

Meeting the Needs of Struggling Readers: **A Resource for Secondary English Language Arts Teachers**



T E X A S
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A G E N C Y

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Introduction

This is a resource book of activities and teaching ideas designed for the high school language arts and/or reading teacher who teaches students with a wide range of abilities. This manual is for you, a very busy teacher.

The lessons and activities included in this manual are specifically designed to assist you in teaching the struggling reader in your class. It will provide you with ideas and strategies so that you may teach reading skills through your content to all your students. The manual is intended to be used as a supplement to your regular classroom language arts/reading program and to provide you with teaching ideas and activities.

Many of these activities and teaching ideas will help you break down concepts into smaller manageable components, provide you with suggestions on how to scaffold student learning, and give you insight into some of the possible stumbling blocks that your students may face. As you read through this manual, you will notice that one of our goals is to make thinking visible and teaching explicit.

You may use the activities in this manual before, during, or after your lesson. Many activities can be used before a traditional lesson to introduce concepts and prepare students for learning. You may want to use some of the activities from this manual during your lesson as a way to scaffold student learning. Other activities may be best suited to provide additional practice or to review concepts. On other occasions, you may turn to this manual after teaching a lesson and finding that many of your students are still having problems mastering a skill or understanding a concept. Many of the lessons will show you an alternate way to teach the same concepts.

Although developed for the struggling reader, many of these activities will help students for whom English is a second language. The discussions, examples, and grouping formats will assist English language learners in making connections and clarifying concepts. Similarly, the activities will be helpful to students who lack background knowledge, or who just need more practice and examples.

Lesson plans for the activities include the objective for the lesson, the grade, corresponding number and letter of the TAKS objective, a list of materials needed, and steps for completing the activity. In addition, ideas for scaffolding and grouping formats and information on possible areas of difficulty or confusion are discussed. A list of teaching ideas that may be used to review, practice, or reinforce skills is included in most lessons.

We hope that this manual will serve as a valuable reference that is both effective and practical. We invite you to refer to it often as a means of promoting understanding among your struggling readers by providing them with clear and specific instruction, scaffolding, and lots of opportunities for practice.

Effective Instruction for ALL Students

As our society changes, the demands that our students face in the world become more challenging, and the ability to read proficiently becomes more important. Basic skills and basic reading proficiency are no longer sufficient to meet the challenges of today's world. Being a proficient reader means much more than reading words off a page or recalling information. To succeed in today's world, students must be able to read for information and to critically evaluate and extend this information.

Although the demands of the world are rapidly changing, many of our students continue to enter high school reading below their grade level and without the necessary skills and strategies to become effective and critical readers. According to the U.S. Department of Education (Donahue, Voelkl, Campbell, & Mazzeo, 1999), fewer than 5 percent of eighth-graders can extend or elaborate on information read, and only 6 percent of twelfth-graders can read at an advanced level. Fortunately, decades of research about reading and learning difficulties have resulted in a better understanding of the components that must be present to effectively teach struggling readers. The following instructional components will promote learning for all your students, but will be especially beneficial for struggling readers, second-language learners, and students with dyslexia and other learning difficulties.

Explicit Instruction

Explicit instruction fully and clearly explains what is being taught. Explicit instruction promotes efficient learning for all students and includes:

- Thinking processes that are visible through modeling.
- Lessons that introduce a few ideas or skills and provide practice activities for each until mastery is achieved.
- Instruction that varies the pace.
- Background information that is provided before new knowledge is introduced.
- Pre-teaching key vocabulary and concepts using tools such as pictures or word maps.
- Visual support for auditory information. For example, when teaching a reading selection, the teacher writes the key vocabulary for major points on a transparency or board.
- Immediate, corrective feedback and re-teaching, if needed.
- Systematic coverage of reading components.

Multiple Opportunities to Maintain and Generalize Skills

Struggling readers benefit from instruction that includes opportunities to maintain and generalize the skills and strategies learned. Use activities that allow students to apply their newly-acquired skills and strategies during independent practice activities (maintenance) and with a variety of materials, as well as in other settings with different subjects and teachers (generalization). The following promote maintenance and generalization:

- Application of previously taught vocabulary in activities across the curriculum, over time (several days or weeks after first introduced), and as a component of homework.
- Comprehension strategies, such as identifying main ideas and supporting details, or asking questions to check understanding.
- Previously taught reading strategies posted in the classroom, presented on cue cards, and reinforced by teachers.

Scaffolding

Provide your students with assistance and guidance as needed. As students become more proficient, gradually decrease the assistance until the students are able to perform the task independently. Providing good models and using think-alouds will make thinking visible and easier for students to follow. As you scaffold students' learning, offer them frequent opportunities to respond. While students are performing tasks or completing assignments, give them specific feedback. In the initial stages of learning, it's best not to wait until the student has completed the assignment, but to provide guidance *as* he/she works on it. Scaffolding also includes frequent and planned review that leads to more difficult applications. Dickson, Simmons, and Kame'enui (1995) suggest using four types of scaffolding:

Teacher/peer scaffolding—occurs across a continuum, with more support occurring when new concepts, tasks, or strategies are introduced. Support is gradually decreased as students gain proficiency and assume more responsibility.

Content scaffolding—occurs as the teacher first introduces simpler concepts and skills, and then slowly guides students through more challenging concepts and skills.

Task scaffolding—occurs as the student proceeds from easier to more difficult tasks and activities, such as those described in Bloom's Taxonomy.

Material scaffolding—occurs when a variety of materials is used to guide student thinking (e.g., story maps, graphic organizers, cause-effect guides).

Opportunities for students to read and time on task

Provide many opportunities for students to read. Unfortunately, in many classrooms the amount of time spent reading is alarmingly small. Durkin's classic 1984 study found that students spent between seven and fifteen minutes reading per day (not per class, the whole school day!). Similarly, the 1998 NAEP report (Donahue et al., 1999) indicates that about one third of adolescents questioned reported daily reading of five or fewer pages in school and for homework. To ensure growth in reading (both in comprehension and amount), students must spend a large portion of each class period reading connected text (McCormick, 2003). The International Reading Association's position statement (Moore, Bean, Birdyshaw, & Rycik, 1999) on adolescent literacy tells us that time spent reading is related to reading success because:

- as students spend time reading connected text, their background knowledge, fluency, comprehension, and vocabulary skills improve;
- time spent reading is associated with attitudes toward additional reading; and
- time spent reading is linked to world knowledge.

The amount of time students spend engaged in academic tasks is directly related to student progress. Evaluate your class schedule and routines and make changes to ensure that minimal time is wasted on transitions or unnecessary interruptions.

Flexible grouping

Use flexible grouping so that all students are engaged in learning and your time is used most effectively. Flexible grouping will help you meet individual needs and tailor your teaching to particular students.

Ongoing progress monitoring

Frequent progress monitoring can provide you with valuable information on students' levels of mastery for the various concepts being studied. You can use the results from progress monitoring to plan new lessons, re-teach unclear concepts, and group students for instruction.

Comprehension strategies

According to the National Reading Panel (2000), comprehension instruction which presents a variety of strategies is most effective. Comprehension strategies assist students in recalling facts, generating questions, and summarizing, among other comprehension-related skills. Engaging students in finding the big ideas in a reading selection and in graphically depicting the relationships among these ideas will improve their recall and understanding of text (Snow, 2002). Monitoring strategies that help students recognize when understanding falters or breaks down, and which “fix-up” strategies to apply, will promote understanding. Teaching your students to use comprehension strategies will promote independence and will assist your students in becoming active participants in their learning. Once students know some comprehension strategies, they can apply them to other subjects taught by other teachers, and when completing homework assignments. Explicit instruction of comprehension strategies will result in better learning outcomes for low-achieving students (Moore et al., 1999; Snow, 2002). Research suggests following these steps when teaching comprehension strategies (Dickson et al., 1995; Pearson & Gallagher, 1983; Snow, 2002):

- Define and explain strategy components.
- Describe the reasons for using the strategy and its benefits.
- Encourage students to pay attention.
- Activate prior knowledge.
- Break the task into small steps, providing sufficient practice at every step.
- Model the strategy from beginning to end using think-alouds.
- Teach students to express the strategy in their own words.
- Provide guided practice with clear and specific feedback at key points in the learning process.
- Scaffold your teaching to gradually decrease the support provided.
- Have students apply the strategy to practice items.
- Have students use the strategy in connected text.

Since proficient reading requires much more than the application of individual strategies, teachers must respond flexibly and at every opportunity to students' needs for scaffolding and modeling. The goal is for students to become readers who constantly use and adapt several strategies to meet the varying demands of the text (Snow, 2002).

Even though there is a strong research base supporting comprehension instruction, this instruction continues to receive inadequate time and attention in our classrooms (Taylor, Pearson, Clark, & Walpole, 1999; Snow, 2002).

Vocabulary

To better understand what they read, students must develop an awareness of words and how they are used across different contexts. Research suggests that students need to add between 2,000 and 3,000 words per year to their reading vocabulary. Reading vocabulary is highly related to the amount a student reads; however, explicit instruction also contributes to vocabulary development. The National Reading Panel (2000) recommends pre-teaching vocabulary. Discussing words prior to reading familiarizes students with concepts and words before they encounter them in print. To assist your students in learning new words, you can:

- Preview the passage and select specific words to pre-teach before reading. Do this even if words have already been selected by the publisher. You know your students better and are more prepared to decide which words to introduce to them.
- List the words that you think your students will find challenging. These may or may not be related to each other.
- Often, after previewing the passage, the list of words selected may be too long. It is best to introduce fewer words to promote deep understanding than to briefly review a long list of words which the students will not internalize and soon forget.
- To decide which words to pre-teach, ask yourself two questions: First, is the word going to appear over and over in the reading selection (is the word one of intermediate frequency—not so frequent that they already know it, yet frequent enough to be worth teaching (Snow, 2002))? Second, how important is the word to the overall understanding of the story?
- Awareness of cognate relationships in words is helpful for many Spanish speakers (e.g., *literature/literatura*, *novel/novela*). However, for some students, this relationship is not always obvious. Point out cognates to your students or, if you do not speak Spanish, allow discussion regarding words so that students can indicate cognates to each other (Snow, 2002).
- Teach vocabulary words explicitly:
 - Expand word knowledge through definitions and constructs.
 - Actively involve students.
 - Model and teach independent word-learning strategies.

Fluency

Fluency, similar to vocabulary and comprehension, can be improved through instruction. Although it may seem that fluency skills will develop independently, and as a result of general reading instruction, we now know that students will benefit from specific fluency instruction. This is especially true for those students who reach high school and are still reading grade-level text in a labored manner with lack of prosody or accuracy.

The National Reading Panel (2000) examined the existing research on repeated reading and found that it is an effective strategy throughout high school for students with reading difficulties.

There are several repeated reading strategies that are feasible for classroom use which require little preparation (Dixon-Krauss, 1995; Rasinski, 1990). Some of these strategies include choral reading, partner reading, Reader's Theater (which you can use with the many plays that appear in your state-adopted texts), and repeated reading with students monitoring their own progress.

Explicit teaching of text structure

For some students, reading a wide variety of genres will not be sufficient for them to internalize the different characteristics of various types of writing. Student awareness of text structure is highly related to reading comprehension (Dickson et al., 1995). Explicit teaching about text structures specific to the genres will help your students distinguish among several organizational patterns and find important information in texts in a more systematic, organized way (Snow, 2002).

Modeling effective reading behaviors

Many students do not come from homes where reading is practiced or discussed. It is difficult for them to see that reading can be meaningful in their own lives and that it can be a source of pleasure and entertainment. You can provide an excellent model by discussing books you are reading, thinking aloud as you demonstrate the use of comprehension strategies, and providing a model of fluent reading when reading aloud.

