to meet with each group. Meet more frequently with struggling readers and less frequently with proficient readers.
- Use a timer to keep your guided reading lessons to 20 minutes. In *Next Step Guided Reading*, Jan Richardson makes suggestions for the length of each part of the lesson. You can also time the individual parts of the lesson to get a feel for the recommended pace of the guided reading lesson.
- Work with short texts. The text that you use should be something that can be read in one or two guided reading lessons.
- Have all the materials you will need for the guided reading lesson organized and ready so that you don't need to search for things once the lesson is underway. There are suggestions for organizing materials on Jan Richardson's website as well as in *Spaces and Places* (Diller).
- Consider what you can prep ahead of time to save precious minutes during the lesson. For example, you might consider tabbing the student text to mark spots where the students should stop and write about their thinking.
- With a larger class, you may also have to increase the size of your guided reading groups. Ideally you would want your groups to consist of no more than 6 students. With larger class sizes this maximum may have to be increased to 8 for students reading on and above grade level. Keep your below level groups at six or less.
- Try to limit the total number of guided reading groups to no more than five. Remember that you can form groups of students that are reading a few levels apart. For example you might have an M/N guided reading group that has a common instructional need. For upper grades, you might work with students who are reading at levels S, T, and U because they all need to work on summarizing.
- Where it makes sense to do so, thread the teaching point from your reading workshop minilesson into your guided reading work. This will give you the opportunity to provide additional scaffolded support for students who need it.



