



Professional Development Guide

Workshop

Small-Group Instruction in ***SRA Imagine It!***

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Workshop

Teaching reading is one of every elementary school teacher's primary responsibilities. Today, the reading curriculum is defined by five essential elements: phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, text comprehension, and vocabulary. In addition, teachers are expected to teach students how to write coherently and correctly. Coupled with these curricula expectations are other factors that teachers need to take into account: time, diversity of students, and accountability. In order to teach reading well to all students, teachers need to have sound instructional materials, but they also need to maximize instructional time, differentiate instruction, and engage in ongoing monitoring and assessment.

The reality is that in order to ensure comprehensive instruction to all students as well as to maximize class time and capitalize on daily assessment and monitoring, a combination of whole-class and small-group instruction needs to be utilized.

Why a Balance between Whole- and Small-Group Instruction?

In the past, whole- or small-group instruction has been an either/or issue. Yet, whole-group instruction when balanced with thoughtful, well-planned, small-group instruction is powerful. By introducing new concepts to the whole group, teachers can maximize time and ensure that all students have access

to the complete reading curriculum. However, every educator knows that not all students acquire new concepts after the initial instruction. Some students need more support. Consequently, teachers need to use whole-class instruction as an opportunity to identify those students who need additional time with specific lesson concepts and follow the identification by working with those students in small groups. Alternatively, teachers may want to work with small groups prior to whole-class instruction to preteach lesson concepts, giving students the extra boost or front loading needed for success during whole-class instruction.

While grouping has traditionally been intended to help lower-achieving students, research shows that these students actually do less well when grouped with other low-achieving students. With opportunities to participate with achieving students in whole-group instruction, expectations are high for all students, and every student receives the same initial instruction. For those students who need additional support, teachers can move to small groups for differentiated instruction.

What Is Differentiated Instruction?

Differentiated instruction is the process through which teachers support and enhance instruction for all students. When teachers differentiate, they do so in response to students' learning needs—addressing which students need additional help and which students need extensions.

Teachers should not wait until Benchmark Assessments are given at the end of a six-week period to find out who needs help. Student needs should be determined on a daily basis using observational data collected during the lesson when specific needs are readily apparent. Providing instructional support immediately allows all students access to the same classroom curriculum. Differentiated Instruction is a concept that makes it possible to maximize learning for all students.

Workshop in *SRA Imagine It!* is small-group differentiated instruction!

Where Is Small-Group Differentiated Instruction in the *SRA Imagine It!* Program?

Small-group instruction in *SRA Imagine It!* is called Workshop. This is the time of day when teachers provide differentiated instruction. Workshop is flexible time when teachers can preteach concepts that will be introduced during whole-class instruction or reteach concepts to students who had problems during initial instruction. This is also a time to extend instruction with higher-achieving students. During this time, teachers can work with small groups on phonemic awareness, decoding, fluency, vocabulary and comprehension, Inquiry, and writing. It is the time when teachers can hold writing conferences, listen to students read, and assess fluency.

Workshop is small-group instruction for differentiation!

In order to have the uninterrupted time to work with small groups of students and differentiate instruction, a plan needs to be established for what the students who are not with the teacher will do. These students need to learn to work independently and productively so the teacher can give special attention to the small groups.

How Should Workshop Be Set Up?

Workshop builds over time as students internalize classroom routines that promote independence. Students learn that during Workshop, the teacher will be working with small groups of students. While the teacher is working with small groups, the others are practicing and reviewing skills, developing listening skills, working on fluency, reading a wide range of other materials, writing, or engaging in Inquiry activities. Teachers set up Workshop areas that focus on different areas of literacy:

- **Reading Area** with leveled trade books related to the unit theme. The books in this area will be changed regularly.
- **Writing Area** with reference materials (dictionaries, picture dictionaries, and thesauruses), writing materials, checklists, and computers
- **Listening Area** with CDs or tapes for students to read along with
- **Game Area** where students can practice phonics, parts of speech, vocabulary, and the like

- **Computer Area** where students can practice lesson skills in phonics, vocabulary, and comprehension
- **Fluency Area** with leveled reading materials, charts, computers, and timers. Note that charts and timers can be used by older students to time their fluency and chart their progress.

Workshop areas are not like traditional reading centers where students circulate through all the theme-related centers during a regular block of time each day; nor are Workshop areas centers filled with worksheets to keep students busy while the teacher works with small groups. Workshop areas incorporate activities that reflect the reading and writing skills and strategies that have been taught. Activities engage students in hands-on, focused exercises to reinforce and extend learning. Teachers may assign students to specific Workshop areas in order to differentiate instruction and ensure necessary reinforcement for learning. Sometimes students are engaged in Workshop and working in multiple areas. Groups of students may be working cooperatively on their Inquiry activities—reading about the focus of their Inquiry, doing research using the computer, taking notes, preparing presentations, and completing other Inquiry-related activities.