Cooperative learning

Encourage your students to work in groups to engage in problem-solving activities or to share ideas through student-led discussions (Alvermann, 2002).

Student engagement and providing choices

Guthrie and Wigfield (2000) suggest that student engagement is a vital factor in student performance and academic growth. Student engagement can be achieved through instruction that fosters motivation, strategy use, the use of a variety of activities and instructional approaches, and social interaction.

Provide students with a limited yet meaningful choice of reading topics and learning activities (Snow, 2002). Turner (1995) found that students put forth greater effort when activities and reading selections are not always teacher-prescribed. Teachers who offer options and autonomy increase students' motivation to read and to understand what is being read (Reeve, Bolt, & Cai, 1999). When given choices, students become active participants in their own learning, thus becoming more invested in the reading and related activities (Moore, et al., 1999).

To summarize, there are many ways we can promote learning in all students, including those who are struggling with reading. When you provide effective instruction that is explicit and has multiple opportunities for practice, students become more confident readers and more proficient in generalizing skills to new learning situations. Providing scaffolding when new information is presented allows students to work more independently on increasingly difficult tasks. Designing lessons that increase time and opportunities for students to read, and that teach vocabulary, comprehension strategies, and increase fluency, can help students improve their understanding of the text they read. Explicitly teaching text structures, and modeling effective reading behaviors, allows students to find important information in texts and enjoy reading. Finally, maximizing student engagement through grouping and cooperative learning fosters motivation. Any of these practices will enhance your instruction, and promote your students' success in using reading as an avenue for learning.

Characteristics of Struggling Readers

Although the overall reading performance of Texas students is steadily improving, many students enter secondary school with insufficient reading skills. As Texas moves towards more rigorous high school programs, graduation requirements, and assessments, secondary schools face the demands of educating students who do not read at grade level. Unfortunately, many adolescents are not learning the skills necessary to succeed in the educational system. This lack of academic success most often leads them to a difficult transition into the labor force.

Chances are that you have met many struggling readers during your teaching career. You recognize their slow and hesitant word-by-word reading, accompanied by ineffective decoding skills. You have witnessed first-hand their difficulty staying academically afloat, particularly now that they have reached high school.

Although this group of students often includes those with learning disabilities, dyslexia, or other exceptionalities, many struggling readers do not have a disability, yet they continue to perform poorly in school. Struggling readers often had a rocky start when learning to read and have been trying to catch up ever since. For some, the gap between their reading abilities and those of their peers widens with each passing year. Many may be reading more than one year below grade level and find difficulty independently reading grade-level materials. In most cases, reading is not a pleasurable activity for struggling readers, and by the time they get to high school they have spent much less time reading than other students. As a result, their vocabulary is limited, which directly affects their comprehension. Less time reading also results in less exposure to different text structures and writing styles. This lack of familiarity with various types of text leads to slower reading and less comprehension.

Other students who may have difficulty with reading are those for whom English is a second language. English language learners are a heterogeneous group with a wide range of abilities. In addition to the factors that contribute to reading difficulties in other students, English language learners' reading skills are also affected by their proficiency in their native language as well their proficiency in English.

In sum, the struggling readers in your class may have reading difficulties because of a variety of factors, such as a learning disability, insufficient mastery of early reading skills, or learning English as a second language. Regardless of the reasons behind reading difficulties, struggling readers share most of these characteristics:

- Slow and labored reading.
- Difficulty decoding unfamiliar words or multisyllabic words.
- Limited vocabulary.
- Poor comprehension.
- Difficulty identifying and using text structures to aid comprehension.
- Poor spelling.
- Difficulty writing (compositions are short, disorganized, and include grammar and spelling errors).
- Limited background knowledge.
- Poor motivation.
- Poor self-image and lack of confidence (may be embarrassed to read aloud).

- Lack of strategies to monitor own learning.
- Risk avoidance.
- Fear of being called on in class.

Keep these characteristics in mind when planning and anticipate how they may affect the struggling reader's ability to understand concepts and complete tasks. Think about how you might scaffold students' learning by varying group size, materials, text level, amount of practice, explicitness in your teaching, number of exposures to a new topic or skill, amount of review, etc. Considering your struggling readers' needs during planning and teaching will enhance their learning and promote their motivation.

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Sample Lessons and Strategies

Anticipation Guide

TEKS Objectives:

- The student comprehends selections using a variety of strategies.
- The student reads extensively and intensively for different purposes in varied sources, including world literature.
- The student reads critically to evaluate texts.

Corresponding TEKS Student Expectations:

9.7.H.: The student is expected to draw inferences such as conclusions, generalizations, and predictions and support them from text.

10.7.G. & 11.7.G.: The student is expected to draw inferences such as conclusions, generalizations, and predictions and support them with text evidence and experience.

9.8.D., 10.8.D., & 11.8.D.: The student is expected to interpret the possible influences of the historical context on a literary work.

9.12.C.: The student is expected to analyze text to evaluate the logical argument and to determine the mode of reasoning used such as induction and deduction.

Materials:

- Appropriate reading materials/text
- Teacher-designed Anticipation Guide

Introduction:

Anticipation Guides motivate students by activating their prior knowledge, interests, and beliefs related to a specific topic. Students are engaged in a non-threatening manner in discussing the concepts they will encounter in their reading.

Lesson:

1. Write statements that tap into students' knowledge, require careful consideration, and can stimulate lively discussions. The number of statements may vary depending on the lesson and purpose, but can range from three to eight. Follow these guidelines when creating statements:
 - A. There are two general types of anticipation statements: cognitive and affective. Cognitive or fact-based statements help students clarify misconceptions about a topic (e.g., if both parents have brown eyes, the child will have brown eyes) and develop deeper understanding. Affective or emotion-based statements allow students to bring their personal values, opinions, and judgments to the reading (e.g., war is wrong, because taking a human life is always wrong). Since emotions impact cognition, affective statements also serve as an effective means of increasing student knowledge.

B. When writing statements:

- Identify the major ideas or themes and key information in the reading assignment.
 - Consider your students' knowledge and beliefs, anticipating where confusion and/or controversy may surface in the text. The best statements will help clarify students' confusions or misconceptions and promote discussion about varying opinions and beliefs. Statements that are obviously true or false and statements about which students have no knowledge or experiences are not effective.
2. Decide on a format for presenting statements, and include appropriate instructions. For example, "*Check the box next to each statement you agree with.*" "*On each line, write A for agree or D for disagree.*" "*Next to each statement, write Likely or Unlikely.*"
 3. Provide a brief introduction (oral or written) to the text before presenting the statements. Then, monitor as each student completes the guide (may be done independently or in small groups).
 4. Allow students to discuss their responses. If the class is large, consider first placing students in pairs or small groups to promote active participation from all students. Then, bring the groups together and discuss conflicting viewpoints (make sure students provide rationales) and new understandings.
 5. Set a purpose for reading. For example, "*Let's read the text to see if our understanding or opinions change.*"
 6. After students read text, moderate further discussion of students' responses. For example, "*Have any of your opinions changed since reading the passage? How and why? Have you learned anything new?*"

Scaffold:

- Make connections between reader and author. For example, "*In the second column, write A or D to show whether you think the author would agree or disagree with you.*" Have students support their responses with evidence from the text.
- Use two response columns as suggested above, with the second representing the views of a character (fictional or nonfictional) from the text.
- Have students write journal/learning log entries based on one or more of the statements (e.g., why they thought the author agreed or disagreed with them on that issue). This writing can then be extended to a more formal essay.
- Consider including a section in the guide for comparing predictions to what is learned from the reading. For example, "*Check yes or no to indicate whether the text supports your prediction. In the space provided, write the explanation from the text in your own words.*" This adaptation connects reading and writing and provides practice in paraphrasing text.

Adapted from Alvermann, D. E., & Phelps, S. F. (2002). *Content reading and literacy: Succeeding in today's diverse classrooms* (3rd ed.). Boston: Allyn and Bacon.

The following is a sample lesson using a selection from a state-adopted text:

Anticipation Guide

Black Boy by Richard Wright

You are about to read an excerpt from *Black Boy*, the autobiography of Richard Wright. This selection focuses on his childhood in the racially-divided South of the early 1900s. When he was three, Wright's family moved from Mississippi to Tennessee because his father could not support them with his job as a sharecropper (sharecroppers would plant, harvest, and take care of crops in exchange for shelter and a small share of the profits from the crop). In Tennessee, Richard's father abandoned the family. When the passage begins, Richard, his mother, and his brother are facing starvation.

Directions

Read the statements below. On the line before each statement, write *A* for agree or *D* for disagree. Be ready to explain your beliefs.

- ___ 1. Racism in the South today is no different than it was during the early 1900s.
- ___ 2. Judges make impartial decisions.
- ___ 3. It is wrong to accept charity.
- ___ 4. Opinions formed based on outward appearance can never fully be changed.
- ___ 5. When faced with choices you don't like, it is better to do nothing and see what happens.

After Reading

Now that you've read *Black Boy*, would you change any of your responses? Why? Why not?

Ask the Author

TEKS Objectives:

- The student expresses and supports responses to various types of texts.
- The student analyzes literary elements for their contributions to meaning in literary texts.

Corresponding TEKS Student Expectations:

- 9.10.B. & 10.10.B.: The student is expected to use elements of text to defend his/her own responses and interpretations.
- 9.11.A.: The student is expected to recognize the theme (general observation about life or human nature) within a text.
- 9.11.B., 10.11.B., & 11.11.B.: The student is expected to analyze the relevance of setting and time frame to text's meaning.
- 9.11.C.: The student is expected to analyze characters and identify time and point of view.
- 9.11.D.: The student is expected to identify basic conflicts.
- 9.11.E.: The student is expected to analyze the development of plot in narrative text.
- 9.8.D., 10.8.D., & 11.8.D.: The student is expected to interpret the possible influences of the historical context on a literary work.
- 10.11.C. & 11.11.C.: The student is expected to describe and analyze the development of plot and identify conflicts and how they are addressed and resolved.
- 10.7.G. & 11.7.G.: The student is expected to draw inferences such as conclusions, generalizations, and predictions and support them with text evidence and experience.

Materials:

- Novel

Lesson:

1. Identify a chapter (or scene) of a novel that may cause confusion and hinder the student's understanding.
2. Segment the chapter according to important concepts (e.g., setting, characters, plot, and theme).
3. Have the students read the first segment.
4. Lead and facilitate a discussion by asking the following questions, eliciting student answers.
 - What is the author trying to say?
 - What does the author mean by this?
 - Why is the author saying this?
5. Respond to student comments by drawing attention to specific ideas.

6. Ask students to return to the text for specific quotations to support their ideas.
7. Rephrase student responses to check for understanding.
8. Provide background knowledge as necessary to enhance comprehension.
9. Have the students read the second segment. Working in pairs, students should ask and answer questions. One student asks questions about the second segment. The other student answers as though he or she is the author.
10. Monitor pairs and offer corrective feedback as needed. Possible questions include, but are not limited to:
 - What do you mean here?
 - How does this connect with what I read earlier?
 - Does this make sense with what I read before?
 - Why did you tell me this now?
11. Repeat steps 9 and 10 with students switching roles.
12. Continue with any remaining segments.

Scaffold:

- Shorten segments.
- If students experience difficulty, decrease and simplify the questions the first few times. As students become more proficient, increase the number of questions and their complexity.
- Provide more modeling.
- Choose a student as your partner and role-play the steps for others.

Adapted from University of Texas Center for Reading and Language Arts. (2002). *Effective instruction for secondary struggling readers: Research-based practices*. Austin, TX: Texas Education Agency.

