

ACHIEVE THE CORE



Create a Successful Book Basket

- 1. Identify great texts.** Sort your existing classroom library into collections of 3 or more texts. Can you group your existing texts by the same conceptually connected topic? Wherever possible, ensure that the texts have similar vocabulary and content. (Examples of great topics include "Animal Adaptations," "Life in the Amazon Rainforest," "Lincoln's Assassination." The depth and nuance of the topic will vary based on the grade level and resources)
- 2. If needed, expand the text set** with additional resources. Looking for more free texts to round out your collections? Try:
 - a. Readworks.org
 - b. Newsela.org
 - c. Activelylearn.com
 - d. Commonlit.org
 - e. Getepic.com (free for elementary school teachers and librarians)
 - f. Any additional website that provides clear, readable information on a topic
- 3. Order the texts in sequence.** Start with the text that provides the broadest introduction to the topic, and/or is easiest to read. Consider sequencing the remaining texts in a way that builds more understanding -- either from simplest to most complex, or based on the knowledge demands of the subject. One way to think about this is, "Have I provided a resource to help my reader understand an upcoming challenge in the text?" Consider adding websites or videos to round out the set, if the technology in your classroom allows.
- 4. Label** your bins, bags, etc. based on the topic.
- 5. Introduce the book baskets** to your class. Tell your students they will be able to pick the sets they are interested in and become experts on a topic or character.
- 6. Help students select texts** that they are interested in, and monitor their comprehension to ensure that they are able to access the content.
- 7. Encourage students to read*** a full set: in sequential order. This can be done in a variety of ways: independent reading, within small group instruction, or even within a full class if the texts support a concept the class is studying.
- 8. Ask questions** like "What do you want to know about?" and "What have you learned?" instead of "What is your level?"
- 9. Keep going!** Collaborate with your school librarian (if you have one), fellow teachers, and your students, to identify topics and texts for new book baskets.

* K-1 text sets may be designed as read-alouds rather than independent reading, depending on the challenge of the resource

STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT PARTNERS