Workshop is introduced to students gradually. It begins with a discussion of rules and guidelines. These serve to reinforce the class rules that the teacher set up at the beginning of the year. Teachers and students discuss the value of three or four simple rules. These rules might include the following:

- Talk quietly.
- Put materials away when you are done.

- Always be working.
- Do not interrupt the teacher.

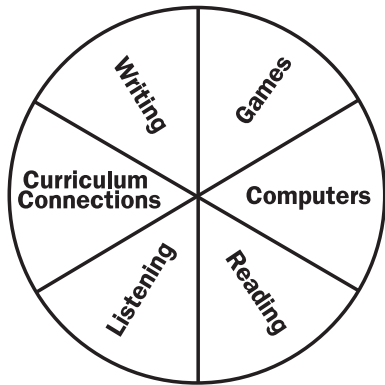
Along with these rules are some basic guidelines for teachers and students.

- All activities should be introduced slowly over time.
- All activities should be able to be done without teacher support—alone, in pairs, or in small groups.
- When Workshop is first introduced, take time to circulate among students, observing, monitoring, and supporting their independence.
- Students need to know how many students can work in an area. Some games can be played with several students, while others may be limited to two. Some Workshop areas such as the Writing Area can accommodate several students, but others like the Listening Area may accommodate only two or three students, depending upon the number of headphones available.
- Students need to know what to do when they finish an activity. They must remember the rule: Always be working. When students finish an activity, they should put it away if it is a game or a book and then find something else to do.
- Students need to know where to put any completed work.

Workshop works when rules are established and activities are introduced over time.

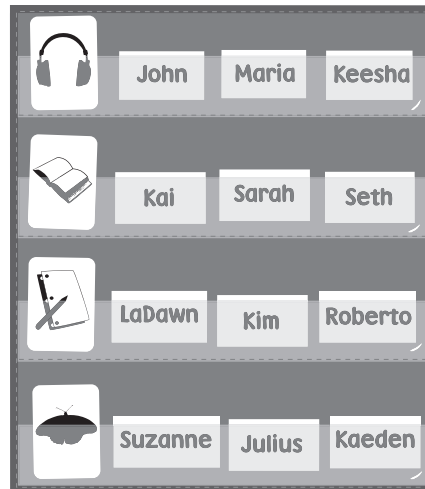
Managing Workshop is key. Using simple devices to monitor where students are and to let them know how many students can work in a particular area helps control traffic and avoid problems. In the example below, the teacher has developed a simple circle chart with Workshop areas and Velcro dots. The dots signify the number of students who can be in that area at any one time. As students go to an area, they stick a small name tag with Velcro on one of the dots.

The teacher can see who should be doing what, and students can quickly see if it is okay to be in a particular Workshop area.



Another simple device that requires little preparation is to use a dry-erase or magnetic board with the different Workshop areas listed down the left-hand side; the teacher or students simply write their names or place a magnetic name card next to the Workshop activity they are working on. In the same vein, many teachers use pocket charts and index cards with the students' names. The activities are listed down the left-hand side, and the students' names are placed on the appropriate line.

Kindergarten teachers often include pictures of the activities at the various Workshop areas as well as the students' names and their pictures on cards.



Teacher tip: Many kindergarten teachers place each student's name and a small picture of each student on charts early in the year.

What Are the Other Students Doing When They Are Not Working with the Teacher?

During Workshop, students should engage in several different activities, depending upon need, grade level, and interest. Students may work alone, in pairs, or in small groups. Workshop areas should vary across the grades and reflect the instruction in the program. In the lower grades, students may need more work with phonics, while upper-grade students may need more work on word structure. What are some of the program resources that students can use during Workshop at one of the Workshop areas or at their desks?

- Rereading or partner reading using *Pre-Decodables* or *Decodables* for Kindergarten through Grade 3

- Practicing high-frequency words with cards found in the *Phonemic Awareness and Phonics Kit* for Grades K–3
- Building fluency using readers and accompanying audiotapes, trade books, *Leveled Readers*, *Leveled Science Readers*, *Leveled Social Studies Readers*, *eFluency*, or *Curriculum Connections*
- Continuing work on writing
- Reviewing selection vocabulary
- Working on Inquiry
- Playing games or activities from *SRA Imagine It! Workshop Kit* (See Appendix A)
- Practicing lesson skills on the computer

In addition to program materials, many teachers make games and activities to use during Workshop. In making games, the following should be kept in mind.