The following is a sample lesson using a selection from a state-adopted text:

Ask the Author

When I Lay My Burden Down by Maya Angelou

1. Introduce the excerpt that will be read today. Discuss Maya Angelou and provide some of her background.
2. Ask students to silently read the first three paragraphs. Then, pair students and explain that one of them will pretend to be Maya Angelou while the other asks the following questions:
 - What are you trying to say by describing the lives of the children in this story?
 - From the information provided so far, how would you describe the children's mother and grandmother?
3. Ask students to silently read the next page. After students finish reading the page, have them ask the "author" in each pair:
 - How would you describe Grandmother Henderson after reading this page? Has your initial description of the grandmother changed? What characteristics have you added to your initial description?
4. Ask students to finish reading the story, and then have them ask the "author" in each pair:
 - Why do you portray Grandmother Henderson in the way that you do?
 - Is there anybody you know that Grandmother Henderson reminds you of? How?
 - What are you trying to communicate to the reader by having Grandmother Henderson sing while the white children laugh and make fun of her?
 - Why does Momma call the white girls "Miz" as she says goodbye to them?
 - Why do you think Sister and her grandmother did not discuss the incident?
 - What did Sister's design on the dirt mean?

Ask the Author

Name(s): _____

Date: _____

1. What is the author trying to say?
2. What does the author mean by this?
3. Why is the author saying this?
4. What do you mean here?
5. How does this connect with what I read earlier?
6. Does this make sense with what I read before?
7. Why did you tell me this now?

Book Cover Predictions

TEKS Objectives

- The student expresses and supports responses to various types of texts.
- The student comprehends selections using a variety of strategies.
- The student analyzes literary elements for their contributions to meaning in literary texts.
- The student understands and interprets visual representations.

Corresponding TEKS Student Expectations:

- 9.10.B. & 10.10.B.: The student is expected to use elements of text to defend his/her own responses and interpretations.
- 9.7.H.: The student is expected to draw inferences such as conclusions, generalizations, and predictions and support them from text.
- 10.7.G., & 11.7.G.: The student is expected to draw inferences such as conclusion, generalizations, and predictions and support them with text evidence and experience.
- 9.11.B., 10.11.B., & 11.11.B.: The student is expected to analyze the relevance of setting and time frame to text's meaning.
- 9.11.C.: The student is expected to analyze characters and identify time and point of view.
- 9.11.F.: The student is expected to recognize and interpret important symbols.

Materials:

- Novel with a cover illustration or photograph (one copy per student)
 - Book Cover Prediction Chart (one copy per student)
 - Questions from Step 7 on cards (one question per card)
- Note: An illustration or photograph suitable for this activity may be found within the text, rather than on the cover.

Lesson:

1. Tell the students that looking for clues in illustrations or photographs is an effective strategy for making predictions about a story.
2. Give the students copies of the novel and ask them to look only at the cover illustration or photograph.
Variation: If the cover illustration does not provide enough information, have students look at all the illustrations in the story.
3. Ask the students to think about what they know about setting, characters, and other story elements while they look at the cover illustration or photograph for a few minutes.
4. Ask the students to answer the following question:
What do you think this story will be about? Why?
5. Give the students a Book Cover Prediction Chart and allow a few minutes for them to record their thoughts on their charts.

6. Pair students and have each share their prediction chart with their partner for one minute (two minutes per pair). Students may add predictions to their charts.
7. Have pairs form groups of four and choose a question card. Give the small groups two minutes to generate an answer for their question(s). Then have a student from each group read the question and the class answer.

What do you think is happening? Why?

Where do you think this story takes place?

What do you think is being said or done in this picture?

If it is a photograph, why do you think it was taken?

If it is a photograph, where and when was it taken? (setting)

What do you think the artist or photographer tried to capture in this picture? What is he or she trying to show us? What message do you think he or she wanted to convey?

If you were the subject of this picture, what would you be thinking or feeling? What makes you think that?

What information is missing in the picture? (What are you wondering about that would help you to better understand the artist's or photographer's message?)

What do you find interesting about this picture?

What about this picture makes you want to read this story?

Scaffold:

- Provide students with clues about the setting of the story.
- Use novels with elaborate covers.
- Use two pictures.
- Create a transparency of the prediction chart and fill it in during a class discussion. Allow students to refer to it while they fill out their charts.

Book Cover Prediction

Name(s): Juan Calzada, María Luisa Lopez, John Schmidt, Larry Jones

Date: January 17, 2003

Name of Reading Selection: "A Christmas Memory" by Truman Capote

What is this story about?

This story is about a family during winter. This story takes place in the past, perhaps in the 1940s. The story takes place in the United States, someplace where it snows. There are several characters, including a boy. The family does not seem to be very well off financially and is probably having trouble buying Christmas presents. I can tell they are not well off by the clothes they wear and the small home they live in.

My predictions:

I think this story is about a family who does not have enough money to buy Christmas presents. The boy in the story will sell some of his own belongings to gather money for the presents.

My predictions with a partner:

This story is about a boy and his mother who do not have enough money to buy Christmas presents. The mother in the story is either ill, or has a drinking problem. The boy in the story asks for help from others in the community, such as the local storeowner. Because of the characters' appearances, we think that the boy and the mother will receive assistance and have a good holiday season.

My group's question and answer:

If it is a photograph, where and when was it taken? (setting)

This story takes place in the winter some years ago (perhaps in the 1940s or 50s). The characters appear to be American, so the picture was most likely taken in the United States. Because it is snowing, this picture was probably not taken in Texas or Florida, but in some other state where it snows. The setting appears to be a rural one, with small homes and the kind of store one would find in a small town.

Question Cards for Step 7

(You may want to copy these on cardboard and have them laminated so they can be reused)

What do you think is happening? Why?

Where do you think this story takes place?

What do you think is being said or done in this picture?

If it is a photograph, why do you think it was taken?

If it is a photograph, where and when was it taken?

What do you think the artist or photographer tried to capture in this picture?

What is he or she trying to show us?

What message do you think he or she wanted to convey?

If you were the subject of this picture, what would you be thinking or feeling?

What makes you think that?

What information is missing in the picture?

(What are you wondering about that would help you to better understand the artist's or photographer's message?)

What do you find interesting about this picture?

What about this picture makes you want to read this story?

Book Cover Prediction

Name(s): _____

Date: _____

Name of Reading Selection: _____

<p>What is this story about?</p>	<p>My predictions:</p>
<p>My predictions with a partner:</p>	<p>My group's question and answer:</p>

Adapted from University of Texas Center for Reading and Language Arts. (2002). *Effective instruction for secondary struggling readers: Research-based practices*. Austin, TX: Texas Education Agency.

Comparison Guide

TEKS Objectives:

- The student expresses and supports responses to various types of texts.
- The student analyzes literary elements for their contributions to meaning in literary texts.

Corresponding TEKS Student Expectations:

- 9.10.B. & 10.10.B.: The student is expected to use elements of text to defend his/her own responses and interpretations.
- 9.11.A.: The student is expected to recognize the theme (general observation about life or human nature) within a text.
- 9.11.B., 10.11.B., & 11.11.B.: The student is expected to analyze the relevance of setting and time frame to text's meaning.
- 9.11.C.: The student is expected to analyze characters and identify time and point of view.
- 9.11.D.: The student is expected to identify basic conflicts.
- 9.11.E.: The student is expected to analyze the development of plot in narrative text.
- 9.8.D., 10.8.D., & 11.8.D.: The student is expected to interpret the possible influences of the historical context on a literary work.
- 10.11.C. & 11.11.C.: The student is expected to describe and analyze the development of plot and identify conflicts and how they are addressed and resolved.
- 10.7.G. & 11.7.G.: The student is expected to draw inferences such as conclusions, generalizations, and predictions and support them with text evidence and experience.

Materials:

- 2 reading selections
- *Comparison Guide*
- *Comparison Guide* overhead

Lesson:

1. Explain to students that they will compare two selections they have already read (e.g., two poems, two plays, two novels, two newspaper articles).
2. Tell them that you will first complete a guide together so that you can model the steps. Place the blank copy of the *Comparison Guide* on the overhead. As you model completing the guide, think aloud various aspects of the reading selections (characters, plots, elements of literature) and elicit student responses and comments.
3. After completing the guide, model how to put it all together in a few sentences, summarizing the comparison.
4. Ask students to provide their personal opinions regarding the reading selections. Which did

they like best? Why? Call on a few students and then complete the last box of the guide.

The guide can be used to compare characters within or across reading selections, or to compare the use of certain literary elements, such as similes, metaphors, idioms, personification, etc.

Scaffold:

- Have students compare two movies before comparing two reading selections.
- When students are first using the guide, tell them which aspects of the reading selections to compare. This will narrow their focus and the task will seem less overwhelming. For example, the first time they complete the guide, tell them to only focus on the main characters in the stories being compared.
- Provide plenty of feedback and guidance as students work on their guides.
- Use shorter selections the first few times students use the guide.
- Have students work in pairs.

McCormick, S. (2003). *Instructing students who have literacy problems* (4th ed.). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Merrill Prentice Hall.

The following is a sample lesson using two selections from a state-adopted text:

Comparison Guide Map

Name: John Garrett

Date: February 6, 2003

Reading Selections: "Daily" by Naomi Shihab Nye and "I Wandered Lonely as a Cloud" by William Wordsworth

As you read think about: Poetry

Similarities

1. Both poems are describing actions.
2. Both poets are observant.
3. The mood in both is uplifting.
4. Both show reverence—one for women's work and one for nature.

Title "Daily"

Description Describes the daily chores of women:

1. This bed whose covers I straighten
2. This table I dust

Title "I Wandered Lonely as a Cloud"

Description Describes various things in nature:

1. That floats on high over valleys and hills (clouds)
2. Fluttering and dancing in the breeze (daffodils)

Differences

1. Shihab describes her own actions, while Wordsworth describes nature's actions.
2. Shihab describes things that must be done in a household, while Wordsworth describes natural events.
3. Shihab's is a catalog poem (list of images); Wordsworth's is not.
4. Wordsworth uses personification ("daffodils dancing") and similes ("wandered lonely as a cloud").

Summarize the information above:

Shihab and Wordsworth's poems focus on everyday events, yet they describe women's chores and daffodils as beautiful happenings. Shihab's is a catalog poem, while Wordsworth's includes personification and similes. Both poems help the reader pay closer attention to everyday events and find the beauty in them.

Personal critique:

I liked Wordsworth's poem better. I like how he talks about daffodils dancing and lonely clouds. His use of personification really helps the reader paint a picture in his mind.

Comparison Guide Map

Name: _____

Date: _____

Reading Selections: _____

As you read think about: Poetry

Similarities

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

Title

Description

- 1.
- 2.

Title

Description

- 1.
- 2.

Differences

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

Summarize the information above:

Personal critique:

Concept Definition Map

TEKS Objectives:

- The student uses a variety of strategies to read unfamiliar words and to build vocabulary.
- The student acquires an extensive vocabulary through reading and systematic word study.

Corresponding TEKS Student Expectations:

9.6.C., 10.6.C., & 11.6.C.: The student is expected to apply meanings of prefixes, roots, and suffixes in order to comprehend.

