

# Letter From the Authors

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*Dear Reader,*

*This book did not emerge from a place of knowing. From ideation to publication, it has been fueled by questions—questions we still do not fully have answers to:*

*How can educators be responsive to students' abilities, identities, experiences, and needs?*

*How can educators lean on curriculum and benchmarks while also leaning on the uniqueness of their students?*

*Because our process has been one of inquiry, the plans for this book have been sculpted and resculpted and then taken the shape of something completely different—something shaped by many: authors, researchers, colleagues, and children. This process, not the product we originally envisioned, nor the one you are now holding, is what we are most proud of and forever changed by.*

*We, like you, are constantly pushing our practice and trying to be better at inclusive practices, at reaching and engaging writers. Many curriculum guides refer to differentiation, offering alternative lessons and approaches. We needed more—a guide for aligning instruction and tools for the writers in our classrooms.*

*We preface what's to come by sharing the mantra that keeps us going: Don't let perfect get in the way of good. The framework, guides, tools, and stories we share are neither perfect nor complete. Perhaps there is a population we have not considered, research in the works, or another domain in which to frame responsiveness. We anticipate (and wish!) this book serves as a contribution to an ongoing dialogue that readers will expand upon and elevate.*

*Our intentions are this: making an abstract concept—responsiveness—more concrete. We hope the impact is this: with the strategies set forth in this book, you, too, will feel a sense of direction and preparedness in the overwhelmingly important work of responsive writing instruction.*

*Onward,*

*Melanie and Kelsey*