- Games and activities should be directly connected to the language arts instruction in the program, the unit, and the lesson.
- Games and activities should be self-correcting so students can use the materials without teacher direction and support.
- Games should have levels of difficulty so they can be played more than once and continue to be a learning experience. For example, if the game involves word cards, have additional decks that move to phrases and then to sentences.
- Teachers need to have a way of monitoring what students have done. For example, if students play a game

with word sorts, the students should write the words; if they are doing scrambled sentences, they should write the final sentences so some record of the work is available for teachers to evaluate. If students are reading a trade book, they can complete the appropriate graphic organizer for the text or write a summary. (Graphic organizers can be found in the *Transparency* binder.)

- Games need to have an element of chance so they are fun and everyone has a chance of winning. For example, a game board should have some spaces with “Lose a turn,” “Move two spaces,” or “Take another turn.”

How Do Students Know What Workshop Activities They Should Do?

Early in the school year, particularly with younger students, teachers often assign the students to particular Workshop activities. These assignments are based upon teacher observations of students’ needs. One of these Workshop assignments might be to work with the teacher in a small group.

Depending upon the age of the students, some teachers introduce a list of “Must Do’s” and “Can Do’s.” “Must Do’s” are usually one or two activities that students might not have completed during the whole-class time, such as writing the vocabulary words in their Writer’s Notebooks or completing the editing of a piece of writing. Must Do’s should

be activities that can be completed in a relatively short period of time so students can make a choice from the Can Do's. The Can Do's can be all or some of the activities noted above in the Workshop areas.



What Is the Teacher Doing during Workshop?

Once Workshop is established, the teacher is free to work with small groups. *SRA Imagine It!* provides a variety of support materials for the teacher to help meet individual needs. These include *Intervention*, *English Learner Support Guide*, *Workshop Kit*, and additional

practice sets of *Decodables*, as well as suggestions in the *Teacher's Edition* in every lesson.

Teachers may be preteaching

- words on the Blending lines or Word Structure lines.
- words in Dictation and Spelling.
- background knowledge to support comprehension.
- vocabulary from the selection.

Teachers may be reteaching

- skills and concepts that were problematic.
- specific strategies.
- selection vocabulary.

Teachers also may be

- working with students on fluency.
- doing fluency checks.
- holding writing and Inquiry conferences.
- observing students as they work collaboratively.
- meeting with students who are working on their Inquiry.
- addressing the needs of more advanced students.



How Are Students Held Accountable for What They Do During Workshop?

One of questions teachers often ask is “If I am working with small groups of students, how do I know what the others are doing during Workshop?” Two possible ways to address this question are through student self-monitoring and through debriefing. In the beginning, the teacher often needs to model what he or she did during Workshop so students understand the concept of debriefing and also recognize that the teacher is part of the group. Debriefing can focus on content—what the teacher and students did. This needs to be modeled by the teacher.

In my group, we worked on vocabulary with Rashid, Maria, and Lee, and we used our selection vocabulary words in sentences.

I did fluency checks with several students, and they have all improved since we met last.

Debriefing should extend beyond just what you did during this time. It should include reflecting on how Workshop went.

We had a great Workshop today. No one had to ask me what to do.

I noticed that everyone was working while I was with a group. Great job!

Debriefing also should include reflecting on learning.

*Today during Workshop, I listened to Jose, Jane, and Wu read their **Pre-Decodables** so I know they can read all their sight words.*

One of my groups reviewed short a and short i, so we are feeling pretty good about reading words and sentences with these vowel sounds.

Gradually, the responsibility for debriefing should be turned over to the students. This time provides an excellent opportunity to evaluate the effectiveness of the Workshop activities and the management techniques in the classroom.

Students can report on what they did during Workshop.

*Tanika and I read a **Decodable**, and then I met with Ms. Marks.*

I completed my vocabulary word forms, and then I worked with my Inquiry group.

Students can reflect on Workshop.

It was too noisy today. I couldn't get any work done. (This tells the teacher that it is time to talk about the noise level and why it is important to talk in a quiet voice.)

For the first time, I got to go to more than two areas. (Compliment the students on getting so much done, but be sure they understand that this is not a race to get through each area.)

Why haven't I gotten to work with the teacher yet this week?

In addition, students can reflect on learning.

*I read my whole **Decodable** twice with Rashika, and I didn't make a single mistake.*

The word cards in the new game in the phonics area were too hard for me.

I shared my story with Timothy. He gave me some good suggestions for revising the story.

I wasn't sure how to write interview questions for my Inquiry project, so I worked with Marguerite. She helped me write four good questions.

Debriefing helps the teacher make decisions about the structure and activities used in Workshop. Workshop is dynamic, and it is important to use information from students as well as observations to make Workshop as productive as possible.