Materials:

- List of vocabulary words from reading selection
- Concept Definition Maps

Lesson:

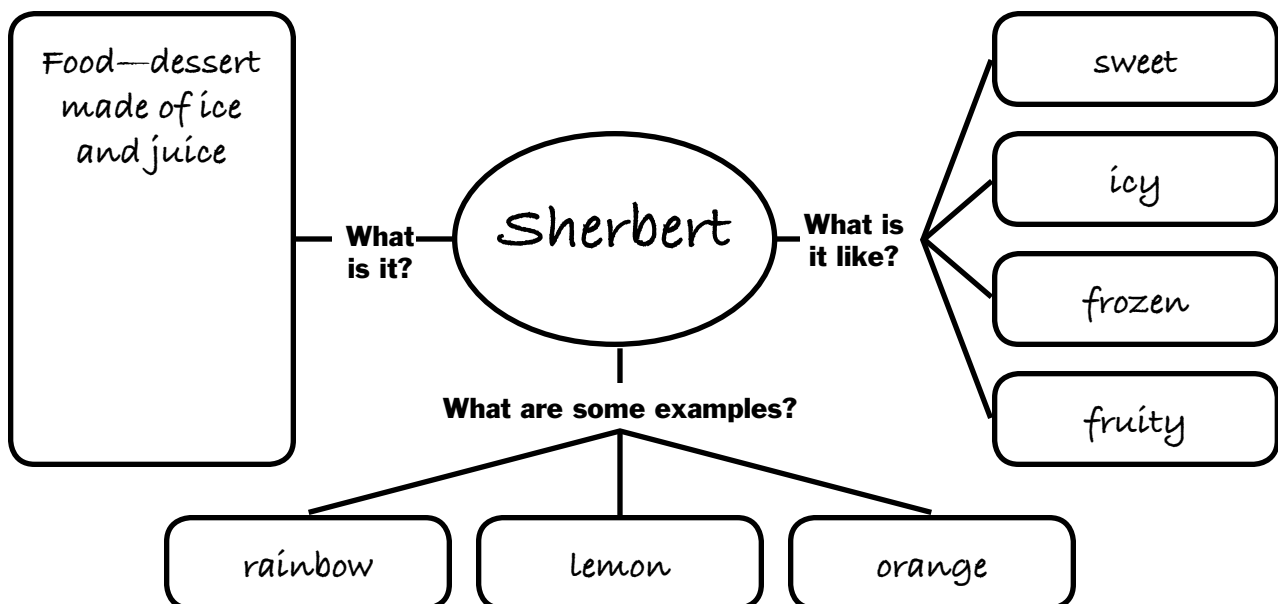
1. Explain to your students that to understand the meaning of new words, they need to understand the components of the definition. Tell them that using a Concept Definition Map will help them gain a deeper understanding of words. To complete a Concept Definition Map they will need to answer three questions:

(1) *What is it?*

(2) *What is it like?*

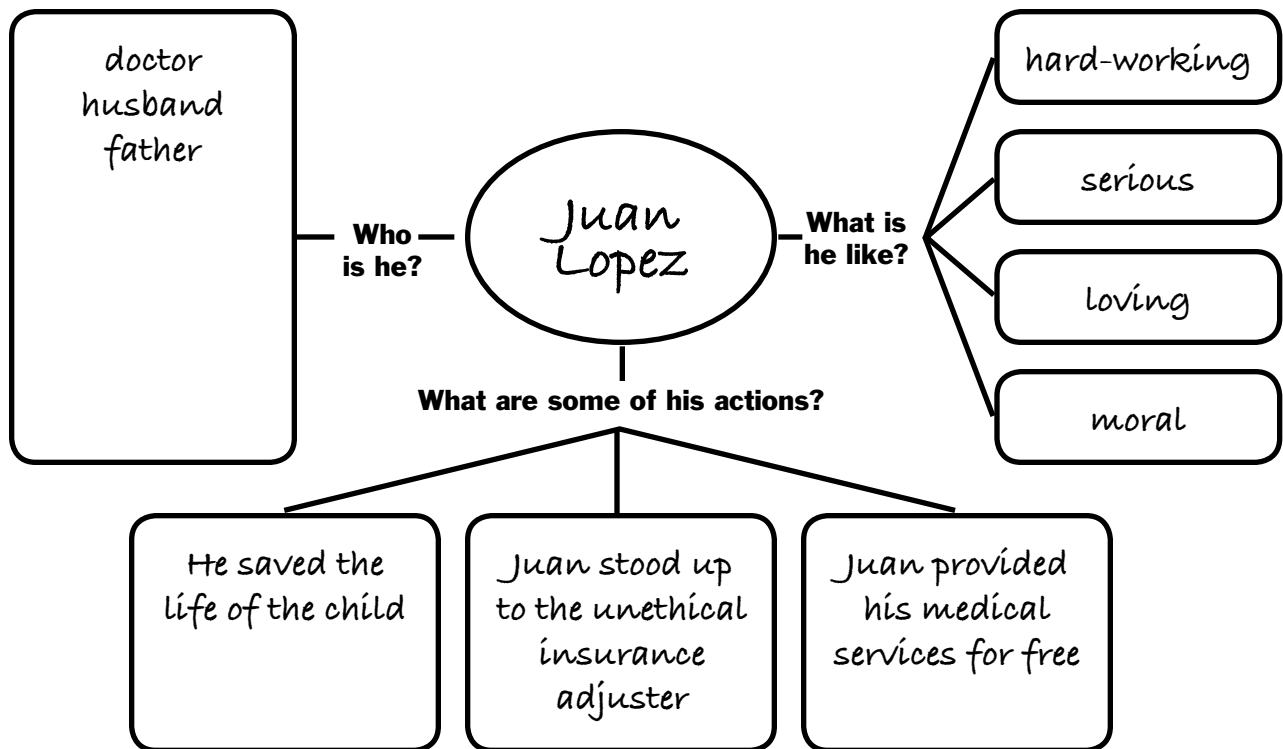
(3) *What are some examples?*

2. Begin by using a familiar word, such as *sherbert*. Show them the map and complete it together.



- Together, write a definition for sherbet, such as:
Sherbet is a dessert made of ice and juice. It is frozen, icy, sweet, and fruity. Some of the flavors that sherbet comes in are rainbow, lemon, and orange.
- Pair students and have them work on other words.
- Once students have become proficient at using the Concept Definition Map, you can use it to introduce words and concepts that appear in stories and reading selections that students will be reading or have read.
- Depending on the word or concept being learned, you may vary the Concept Definition Map to promote deeper understanding. Some variations are included below.

Example of Character Definition Map:



Your Description of the Character:

Juan Lopez, a surgeon for the last 20 years, is a loving husband and father of three young children. He is serious and hard-working, never missing work, and treating each patient as if he were the first. When faced with following the hospital rules or treating a young patient, Juan decides to offer his services free of charge and save the life of his young patient.

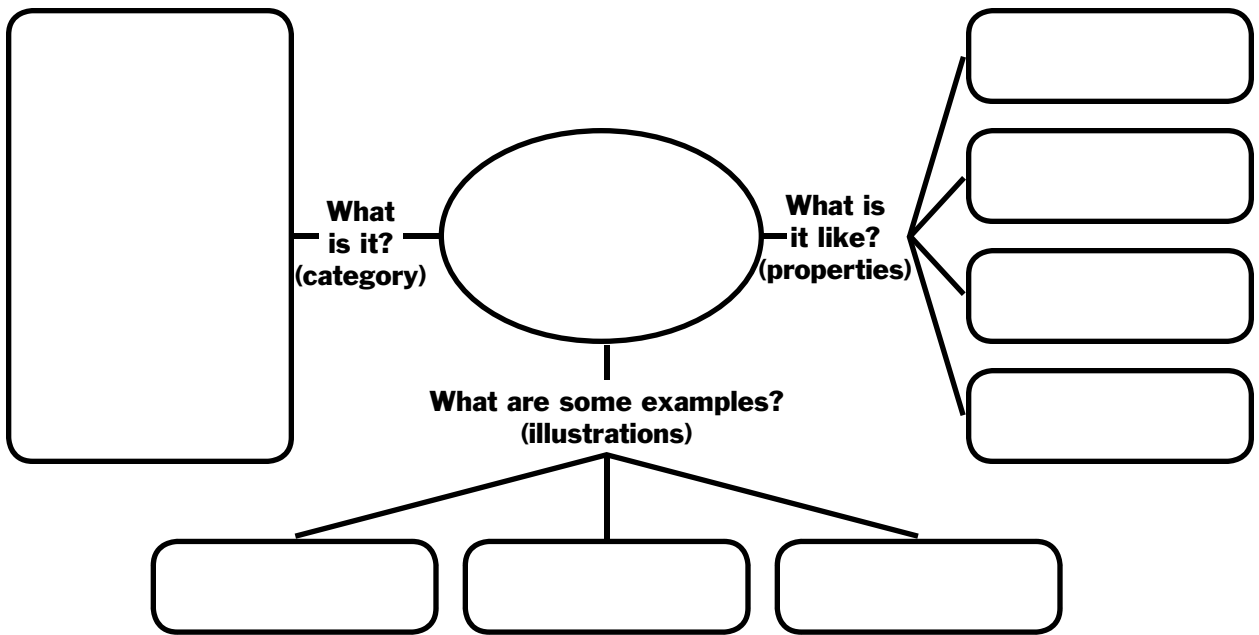
Schwartz, R. M., & Raphael, T. E. (1985). Concept of definition: A key to improving students' vocabulary. *The Reading Teacher*, 39(2), 198-205.

Concept Definition Map

Name: _____

Date: _____

Reading Selections: _____



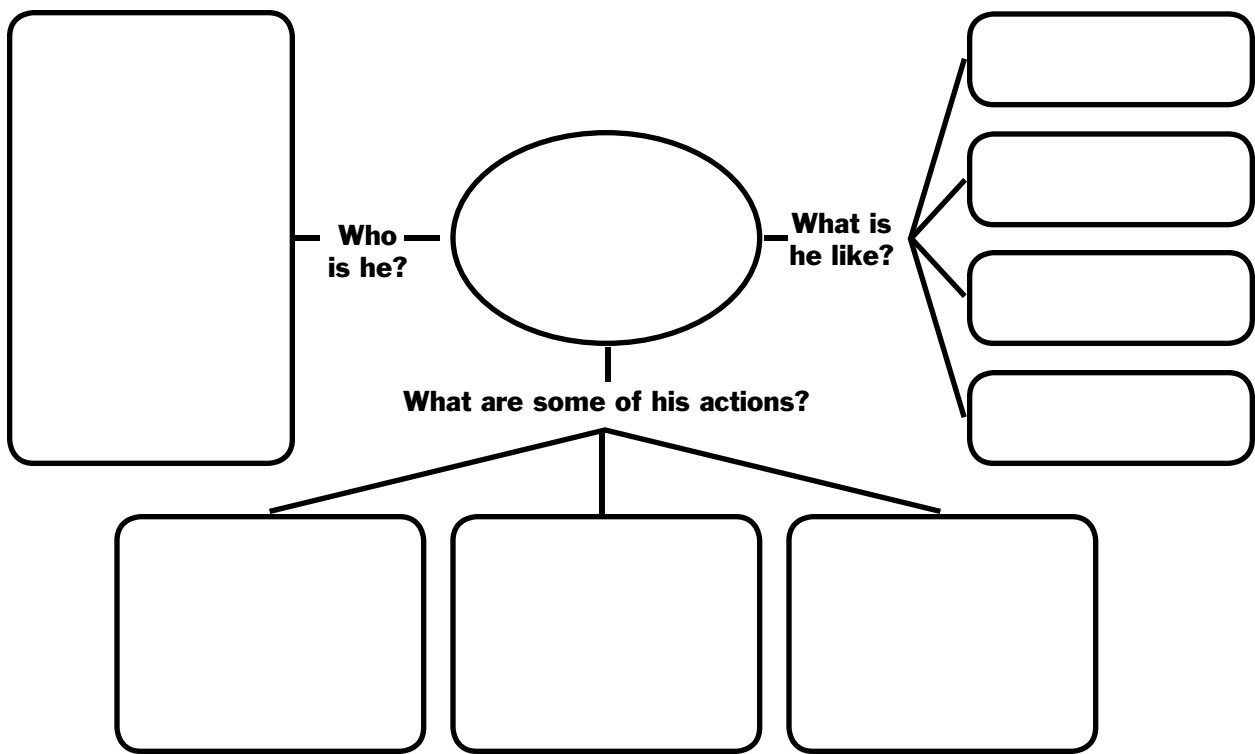
Your Definition:

Character Definition Map

Name: _____

Date: _____

Reading Selections: _____



Your Description of the Character:

Concept Guide

TEKS Objectives:

The student comprehends selections using a variety of strategies.

