Self-Directed Reading –
GRAB YOURSELF A BOOK!

There are books from my class’ SDR Library on the back table – grab one and start to read while we wait. (They are only Spanish titles since I am a Spanish teacher, and I need my books back, please!)

× Every Tuesday and Thursday at the beginning of the hour, after greeting Profe Varda at the door, the first thing we will do is READ!
× Reading time is SACRED.
  ○ The only thing we do during reading time is...READ!

*The more that you read the more things that you’ll know, the more that you learn the more places you’ll go. – Dr. Seuss
SDR: Pleasure reading for literacy development and language acquisition

https://tinyurl.com/y37cydpo
Get your students reading for pleasure to help them acquire language faster. Discover why self directed reading is essential to literacy development. Explore ways to engage students in conversations about books and discuss the importance of creating lifelong readers.
Plan for the session

1. What is SDR?
2. Why start SDR?
3. Creating your library
4. Introducing SDR
5. Engaging students as readers
6. Maintaining your library
Hello!

I am Kathy Varda.
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1. What is SDR?

Student Directed Reading
What is SDR?

- Student Directed Reading
- aka Free-Voluntary Reading
  - Students pick what they read
  - Reading should be easy (not frustrating)
    - 98% comprehensible at first
What is SDR?

- Everyone reads - including the teacher (you are setting an example)
- Student choice
- Not supposed to be evaluated or formally assessed
What is SDR?

- How much time per level?
  - I use SDR as a bell-ringer 2x per week (Tuesday and Thursday)
  - 8th grade (1st exposure to Spanish) - starts SDR in mid-November with 5 minutes 1x per week
  - Spanish 3, 4, and AP 7-10 minutes 2x per week
2. Why start SDR?

My experience and what the Experts say
My experience

- Transition to more CI methods in my teaching
  - After Summer Institute 2018
    - Janice Holter Kittok
- Peer pressure/suggestion
- District Initiatives for Literacy and improved test scores
- The research
“Providing daily class time to read shows students that we value their regular engagement with reading. We establish this habit in our classrooms, because we know that if our students are not reading in school, most will not read at home...While it feels like not enough time, especially for our least skilled students, just ten minutes of daily reading can have a significant impact” (Gallagher & Kittle, 2018).
“Picking up word meanings by reading is ten times faster than intensive vocabulary instruction.”

-Stephen Krashen
Perhaps the most powerful way of encouraging children to read is to expose them to light reading, a kind of reading that schools pretend does not exist, a kind of reading that many children, for economic or ideological reasons, are deprived of. I suspect that light reading is the way nearly all of us learned to read.

-Stephen Krashen, The Power of Reading, p. 92
We remember things best when they are organized with everything else we know, when they come with stories attached, rather than as isolated bits of information."

-Frank Smith, Reading FAQ
There is overwhelming research showing that recreational reading in a second language is a powerful means of improving grammar, vocabulary, spelling and writing ability - and it is far more efficient and far more pleasant than traditional instruction."

-Stephen Krashen
“New words are learned with remarkable facility, especially in stories, when you are reading something that makes sense to you.”

-Frank Smith, Reading FAQ
“Teaching vocabulary lists is inefficient - the time is better spent reading alone.”

-Stephen Krashen
Incidental learning of words during reading may be the easiest and single most powerful means of promoting large-scale vocabulary growth.

-W.E. Nagy & P.A. Herdman quoted in Extended Reading in the Foreign Language Classroom
“People acquiring a second language have the best chance for success through reading.”

-Stephen Krashen
Show empathy for those who struggle, excitement about the possibilities, and clear expectations that remaining dormant as a reader is not an option. Let students know, there is no hiding here.

When ACQUIRING another language:
First we learn to LISTEN.
We learn to READ what we’ve heard.
We learn to WRITE what We’ve read and heard.
Finally...
We SPEAK because We’ve heard, read and written it.
Strategies for starting

- Be aware that some students will take longer to find a book they want to read.
- Confer with students. Start right away to get to know students as readers and learn what they need.
- Establish a library checkout routine for reading.
- Communicate with parents about the importance of students’ engagement in independent reading.
- Generate data that helps you know your students as readers.