How Should Workshop Be Introduced at Different Grade Levels?

The goal of Workshop is to have students working productively and independently. The time it takes to get to this goal varies by grade level, students' prior experience with Workshop, and their maturity level. Regardless of the grade level, all teachers need to devote some time at the beginning of the year to developing routines and good Workshop habits. Some teachers like to think of developing Workshop as a fluid, three-stage process: Ready, Set, Go! In the Ready stage, the rules are established, and there is maximum teacher support. Set is the transition period during which time students internalize expectations and begin to make decisions. Go is the final stage at which students work independently in a variety of areas while the teacher meets individual needs. Go is the goal!

Kindergarten and Grade 1

Introduce Workshop in Kindergarten and Grade 1 with whole-class Workshop. The success of Workshop depends on students being able to work independently alone,

with a partner, or with a small group. The reality is that many young students may need time to learn to work without direct teacher supervision.

Whole-Class Workshop

To begin Workshop, the teacher has all the students doing the same activity independently at their desks or tables. Students may be doing activities such as putting cards in alphabetical order, matching capital and lowercase letters, or sorting pictures by initial sound. The key is that students are working independently, not asking questions, and doing their best. After it is apparent that students understand the idea of working productively, teachers raise the bar and vary whole-class Workshop. In order to prepare students for working with partners, teachers may have all students working on the same activity with a partner. The teacher is circulating, observing, and monitoring during this time. It is important to let students know what to do if they finish before Workshop ends. Many teachers have students look at books at their desks. At the end of Workshop, the class should discuss how Workshop went. Comment on how well the class worked independently and followed the Workshop rules. An early whole-class Workshop like this may be limited to five minutes and be done a couple of times throughout the language arts period.

One commonly asked question is How long should whole-class Workshop continue before shifting to more independent activities? There is no absolute answer because this will depend upon the maturity level of the students and their previous school experiences. The teacher will know when to advance to the next step—when

the students are working independently on the assigned activity, and they know what to do and do it. In reality, this may take a couple of weeks. If teachers advance to the next step and students are having problems, the teacher can drop back to whole-class Workshop.

The next step toward independence is whole-class Workshop with two activities. Half of the class is assigned one activity, and the other half is assigned a second activity. Once students complete their assigned activity, they need to remember the rule: Always be working. At this grade level, it is important that students appreciate that they should not be calling out “What do I do now?” or “What should I do?” The importance of students knowing what to do when they are finished with their Workshop activity cannot be overstated. The next day, using the same activities, the groups will switch. The point of this whole-group transition is that students realize they are not all doing the same thing at the same time. This is also a time when teachers can begin to extend the length of time for Workshop to about ten minutes.

This alternating of activities can continue for a week or more before moving to three groups with three different activities. The teacher is still monitoring and observing. Even during this early stage of Workshop, it is important to take time to debrief and reflect. Debriefing during this early stage helps make students conscious that Workshop is a productive period of time.

When students are able to work independently and know what to do when they have finished an assigned activity, the teacher can begin to meet with small groups.



Introducing Workshop Areas

Workshop now might include several student activities as well as teacher-led, small-group instruction. Before beginning Workshop, introduce several Workshop areas. At this early point in the year, Workshop areas for ***Pre-Decodables*** and ***Decodables***, high-frequency sight words, and phonics and writing activities make sense. Limit the number of activities in each area to one at this early point, and then gradually add more activities and Workshop areas as the year progresses and students are ready.

Teachers should always demonstrate how to use the materials as they are introduced to the various Workshop areas. This includes demonstrating—actually playing—any games that might go into the various areas.

Early in this process, teachers often have students visit one or two Workshop areas

each day and then go to different areas the next day. Some students, given their choices, would go to the same Workshop area each day. In order to monitor this, some teachers post sign-up sheets in each area with a list of student names down the side and days of the week across the top. As students complete an activity in an area, they put a check in the box for the appropriate day of the week.

During this same time, teachers are working with small groups of students to preteach or reteach or extend learning, to listen to students read, or to work with them on writing. Because students are doing different activities, debriefing is useful to monitor students. Remember, debriefing is a time for students to reflect on how well Workshop went and what they learned.

By the middle of the year, Workshop should evolve into a smooth process with students making independent choices and using two or three areas during each session. Some teachers have required Workshop activities that students must complete some time within the week. Using a sign-up sheet where students check off or write comments is an easy way to monitor required activities. A few students may still need some direction as to which areas to work in, but this is now done with minimal support. The teacher is working with multiple groups of students based upon their instructional needs. Workshop may be done in a single block of thirty to forty minutes or in several shorter blocks of fifteen to twenty minutes each throughout the day. Also, at this point, it might be time to add more Workshop areas, such as a Listening Area, a Fluency Area (Grade 1 on), and so on. Although the Workshop areas may not

change, the activities and games *within* the areas certainly are changing on a regular basis as the instructional content of the lessons changes.