Corresponding TEKS Student Expectations:

9.7.F.: The student is expected to identify main ideas and their supporting details

9.7.H.: The student is expected to draw inferences such as conclusions, generalizations, and predictions and support them from text.

10.7.G. & 11.7.G.: The student is expected to draw inferences such as conclusions, generalizations, and predictions and support them with text evidence and experience.

Materials:

- Appropriate reading materials/text
- Teacher-designed concept guide

Lesson:

1. Write several statements regarding the selection students will be reading. These statements should activate students' background knowledge, pique their interest, and require careful consideration.
2. Students read the selection on their own.
3. Students can either work on their own or in pairs to determine which statements are supported by the passage. Students write an "A" next to the statements that they agree are supported by information in the passage.
4. In Part II, the students write a checked statement at the top of each statement chart and then add details from the text on the lines in the chart. They include the page number on which the supporting information was found.

Scaffold:

- Copy the *Concept Guide* form on an overhead and complete parts 1 and 2 together with the class. Model the entire process for the students, thinking aloud as you do so.
- As you model the steps involved, caution that only statements directly supported by the text should be selected. There are some statements that the reader may agree with; however, if they cannot be supported by the text, then they should not be selected.
- Pair students for part 1, 2, or both.
- The first few times students practice using the Concept Guide, have them use short selections.

Wood, K. D., Lapp, D., & Flood, J. (1992). *Guiding readers through text: A review of study guides*. Newark, DE: International Reading Association.

The following is a sample lesson using a selection from a state-adopted text:

Concept Guide

Name: _____

Date: _____

Reading Selection: "Thank You, M'am" by Langston Hughes

Part I

Read "Thank You, M'am" in your book (pages 120–124). Then put an *A* next to the statement if you agree that it is specifically supported by the reading.

- _____ 1. Mrs. Jones was afraid of the boy who tried to steal her purse.
- A 2. The boy looked disheveled.
- _____ 3. The boy did not eat the food Mrs. Jones gave him because he was too afraid to eat.
- _____ 4. Mrs. Jones liked Roger because he reminded him of her own son.
- A 5. Mrs. Jones is a kind and compassionate woman.
- _____ 6. Roger learned his lesson and never again stole from others.
- _____ 7. Roger probably has no morals and is a bad person.
- _____ 8. Mrs. Jones should report Roger to the police.
- _____ 9. Mrs. Jones was trying to help Roger become a better person.
- _____ 10. Roger will probably never forget Mrs. Jones.

Part II

Fill in the statement charts below by writing each statement supported by the reading. Then find the details that support each concept and write them on the chart. Include the page number where you found the supporting information.

Statement 5. Mrs. Jones is a kind and compassionate woman.

Supporting Details

Page found

- | | |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------|
| a) Mrs. Jones had Roger wash his face (telling him to wait for warm water). | p. 120 |
| b) Mrs. Jones did not take Roger to jail. | p. 121 |
| c) Mrs. Jones served Roger dinner. | p. 121 |
| d) Mrs. Jones did not ask Roger anything about where he lived, or his folks, or anything else that would embarrass him. | p. 120 |
| e) Mrs. Jones gave Roger \$10.00 so he could buy blue suede shoes | p. 121 |
-

Statement 2. The boy looked disheveled.

Supporting Details

Page found

- | | |
|------------------------------------------|--------|
| a) Roger's face is dirty. | p. 121 |
| b) He looked frail and willow-wild. | p. 121 |
| c) Ms. Jones asked him to comb his hair. | p. 121 |
| _____ | _____ |
| _____ | _____ |
| _____ | _____ |

Detecting Bias

TEKS Objectives:

- The student comprehends selections using a variety of strategies.
- The student reads extensively and intensively for different purposes in varied sources, including world literature.
- The student reads critically to evaluate texts.

Corresponding TEKS Student Expectations:

- 9.12.A.: The student is expected to analyze characteristics of text, including its structure, word choices, and intended audience.
- 9.12.D.: The student is expected to analyze texts such as editorials, documentaries, and advertisements for bias and use of common persuasive techniques.
- 9.19.B., 10.19.B., & 11.19.B.: The student is expected to analyze relationships, ideas, and cultures as represented in various media.
- 9.19.C., 10.19.C., & 11.19.C.: The student is expected to distinguish the purposes of various media forms such as informative texts, entertaining texts, and advertisements.

Materials:

- Video with seven examples of commercials
- TV
- VCR
- Newspapers and magazines
- Appropriate reading materials/text

Lesson:

1. Begin by discussing with your students several popular TV commercials. Possible prompts/questions to guide your discussion:
 - *Tell me about your favorite commercials. Why is that your favorite commercial?*
 - *What is the purpose of commercials on TV?*
 - *Are all commercials effective in convincing viewers to buy their product? Why? What are some examples of commercials that convinced you to buy their products? Has a commercial ever convinced you to buy a product you didn't really need?*
 - *Share with your class an instance when a TV commercial convinced you to buy a certain product, and explain why.*
2. Videotape several commercials and show them to your class. For example, show students a commercial of a local car dealer who tells viewers about the great cars he has for sale and why his prices are better than those of other dealers.
 - *What did you think of this commercial? Why?*
 - *Would you be more or less inclined to buy a car from this dealership after seeing this commercial?*

- *What was the dealer's goal in making this commercial? (to persuade; review persuasive writing)*
 - *What did he do to try to accomplish this goal?*
3. Explain to students that some words in commercials, textbooks, and everyday conversations are “loaded” with bias. That is, they express or insinuate an opinion, judgment, or belief. Some of these words are easy to recognize, yet others are trickier.

Scaffold:

Some of your students may not be aware that bias can either be *positive* (in favor of a person, idea, product, etc.) or *negative* (against a person, idea, product, etc.). Many students incorrectly believe that bias is always against something or someone. Spend some time clearly explaining bias and how it is used, and provide several examples for each.

4. Have students take out a sheet of paper and tell them that you will be showing them the same commercial once again. Ask them, as they watch, to write down all the words that show bias (e.g., *unique, special, affordable, quality*). Show the commercial once more.
5. Write student responses on the board and ask students to justify their answers.
6. Once all words are listed, have students briefly turn to their neighbor and decide which words are most obviously biased and which are subtle and easy to miss. Discuss student responses.
7. Repeat steps 4-6 several times. Use commercials that are obvious in their approach and others that are more subtle.
8. Explain to your class that evaluating commercials and becoming aware of words that carry bias will provide them with practice and skills that they can then apply to their reading. For homework, tell students to choose five commercials as they watch TV. For each commercial, have them write a brief description, the main idea, and three words “loaded” with bias.
9. Explain to students that as they read, they should be aware of “loaded” words- biased words authors use to try to persuade the reader. Often readers think, “*If it's printed, it must be true!*” This is particularly common if the writing appears in a serious-looking book or a prestigious newspaper or magazine. Often readers confuse persuasive text with informational text because they are not aware of “loaded” words.
10. Write on the board:
 - The lab is using people for (inhumane, medical) tests.*
 - My grandmother is extraordinarily (feisty, active) for her age.*
 - The new home will (wipe out, use up) all of our savings.*
11. Select a student to read each sentence twice: once using the first word in the parentheses, and once using the second word in the parentheses.
12. Ask students to choose which of the words or phrases in the parentheses carry the most bias and explain why. Discuss student responses.

Scaffold:

If students are having difficulty identifying biased words, read the sentence both ways, adding gestures and intonation to exaggerate the difference in meaning.

13. Distribute copies of several newspaper and magazine advertisements. Have students work in pairs and give each one a copy of an ad. Ask students to write down all the words that show bias.
14. Ask students to rank their words from most “loaded” to least “loaded.”
15. After several days of practicing with TV and print ads, bring in newspaper stories and editorials. Again, divide the students into pairs or small groups and ask them to highlight “loaded” words and to rewrite the sentence using less biased language. For example:

Neighborhood Association Complains About Messy Neighbors

It seems some residents of Sun City are not paying enough attention to their yards. The Sun City Neighborhood Association has voted on a resolution that would fine residents who don't take care of their patios and yards. One member of the association said, “People who do not keep their yards looking nice are irresponsible and inconsiderate.” When asked about the new resolution, a non-member resident complained, “These people are always coming up with new ridiculous laws and fines. It is obvious that the members of the association do not have full-time jobs like the rest of us.”

Biased sentence: *These people are always coming up with new ridiculous laws and fines.*

Rewritten sentence: *These people are always coming up with new unreasonable laws and fines.*

Scaffold:

The first few times students complete this activity, make a thesaurus available for their use.

Excerpt Log

TEKS Objectives:

- The student analyzes literary elements for their contributions to meaning in literary texts.

Corresponding TEKS Student Expectations:

9.11.A.: The student is expected to recognize the theme (general observation about life or human nature) within a text.

10.11.A.: The student is expected to compare and contrast varying aspects of texts such as themes, conflicts, and allusions.

11.11.A.: The student is expected to compare and contrast aspects of texts such as themes, conflicts, and allusions both within and across texts.

9.11.B., 10.11.B., & 11.11.B.: The student is expected to analyze the relevance of setting and time frame to text's meaning.

9.11.C.: The student is expected to analyze characters and identify time and point of view.

10.11.C. & 11.11.C.: The student is expected to describe the development of plot and identify conflicts and how they are addressed and resolved.

9.11.D.: The student is expected to identify basic conflicts.

10.11.E. & 11.11.E.: The student is expected to connect literature to historical contexts, current events and his/her own experiences.

9.11.E.: The student is expected to analyze the development of plot in narrative text.

Materials:

- Novel
- Excerpt Log

Lesson:

Grouping: Whole class, small group

1. Choose an excerpt from a novel that provides clues to the setting, characters, primary conflict, and theme.
2. Have the students read the excerpt and identify clues about the setting, characters, primary conflict, and theme.
3. Divide the students into small groups and assign one of the topics (setting, characters, primary conflict, or theme) to each group. Have the groups complete the Excerpt Log for their assigned topic.
4. Post four pieces of chart paper, each labeled with one topic, around the room. Have a member from each group record the group's main points and predictions for their topic (more than one group may need to write on the same chart paper).

5. Ask students to compare their responses with those of other groups that worked on the same topic, and add missing ideas to their log.
6. Have students read all of the posted main ideas and predictions and discuss the following questions:
 - *How have the characters developed? Can you find a quotation from the excerpt that shows this?*
 - *What did you learn about the setting (i.e., time period, location)?*
 - *How has the conflict developed?*
 - *What factors have contributed to the conflict?*
 - *What evidence did you find about the theme of this novel?*

Scaffold:

- For the first few times students complete this activity, ask them to complete only one of the four sections. As students become more proficient and get more practice, add the next section, and so forth.
- Create a poster of discussion questions.
- Allow students to work with partners.
- Model each step by thinking aloud. For example, show how you use clues from the text to find information related to setting, clues, or characters.
- Create a transparency of the Excerpt Log and fill it in during the students' discussion.
- Choose the first section of the novel to read rather than an excerpt.
- Have the students use an excerpt from a novel they have already read.

Excerpt Log

Name(s): _____ Date: _____

Title of novel: _____

Assignment (circle your topic):

Setting Characters Conflict Theme

What I already know about my topic:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

What I just learned about my topic:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

What I predict will happen about my topic:

1. I think _____

because _____

2. I think _____

because _____

3. I think _____

because _____

How is this topic same as/different from my own experiences:

1. Same as _____

because _____

2. Same as _____

because _____

3. Different from _____

because _____

4. Different from _____

because _____

Figuring Out Figurative Language

TEKS Objectives:

- The student analyzes literary elements for their contributions to meaning in literary texts.

