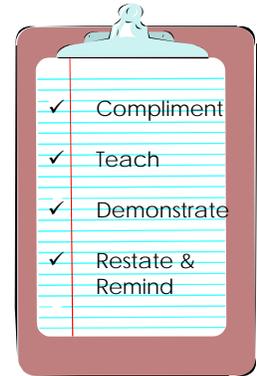


Reading Conferences

Reading conferences can be challenging. Teachers often wonder what to say or what to emphasize when they sit alongside reader in their classrooms. As we watch children read, it can be overwhelming: there are a million things to teach them within a single conference.

It is helpful to begin with an understanding of how a **typical conference** might go. It's important to sit alongside a child and **observe** the child as she reads. **Jot some notes*** about what you see then offer some kind of **compliment** to the reader. Next, move quickly to **teach** the student a skill or strategy that she needs to help her reading improve (be sure to focus on only one teaching point for the conference so as to not overwhelm the student with too much to learn and apply all at once). Your teaching will often include **demonstrating** just what you want the student to do, then watching her as she tries it within the conference. At the close of the conference, **restate** the teaching point and **remind** the reader to use the particular skill or strategy from this point forward.

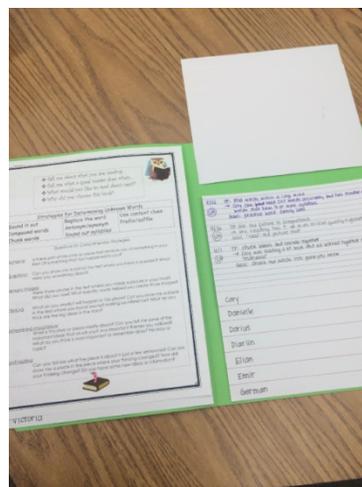
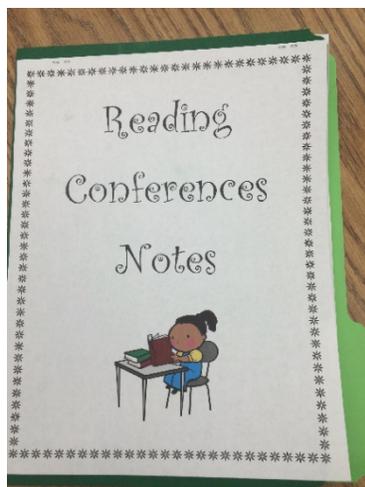


Try to keep conferences to less than 3-5 minutes.

Conference notes should be used to inform your teaching so make sure you jot down the compliment you offered the reader so you can keep track of what's going well. Note the teaching point of the conference and the other needs of this reader so you can address them in the next conference or within a small-group lesson with other students who share that particular need.

(Adapted from *Growing Readers* by Kathy Collins, 2004. Portland, ME. Stenhouse.)

Sample conference folder:



*Conference Notes Folder with notes written on index cards taped inside the folder (conference tips stapled on left side of the folder). Notes on the index card include: Book Level, Teaching Point (TP), Notes/Observations (→), and Goal, all handwritten by the teacher during the conference.