Mr. Hishiro has introduced whole-class Workshop to his first-grade class. It is now the end of the second week of school, and students are putting letter cards in alphabetical order. He has noticed that four students are finishing before the rest of the class, so he needs to think about how to challenge them. While walking around the room, he also has noticed that three students are struggling with this activity and will need some individual attention. At this point, Mr. Hishiro is comfortable that his students understand the concept of Workshop and can work for small blocks of time independently. He and the class are ready to advance to the next step of Workshop.

It is now the middle of the year, and Mr. Hishiro's class has reached the Go! phase. There are multiple Workshop areas:

- **Phonics** with games that now reflect students' knowledge of the majority of sounds and spellings.
- **Fluency**, where he has copies of all the **Decodables** for the year with a chart of the students' names and books. Students now check off which books they have read twice with a partner.
- **Writing**, where students can find all the materials they need to draft, revise, and edit their work.
- **Listening**, where students can listen to selections from the **Student Readers and Big Books**, as well as other recorded books that are related to the new unit theme.

Every morning, Mr. Hishiro has a chart posted with the names and groups of students he will be working with during Workshop that day.

Mr. Hirshiro has tried various models for Workshop. What works best for him this year with this class is to begin the day with Workshop and preteaching. A second fifteen-minute block of Workshop time is scheduled in the afternoon.

Grades 2 and 3

How is Workshop in Grades 2 and 3 different from Workshop in Kindergarten and Grade 1? The time line for introducing Workshop in Grades 2 and 3 should be condensed. For the Ready stage of Workshop at these grade levels, the teacher simply explains Workshop, discusses the rules, and introduces the different Workshop areas. As in the earlier grades, it is critical to model all activities. Students in these grades are more mature and capable of working independently earlier in the year. They have more reading and writing skills and greater awareness of what they need to be working on, yet many still may need guidance in choosing appropriate activities. At the beginning of the year, students need to learn to move from area to area, and the teacher should be monitoring early Workshops. This means the teacher is not meeting with small groups initially, but rather is observing and collecting information about the students that will be used to form small groups.

Once the teacher is comfortable that this aspect of Workshop is moving smoothly, he or she can begin to meet with small groups. Clearly the lines between Set and Go are defined by the number of

Workshop areas and the amount of choice the students are given. As with the earlier grades, it is critical that the teacher continuously change activities in the different Workshop areas as student needs and the curriculum change. At these grade levels, the emphasis in Workshop should be on building fluency, writing, and vocabulary. Workshop is also a perfect time for students to work in groups on their Inquiry activities with teacher supervision. They can plan, find resources, read and take notes, and develop their presentations. It might not be until much later in the year that students are ready to work on Inquiry independently.

In addition to the debriefing, students in Grades 2 and 3 should take greater responsibility for monitoring their learning during Workshop. Here are some ways that teachers can promote this.

- Develop individual Workshop logs in which students keep track of what they have done during the week. This can be a simple form. (See Appendix B)
- Create fluency charts to map their fluency growth. (See Appendix C)
- Create a classroom chart to keep track of your Workshop assignments each day. (See Appendix D)

*It is September in Ms. Sufuentes's class. Her class is new to **SRA Imagine It!** so they have not done Workshop before. She has explained Workshop, and she is beginning with just three Workshop areas: Fluency, Vocabulary, and Writing. She has decided to assign students to each Workshop area, making sure that students work at each area during the week. Ms. Sufuentes has spent time observing students working in the*

various areas. This information, along with her observations during reading, has given her a good overall picture of her students and their needs. She feels that the class needs at least another week of structured Workshop to get them ready for greater independence because she has noticed that too many students still need close supervision. During debriefing with the class, it is clear that they are having problems adhering to the Workshop rules. For example, she has noticed that many students are still asking what they should do when they finish working at one of the Workshop areas.

At this point in the year, Workshop takes about fifteen minutes, and it is done after reading.

Several months later, Workshop looks totally different. Now students are visiting several Workshop areas, and Ms. Sufuentes is working with small groups with a range of needs and skills. This year, the class has a high percentage of English learners, and Ms. Sufuentes takes time almost daily to preteach selection vocabulary and to review these words in linguistic structures found in the selection. Ms. Sufuentes also uses Workshop time to meet with groups working on Inquiry activities, to do fluency checks, and to apply comprehension strategies to content area materials.

