

## *Viewing Guide*

# Happy Reading!



Creating a  
Predictable  
Structure for  
Joyful Teaching  
and Learning

Debbie  
Miller

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This guide is designed to help facilitators use *Happy Reading!* in workshop settings. The plans provided are flexible, allowing you to tailor the suggestions to the needs of your group.

We've divided suggestions for each tape into four sections:

1. note-taking strategies while viewing
2. questions for discussion
3. suggestions for workshop activities
4. readings from *Reading with Meaning*, the companion text from Debbie Miller that can be used with the video series.

We've also included information for cueing the tapes to view specific content (i.e., individual segments demonstrating small-group reading instruction or whole class mini-lessons) in the appendix on page 20.

## Using Videotapes in Workshop Settings

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Using videotapes presents special challenges in a workshop setting. Most of our experience with viewing television is passive, and it can be difficult to get participants to be more active (and reactive!) as they view instructional videotapes. Facilitators can use a few simple strategies to prepare participants for a much more active role in looking at *Happy Reading!* and discussing the tapes after viewing:

1. *Check out equipment and sound in advance.* Make sure the videotape segments are cued to the right spot in each tape (we provide time cues in the information on each tape that follows). After you begin running any segment, walk to the back of the room and listen to the tape. The goal is to have the sound as low as possible but still loud enough so participants in the back can hear. The most common error instructors make in using videotapes is playing them with the sound too loud.
2. *Have participants keep notes as they view each segment.* Double-entry journals work well to help participants focus on what they are watching, and we have provided suggestions for two-column notes for each tape. But any note-taking format can be effective if you link the notes to specific goals you have for viewing the tapes.
3. *Ask questions before the segment is played.* Classrooms are noisy, busy places. On these tapes, viewers are looking at classroom practice that has evolved over the thirty years Debbie Miller has been working with primary-age readers. There are literally dozens of different components of each segment that participants might choose to focus on—nonverbal behaviors, a form Debbie uses, rules and procedures for

readers' workshop. If you don't ask a focus question before the segment begins, you're likely to get awkward silence when you try to begin discussion later. We suggest possible questions in this guide for each tape. Consider writing a guiding question on a whiteboard or chart paper and posting it next to the video player, so that participants are reminded of the guiding question while they're watching the tapes.

## Using Two-Column Notes During Viewing

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One of the suggestions you will see repeatedly in this guide is for the use of two-column notes by participants in workshop settings where *Happy Reading!* is viewed. The two-column note viewing strategy is especially effective when looking at videotapes. The Public Education and Business Coalition of Denver, Colorado developed the use of two-column notes in many of their lab classroom observations, and we've adapted their techniques below.

Two-column notes are a kind of double entry diary or journal, with participants jotting down specific information or insights under each of the columns as they observe teachers or watch a video. Many viewers find themselves feeling overwhelmed by even the best videotapes, simply because there is so much content to take in, so quickly.

Unlike a book, it is not possible in a group viewing setting to pause, flip back a few pages, and reread a section anytime anyone gets confused. The notes are a way for participants to capture important nuggets of information as they are viewed. They also give facilitators insights into which sections of tape lend themselves to the most discussion, or even a second viewing by the whole group.

Two-column notes also help observers focus and sharpen their comments in small- and whole-group discussions after viewing tape segments. In addition, they can assist workshop participants in connecting what they are viewing with what changes they will make in their classroom.

If you want to use two-column notes while viewing the *Happy Reading!* videos, you can distribute copies of one of the templates provided, or simply have participants write down each of the two headings you've selected on blank sheets of paper before beginning the tape.

### Sample Two-Column Note Headings

Here are examples of reproducible two-column notes provided in this guide (see Figures 1 through 4). But use these only as a starting point in your thinking—there are endless variations for headings that might be developed, depending on your purposes in showing the tapes.

<b>Similarities to My Classroom</b>	<b>Differences</b>
<b>Rules and Procedures in My Classroom</b>	<b>How Are These Reinforced?</b>
<b>What I'd Like to Try in My Classroom</b>	<b>What Might Keep Me from Making the Change</b>
<b>Verbal Cues from Debbie to Students</b>	<b>Nonverbal Cues</b>

Participants take notes while viewing the segment. It's often helpful to have participants partner up after the segment ends, and share their notes with one other person for five or ten minutes before talking about the notes and tape in the whole group.

## Tape 1: Essentials: Tone, Structure, and Routines for Creating and Sustaining a Learning Community

This tape has a natural break between the first section of the tape, where Debbie demonstrates her classroom design and routines and the second section, where Debbie explains readers' workshop procedures.

