Putting books to work: Moving beyond genre

Gina Cervetti
Marco Bravo
Alison Billman
Questions

1- When do scientists read? What do they read? For what purposes?
2- When do students read in science class? What do they read? For what purposes?
• Can/should these be brought into closer alignment?
• How does research guide us in answering this question?
Authenticity Matters

- Giving students real reasons to read and write in science supports science-relevant literacy development (Purcell-Gates, Duke, & Martineau, 2007; Amaral, Garrison, & Klentschy, 2002;)

- Using reading and writing to support inquiry-based investigations supports science understanding (Guthrie, Anderson, Alao, & Rinehart, 1999; Palincsar & Magnusson, 2000).

- Using nonfiction texts supports science learning more effectively than use of fictional narratives (Cervetti et al., 2009; Jetton, 1994; Mayer, 1995)
Reading in Science?

- Science books can **inspire** science investigations (Anderson et al., 1997)
- Science books can **inform** science investigations (Guthrie et al., 2006; Palincsar & Magnusson, 2000)
- Science books can **model** science investigations (Cervetti & Barber 2008; Palincsar & Magnusson, 2000)
Habitats

Third and fourth grade students are involved in an ongoing investigation of habitats. Currently they are investigating soil habitats using desktop terrariums. So far, they have built their terrariums by adding soil, rocks, and small plants. They have made initial observations and are preparing to observe the changes that take place as they add isopods and earthworms.

How can these books be used by students to support their inquiry?
Find...

- one book that can **inspire**
- one that can **inform**, and
- one that can **model**.
Science is Good for Reading Too

- Knowledge begets comprehension
- Science expertise offers opportunities for control of more difficult texts through building background knowledge, vocabulary, and tie to experience
Bottom Lines...

• Reading is an act of inquiry and should be put to use in the interest of learning and communicating about important things.
• Students should read and write as scientists do in the service of engaging in inquiry and acquiring knowledge about the natural world.
Contacts:

• gina.cervetti@colorado.edu
• mbravo@scu.edu
• alison_billman@berkeley.edu

www.scienceandliteracy.org