Grades 4, 5, and 6

Even if students have never been in this reading program, they certainly have had experience working independently and in small groups. Workshop, however,



is not a time for busywork; rather, it is an opportunity for students to make sound choices about what they need and would like to do. The concept of Ready, Set, Go used in the primary grades may be compressed or nonexistent at these grades. Begin the year by presenting the rules and discussing reasonable options for Workshop time. At these levels, some teachers have defined Workshop areas as described for the lower grades, but this formal structure is not critical with older students. However, students do need to know what their options are and where the necessary materials are located; for example, where the trade books for Inquiry are housed or where the resources for writing are kept. The amount of structure for Workshop should be determined by the conduct of the students. For example, some upper-grade students may need more direction and more structure in order to work productively. This may mean setting up actual Workshop areas and more closely monitoring student activities. Students may have the skills to work independently, but they might not have the discipline to make good choices and work on their own or collaboratively. Having a structure to Workshop and debriefing and

reflecting on learning will help develop the self-regulated behaviors necessary for independent work.

Many teachers believe they need to create Workshop activities for their students. The nature of Inquiry at this level is ideally suited to Workshop. After having worked on Inquiry during the whole-class lesson, students are expected to work collaboratively and to read widely from a variety of resources in order to address research questions and conjectures. In addition, students can work on writing projects, fluency, vocabulary, reading a wide range of genres, spelling, and the like. As in the primary grades, Workshop time is time for differentiated instruction with individual or small groups of students.

Some of Ms. Jackson's students are familiar with Workshop from the previous year. Even though not all students have been involved with Workshop in the past, it doesn't take Ms. Jackson long to discuss the rules and expectations for Workshop. At the beginning of the year, she prefers to take a couple of weeks to monitor and observe students before she begins to meet with small groups.

Today Ms. Jackson has given her class three choices in addition to completing one Must-Do, so students have choice within a structure in Workshop. Students must complete their vocabulary assignment. Once completed, they can choose from continuing to work on their writing, collecting information for their Inquiry project, or extending their knowledge of Greek and Latin to the learning of new words. Ms. Jackson will work with only two groups today; the rest of her Workshop time will be spent holding writing and Inquiry conferences.

It is now January, and Workshop is on automatic pilot and a favorite part of the day. It has changed from a twenty-minute period to a forty-minute block in the afternoon. The students have many options, they know what to do, they use each other as resources to solve problems, and they do some real independent learning. Ms. Jackson now spends her time with several small groups, working on writing, comprehension, and vocabulary. With some groups she is reteaching, with others preteaching, and yet with others extending instruction. Her groups are fluid, and their makeup changes regularly based on student needs.

How Should Small Groups Be Formed for Workshop?

Workshop groups are formed using information from the continuous monitoring of student progress instruction. During whole-class instruction of phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, comprehension, or writing, the teacher uses the observation checklists or makes mental notes of which students need additional support either through reteaching or preteaching before the next lesson or which students need to be challenged. Throughout the year, students are grouped and regrouped based upon changes in progress and needs. Also, a student may be below grade level in one area of language arts while at the same time being at or above grade level in another area. Think of the student who is a good reader but not as successful as a writer.

Small groups are formed based on observation during instruction. The makeup of the groups changes based on student needs.

By forming small groups based on daily observations of student learning and assessment data, teachers are able to identify needs immediately and reteach when students are experiencing difficulty. This approach to developing groups based on observations of student needs during whole-class instruction also allows for the constant updating of groups based on student performance. For example, a teacher may see that five students need work in an area like fluency. The teacher works with this group for a couple of weeks. Two of the original five students are making progress and are ready to practice independently as partners. These students move out of the small group, but the teacher observes that three more students in the class could benefit from work in this small group, so they move into the group. A constant ebb and flow of students is occurring; hence, the groups are not static.

But flexible grouping is not just about students moving in and out of groups based on instructional needs; it also means that a student may be in a group for writing but not necessarily for anything else. In addition, flexible grouping provides opportunities for students to be members of more than one group, and each of those groups is made up of different students.

Because students in *SRA Imagine It!* are constantly engaged in the lesson, teachers

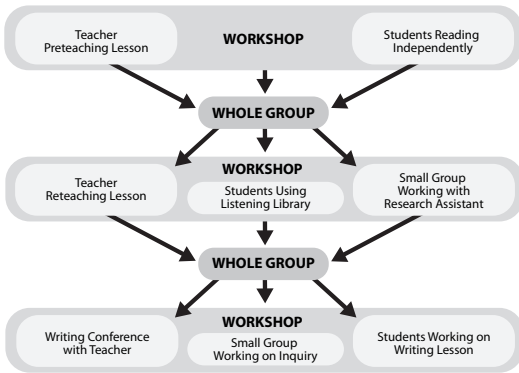
can quickly observe who needs additional help or who needs opportunities to extend their understanding. For example, observing during Dictation and Spelling allows teachers to identify students who need more work with specific sounds and spellings as well as with segmentation. Similarly, observing during Reading and Responding as students think aloud allows teachers to identify students who need additional work with comprehension strategies.