Corresponding TEKS Student Expectations:

9.11.G.: The student is expected to recognize and interpret poetic elements like metaphor, simile, personification, and effect of sound on meaning.

Materials:

- Reading material
- Paper or notebook
- Pen or pencil

Lesson:

1. Write two sentences, one with a simile and one with a metaphor. For example:

My car is as fast as a cheetah.

My car is a cheetah.

2. Explain that both sentences include comparisons, but that the second does not include the word *fast*. Tell your students that the first sentence is a simile and the second is a metaphor.
3. To change a metaphor into a simile, students must find the missing word that makes sense. Provide them with a second example and ask your students to come up with a word that makes the comparison clearer. For example:

My headache is a stampede of elephants.

Possible responses might include:

My headache is as crushing as a stampede of elephants.

My headache is as strong as a stampede of elephants.

4. Provide students with a list of metaphors and have them work in pairs to come up with words that fit each one.
5. Call for various responses, write them on the board, and discuss which make a clear connection between the two subjects, feelings, or places being compared. Point out that metaphors often evoke mental images in readers. As students discuss the various answers on the board, ask them to consider the mental images resulting from their responses.
6. Once students have learned the difference between metaphors and similes, have them practice the same activity using metaphors and similes from their text. Begin by modeling what you want them to do.

A play which appears in a state-adopted text, such as *Romeo and Juliet*, is an excellent venue for the discussion of metaphors and similes.

Write the following phrases from *Romeo and Juliet* on the board:

The brightness of her cheek would shame those stars

As daylight doth a lamp.

The time and my intents are savage-wild

O, he's a lovely gentleman!

I love thee better than myself

Death lies on her like an untimely frost

And shrieks like mandrakes

He's a flower... a very flower.

7. Do a think-aloud with the first sentence. For example, “*This is a simile because it includes the word as. The two things being compared are the light from Juliet’s cheeks and daylight. That is, Juliet’s face is brighter than a star, just like daylight is brighter than a lamp.*”
8. Ask students to turn to their neighbors and follow the same procedure with the rest of the phrases on the board. For each, they must decide whether it is a simile or a metaphor, why, and what is being compared.
9. Call on several pairs to share their responses.
10. Ask pairs to re-read Act I and write all the similes and metaphors they find. For each one, they will label it as a simile or metaphor, explain why it is one or the other, and list the two things being compared. This activity will be much more effective if the selection chosen is one that has already been read and discussed.

Teaching Ideas:

- Have your students write poetry using metaphors.
- Have your class design an alphabet book for younger readers. Divide your class into pairs and assign a letter of the alphabet to each. Ask each pair to write a metaphor using a word that begins with their letter and include an illustration of the metaphor. For example, the page for the letter ‘S’ might read, *Sally’s smile is a banana*. Students would then draw a picture of a smiling girl with a banana for a mouth. Each page should include a metaphor and illustration. Donate the book to the students at the nearest elementary school.

Scaffold:

- Before developing lessons to teach your students how to interpret figurative language, determine why they are having difficulty with this skill. Activities designed to teach the difference between figurative and literal language will not assist your students if they lack the necessary specific word knowledge. If this is the case, identify the metaphors and similes in the text before beginning the reading. Teach the vocabulary necessary to understand the figurative language.
- Teach similes and metaphors separately, since students often confuse them. Teach one to mastery and then introduce the next.
- Figurative language can be especially challenging to your ELL students. Even though these students are in high school, do not underestimate the usefulness of illustrations when introducing figurative language.

Finding Main Ideas

TEKS Objectives:

- The student comprehends selections using a variety of strategies.

Corresponding TEKS Student Expectations:

9.7.F.: The student is expected to identify main ideas and their supporting details.

9.7.H.: The student is expected to draw inferences such as conclusions, generalizations, and predictions and support them from text.

10.7.G. & 11.7.G.: The student is expected to draw inferences such as conclusions, generalizations, and predictions and support them with text evidence and experience.

Materials:

- Appropriate reading materials/text
- Newspaper articles of various lengths

Lesson:

1. When teaching students how to find the main idea it is best to begin with single paragraphs and gradually move on to longer passages. At first, choose paragraphs in which the topic sentence is directly stated. Use think-alouds as you model how to find the main idea. Engage students in a discussion about the process to follow when selecting a main idea.
2. Once students have reached mastery with main ideas that are directly stated, select some paragraphs with implicitly stated main ideas. The key to this strategy's success is the discussion that occurs as the class completes the activity. First, model the entire process on the overhead or board. Use think-alouds and directly explain all the steps involved in finding the main idea. Elicit student responses. Have students justify their answers and then reach consensus as to which of the proposed responses is the best main idea.

Scaffold:

- If students continue to have difficulty finding main ideas that are not explicitly stated, write the main idea and supporting details on strips of paper. Have students work in pairs to arrange the strips in an outline to show the main idea and supporting details.
- Once students have gained proficiency arranging the strips, introduce outlining techniques in which students clearly indicate the difference between main and supporting details.
- Ask key questions (such as what, when, who, why) to promote thinking and assist students in finding implicit main ideas. In some cases, the answers to these questions can be combined to form a main idea.
3. Cut out various one-paragraph articles from the newspaper, leaving out the headline. Distribute the articles and have students work in pairs to come up with headlines for their pieces.
4. To move students on to longer reading selections, use the same strategies used with paragraphs, but with some adaptations. Explain to students that the main idea of each paragraph now becomes one of the supporting details of the main idea (or thesis statement) for the whole passage.

Scaffold:

- Use a diagram or visual representation to make clear that what had been main ideas in paragraphs will now become the details in a longer reading selection.
- Use sentence strips that include the main idea for each paragraph (which will now be the supporting details) and a thesis statement for the entire selection.
- 5. Repeat Step 3, using longer newspaper articles without headlines. Working in pairs, students are to come up with a headline for their selection.
- 6. After students practice with newspaper articles, move them on to other reading materials.

Scaffold:

- Use clear and explicit language when providing students with directions.
- Continually monitor students as they work so that you can provide guided practice.
- Provide plenty of opportunities for independent practice using authentic materials.
- Provide students with corrective feedback as they work, and provide direct assistance in deciding why an answer is right or wrong.
- The discussion between you and the students will provide insight into the process of selecting main ideas. Class discussions are much more effective than having students independently read a paragraph and then select the main idea. These discussions, along with use of explicit instruction, will make the steps visible to students, and they will begin to internalize the steps as they have more opportunities to practice and engage in collaborative efforts.
- Use diagrams and other visuals to represent the relationships among main ideas and supporting details. Visual representations will make the relationships between main ideas, thesis statements, and supporting details concrete for students (see sample form below).

Baumann, J. F. (1984). The effectiveness of direct instruction paradigm for teaching main idea comprehension. *Reading Research Quarterly*, 20, 93-115.

McCormick, S. (2003). *Instructing students who have literacy problems*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Merrill Prentice Hall.

Finding Main Ideas

Name(s): _____ Date: _____

Reading Selection: _____

Author: _____

Paragraph 1 Is paragraph 1 an introductory paragraph? Yes No

Main Idea: _____

Explicitly stated? Yes No

1. Supporting detail: _____

2. Supporting detail: _____

3. Supporting detail: _____

Paragraph 2

Main Idea: _____

Explicitly stated? Yes No

1. Supporting detail: _____

2. Supporting detail: _____

3. Supporting detail: _____

Paragraph 3 Is paragraph 3 a concluding paragraph? Yes No

Main Idea: _____

Explicitly stated? Yes No

1. Supporting detail: _____

2. Supporting detail: _____

3. Supporting detail: _____

Thesis statement: _____

If explicitly stated, in which paragraph did you find it? _____

Paragraph 4

Main Idea: _____

Explicitly stated? Yes No

1. Supporting detail: _____

2. Supporting detail: _____

3. Supporting detail: _____

Paragraph 5

Main Idea: _____

Explicitly stated? Yes No

1. Supporting detail: _____

2. Supporting detail: _____

3. Supporting detail: _____

Paragraph 6

Main Idea: _____

Explicitly stated? Yes No

1. Supporting detail: _____

2. Supporting detail: _____

3. Supporting detail: _____

Arguments: Are They Logical?

TEKS Objectives:

- The student reads critically to evaluate texts.

Corresponding TEKS Student Expectations:

9.12.C.: The student is expected to analyze text to evaluate the logical argument and to determine the mode of reasoning used such as induction and deduction.

Materials:

- Reading material
- Paper or notebook
- Taped TV commercials (optional)
- Newspaper editorials (optional)

Introduction:

Recognizing logical or sound arguments may be difficult for many of your students. However, recognizing illogical or unsound arguments may be much easier. Begin by introducing to your students the different types of illogical arguments and providing plenty of practice with each.

Lesson:

1. Ask students to describe an ongoing argument they've been having with their parents (e.g., curfew, whether or not they should be allowed to drive, etc.).
2. Explain that one way to improve their chances of winning an argument is by examining the validity of the opposing arguments. Tell your students that arguments are either logical or illogical (sound or unsound). Even very smart-sounding statements made by highly educated people may be illogical or unsound. This may also be the case when arguments appear in print.
3. Introduce the different types of illogical or unsound arguments with several examples for each. Here are some (but not all) types of illogical arguments.
 - a. The stated conclusion is not necessarily a logical result of the facts presented, that is, "it doesn't follow."
María has been a superb older sister; therefore, she will make a fine mother.
 - b. Everybody else does it, so it must be true, or right, or good (the bandwagon effect).
Everybody is skipping class, so I should too.
 - c. A statement based on insufficient evidence (generalization).
That bald man was so rude to me. From now on I'm avoiding all bald men.
 - d. The statement attacks a person's character or circumstances rather than the issue.
I would never trust our school counselor with my personal problems. She is always late to work and her sense of style is outdated.

Teaching Ideas:

1. Present an issue to the class and ask them to come up with illogical arguments and to identify which type of illogical argument they are using.
2. Watch a presidential debate and ask students to identify any illogical arguments used by the candidates.
3. Break the class into small groups. Provide each group with the editorial section of the newspaper and ask them to find and identify any illogical arguments being used.
4. Provide students with a list of illogical arguments. Ask them to change each argument into a logical one.
5. Bring in several taped TV commercials and discuss with students the use of illogical arguments in the media.

Scaffold:

- Present one or two types of illogical arguments at a time and teach to mastery before moving on to the next one.
- Use several examples and non-examples. The use of non-examples will assist students in refining their understanding of the various types of illogical arguments.
- Provide scaffolding by first using statements that are easily identified as illogical arguments (e.g., *I don't like you, therefore you're wrong*). Then slowly introduce more complex and less obvious statements.
- Begin by asking students to examine lists of isolated statements. As students become more proficient in identifying illogical arguments, use passages and longer reading materials.
- When asking students to identify the type of illogical argument, always ask them to justify their response.
- For those students having difficulty with this skill, prepare an index card listing each type of illogical argument, followed by key words and an example.

Adapted from Johnson, B. E. (1998). *The reading edge: Thirteen ways to build reading comprehension*. New York: Houghton Mifflin Company.

Main Idea Record

TEKS Objectives:

- The student comprehends selections using a variety of strategies.

Corresponding TEKS Student Expectations:

9.7.F.: The student is expected to identify main ideas and their supporting details.

9.7.H.: The student is expected to draw inferences such as conclusions, generalizations, and predictions and support them from text.

10.7.G. & 11.7.G.: The student is expected to draw inferences such as conclusions, generalizations, and predictions and support them with text evidence and experience.

