

## Workshop/Intervention, Grades 4-6

### Classroom Management

The success of Workshop depends primarily on the ability of the teacher and the students to manage their time and materials efficiently. This level of organization develops with time and continual reinforcement. Ms. Strelcheck has followed the suggestions presented in *Open Court Reading* and *SRA Imagine It!* for setting up and conducting Workshop. In addition, she has used her own experience and knowledge of her students' limitations and abilities to make Workshop engaging and valuable.

### General guidelines

1. Establish and discuss rules for Workshop with your students. Write the finalized rules on the board or on a poster. Suggested rules include:
  - Be polite.
  - Share.
  - Whisper when you need to say something.
  - Take only the materials you need. When you are finished, put them back in the proper place.
2. Introduce and demonstrate every activity and game before you give it to the students to do on their own. Provide complete instructions for each activity before they begin working.
3. Make sure that every student knows exactly what to do during Workshop, including what to do when they have finished an activity. This is essential if you are to be free to work with small groups.
4. Show students where materials can be found.
5. Let students know that if the noise level becomes too distracting, Workshop may have to end for the day.

Adhere to Workshop guidelines. By the time students have done Workshop for a couple of weeks, they will have internalized the rules and your expectations. Early Workshops may run no more than 10 or 15 minutes. You may gradually increase the time to 30 minutes as your students gain independence.

Ms. Strelcheck spends a considerable amount of time discussing her Workshop rules with her students. She makes absolutely sure that they know the rules, understand them, and understand that they must abide by the rules. She also explains her reasons for each rule. This helps her students act responsibly during Workshop. They are less likely to ignore rules if they understand the reasons for them.

### Managing space

Carefully setting up your classroom to accommodate different Workshop activities will help Workshop period progress smoothly and effectively. During Workshop, students will be doing independent and collaborative reading and writing, as well as individual and small-group projects. While setting up your classroom, keep the primary Workshop activities in mind.

Note how Ms. Strelcheck has arranged her classroom.

- She has materials readily available to the students. They are in containers separated by activity and clearly marked.
- She has a table placed in the back of the room at which she meets with individuals and small groups. This allows her to separate these small groups as well as watch the other students as they participate in their Workshop activities.

### Additional Workshop tips

- Encourage responsibility and independence by reminding students to follow the rules.
- Provide time each day for a couple of students to share their work with the class. This helps students understand that Workshop time is valuable learning time.
- Encourage students to tell each other what they like about their work and to offer help and suggestions.
- Look for talents and abilities in each student; provide opportunities for your students to show off their talents.
- Encourage students to challenge themselves during Workshop by showing them that mistakes and problems are not bad, but rather can be used to learn new things.