Workshop groups should be kept small and comprised of students with common instructional needs. Use of the *eAssess* component of *SRA Imagine It!* configures small groups for each unit and provides instructional suggestions.

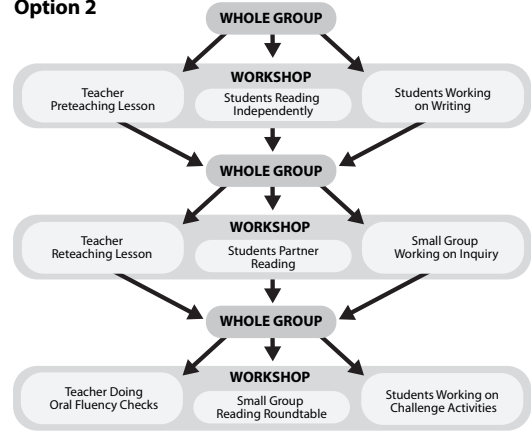
Workshop Is Flexible Time!

Teachers often ask “When do you do Workshop?” Some teachers like to start the day with Workshop. Instead of coming into the classroom and doing a worksheet, students come in and begin Workshop. They may do Must Do’s that are already set up on the board or continue working on something from the prior day. Some teachers like to do Workshop after each part of the lesson—Part 1: Preparing to Read, Part 2: Reading and Responding, and Part 3: Language Arts. This enables the teacher to reteach or preteach for the next part of the lesson. Some teachers do a Workshop block in the morning and another one in the afternoon. Others find that a single Workshop block fits their schedule best.

Option 1



Option 2



Defining Workshop

Workshop helps teachers combine whole- and small-group instruction based upon the needs of their students to maximize instructional time. Workshop is flexible whole- and small-group instruction. Students work on assigned and self-selected purposeful activities that reinforce and extend the instruction in *SRA Imagine It!* while the teacher works with small groups of students who

are grouped based upon their instructional needs. The teacher works with small groups on the following activities: preteaching, reteaching, providing intervention, working on fluency, holding writing conferences, doing informal assessment, listening to students read, and extending learning. During this time of small-group instruction, the rest of the students in the class are working independently, in pairs, or collaboratively in small groups.

Managing Workshop: Small-Group Differentiated Instruction		
Areas of Concern for Managing Workshop	Commonly Asked Questions	Some Practical Suggestions
Workshop Areas	How many Workshop areas do I need to have in the classroom?	The number of Workshop areas will evolve over time. Early in the year, many teachers have two or three areas and then gradually add more as students are ready.
	Students seem confused by the all the different areas. How can I reduce this confusion?	One of the best ways to reduce confusion is to introduce one or two Workshop areas at a time and explain how to use the materials in each area. As the year progresses and you add new materials to the Workshop area, model how to use these new materials. Always model and practice any games with students before putting them in a Workshop area.

<p>Organizing the Classroom</p>	<p>I have a very small room. How do I create areas to house Workshop materials?</p>	<p>Many teachers with small rooms use bookcases to store Workshop materials. They put materials for the different Workshop areas in tubs or plastic crates.</p> <p>Visit other teachers who have comparable-sized rooms to see how they have arranged Workshop areas.</p> <p>Work with other teachers in your school to find ways to rearrange your desks and other furniture. If you are an upper-grade teacher, have your students help solve the problem.</p>
<p>Organizing Materials</p>	<p>Keeping materials organized is a challenge. What can I do to make it easy to keep track of materials?</p>	<p>Color coding materials helps solve the problem. Many teachers color code pieces for different games and then use the same color to code the container. Teachers also code the sets of Individual Sound Cards by simply taking a magic marker and running one color across the top of the deck and then doing the same using different colors for the remaining three decks. This way, if a teacher or students finds one of the Individual Sound Cards on the floor, he or she can check the color and return it to the correct set.</p>
	<p>How can materials be stored to keep them out of the way when they are not being used?</p>	<p>Many teachers maximize the use of crates and resealable plastic bags. Crates can be stacked on top of each other, and plastic bags are a convenient way to keep materials for each activity together.</p>
<p>Managing Time</p>	<p>How long should I spend on Workshop?</p>	<p>The length of time spent on Workshop depends on the time of year, the age of the students, and the number of Workshop periods you have. Early in the year with young students, you may start with five minutes of Workshop and then move to longer periods of time.</p>
	<p>What happens when students finish their work before I am finished working with small groups?</p>	<p>One of the Workshop rules is that students should always be working. This means that students need to know what to do if they complete their Workshop activities. Many teachers have students read a book.</p>
	<p>How do I find the time to plan for differentiated instruction?</p>	<p>Planning is essential. Many grade-level teachers meet at the end of every unit to review the results of the lesson assessments and discuss the instructional needs of students. At this meeting, teachers can work together to plan different activities for below, at, and above grade level and share ideas.</p>