Suggestions for SDR

In his article “81 Generalizations about Free Voluntary Reading” Krashen writes:

The following suggestions are based on the generalizations presented above as well as on the suggestions of teachers.
Suggestions for SDR

1. Do a little each day, not a lot once a week (distributed, not massed) *
2. Less is more; do less than you think they can handle; if you think they can sit and read for 15 minutes, do ten minutes.*
3. Make sure plenty of books and other reading material are available.
Suggestions for SDR

4. Comic books are ok.
5. Magazines are ok.
6. Graded readers, books written for language students, are ok.
7. Let students select their own reading material (SY Lee 2007)
8. Impose minimum censorship on what is read* (for discussion, see Trelease, 2004)

9. It is ok for readers to read “easy” books (below their “level”) (Krashen, 2005b).

10. It is ok for readers to read “hard” (books above their “level”) (Krashen, 2005b).
Suggestions for SDR

11. Students don’t have to finish every book they start to read.*

12. Sustained silent reading is not for beginners. Beginners need other kinds of comprehensible text. It also will not help advanced readers who have already established a reading habit (Krashen, 2001a).
13. Supplement SSR with activities that serve to make reading more comprehensible and interesting (e.g. read alouds, trips to the library, discussion of literature).
14. Don’t use rewards for reading, don’t test students on what is read, do not require book reports. Use zero or minimum accountability. When the conditions are right (compelling reading material available, and enough reading competence) direct encouragement can work.
15. How about some food and drink? Let’s trying eating and reading in the school library.*
(Trelease and Krashen, 1996)
3. Creating your library

How to add more books to your library to give your students options.
Creating your library

- Create a [Donors Choose](https://www.donorschoose.org) project
  - I had a [$525 project](https://www.donorschoose.org) funded to get 50 books for my classroom
    - It was like Christmas!
Creating your library

- Look for books in Spanish at garage sales, Goodwill, second-hand bookstores
- Thriftbooks.com
  - Lots of “authentic” titles in Spanish to have in your library for native speakers or more advanced students
  - Books translated from English to Spanish
  - There are also some CI titles available (Carol Gaab, Mira Canion, A.C. Quintero, Jennifer Degenhardt, etc.)
Creating your library

- Talk to your school/district librarian and reading specialists
- Books you have in boxes from when you were in college
- When you go abroad, scour bookstores for authentic materials
  - Save room in your suitcase for this!
- Conferences
  - Often publishers will have discounts at conferences
Creating your library

- Amazon.com
  - Lots of independent authors publish through Amazon.
  - Once you start to look for CI novels, Amazon will start to make suggestions of books that are similar
- Scholastic (Club Leo) - Spanish
  - Great non-fiction selections (National Geographic)
  - Children’s books in Spanish/Bilingual
Creating your library
Comprehensible Resources

- Written for language learners
- Limited vocabulary (number of unique words) and grammar structures
- Often have glossaries containing all unique words in the book
- Highly engaging and compelling
- Age appropriate
Creating your library
Comprehensible Resources: Readers

- **SeñorWooly Graphic Novels**
  - Starting French content
- **FluencyMatters**
  - Spanish, French, German, Italian, Latin, Russian, Chinese
- **TPRSBooks**
  - Spanish, French, Chinese, German, Italian, Latin, Russian
- **Amazon - independent authors** (French too)
- **Aquila** (French)
- **AIM Language learning**
  - French, Spanish, Mandarin, Japanese
- **TeachersDiscovery**
  - French, Spanish, German
Creating your library
Favorite CI Authors

Chinese CI reader authors
- Terry Waltz
- Linda Li
- Haiyun Lu
- Pu-Mei Leng

French CI reader authors
- Theresa Marrama
- Cécile Lainé
- Carla Tarini
- Catherine Lheureux
- Adriana Ramirez
- Patricia Lopez
- Jennifer Degenhardt
- A.C. Quintero
- Señor Wooly
- JJ Hill, Marissa Rubin, and Roberta Price
- Claire Walter

