

## **Daily 5 – Catchy Title But Does It Work?**

As teachers, we are always looking for new ways to make our classes run more smoothly. Trying to fit in time to work in small groups without constantly having to stop to get students back on task is always a challenge. Daily 5 by Gail Boushey and Joan Moser is an approach that does this and works on classroom management at the same time. The program centres around 5 activities: Read to Self, Read to Someone; Listen to Reading, Work on Writing and Work on Words. The thesis is that children can work independently if they are trained.

Training begins with “Read to Self.” In order to do this, students must have “just right” books. Students are shown what a just right book is and book boxes are prepared so that there is no time wasted when beginning the activity. Independence is based on stamina building and children soon embrace the idea that they can read to themselves for a longer period of time after practice. Once students can read independently for 12 to 15 minutes, another skill is practiced. Eventually all 5 activities take place at the same time with students reading in corners, listening at the listening station, working on word activities or games and working on writing in different parts of the room. With practice, the class becomes a wonderful busy place where everyone is on task for about 15 minutes (or more depending on the level). When the signal (a music box or chimes) lets the students know that the activity time is up, everyone gathers for some group time. This time can be used to evaluate how the last activities went but it is also a time for the teacher to give a “mini-lesson” on a predetermined topic in grammar, history, writing, etc.

It takes some organization and patience but it is amazing to see how all types of students, especially those who have difficulty sitting still in a large group, catch on and enjoy being able to work independently. Once the Daily 5 is running well, teachers can conference individually or work with small groups on reading, writing or other skills. Daily 5 – it works!

Thank you ATEQ for supporting this endeavour and for the subsidy.

Kerry Ann King  
Dollard des Ormeaux School  
Central Quebec School Board