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Please enjoy this complimentary excerpt from More Ramped-Up Read Alouds.

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# Read-Aloud Experiences at a Glance

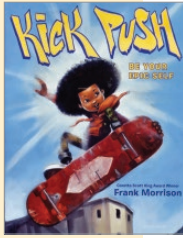
## Read-Aloud Experience Title:

To assist you in intentionally selecting picture books for your read-aloud experiences, I've categorized each read-aloud title by strategy and learning target. A complete list of titles and learning targets appears in the Learning Target Chart found on the companion website ([resources.corwin.com/more-ramped-up-readalouds](https://resources.corwin.com/more-ramped-up-readalouds)). It's nearly impossible to put a well-crafted picture book neatly into one category. My hope is to give you a starting point knowing that you'll let your students and their responses to the books be your guide.

**Book Title:** The 50 titles featured in this resource were selected to represent a range of recently published books and spotlight those written and illustrated by people who are from underrepresented and/or marginalized backgrounds.

**About the Book:** Here I include a teacher-focused summary of any insights I've learned about the author, illustrator, or behind-the-scenes tidbits about the creation or design of the book.

**Learning Targets:** This section will help you zero in on what you are aiming for students to be able to know and do as a result of the experience.




**Let Your Talents Shine**

**Book Title:** *Kick Push: Be Your Epic Self* (Morrison, 2022)

**About the Book:** Ivan, nicknamed Epic because of his epic skateboard tricks, moves into a new home. When Epic's tricks aren't grabbing the attention of the kids in the neighborhood, he tries fitting in by playing other sports. After this strategy doesn't go as planned, he takes his parents' advice and skates over to the bodega for a treat. There he finds a new crew and, together, they head out for a skateboarding session.


To find a book like this one, look for the following:

- Characters who embrace individuality
- Characters who are passionate about their hobbies



**Learning Targets:**

- I notice and track the actions and feelings of characters
- I pay attention to my own actions and feelings.
- I talk, write, or draw about how a person's actions and feelings make them unique.



**Comprehension Conversation**

**Before Reading**

**Notice the Cover Illustration:**

What is the boy on the cover doing? [skateboarding] Do you see anything in the illustration that makes it seem like he's moving? In the creator's note, Frank Morrison tells us that he painted the illustrations using his "signature style of mannerism" to capture the vibe of skateboarding tricks. When artists use mannerism, they stretch out parts of a person's body or twist them in an exaggerated way to show movement. Mannerism gives the painting energy. See if you notice his style as we enjoy this story.

**Set a Purpose:** Just like Frank Morrison, we all have a "signature style" because we do just about everything in our own, unique way. As you probably predicted by looking at the cover, in *Kick Push: Be Your Epic Self*, you're going to meet a boy who loves to skateboard. Pay careful attention to how his actions and feelings change over the course of the story. Let's go for a ride!

**During Reading**

- **Front endpapers:** Take a look at the front endpapers. Can you figure out what is going on? [It looks like someone is moving to a new home.] Let's start reading to see if we can figure out which character is moving.
- **A new day in a new neighborhood page:** Use the clues from the text and illustrations to infer how Epic is feeling at this point in the story. (excited, confident, happy) Share the clues you used with a partner.
- **KICK PUSH PLOP page:** Uh-oh! What's changed? Trade ideas with your *compadres*. The word *compadres* on this page means buddies or friends. How would you feel in this situation?

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## Comprehension Conversation

### Before Reading

#### Notice the Cover Illustration:

Take a moment to glance at the book cover that appears with each read-aloud experience. In this part, I guide you in previewing the book. This preview might include noticing the artistic and design techniques used on the book jacket and, if applicable, on the case cover (the hard cover underneath the paper book jacket), pondering the connection between front and back cover, discussing the title, and exploring other ideas to build excitement and invite wonder.

**Set a Purpose:** View the purpose statement like an invitation to your listeners to inquire and investigate something in the book. The purpose statement will align with the learning target(s).

#### Bracketed Text

The text that appears in brackets includes teaching tips and other insights that are directed at you, the teacher, rather than the students.

### During Reading

Because most picture books don't have page numbers, I use the first few words on the top of the left-hand page to point you in the right direction. The questions and prompts are designed to be asked *after* you've completed reading the entire two-page spread. As to not disrupt the flow of your read aloud, I've included only a handful of questions at critical key points. In my opinion, asking too many questions distracts your listeners. It is better to let the author and illustrator magic do the job!

## Embrace Individuality

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- *Bright and cheerful, Epic decided to try fitting in with the neighborhood kids* page: Epic is following his dad's advice and keeping an open mind. Does it look like it's working? Why or why not? What would you tell him to do next?
- *Epic hopped inside the bodega and grabbed his favorite snack* page: How do you think Epic feels when the kids in the bodega say, "Sick moves, bro"?

### After Reading

- Share something you learned about Epic by paying attention to his actions and feelings.
- Epic loves skateboarding. Do you have any activities that you enjoy? How do you feel when you're doing them?



### Extend the Experience

- As we skated along with Epic, we noticed that his feelings changed at different points in the story. Let's revisit three key events in the story to identify and record Epic's emotions. [Revisit the pages that begin with these sentences to record Epic's emotions:
  - *A new day in a new neighborhood?*
  - *"What's going on, Epic?" Dad wants to know.*
  - *Back home they started a gnarly game of Skate.*How does tracking a character's actions and feelings help you as a reader?
- Think back to a story you've just read, a movie you've watched, or a recent experience. Design a diagram to track the events and emotions that happened during that story, movie, or personal experience.

