

# THE FAITHFUL READER

## Reading and Writing and Listening and Speaking...Oh My!

Welcome to The Faithful Reader! This newsletter shares tips and ideas for reading instruction in the Catholic classroom.



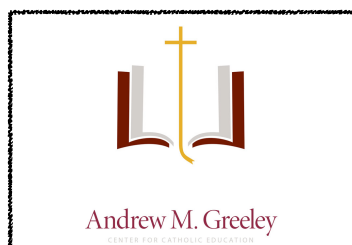
All teachers want the best instruction for their students. Here are some **essential practices in reading instruction**:

- Students spend 75% of class time reading, writing, thinking, and speaking
- The teacher provides instruction in 7-10 minute mini-lessons and in 10-15 minute small group instruction (guided reading)
- Students have time to read books independently that they choose themselves
- Worksheets are kept to a minimum: student work is meaningful and necessary
- Vocabulary is connected to what students are reading and taught in context
- Teach, don't just assign
- Reading and writing don't just occur during "reading and writing" class, they occur in all areas

### FAQs

#### My students struggle to read independently for very long. What can I do?

If they are reading independently, that is a great start! Be sure to model, show, and tell what independent reading looks like. Share your expectations: sit in the same place, read the whole time, etc. This is a great opportunity to create an anchor chart that shares your expectations (3-5 expectations is plenty). Also, use part of your board or a bulletin board to post a graph. Each time students independently read, time how long they can do it the way you want them to do it. Each day, the graph should grow - and then you can celebrate!



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**I would love to help my students choose a variety of books that are just right for them. What can I do?**

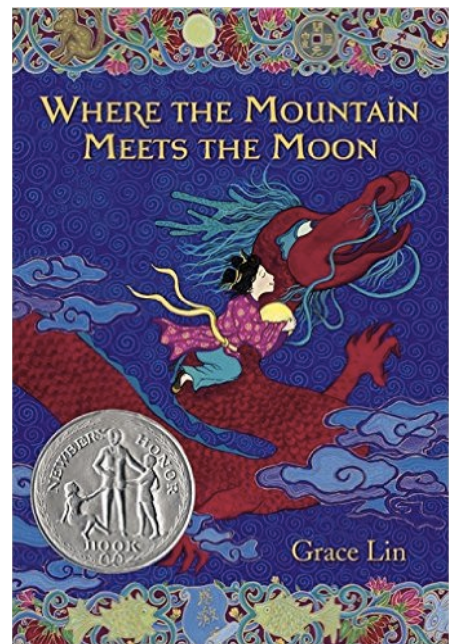
From your question, I can tell that you provide time for your students to read independently and choose books - so hats off to you for that! One of the first things you can do is to go to your classroom library and pick 5 books that you have read (it could have been a book you read when you were their age). Then think about why you loved it - with no spoilers! Each day during the week, give a book talk: spend 1-2 minutes telling your students about one book that you love. Make sure the book is somewhere visible so they can choose it during free-choice reading. (Stand back - likely it will be the most popular book!)

Another thing you can do is to have students give book talks. Create a sign-up sheet and ask students to sign up when they are ready to give the book talk: they have read the book and have 1-2 minutes of information to talk about the book. Student-recommended books become VERY popular, too!

## Books!

In this section, book recommendations are shared that we think your students will love!

### *Where the Mountain Meets the Moon* by Grace Lin



This lovely book tells the story of Minli who lives with her parents in the valley of Fruitless Mountain. Minli and her father are happy, but her mother is unhappy because of the hard work from morning to night and always being hungry. Minli seeks to change the family's situation, and in the process meets friends and comes to realizations about gratitude and family.

**Read Aloud** for 3rd, 4th, or 5th graders

**Independent Reading Level** 4th

**Lexile** 810

**Genre** Fantasy



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**We are Catholic educators who challenge Catholic schools to be excellent because they are essential in preparing students for the future.**