Materials:

- Novel
- *Main Idea Record*

Introduction:

This activity teaches students how to determine the main idea of a meaningful section of text (e.g., chapter, scene) and to make and evaluate predictions.

Lesson:

1. Ask the students to read the first meaningful section (e.g., chapter, scene) of the novel.
2. Tell students they are going to *Get the Gist* of the section (see *Get the Gist* lesson). Review how to *Get the Gist* by having a discussion about **who** or **what** the section is about. Ask students to:
 - Identify **who** or **what** the section is about.
 - Identify what is important about the **who** or **what**.
3. Lead students in developing a main idea statement about the **who** or the **what**. Record it on the board. Have students record it in their *Main Idea Record*.
4. Lead a discussion in critiquing the main idea according to the following criteria:
 - Most important information
 - In my own words
 - No more than ten words
5. Have students skim the section for quotations that confirm the main idea statement. Call on students to share their quotations. Students should provide the page number and read the passage. Record the quotations on the board. Have students record them in their *Main Idea Record*.
6. Ask students to think of images of the main idea and illustrate them on *Main Idea Record*.
7. Ask students to brainstorm a title for the section using their main ideas and quotations. Have students share their ideas and decide on a title. Write it on the board and have students write it at the top of their *Main Idea Record*.
8. Draw a simple chart to be used during the entire novel.

Prediction	Quotation	Evaluation

Lead the students in making one or two predictions about the novel based on the first section. Students should be able to provide quotations from the text to support their prediction. After the second section of the novel, the students can evaluate their predictions and make further predictions.

9. Continue this procedure with the remaining sections of the novel.

Adapted from University of Texas Center for Reading and Language Arts. (2002). *Effective instruction for secondary struggling readers: Research-based practices*. Austin, TX: Texas Education Agency.

Main Idea Record

Name(s): Luisa Morales Date: 9/17/02

Chapter title: Act 1, Scenes 1 & 2 of the "Miracle Worker" by William Gibson

Quotation that supports the main idea:

"Doctor, don't be merely considerate, will my girl be all right?" p. 637

Quotation that supports the main idea:

"Main thing is the fever is gone, these things come and go in infants, never know why. Call it acute congestion of the stomach and brain." p. 637

Quotation that supports the main idea:

"She can't see. Look at her eyes. (She takes the lamp from him, moves it before the child's face). She can't see!" p. 638

Quotation that supports the main idea:

"Or hear. When I screamed she didn't blink. Not an eyelash—she can't hear you!" p. 638

Illustration of the Main Idea



Main Idea

Helen Keller is a child with many medical problems and several disabilities.

Sample lesson, continued

7. Possible title for play, based on Scene 1:

A Child of Misfortune

8. Lead the students in making one or two predictions about the play based on the first section. Students should be able to provide quotations from the text to support their prediction. After the second section of the play, the students can evaluate their predictions and make further predictions.

Prediction	Quotation	Evaluation
<p>Helen's parents have a hard time dealing with her medical problems.</p>	<p>"They have been through a long vigil, and it shows in their tired bearing and disarranged clothing." "Doctor, don't be merely considerate, will my girl be all right?" "And now, still staring, Kate screams...Kate screams again, her look intent on the baby and terrible."</p>	<p>Because of the pain of their daughter's disabilities, the parents become distant and rely heavily on nannies to provide for Helen.</p>
<p>Helen will be unable to talk because she cannot hear or see.</p>	<p>"Or hear. When I screamed she didn't blink. Not an eyelash—she can't hear you!"</p>	<p>Throughout the entire play, Helen never recovers her ability to hear or see; however, she is able to pronounce some words with the assistance and teachings of Annie Sullivan.</p>

Main Idea Record

Name(s): _____ Date: _____

Chapter title: _____

Quotation that supports the main idea:

Quotation that supports the main idea:

Quotation that supports the main idea:

Quotation that supports the main idea:

Illustration of the Main Idea

Main Idea

Mental Imagery

TEKS Objectives:

- The student expresses and supports responses to various types of texts.
- The student comprehends selections using a variety of strategies.

Corresponding TEKS Student Expectations:

- 9.10.B. & 10.10.B.: The student is expected to use elements of text to defend his/her own responses and interpretations.
- 9.11.A.: The student is expected to recognize the theme (general observation about life or human nature) within a text.
- 9.11.B., 10.11.B., & 11.11.B.: The student is expected to analyze the relevance of setting and time frame to text's meaning.
- 9.11.C.: The student is expected to analyze characters and identify time and point of view.
- 9.11.D.: The student is expected to identify basic conflicts.
- 10.11.C. & 11.11.C.: The student is expected to describe and analyze the development of plot and identify conflicts and how they are addressed and resolved.
- 9.7.H.: The student is expected to draw inferences such as conclusions, generalizations, and predictions and support them from text.
- 10.7.G. & 11.7.G.: The student is expected to draw inferences such as conclusions, generalizations, and predictions and support them with text evidence and experience.

Materials:

- Appropriate reading materials/text
- Mental Imagery Logs

Lesson:

1. Begin by having students create mental images of familiar objects. Ask students to close their eyes and form a picture of a car, a dog, or a house. Tell them that as they picture the object, they should think about how the object looks, sounds, feels, and smells. Encourage students to personalize their responses.
2. Next, read aloud a sentence to the students, such as "*The windows in the enormous mansion were decorated with plush red curtains, which fell onto the marble floor.*" Have students visualize images from the sentence. Ask students to identify the words that are necessary to form the mental picture. (For this example, *windows, enormous, mansion, plush, red, curtains, marble floor.*)

3. As students form their mental images, ask questions such as:
What do you see?
What does it smell like?
How bright/dark is it in your image?
What do you feel?
4. Choose a short passage or several sentences from the reading selection. Tell students to read the short passage and to form a mental image. Have them write a description of their image that includes sensory references, such as sight, smell, touch, etc.
5. Call on several students to share their descriptions and explain what in the passage led them to the various aspects of their mental image. For example, if a student describes a home as “lonely,” ask for an explanation of what in the passage gives the impression that the home is a lonely place.
6. Have students finish reading the selection silently. Then, ask them to modify or add to their description.

Scaffold:

- If students have difficulty describing the mental images derived from sentences, spend more time practicing with mental images derived from concrete objects.
- Have students work in pairs to read a passage or selection. Ask them to stop after two or three paragraphs and create a mental image. They describe their mental image to each other and then continue reading the next several paragraphs, repeating this procedure. Once students have finished reading, each pair will write a summary that includes sensory references, elaborations, and inferred details, whenever appropriate.
- Preview the passage and mark the places in the reading where it makes sense to stop and create a mental image. Before students begin reading, indicate where you want them to stop and make mental images.
- Have students underline (or write on a separate sheet of paper) the key words used to create their mental images. These words can be used later in their descriptions and summaries.

McNeil, J. D. (1987). *Reading comprehension: New directions for classroom practice* (2nd ed.). Glenview, IL: Scott Foresman.

Wood, K. D., & Harmon, J. M. (2002). *Strategies for integrating reading and writing in middle and high school classrooms*. Westerville, OH: National Middle School Association.

Marigolds by Eugenia W. Collier

“Each morning our mother and father trudged wearily down the dirt road and around the bend, she to her domestic job, he to his daily unsuccessful quest for work” (p. 92).

Teacher Probing Questions

1. Describe the mother and father. What might their dress look like?
What do you think might be their demeanor? What are their surroundings like?
2. How do you envision the narrator?

Student Responses

Student A: The father is tall and thin. He has slumped shoulders.

Student B: He is wearing overalls and a long-sleeved plaid shirt.

Student C: The mother is shorter and not as thin.

Student D: She is wearing an old dress.

Student E: Both are tired after so many years of hard work.

Student F: They have accepted their fate and work hard.

Student G: Their surroundings look barren. The land is light brown with little patches of long grass.

Student H: She is a teenager who is beginning to understand their situation.

Student I: She is very well-behaved and helps her parents because she knows how hard they work.

Student J: She is tall and thin like her father, but her face has some of her mother’s roundness.

Student K: She is angry at her family’s plight.

Class inferences and description based on the mental images:

The girl and her family lived in a barren place, surrounded by poverty. Her parents were hard- working folks who had to work long days to make ends meet.

As she entered puberty, the girl was beginning to understand her station in life and did not like it. She felt an anger stirring inside her because of the injustice around her. Her parents, who worked for others day in and day out, had nothing to show for it. Their worn-out clothes and tired bodies were a daily reminder of all the things they did not have.

Modified mental images after reading “Marigolds” by Eugenia W. Collier:

The girl: _____

Mother: _____

Father: _____

Setting: _____

Plot: _____

Mental Imagery Log

Name(s): _____ Date: _____

Title: _____ Author _____

Excerpt from reading selection (p. ____)

“

_____”

Before reading

1. Underline the key words in the excerpt.
2. Create a mental image of the excerpt.
3. Write a description of your image. What does it look like? What does it smell like? What does it feel like? What does it sound like? Describe the setting.

After reading

4. Now that you have finished reading the passage, has your mental image changed? How?

Preview Log

TEKS Objectives:

- The student expresses and supports responses to various types of texts.
- The student analyzes literary elements for their contributions to meaning in literary texts.

Corresponding TEKS Student Expectations:

- 9.10.B. & 10.10.B.: The student is expected to use elements of text to defend his/her own responses and interpretations.
- 9.11.A.: The student is expected to recognize the theme (general observation about life or human nature) within a text.
- 9.11.B., 10.11.B., & 11.11.B.: The student is expected to analyze the relevance of setting and time frame to text's meaning.
- 9.11.C.: The student is expected to analyze characters and identify time and point of view.
- 9.11.D.: The student is expected to identify basic conflicts.
- 9.11.E.: The student is expected to analyze the development of plot in narrative text.
- 9.8.D., 10.8.D., & 11.8.D.: The student is expected to interpret the possible influences of the historical context on a literary work.
- 10.11.C. & 11.11.C.: The student is expected to describe and analyze the development of plot and identify conflicts and how they are addressed and resolved.
- 10.7.G. & 11.7.G.: The student is expected to draw inferences such as conclusions, generalizations, and predictions and support them with text evidence and experience.

Introduction:

This activity teaches students how to preview text through brainstorming, developing vocabulary, building background knowledge, and making predictions.

Materials:

- Expository text
- Overhead projector
- Overhead marker
- Preview Logs
- Transparency of Preview Log

Lesson:

Grouping: Small groups

1. Introduce the topic of the lesson to the students and record it on the top of the transparency. Ask the students to record it on the top of their Preview Logs.
2. Give each group two minutes to brainstorm how this topic relates to previous lessons and what they already know about the topic from other lessons, friends, movies, independent reading, and/or family members. Instruct the students to record their ideas in the first box of their Preview Logs.
3. Ask for brainstormed items from each group and record them in the first box on the transparency.
4. Introduce and write three to five key vocabulary words and their definitions in the second box of the transparency. Have the students record the key vocabulary words along with their definitions in the second box of their Preview Logs. Ask them to think of an antonym for each word, sentence containing the words, or a visual image, and record it on their logs.
5. Introduce and discuss any unfamiliar proper nouns from the passage to be read.
6. Pass out copies of the passage or direct the students to the passage to be read in their textbooks.
7. Lead the students in scanning the passage for clues or physical features, such as the title, subtitle, headings, subheadings, and/or pictures that could be used to make predictions about the passage.
8. Ask each group to make two predictions regarding what they think they are going to learn about in the passage. Have the students record them in the last box of their Preview Logs and check the box or boxes to show what clues they used to make their predictions.
9. Ask for predictions and record them in the last box on the transparency. Return to the predictions at the conclusion of reading to see how close the predictions were to what actually happened.

