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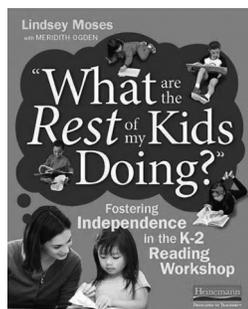
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# “What Are the Rest of My Kids Doing?”: Fostering Independence in the K-2 Reading Workshop.

by Meghan K. Block, Ph.D.

Moses, L. & Ogden, M. (2017). *“What are the rest of my kids doing?”: Fostering independence in the K-2 reading workshop*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann. ISBN 978-0-325-08775-7



A common concern among many early elementary teachers as they implement a reading workshop is how to keep their young students actively and independently engaged. Although teachers often feel as though fostering literacy independence in the K-2 classroom is daunting, they also recognize that it is essential to a successful reading workshop. Moses, an assistant professor and educational researcher, spent a significant amount of time in Ogden’s first-grade classroom researching and documenting best practices for facilitating independent literacy learning among young children. Their goal was to establish a classroom in which K-2 children could independently participate in literacy learning while the teacher provided targeted, small group instruction. Through their collaborative research, these authors accomplished their goal and, as a result, have composed a useful book to guide other early elementary teachers in establishing *purposeful learning experiences* (PLEs)—a term the authors have coined.

Moses and Ogden divide their book into seven chapters. The first chapter provides foundational research and guiding principles that underpin the subsequent recommendations in the text. The remaining six chapters address important aspects of the classroom to consider when fostering independence. These aspects include the environment and schedules, routines, strategies for reading response opportunities, partner



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experiences, and small-group experiences to foster collaborative independence. Each chapter offers practical recommendations and provides the reader with vivid photographs, classroom vignettes, sample lesson plans, suggested assessments, and samples of student work. Throughout all of the chapters, the authors present lesson plans or recommended practices and often include a “peek into the classroom” to help the reader better visualize the recommendation in context.

In this book, Moses and Ogden help early elementary teachers rethink their independent reading time to eliminate traditional “busy work” and replace it with powerful, independent literacy experiences for children. The authors recognize the challenges in facilitating this type of classroom environment and offer practical, research-based ideas for implementation. The book is a useful resource for all early elementary teachers who strive to provide meaningful small group instruction while simultaneously supporting purposeful learning experiences for the rest of their students.

## Author Biography

**Meghan K. Block** is an assistant professor of Elementary Literacy in the Teacher Education and Professional Development Department at Central Michigan University. Her teaching and research interests focus on early literacy development and instruction. She can be reached at [block1m@cmich.edu](mailto:block1m@cmich.edu).