

Now that the Lessons Are Complete, What's Next?

First, present a certificate of completion to your student. You may use the certificate of completion found at the end of Unit 4 [page 195] or one of your own design. Make the presentation special—a big deal—because it is!

Select an inspiring, interesting, or encouraging book to read together.

In making your selection, consider biographies or autobiographies about people who overcame obstacles and adversity. Exposing your student to wholesome ideas and new possibilities for his life can provide a wonderful beginning for a newly minted reader.

One of my personal favorites is a book entitled *Gifted Hands*. It is by the famous neurosurgeon, Dr. Benjamin Carson. Ben Carson grew up in a single-parent home on the edge of poverty. He faced flunking out in the fifth grade. Today, this talented black surgeon travels the world doing complex surgeries and saving lives. *Gifted Hands* is an amazing, gripping story, and my students absolutely love reading it. This book has many polysyllabic words, which students enjoy discovering they can read.

Begin reading the book out loud. You and your student may take turns reading. Read with expression! Use proper pauses and inflections. Don't read too fast; savor the material. You are providing your student with an awareness and enjoyment of his newly developed skills. During the reading, stop from time to time to ask questions and discuss the story. (For more ideas on how to assist your student in reading, see page xx.)

After just a few sessions, your student will begin to realize that he knows the meaning of a great many words (we hope all) and understands what he is reading. Prior to these lessons, his oral vocabulary was probably more extensive than his reading vocabulary. Reading a good book together allows for vocabulary building and confirms his new abilities. You don't necessarily have to finish reading the book together.

Prior to doing these lessons, your student might have been shy about answering questions in class. He still may think he can't handle questions. This is not a reading problem but a confidence problem. Before long, as he gains confidence, he will start taking the risk. He can read now, plus he knows enough about word patterns that he can take an educated guess at unfamiliar words, all the while considering the story's context. (This is the proper use of context.)

I remember one seventh-grade student who read a passage that had the words **laborious, tedious, painstaking, preparation, determination, and appropriate**. After discussing the paragraph, I asked him if he was aware of the big words he had just read. He looked puzzled and said no. I went back through the paragraph and showed him these words. He was genuinely surprised. Not only did he breeze through the paragraph, but he understood every word of it. All of which brings me to my point: **Real reading is effortless reading.** You will know that your student has become an accomplished reader when he reads without thinking about how to read.

A new math student will often begin his math work by reciting out loud ("*Two plus two is four. . . Four plus four is eight*"). Later, he will whisper addition facts to himself, and eventually he will handle his computations silently. The same is true for reading.