In a longer workshop, you may want to stop the tape after the first section for a brief discussion before continuing on to the readers' workshop section. Or, if you only have an hour or less scheduled for the viewing, you may want to show this tape in two chunks at separate workshops.

### Getting Started

00:00–14:44

*Suggestions for two-column notes:*  
Figure 1: Similarities to My Classroom/Differences

*Questions for discussion:*  
How is the organization of Debbie's classroom similar to your organization? What does she do differently?  
What do you notice about the way she talks with children?

*Workshop suggestion:*

Distribute the list of different categories for tub books that Debbie uses, including suggestions from the children (Figure 5). Have participants write down the different categories they use for organizing their books in tubs or on shelves. In small or large groups, discuss how participants might make changes to their organization scheme based on Debbie's system.

*Chapters from Reading with Meaning:*

Prologue; Chapters 1–2

## **Readers' Workshop**

14:45–38:30 (total time: 23:45)

*Suggestions for two-column notes:*

Figure 2: Rules and Procedures in My Classroom/How Are These Reinforced?

*Questions for discussion:*

What are the strategies or procedures in place for whole-group sharing sessions?

What are the principles that guide Debbie's readers' workshop?

What is the purpose of the mini-lesson? How did Debbie decide on this particular lesson for this group?

*Workshop suggestion:*

Viewers are often interested in Debbie's assessment strategies. Share copies of sample pages from Debbie's assessment notebooks for the whole class and individual students (Figure 6). In small or large groups, talk about the kinds of notes Debbie shares. You might also have participants share their own strategies for note-taking and individual assessment or bring in samples of their systems.

*Chapters from Reading with Meaning:*

Chapters 3–4

## **Tape 2: Explicit Teaching: Portraits from Readers' Workshop**

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This tape includes numerous examples of Debbie at work with children, including individual, small-group and whole-class instruction. Viewers will see how instruction builds from day to day, based on observations and assessment of student needs.

*Suggestions for two-column notes:*

Figure 3: What I'd Like to Try in My Classroom/What Might Keep Me

from Making the Change for use with the entire tape or Figure 7: Small-Group Decoding: Strategies for Unknown Words for use with the Small-Group Decoding segment (to cue the tape to this segment, go to Small-Group Decoding [11:09–16:12]—total segment time 05:03).

*Questions for discussion:*

How do Debbie's procedures in her small reading group compare and contrast with your own?

How does small-group reading instruction in Debbie's class foster independence in students?

How does Debbie use what she learned on the first day of teaching *The Royal Bee* to guide her instruction on the second day?

*Workshop suggestions:*

Distribute copies of the form Debbie developed to use in her mini-lesson (Figure 8) and the Tricky Word Card (Figure 9). Have participants talk about how they balance whole-group, individual, and small-group instruction. You might also have them bring in their assessment notes (building on the workshop using Debbie's assessment samples in Tape 1). Have individuals or the whole group brainstorm how they could design comprehension aids like Debbie's whole-group form or her tricky word card for use with the whole class, small groups, or individuals based on needs they find in their assessment notes.

You can also have individuals work in small groups with the two-column notes to the guided reading session, discussing similarities and differences between the way Debbie leads the group and their own experiences with guided reading.

*Chapters from Reading with Meaning:*

Chapters 5–9

## Tape 3: Wise Choices: Independence and Instruction in Book Choice

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Tape 3 has two sections, one on book choice and the other on nonfiction instruction. Depending on the time available and purposes of your viewing, you can choose to pause and discuss the book choice section before moving on to the nonfiction segment or decide to view the tape in two separate settings.

*Suggestions for two-column notes:*

Figure 4: Verbal Cues from Debbie to Students/Nonverbal Cues

## Book Selection

00:00–16:19

### *Questions for discussion:*

How is Debbie's concept of students using "easy, challenging, just right" categories for self-leveling of books different than traditional levels? What about the organization of the room and the choices available fosters independence in students?

### *Workshop suggestion:*

Have everyone talk in small groups about the different charts Debbie uses in her teaching. How might they use and develop similar visual aids to help students understand and make choices during reading?

### *Chapters from Reading with Meaning:*

Chapters 2–4

## Teaching Nonfiction

16:20–37:10 (total time: 20:50)

### *Questions for discussion:*

What connections does Debbie make between reading and writing non-fiction? What are her strategies for teaching different conventions?

### *Workshop suggestion:*

Have everyone bring in a large stack of nonfiction books from their classroom libraries or provide a table full of books available in the school library. Give participants a copy of Debbie's Nonfiction Conventions (Figure 10). Ask everyone to browse through the books, matching up what texts would be useful for teaching each of the conventions. Have participants share their choices in large or small groups.

