



Yale-New Haven
Teachers Institute®

Curriculum Units by Fellows of the Yale-New Haven Teachers Institute
1997 Volume II: American Children's Literature

Beyond R. L. Stine: Read-Aloud Books and Group Activities For Fifth Graders

Guide for Curriculum Unit 97.02.11

by Teresa M. Matthews

Reading is the key to knowledge. It is a skill that, if learned correctly, will pay dividends throughout an entire lifetime. A knowledge-based society expects its citizens to be able to read, and of course, school is the institution charged with accomplishing that task. Teaching reading to fifth graders can be challenging and rewarding, with both high points and low points along the way. The goals of this unit were to identify books that typical fifth graders “like” and to develop interactive strategies for each book which highlight elements such as characters, object lessons, and sub-plots.

The unit requires reading aloud to the class on a daily basis. “Who will read aloud?” you ask. The students and the teacher, of course; but they will be complemented by parents, grandparents, the principal, the school lunchroom supervisor, the district reading coordinator, and a host of other “guest readers”. The ever-changing menu of presenters will help create an environment of interest and curiosity towards not only the story being read but towards reading itself!

Books with contemporary themes and values were selected for the read aloud unit. Students will be expected to read other books during the school year, and the class will develop a “total books read” goal at the start of the school year. Individual and group incentives will be built into the goal setting process.

As a concerned parent or elementary school teacher, you are encouraged to take any or all of this unit and use it however you wish to develop better reading skills in your children.

(Recommended for Reading, grade 5)

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