The Daily 5 is a hands on, user friendly text written for both teacher-practitioners and teacher candidates to easily understand and implement a constructivist philosophy for literacy instruction. This second edition is written in a manner that establishes both the theoretical underpinnings of the program as well as the practical knowledge for implementation.

Throughout the book, Boushey and Moser give specific foundational information interwoven with the step-by-step instructions designed to support any classroom context. The reader finds themselves inside the authors’ classrooms both with detailed examples, classroom examples, colorful pictures, and authentic examples. All nine chapters and the appendices detail the framework and details of the Daily 5 approach.

Each chapter scaffolds the reader’s understanding supporting their knowledge of the foundational elements of the Daily 5. Chapter One, in particular, provides a clear overview of the Daily 5 instructional approach as well as how it has evolved over time. The authors then provide in Chapter Two the foundational beliefs that undergird their literacy.
instructional approach and in Chapter Three detail the “10 Steps to Teaching and Learning Independence” that give deeper insights and understandings of the process.

In Chapter Four, the authors move to providing specific, clear components that educators need to utilize the Daily 5 approach in their classrooms. Detailed steps on creating a gathering place, focus lessons, and anchor charts, and more are provided. Chapters Five and Six give step by step directions for developing, enhancing, and personalizing foundational lessons to support all learners.

The authors shift slightly in Chapters Seven and Eight, helping the reader to know when and how they might “launch” the next components of the Daily Five and how to incorporate a math focus with their framework, entitled the “Math Daily 3.” Their structure reminds us again of the importance of “manageable chunks” and how to develop a meaningful structure in which lessons are crafted to a length of time that is “much closer to a brain-compatible time, enhancing the opportunity for children to retain the learning and information” (p. 125).

The final chapter of the book entitled “Returning to Our Core Beliefs” brings the reader back to the theoretical foundations of their literacy instructional approach. In this chapter, the authors give strong examples of how they support “barometer children” who “dictate the weather in the classroom” (p. 142). Identifying that some children need more support and differentiation, the authors illustrate ways in which they modify their approach to accommodate each child, in particular those that need additional levels of support in the classroom. Clear, practical examples, charts, and schedules are included to further illustrate their work.

Incorporated throughout the text are sample lessons grounded in the Common Core standards (both for the literacy and mathematical standards). In addition, appendices provide blank charts, guides, plans, and sample parent letters as well as additional lesson plans to support anyone launching a Daily 5 approach. For readers who are interested in accessing additional strategies and lessons it would be useful to examine The CAFÉ Book (Boushey & Moser, 2009) or their website at www.thedailycafe.com.

A strength of the text is in its ability to provide the reader with the content knowledge critical to understanding the Daily 5 approach while providing all of the practical components that detail the information without demanding any required path. The authors provide a guide book with detailed directions on how to get to the final destination.
with ample choices on the roads that might be selected to get there. The hands on framework utilized in this book will support mentor and novice teachers alike. Just as the authors advocate for the “gradual release of responsibility” (Pearson & Gallagher, 1983) for their students, so also do they write their text for their audience, providing a gradual release model through their chapters that can support any teacher’s implementation of the Daily 5 model.

References


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