Spanish CI reader authors
- Craig Klein Dexemple
- Jennifer Degenhardt
- Carrie Toth
- Carol Gaab
- A.C. Quintero
- Bryan Kandel
- Mira Canion
- Emily Ibrahim
- Señor Wooly
- Karen Rowan
- Jeremy “Señor” Jordan
- Adriana Ramírez
- Inga Paterson-Zúñiga
- Kristy Placido
- Rita Barrett
- Katie A. Baker
- Nathaniel Kirby
- Blaine Ray
Creating your library
Children’s Books

- I have removed most of the children’s books from my library because I found that students were only really looking at the pictures and were not trying to read the text.

- I love children’s books! They are awesome resources and I continue to use them in other ways in my class, but for now they are not in my SDR library because children’s literature is often not truly comprehensible (difficult vocabulary and structures)
Creating your library
Other resources

- Class stories
- News (El Mundo En Tus Manos, NewsELA (Spanish), Le Petit Journal Francophone
- TeachersPayTeachers
- Scholastic Language Magazines
- Reading A to Z
- Epic! Books
- Stories First
Creating you library
Finding Books

Mike Peto and Martina Bex have collaborated to create an extensive list of CI novels in all languages.

Check out https://cireading.com/ for lots of independently published books.
4. Introducing SDR
How to get your students excited about books.
Introducing SDR
This is projected when students enter class.

"The more that you read the more things that you'll know, the more that you learn the more places you'll go."
- Dr. Seuss

- Every Tuesday and Thursday at the beginning of the hour, after greeting Profe at the door, the first thing we will do is READ!
- Reading time is SACRED.
- The only thing we do during reading time is...READ!
- Reading poster (adapted from Bryce Hedstrom)
Introducing SDR

- Show students the research
  - Use the quotes about how impactful reading is
- Share information about the books to get them excited/interested in the books
Introducing SDR
Booktalks

- Highlight new resources
- Highlight underutilized parts of your library
- Teacher booktalks
- Student booktalks
- Read the back of the book
- Do a read aloud with part of the book, then make it available
Introducing SDR

- Book tastings and menus
- Kindergarten reading
- Conference with students
  - Talk about what they are reading
  - Help them find something new to read
- Read with students
  - Get to know the books in your library
  - Challenge yourself with an authentic novel
After they finish a book

Students review the book:

- What level did they think the book was?
- Give it a rating out of five stars
- What did they like?
- What would they change?
5. Engaging students as readers
How to get your students to become readers.
Conferencing with students

- Conference with students as they read
  - With three to four students per 10-15 minute reading session, walk around and interview them about what they are reading
  - Ask them to read a section to you
  - To check for comprehension and that they are reading accurately, ask them to translate a couple lines that they recently read

Brett Chonko's Adaptation of Tina Hargaden's "Habits of a Strong Reader Rubric"
Book Trailers

- Pick a book to preview for students.
  - “Sell” it to them
  - Read a small section of the book
  - Give them a brief synopsis of the book (in English)
  - Level of the book
  - Genre
  - Other books by the same author
Get students talking about what they are reading with other students
- Small groups
- It’s like a book club
- Authentic conversations about books and reading
- Ask follow up questions
Artistic expression

- Book trailers
- Book posters
- Book reviews
- Acting out a book (an optional project)
Some of our students are non-readers/reluctant readers (they don’t read in L1)

- L2 reading is scary
  - Show them what to do if they don’t know a word (glossary)
  - Using context
6. Maintaining your library

Keeping your books safe.
Maintaining your library

- Cover your books
- Tape the bindings/spines and edges of the books
  - See Bryce Hedstrom for suggestions
    - Heavy duty Scotch packing tape
    - Book tape
- Have students (class job) that monitor the library and help find books in need of repair
- Keep a list of the books in your library
Displaying your books
Thanks to Zoe Witzeling and Erin Nienas for their support and suggestions.
Thanks!

Any questions?

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