<p>Managing Questions</p>	<p>What happens when students are having problems or don't understand how to do something?</p>	<p>There will always be times when students need help, and their natural reaction is to turn to you. The following are some teacher suggestions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “One, two, three, then ask me.” If a student is having a problem, he or she should ask at least two other students for help before turning to you when you are finished working with your group. • In one first-grade classroom, the teacher gave each student a circle with his or her name on it. If a student needed help, he or she put the circle on the ledge of the white board. When the teacher finished working with a group, she would check the ledge before beginning work with another group. <p>What teachers find out with these simple techniques is that many students solve their problems before the teacher ever gets to them. Problem solving is part of building independence.</p>
<p>Managing Noise</p>	<p>How can I maintain a level of noise in the classroom that allows for interaction in small groups and student pairs while respecting the need that some students have for quiet while they work?</p>	<p>One of the rules you and your class discuss is “Talk in a quiet voice” or “Talk in a six-inch voice.” Have a signal set up to let the class know when the noise level is getting too high. Reviewing rules periodically helps remind students about keeping the noise level down. If the noise level is getting too loud and students seem unable to tone it down, some teachers just end Workshop for that day and tell students to read a book or work alone on their writing.</p>
<p>Monitoring Student Work</p>	<p>Some teachers want a way to monitor student work during Workshop.</p>	<p>Student work can be monitored in several ways.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Debriefing after Workshop is a quick way to determine not only how well Workshop is going but what students are doing during Workshop. Have two or three students debrief each day. • Make sure students have some sort of product to show what they have done during Workshop. If students have been working on fluency, then they should complete a chart or form with information about the number of words they read during a designated period of time. Students in Grade 2 and up can chart their progress. • Working with small groups is key, but it can be valuable occasionally to walk around the room and observe students during Workshop.
<p>Working with Small Groups</p>	<p>Where do I get the materials for working with small groups?</p>	<p><i>SRA Imagine It!</i> has multiple resources to support preteaching, reteaching, and extending the lesson.</p>

Appendix A

SRA Imagine It! Workshop Kit Components

Level K

- *Wikki Stix*
- *Uppercase and Lowercase Sandpaper Letters*
- *Alphabet Sound Picture Cards*
- *Alphabet Sound Letter Cards*
- *Uppercase and Lowercase Letter Cards*
- *Letter Cubes*
- *Letter Tiles*
- *SRA Imagine It! Photo Library CD*
- *Individual Pocket Chart*
- *Game Pieces, Cubes, and Markers*
- *Workshop Resource Book*

Level 1

- *Wikki Stix*
- *Uppercase and Lowercase Sandpaper Letters*
- *Sound/Spelling Picture Cards*
- *Sound/Spelling Spelling Cards*
- *Uppercase and Lowercase Letter Cards*
- *Letter Cubes*
- *Letter Tiles*
- *Game Mats and Game Cards with Game Pieces, Cubes, and Markers*
- *SRA Imagine It! Photo Library CD*
- *Individual Pocket Chart*
- *Workshop Resource Book*
- *Timer*

Levels 2 and 3

- *Sound/Spelling Picture Cards*
- *Sound/Spelling Spelling Cards*
- *Uppercase and Lowercase Letter Cards*
- *Letter Cubes*
- *Letter Tiles*
- *Game Mats and Game Cards with Game Pieces, Cubes, and Markers*
- *SRA Imagine It! Photo Library CD*
- *Workshop Resource Book*
- *Timer*

Levels 4, 5, and 6

- *Uppercase and Lowercase Letter Cards*
- *Game Mats and Game Cards with Game Pieces, Cubes, and Markers*
- *SRA Imagine It! Photo Library CD*
- *Workshop Resource Book*
- *Timer*

Appendix B

Workshop Log

Name _____ Week _____

Phonics				
Fluency				
Vocabulary				
Comprehension				
Writing				
Grammar				
Inquiry				
Spelling				

Appendix C

Fluency Chart

Name _____

Date	Passage	Fiction/ Nonfiction	Total Words/Number Correct

Appendix D

Classroom Workshop Chart

Name _____ Week _____

	Preteach	Reteach	Practice	Extend
Phonics				
Fluency				
Vocabulary				
Comprehension				
Writing				
Grammar				
Spelling				
Inquiry				