### *Chapters from Reading with Meaning:*

Chapters 10–11



**Figure 1**

Similarities to My Classroom	Differences

**Figure 2**

Rules and Procedures in My Classroom	How Are These Reinforced?

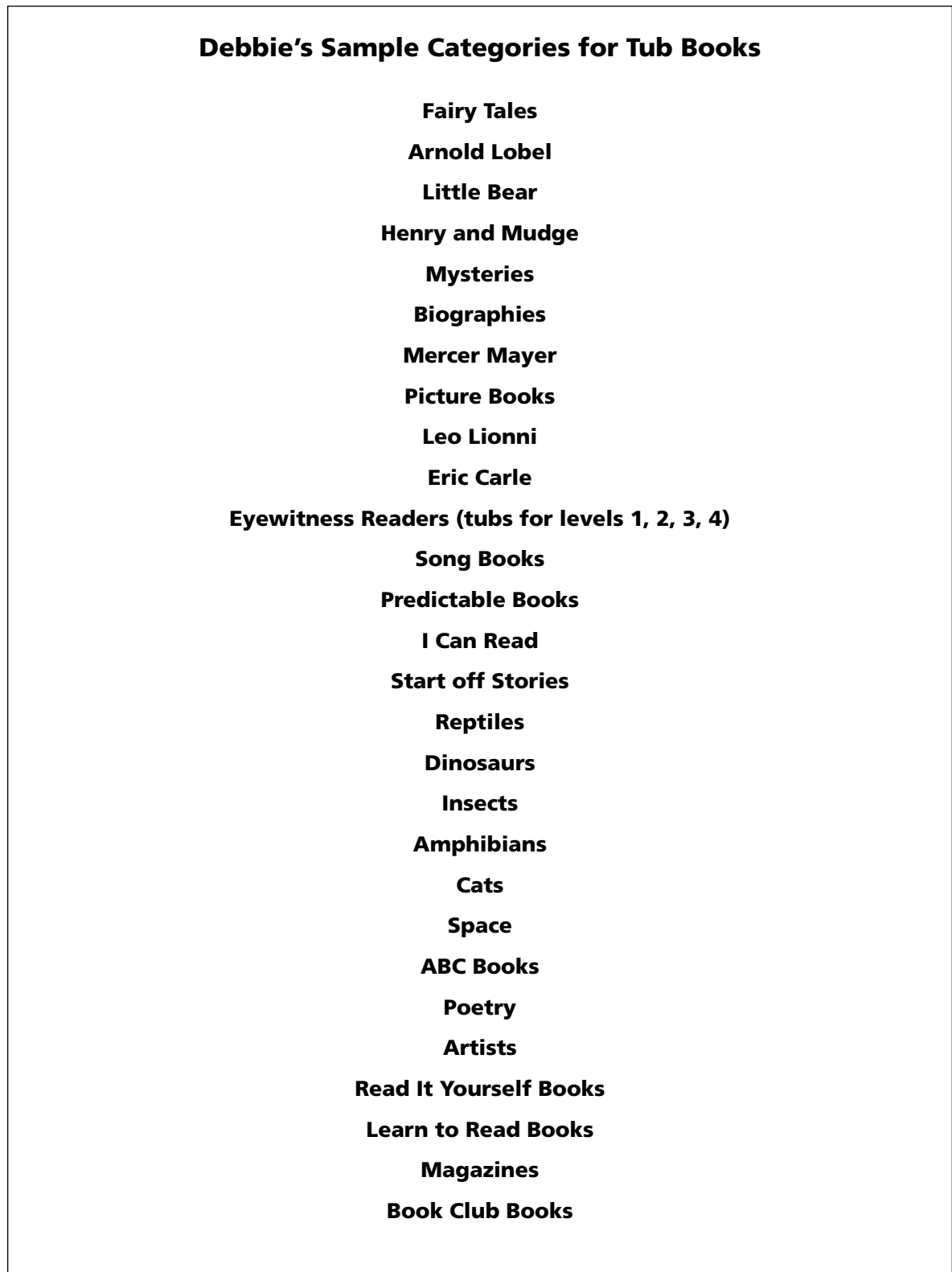
**Figure 3**

<b>What I'd Like to Try in My Classroom</b>	<b>What Might Keep Me from Making the Change</b>