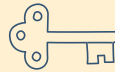
### Similar Titles

- **Skater Cielo** (Katstaller, 2022) [Spanish Edition: *Cielo la patinadora*]

**About the Book:** When Cielo skates, nothing can stop her except a deep pool called *The Whale*. After falling hard while trying to skate *The Whale*, Cielo loses her confidence and stuffs her skateboard into the back of her closet. Then, Cielo meets Mia and Miho, who cheer her on until she overcomes her fear of *The Whale*—one fall at a time.

- **When Langston Dances** (Langley, 2021)

**About the Book:** Langston likes basketball, but he loves to dance. Inspired by a performance of the Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater, he begins practicing until he's ready for his first day of dance school. Encouraged by his teacher, he joins the class clad in his basketball gear. The teacher, Ms. Marie, gives him a pair of black ballet slippers, advises him to work hard, and he does!



### Key Vocabulary and Kid-Friendly Definitions:

- cheerful: filled with happy feelings
- defeated: feeling like you've lost or haven't been able to do something
- drenched: soaking wet



### Upper Elementary Extension:

Skateboarding was added as an Olympic sport in 2020. Curious learners can research past and future Olympic skateboarding events and/or athletes and share their findings with the class.


Chapter 1: Maintain a Happy and Caring Learning Community All Year Long • 43

## Key Vocabulary and Kid-Friendly

**Definitions:** When highlighting vocabulary during a read aloud, it is helpful to provide kid-friendly definitions. In this feature, you will find key words along with a definition to share with your learners.

**Extend the Experience:** The extension will differ based on where the text and conversation naturally lead. For consistency and to assist you with your planning, they will follow this pattern: the first extension will align with the learning target and purpose statement, and the second extension will vary.

## Similar Titles:

I scoured my independent bookstore and public library shelves to find related titles with comparable themes that lead students to similar read-aloud conversations. You might choose to read these titles to reinforce learning targets, compare and contrast with the featured title, or continue the conversation with a small group of students. Titles marked with this icon  are more suitable for upper elementary grade listeners.

## Upper Elementary Grade Extension:

This extension is written to you, as the teacher, and offers a suggestion to enrich your upper elementary grade students' book experience. These suggestions are designed to expand learners' content knowledge by inviting them to inquire, write, create, and explore ideas beyond the text.

## After Reading

The concluding questions and conversation starters bring the experience full circle by drawing students' attention back to the purpose of the read aloud (other than simply for fun!). Their intention is to prompt students to apply what they've learned from this book to their lives, their learning, or their own writing.

## Kid-Friendly Definitions for Key Vocabulary Words

The teaching sequence outlined on page 18 emphasizes the importance of sharing kid-friendly definitions of the key vocabulary words. Studies indicate the importance of presenting children with accessible definitions when teaching individual words (Cobb & Blachowicz, 2014).

However, that is easier said than done. I often find myself stumped to formulate an on-the-spot definition. To assist you in defining the key vocabulary words in this book, I've provided child-friendly definitions comprised of words typically familiar to young children. To enhance the explanation, consider incorporating a relevant example or displaying a corresponding image.

## How to Find More Time to Read Aloud

Teachers often ask, "How do I fit read-aloud experiences into my already packed schedule?" Here are a few ideas on how you can *flexibly* use the read-aloud experiences in this resource:

- Split a picture book read-aloud experience into sections like you would a chapter book. Then, read the beginning in the morning, the middle after lunch, and the conclusion at the end of the day. This strategy provides more time for students to converse and also offers an opportunity for listeners to recap what they've learned so far from a nonfiction book or retell the story bit by bit—strengthening working memory.
- Integrate read-aloud experiences into your content-area instruction. Supplement your science or social studies materials with a picture book to build or extend students' knowledge about the topic. See the sample first-grade schedule during a science unit on animals. Notice that all of the books focus on animal characters or include animal facts.
- Weave read-aloud experiences into a published reading series. Add picture book read alouds to build background knowledge about the theme, topic, or focus strategy. Extend the learning by sharing similar books to compare and contrast with the publisher's selection.

### Reading Aloud Across a First-Grade Day

Schedule	Read-Aloud Experience
Morning Meeting Learning Target: I think of ways to spread kindness.	<i>The Red Jacket</i> (Holt, 2023)
Reading & Social Studies Learning Target: I infer characters' feelings.	<i>How This Book Got Red</i> (Greanias, 2023) [See Bonus Read-Aloud Experience on the companion website (resources.corwin.com/more-rampedup-readalouds)]
Snack Time or After Lunch Learning Target: I like reading funny books about animals!	<i>Lucky Duck</i> (Pizzoli, 2024)
Writing & Science Learning Target: I notice patterns in nonfiction texts while I learn about animal characteristics.	Read aloud <i>one or two pages of Butt or Face?</i> (Lavelle, 2023) [See Read-Aloud Experience on page 184]
End of Day Learning Target: I use clues to guess an animal.	Read aloud <i>one poem from Champion Chompers, Super Stinkers and Other Poems by Extraordinary Animals</i> (Ashman, 2023) [See Read-Aloud Experience on page 202]

## Weaving Ramped-Up Read Alouds Into a Publisher’s Reading Program

Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5
Introduce theme and/or strategies using a picture book from <i>More Ramped-Up Read Alouds</i> .	“Shared reading” of story of the week per publisher’s directions.	“Close reading” of story of the week per publisher’s directions.	“Response to reading” with story of the week per publisher’s directions.	Share and compare story of the week with a picture book from <i>More Ramped-Up Read Alouds</i> .

### Let the Reading Begin!

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With the confidence that comes from knowing exactly why we must redouble our efforts to share high-quality interactive read-aloud experiences with children, it’s time to pull a picture book off the shelf. Savor the illustrations. Study the text. Then, with enthusiasm and intention, let the reading begin!

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