

# DEEPENING INDEPENDENCE IN READING

Lee Academy incorporates the following guidelines in its approach to independent reading. The positive results of this approach are readily visible in the depth of comprehension in our students and their high levels of interaction with each other and in class discussions. It also creates a love of reading that will stay with them throughout their lives!

## NURTURING ENVIRONMENT

*The Research:* When students feel safe to take risks, it increases their motivation, engagement, independent literacy development and language acquisition.

*The Practice:* Reading with partners, students learn to coach and support each other. Form inferential discussion groups with open-ended discussion of texts.

## CHOICE

*The Research:* Choice raises motivation and engagement.

*The Practice:* Students free to select books for reading and choose how to document their reading. For small-group literature discussions, students choose their top choice from pre-selected books.

## SUPPORTED INDEPENDENT READING

*The Research:* Supported independent reading time increases fluency, comprehension and reading achievement.

*The Practice:* Help students select books they can read and enjoy. Introduce strategies for working with challenging words and maintaining or deepening comprehension. Hold brief conferences with each student to document independent reading practices and provide individualized coaching and support.

## TALK AND INTERACTION

*The Research:* Discussion supports comprehension and engagement in higher-level thinking and knowledge communication.

*The Practice:* Teach students strategies for interaction during partner reading and discussion groups. Brainstorm possibilities for inferential and literal talk about texts during and after reading. Remind students about higher-level thinking they could use when discussing books with a partner or small group.

## ASSESSMENT GUIDED INSTRUCTION

*The Research:* Assessment that gives teachers immediate feedback on instructional needs improves the quality of teaching.

*The Practice:* During conferring sessions, note successful strategies students use as well as an area of need and coaching. Create an observational checklist to document student behaviors during partner reading. Provide immediate feedback to students about observations and ideas for enhancing their independent time.

Lindsay Moses, Associate Professor of literacy education at Arizona State University, created the above guidelines she uses in her reading workshops for elementary level students. Further detail can be found in her book, *Fostering Independence in the K-2 Reading Workshop* by L. Moses and M. Ogden, 2017.