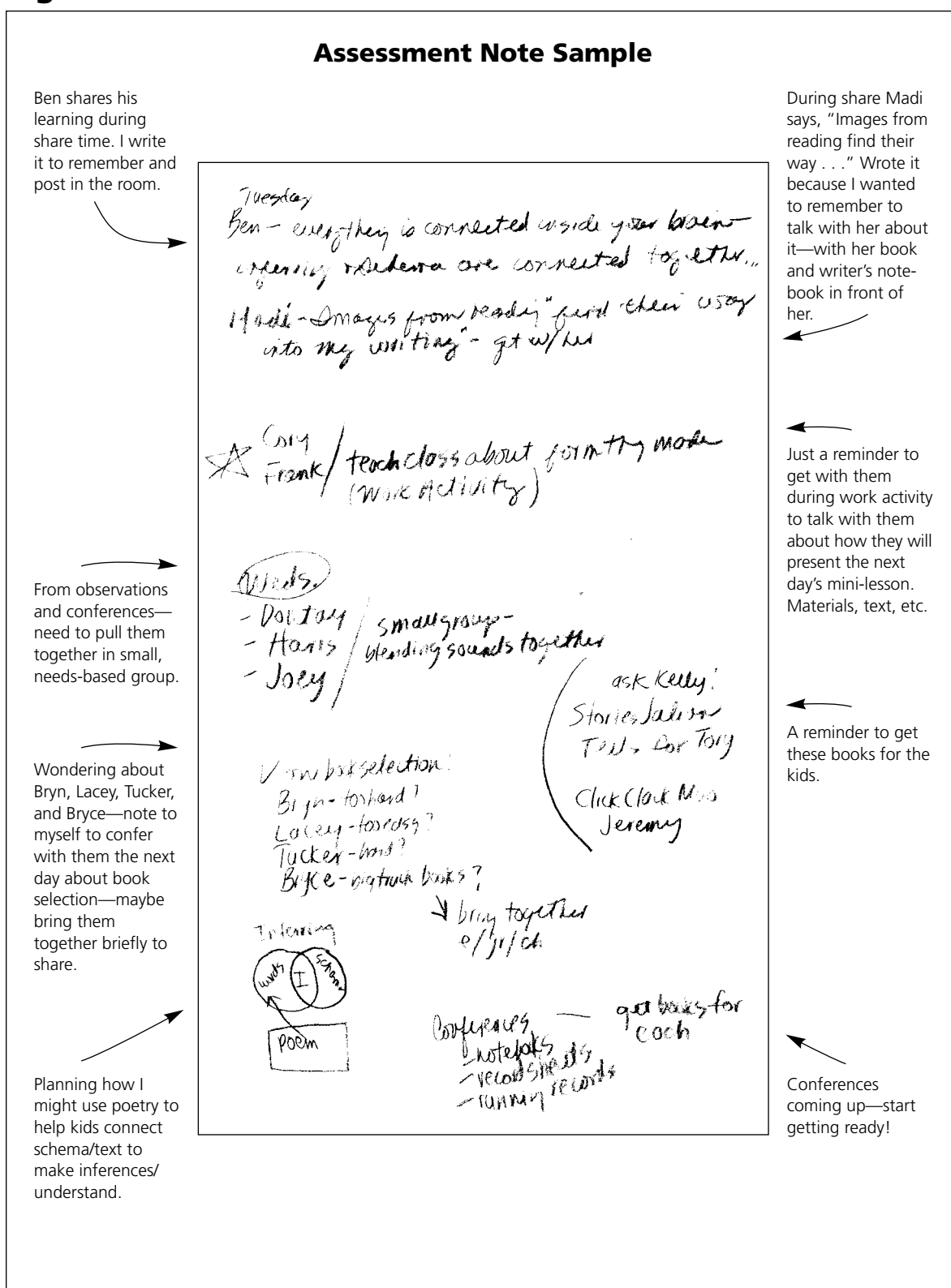
**Figure 4**

Verbal Cues from Debbie to Students	Nonverbal Cues

**Figure 5**



**Figure 6**



**Figure 6 (continued)**

### Assessment Note Sample

3-20-02 Little Bear

L. Bear Goes to the Moon - (36)

How can it?

"I regret - for me"

vvvvvv.

vvvvvv, vvvv

vv.

vvvv.

vvvvvvvv Rainbow/ expression

vvv.

vvvv

vvv.

vv, vvv come (same)

3? - Theme? "believe in yourself"

After the running record, Debbie asks Bryce, "What's the theme?"

Bryce explains, giving examples from the text. Debbie ends the conference with the challenge, "As you keep reading, see if your thinking changes about the theme."

The Post-it shows Bryce's response to the challenge.

Why? ↓

"he thinks he can do it"

what were the words?

"and maybe I can fly like a bird."

Challenge - read - see if your thinking changes...

→ post it

Shaww! Mom!

