

# *Read 180* Teacher Success Story: Mrs. Mannarelli

Iroquois Elementary School, Pennsylvania

## Introduction

Mrs. Mannarelli, an experienced educator teaching for ten years, has spent nine of those ten years teaching *Read 180*®. She has been an elementary school Title 1 teacher at the Iroquois Elementary School located in Pennsylvania for the past three years. She implements *Read 180* for a 90-minute block period five times a week to students in Grades 4 through 6.

In the 2021–2022 school year, Mrs. Mannarelli's students averaged a Lexile® growth of 123L, completed an average of 8 segments per student, and totaled over 2 million words read across her classes.

What makes her classroom successful? Mrs. Mannarelli shares her strategies for fostering success and building confidence in her students.



## Goal Setting and Progress Monitoring

At the beginning of each year, setting goals is integral to Mrs. Mannarelli's classroom so that students start off with achievable expectations. She schedules one-on-one conference meetings during the rotations. She asks, "What do you think we can accomplish this year? Which part do you want to focus on improving? Not only just the Lexile numbers, but also what parts of the program do you want to work on and how are we going to get there together?"

After students take the *Reading Inventory*®, students are aware of their Lexile levels and monitor their growth at each administration. For students who are in her classroom for multiple years, they will look at the most recent test score in addition to the scores from the previous year to look at their growth.

In addition, within the Student App software, she encourages her students to start a new segment each month, as segment completion is tied to reading growth. Once goals are set, students monitor their own progress. She also monitors their progress to see if they are on track to achieve their goals.

"They're able to set goals and meet those goals. I think that makes it worth the time because they're seeing themselves grow and becoming better readers, and that is just overall beautiful."

## Establishing Rotations and Routines

At the start of a new academic year, Mrs. Mannarelli spends the first couple of weeks teaching students what is expected in each rotation. It is essential to establish structure and expectations so that students will fully complete their tasks for each rotation. She notes, "I've learned that students thrive on structure." In her classroom, each rotation has a distinct characteristic—one rotation has lawn chairs while another rotation has bean bags. These seemingly subtle differences help keep the students engaged and motivated, as they look forward to moving to a "new" seating arrangement in the following rotation.

In addition, establishing clear expectations step by step and breaking down each step as small as possible so students can achieve each goal is key.



## Personalizing Instruction

### 1. Grouping students to target instruction

Mrs. Mannarelli frequently looks at the *Read 180* reports, *Reading Inventory* reports, and *Phonics Inventory*<sup>®</sup> reports to do her grouping to ensure that students receive the appropriate instruction they need. She also uses the mid-Workshop Assessments and the end-of-Workshop Assessments to group students so that she can reteach any areas of weakness that the students may have before moving onto the next workshop. "I like to switch it up. . . at times, I group them by Lexile. When we're working on reinforcing skills, I pull them by their program assessment scores. It's also sometimes by behavior. So, a little bit of everything," she notes.

### 2. Practicing spelling

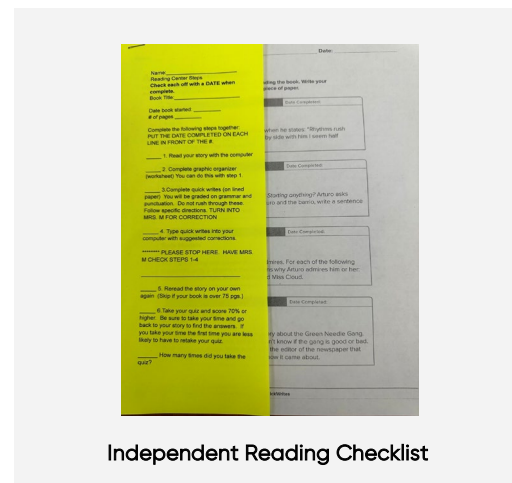
Mrs. Mannarelli noticed that many of her students had difficulty with spelling in the Spelling Zone, so she had each of her students use composition books as Spelling Notebooks for additional practice.

### 3. Promoting self-agency

Her students know how to look at their own Lexile levels to select books that are within their independent reading range. Having students select their own books and complete them builds their confidence.

### 4. Building independence through checklists

Independent reading is often a difficult rotation to effectively manage, but Mrs. Mannarelli has established clear expectations for her students. She provides an "Independent Reading Checklist" that lists out the steps to independent reading, and they work through the checklist together. "What does this step look like? What are we doing for our Quick Writes?" Students read through a book multiple times. The first time, the students read through the book with the computer. Then, as they are reading independently, they complete graphic organizers. In addition, they do their Quick Writes as a written response. Students review examples of well-written Quick Writes and those that need more work. After completing the book, students take a comprehension quiz. Explicitly showing the students the structure and expectations of the independent reading time has been effective in her classroom.



