Learn About Book Reviews

1. Focus (15 minutes)

Distribute a blank index card to each student. Invite students to draw a green happy face on one side of the card and a red sad face on the other side to match the faces shown on page 5 of the mentor big book. When they are done, display the cover of Discover Book Reviews using the big book or interactive whiteboard resources. Invite students to tell you what they learned yesterday about book reviews. Use the following questions as needed to generate conversation:

- Why do people write book reviews?
- Why do people read book reviews?
- What are some parts of a book review?

NOTE: Save the index cards to use in the next lesson.

Read aloud the headings and story text on pages 6–11 in a fluent, expressive voice as you point to each word. Follow students’ lead in discussing the illustrations as you pause after each spread or page. Say: Today we’re going to read “Where’s Molly?” together. After we’re done, we will use our happy faces and sad faces to show our opinions of the characters, story events, and illustrations.

Share opinions about the characters. Ask students to use their cards to show their opinions about each character. Invite volunteers to share the reasons for their opinions. Ask: Who are the characters in this story? (Allow responses.) That’s right. The characters are a boy named Sam and his cat named Molly. Now we can tell what we think about the characters. What we think is called an opinion. Hold up the card that shows what your opinion is about the characters. Can you give me a reason why you liked or didn’t like the characters?

Share opinions about the events. Ask students to use their cards to show their opinions about what happened in the story. Invite volunteers to share the reasons for their opinions. Say: The events are the things that happen in the story. First Sam can’t find his cat. He looks for Molly all around the house. Then he goes outside. He finds Molly! We can tell what we think about the story events. We can give our opinions. Hold up the card that shows your opinion about the events. Can you give me a reason why you liked or didn’t like the story events?

Share opinions about the illustrations. Ask students to use their cards to show their opinions. Invite volunteers to share the reasons for their opinions. Say: The illustrations are the pictures in the story. We can give our opinions about the illustrations. Hold up the card that shows your opinion about the illustrations. Can you give me a reason why you liked or didn’t like the illustrations?

Read aloud page 12. Say: A child wrote this review. The child wrote about one
of the characters. Does the child like the story? (Allow responses.) Yes! The child 
thinks Sam is a good boy because he loves Molly. The child thinks others should 
meet this character, too!

Put the big book aside. Say: We’ll read another review of “Where’s Molly?” 
tomorrow. Because we’re just learning about book reviews, we’ll keep writing 
in our journals for now.

2. Rehearse (5 minutes)

Invite students to close their eyes and visualize an experience that they could 
draw and write about in their journals. Say: Tell your partner what you plan to 
draw and write about. Tell what happened, and tell how you felt. Then act out 
your idea to make sure you have complete thoughts.

If your class includes English learners, you may wish to model using the 
following oral sentence frames to support their partner talk:

• One time I ______.
• I felt ______.

3. Independent Writing 
and Conferring (20 minutes)

Distribute students’ writing folders. Invite each student to draw a picture of what 
he or she described and to write a message. Ask questions as needed to help 
students develop their sentences, and remind them to reread after each word. 
Continue to support them in the skills taught in the Journal Writing unit.

Use the Sample Responsive Conferring Prompts to help you provide 
differentiated support to individual students based on your observations.

4. Share (5 minutes)

Use the Share time in one of the following ways depending on your observations 
of students during Independent Writing and Conferring:

• After several students have read aloud their sentences, use the sentences 
to point out examples of where students have used uppercase and 
lowercase letters correctly, included appropriate end punctuation, and 
written complete thoughts.
• Invite volunteers to read their sentences. Encourage listeners to tell what 
they liked about the sentences.
• Invite volunteers to read aloud their sentences and then demonstrate how 
they acted out their messages to check for complete thoughts.

Sample Responsive Conferring Prompts to Support and Scaffold Writers

Goal Oriented
• One time I ______. I felt ______.
• Notice how I share reasons for my opinions.
• I will describe ______ with the word ______.

Directive and Corrective Feedback
• What could you say in your message?
• Can you hear the sound ______ at the start of ______? Write the letter that makes that 
sound.
• How could you describe ______? What other 
words could you use?

Self-Monitoring and Reflection
• What did you see in your mind? How can that 
help you write?
• What letter would you expect to see at the 
beginning? In the middle? At the end?
• What words did you use to describe your 
experience? Why?

Validating and Confirming
• Your picture shows what you did and how 
you felt.
• Good work! You wrote the letter that stands 
for the ______ sound.
• You wrote ______! I like the way you worked 
that out!
• I like the way you asked yourself questions to 
help yourself write strong sentences.

Teacher Tip
Continue to ask students to say words 
slowly and write the sounds they hear as 
you document their gains in sound/symbol 
relationships and number of words known.