Blev in your  
SAUF BUT ALSO  
LISH TO YOUR  
MATH

**Figure 7**

Small-Group Decoding: Strategies for Unknown Words	
Explanation of Task by Debbie	
What I Saw/Heard	What It Makes Me Think About
Demonstration/Guided Practice by Students	
What I Saw/Heard	What It Makes Me Think About
Individual Practice by Students	
What I Saw/Heard	What It Makes Me Think About



[illegible]

**Figure 9**

**Tricky Word Card**

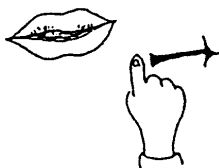
**What do you do when you come to a word you don't know?**



**Look at the picture.  
Think about the story.**



**Go back.**



**Get your mouth ready.  
Point and slide under the word.**



**Read to the end of the sentence.**



**Try a word.  
Does it make sense?  
Does it sound like language?  
Do the letters match?**



**Go on.**

**Figure 10**

<b>Nonfiction Conventions</b>	
<b>Convention</b>	<b>Purpose</b>
<b>Labels</b>	<b>Help the reader identify a picture or photograph and/or its parts</b>
<b>Photographs</b>	<b>Help the reader understand exactly what something looks like</b>
<b>Captions</b>	<b>Help the reader better understand a picture or photograph</b>
<b>Comparisons</b>	<b>Help the reader understand the size of one thing by comparing it to the size of something familiar</b>
<b>Cutaways</b>	<b>Help the reader understand something by looking at it from the inside</b>
<b>Maps</b>	<b>Help the reader understand where things are in the world</b>
<b>Types of print</b>	<b>Help the reader by signaling, "Look at me! I'm important!"</b>
<b>Close-ups</b>	<b>Help the reader see details in something small</b>
<b>Tables of contents</b>	<b>Help the reader identify key topics in the book in the order they are presented</b>
<b>Index</b>	<b>An alphabetical list of almost everything covered in the text, with page numbers</b>
<b>Glossary</b>	<b>Helps the reader define words contained in the text</b>

# Appendix

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## *Segment Titles and Cueing Information*

### **Tape 1: Essentials: Tone, Structure, and Routines for Creating and Sustaining**

#### **a Learning Community**

**38:30**

<i>Part 1:</i> Getting Started	02:17–14:44 (12:27)
Predictable Structure	02:41–03:56 (01:15)
Accessibility and Purpose: Creating an Organized Environment	03:57–06:39 (02:42)
The Day Begins	06:40–07:15 (00:35)
Music in the Classroom	07:16–10:45 (03:29)
Attendance	10:46–12:38 (01:52)
Message Board	12:39–14:44 (02:05)
<i>Part 2:</i> Readers' Workshop	14:45–38:30 (23:45)
Mini-Lesson: Identifying Themes	17:41–25:02 (07:21)
Eye-to-Eye, Knee-to-Knee	25:03–28:04 (03:01)
Time to Practice	28:05–30:10 (02:05)
Sharing	30:11–35:29 (05:18)
At the End of the Day	35:30–38:30 (03:00)

### **Tape 2: Explicit Instruction: Portraits from Readers' Workshop**

**24:00**

Morning Preparation	01:29–03:11 (01:42)
Another Day Begins	03:12–04:34 (01:22)
Readers' Workshop: Mini-Lesson: Identifying Themes	04:35–07:47 (03:12)
Sound Patterns	07:48–08:36 (00:48)
Time to Practice	08:37–11:08 (02:31)
Small-Group Decoding	11:09–16:12 (05:03)
Classroom Management	16:13–18:15 (02:02)
Sharing	18:16–22:00 (01:44)
At the End of the Day	22:01–24:00 (01:59)

### **Tape 3: Wise Choices: Independence and Instruction in Book Choice**

**37:08**

<i>Part 1:</i> Book Selection	00:58–16:19 (15:17)
Readers' Workshop: Mini-Lesson: Book Selection	02:32–07:08 (04:36)
Time to Practice	07:09–08:44 (01:35)
Recommending Books	08:45–10:52 (02:07)
Sharing	10:53–16:19 (05:26)
<i>Part 2:</i> Teaching Nonfiction	16:20–37:10 (20:50)
Readers' Workshop: Mini-Lesson: Nonfiction	18:00–25:54 (07:54)
Time to Practice	25:55–29:17 (03:22)
Readers' Workshop: Mini-Lesson: Nonfiction Conventions: Labels	29:18–32:13 (02:55)
Time to Practice	32:14–33:11 (00:57)
Sharing	33:12–35:20 (02:08)
At the End of the Day	35:21–37:08 (01:47)