Independent Reading Checklist

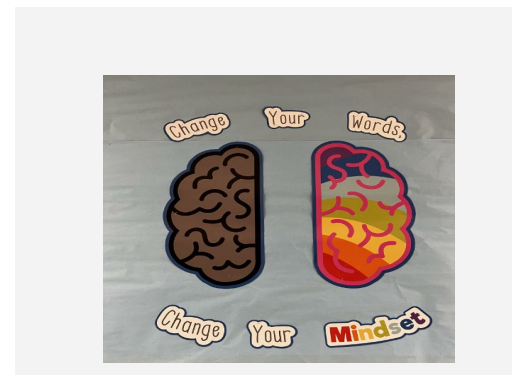
"[The students] work as hard as I'm working . . . We're a team."

## Encouraging Growth Mindset

Mrs. Mannarelli starts the year grounding the students in the growth mindset lesson. However, rather than making it a one-time lesson, she reinforces students' growth mindset throughout the year. She frequently reminds the students that this is hard work, but the students can do it when they put their effort into it.

## Celebrating Successes

All students appreciate recognition, and Mrs. Mannarelli is intentional about celebrating every student success, whether big or small. When students complete a segment or achieve a goal, the class will always give the student a round of applause. When students grow on their *Reading Inventory*, their



name goes on the *Reading Inventory* Superstar list. "We celebrate every single small accomplishment."

In addition, the classroom has a Words Read Achievers Flamingo Success Chart that tracks how many words students have read. Students are motivated when they see their name on a flamingo move across the chart or reach key milestones.

When the class achieves a goal as a group, they celebrate it with events such as watching a movie, Pajama Day, or an end-of-the-year Pie in the Face Day. Acknowledging every success is important to keep students motivated so that they can reach their long-term goals of becoming skillful readers.

## Connecting with Families

In addition, she is in touch with her students' parents frequently and tries to connect with all of them. At the beginning of the year, she calls a couple of parents a day, spending five minutes a day, particularly if they are first-year students in her classroom. She tries to make more "happy" phone calls rather than negative ones. At times, when a student has a great day, the student will say, "Can you call my mom?" so Mrs. Mannarelli can communicate the student's accomplishment. She truly believes family communication is integral to building positive relationships not only with the family but with the student. Getting the parents to understand what their child is accomplishing through *Read 180* is just as important. She shows the graphs and the data with the parents as they are an integral part of the learning process for the students.

## Collaborating with Colleagues

Perhaps the key to the success of her *Read 180* classroom is the unwavering support of the administration she receives. She stresses the importance of utilizing all the resources the program has to offer. What is particularly essential are the beginning of the year trainings, end-of-year gains meetings, and attending "utilization" meetings where the teachers look at the data to tweak their instruction to reach their goal. It helped improve her instruction to examine her implementation at a deeper level. "It was nice to see where we were using it, how we were using it well, and what gains we could see as a result." These utilization meetings were conducted once at the beginning of the year and two or three times a year.

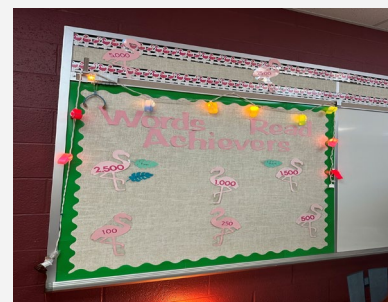
## Conclusion: Community of Success

Mrs. Mannarelli encourages teachers to "reach out and ask for help . . . we are better as a community." Success may not come in the first or second year of implementation, but over time, she figured out what works best in her classroom and how she could implement all the components effectively. She stresses the importance of knowing the students' needs and adapting to their learning goals. "I could teach fourth, fifth, and sixth grades and have the same idea, but my classrooms will look completely different based on the students in my classroom and the dynamics of the classroom."

Because of the culture of success Mrs. Mannarelli has established, she observes the transformed lives of her students. Students are ultimately motivated by their progress and growth. "That in itself is enough motivation," she states. "They're seeing themselves grow and becoming better readers, and that is just overall beautiful."

For more on *Read 180* research, visit [hmhco.com/read180research](http://hmhco.com/read180research)

"[Success] is contagious in the classroom. They see their friends successful, and they're like, *I can do this*. It motivates them. Those small goals. And we celebrate the smallest things, no matter what."



Words Read Achievers: Flamingo Success Chart

"*Read 180* has given me the tools that I needed to become a successful teacher."

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