Scaffold:

- Review information from previous lessons that relate to the new topic.
- Reduce the number of new vocabulary words.
- Using a think-aloud, lead the students in scanning the passage for clues or physical features that could be used to make predictions about the passage.
- Use an expository text with numerous relevant clues, such as physical descriptions, that facilitate making predictions.
- Use prompts and cues to guide the students in making two predictions regarding what they think they are going to learn about in the passage.

Preview Log

Name: _____ **Date:** _____

Title: *"Birds" by Daphne du Maurier* **Topic:** *Attacking birds*

How does this topic relate to previous lessons? What do I already know?

I don't recall any other stories that we've read about invading birds. However, we did read about the locust in Africa and the damage it was causing farmers and their crops. I saw Alfred Hitchcock's movie, "The Birds," many years ago. This movie was about how birds all of a sudden and without provocation attack the residents of a small town.

Key Vocabulary word and definition

1. *disposition*: personality or temperament
2. *placid*: calm, untroubled
3. *recounted*: described in detail; narrated
4. *sullen*: gloomy
5. *deft*: skillful in a quick, sure and easy way

Antonym, sentence, or illustration

After his girlfriend's death, Bob's disposition has changed from easy-going to sullen and angry.

Antonym: nervous, anxious

As soon as David arrived, he recounted all of his adventures during camp.

Antonym: cheerful

Lisa is so deft at cooking, we all would rather go to her house for the holidays.

Unfamiliar proper nouns:

Plymouth Mrs. Trigg Cornwall, England Nat Hocken The Guardian

Predictions:

1. I think this story is going to be about...

Birds that attack a town.

I got this idea from:

title

illustrations

subheadings/chapter titles

other: The Alfred Hitchcock movie

2. Read first three pages (47–49) of “Birds” and Get the Gist:

Nat, a war veteran and farmer, has noticed that the birds are becoming restless. That night, birds enter his home and attack him and his children.

3. What will happen next?

The bird attacks will become more frequent and more intense. Birds will begin to attack people in the town and folks will become nervous and upset. As the danger increases, Nat and his family will leave town to escape the birds.

Adapted from University of Texas Center for Reading and Language Arts. (2000). *Enhancing reading comprehension for secondary students: Part II*. Austin, TX: Texas Education Agency.

Question-Answer Relationships

TEKS Objectives:

- The student comprehends selections using a variety of strategies.
- The student reads extensively and intensively for different purposes in varied sources, including world literature.
- The student reads critically to evaluate texts.
- The student expresses and supports responses to various types of texts.
- The student comprehends selections using a variety of strategies.

Corresponding TEKS Student Expectations:

- 9.10.B. & 10.10.B.: The student is expected to use elements of text to defend his/her own responses and interpretations.
- 9.7.H.: The student is expected to draw inferences such as conclusions, generalizations, and predictions and support them from text.
- 10.7.G. & 11.7.G.: The student is expected to draw inferences such as conclusions, generalizations, and predictions and support them with text evidence and experience.
- 9.11.B., 10.11.B., & 11.11.B.: The student is expected to analyze the relevance of setting and time frame to text's meaning.
- 9.11.C.: The student is expected to analyze characters and identify time and point of view.

Introduction:

Using QARs allows students to independently analyze a text-related question and provide the appropriate answer. Once students gain independence in answering questions, you can teach them how to pose their own questions.

Materials:

- Several reading selections of various lengths
- Questions and answers for each passage of each QAR type
- Question-Answer Relationship Guide

Lesson:

1. Tell your students that today they will learn about reading-related questions. Explain that there are several types of questions and that understanding the differences among them will make finding answers much easier. Questions about a reading selection make different demands on the reader. Some require basic recall, while others require drawing conclusions or making inferences. Understanding the various types of questions will improve students' ability to retain information and enhance their comprehension.
2. Go over the *Question-Answer Relationship Guide* and explain that there are several types of questions:

In the Book: Questions that can be answered using information from the text. There are two types:

- *Right There:* The information needed to answer *Right There* questions can be found in one place in the reading selection; that is, the information is right there. Answering *Right There* questions is usually easy and requires little thinking or effort.
- *Think and Search:* The information required to answer *Think and Search* questions is found in more than one place in the reading and requires putting various pieces of information together. These questions require that a conclusion be drawn.

In My Head: Questions that can be answered with information based on prior student knowledge and experiences. In My Head questions require more thought than In The Book questions. There are also two types:

- *Author and You:* When answering *Author and You* questions, students need to add their own knowledge and experiences to information from the story. The answers cannot be found in the selection, but reading the selection is necessary to answer *Author and You* questions. These questions require that inferences be drawn using text details plus the student's prior knowledge.
 - *On My Own:* To answer this type of question, students rely on their own knowledge and experience, and it is not necessary to read the selection in order to answer the questions. These questions may require the student to make an evaluation or to be creative.
3. Give students a short reading selection, four questions (one of each type), four answers, and a blank *QAR Guide*. Model labeling each question and placing it under the appropriate heading (e.g., *Author and You*, *On My Own*, etc.). As you think aloud, model how to find the correct response for each question.
 4. With a new selection, set of questions and answers, and a fresh *QAR guide*, repeat the last step. This time have students work in pairs to place each question under the correct heading. Call on pairs to share their responses and to explain the placement of questions in the guide.
 5. Repeat Step 4, but this time do not provide students with the answers. Students now must supply the responses and place each question under the correct heading.
 6. After students have had plenty of practice with paragraphs, provide them with longer texts containing more questions. Guide the students through an initial QAR as a review. Then students work through remaining exercises while you provide each pair with feedback on QAR selection and answer accuracy.
 7. Now students are ready to move on to chapters or a full story broken into four segments, each followed by six questions—two per QAR category. The first segment is completed by the class and serves as a review. The second is completed by each student, but corrected by the group. The remaining two segments are completed by each student, with appropriate teacher monitoring and scaffolding.

Scaffold:

- Allow students who are having difficulty to repeat each step before moving on to the next.
- At first, scaffold students' learning by using easier and shorter passages.
- Surround each activity with lots of discussion and think-alouds. By discussing each step, you will make your thinking visible.

The following is a completed guide using a selection from a state-adopted text:

Question-Answer Relationship Guide

Name(s): _____ Date: _____

Reading Selection: "The Washwoman" by Isaac Bashevis Singer

In The Book QARs	In My Head QARs
<p style="text-align: center;">Right There</p> <p>The answer is in the text, usually easy to find. The words used to make up the question and answer are right there, in the same sentence. Example:</p> <p><i>How old was the washwoman who took care of the family's laundry?</i></p> <p><i>The washwoman was past 70 when she began doing the wash for the family.</i></p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Author and You</p> <p>The answer is not in the text. You need to think about what the author is telling you and what you already know. Example:</p> <p><i>Why did the washwoman make such a strong impression on the little boy who narrates the story?</i></p> <p><i>Even though the woman was of such an advanced age, she did not want to be a burden to others. She worked much harder than any person of her age should. Her concern with finishing her work and returning the laundry to its owners prolonged her life until her responsibilities were completed.</i></p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Think and Search (Putting it Together)</p> <p>The answer is in the reading; however, you need to put together several pieces of information to find it. Words for the question and words for the answer are not found in the same sentence (sometimes, not on the same page). They come from different places in the reading. Example:</p> <p><i>What things did the washwoman do that made her such a good launderer?</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Every piece of linen sparkled like polished silver.• Every piece was neatly ironed.• She charged no more than the others did. The woman had no faucet where she lived but had to bring in the water from a pump.• She scrubbed thoroughly in a washtub, rinsed with washing soda, soaked, boiled in an enormous pot, starched, and then ironed.• Every piece was handled ten times or more.• She had to carry the laundry up to the attic and hang it on clotheslines.	<p style="text-align: center;">On My Own</p> <p>The answer is not in the reading. You can even answer this question without reading the selection. You need to use your own experiences and prior knowledge. Example:</p> <p><i>What are the traits of a hard worker?</i></p> <p><i>A hard worker is one who is always punctual, completes all work, is responsible, gets along with co-workers, and enjoys doing his/her work well.</i></p>

Moore, D. W., Readence, J. E., & Rickelman, R. J. (1989). *Prereading activities for content area reading and learning*. Newark, DE: International Reading Association.

Raphael, T. E. (1982). Question-answering strategies for children. *Reading Teacher*, 38, 186-190.

Raphael, T. E. (1984). Teaching learners about sources of information for answering comprehension questions. *Journal of Reading*, 27, 303-311.

Reaction Guide

TEKS Objectives:

- The student comprehends selections using a variety of strategies.
- The student reads critically to evaluate texts.
- The student expresses and supports responses to various types of texts.
- The student comprehends selections using a variety of strategies.

Corresponding TEKS Student Expectations:

9.7.F.: The student is expected to identify main ideas and their supporting details.

9.10.B. & 10.10.B.: The student is expected to use elements of text to defend his/her own responses and interpretations.

9.11.B., 10.11.B., & 11.11.B.: The student is expected to analyze the relevance of setting and time frame to text's meaning.

9.11.C.: The student is expected to analyze characters and identify time and point of view.

9.7.H.: The student is expected to draw inferences such as conclusions, generalizations, and predictions and support them from text.

10.7.G. & 11.7.G.: The student is expected to draw inferences such as conclusions, generalizations, and predictions and support them with text evidence and experience.

Materials:

- Appropriate reading materials/text
- Reaction Guide

Lesson:

Note: Teaching students about logical arguments prior to this lesson will provide them with background knowledge (see *Arguments: Are They Logical?*).

1. Read the selection and select the key concepts that underlie the piece.
2. Write thought-provoking statements related to the reading selection.
3. Include two columns, one to be completed before reading and one to be completed after reading.
4. Distribute copies of the statements.
5. Have students work in pairs. Ask students to read the statements together and to discuss whether or not they agree with each. Explain that it is not necessary that they agree with each other, but that they must explain to their partner why they disagree or agree with each statement. Even though they are working in pairs, each student should complete their own Reaction Guide. If they agree with the statement, they are to put a checkmark under the *Before Reading* column.

6. Explain to students that there are no right or wrong answers. Encourage students to listen to others' opinions without criticism. Instead, they should explain their responses, and whenever possible, provide evidence to support their point of view.
7. Once students have completed the *Before Reading* column, engage the class in a discussion. Ask students to share their responses and to explain why they agree or disagree with each statement.
8. Have students read the selection independently.
9. Working again in pairs, students repeat Step 5, but this time they fill in the *After Reading* column.
10. Bring the class together and have a second class discussion. As students share their responses, ask them to cite examples from the reading selection to support their answers.

Readence, J. B., Bean, T. W., & Baldwin, R. S. (1998). *Content area literacy: An integrated approach*. Dubuque, IA: Kendall/Hunt.

Wood, K. D., & Harmon, J. M. (2002). *Strategies for integrating reading and writing in middle and high school classrooms*. Westerville, OH: National Middle School Association.

Reaction Guide

Name: _____ **Date:** _____

Title: "The Gift of the Magi" **Author:** O. Henry

Read the following statements and place a checkmark if you agree with the statement under the *Before Reading* column.

Read "The Gift of the Magi" by O. Henry and place a checkmark if you agree with the statement under the *After Reading* column. Did your responses change after reading the passage?

	Before Reading	After Reading
1. It's better to give than to receive.		
2. Love is unselfish.		
3. When giving gifts, it's the thought that counts.		
4. You should always work to have better things.		
5. A true gift requires sacrifice.		
6. You should always give gifts to your loved ones on important occasions, even when doing so will put you in debt.		

If you changed one or more of your responses after reading the selection, explain what in the story made you change your mind.

Story Impressions

TEKS Objectives:

- The student comprehends selections using a variety of strategies.
- The student analyzes literary elements for their contributions to meaning in literary texts.
- The student expresses and supports responses to various types of texts.
- The student reads critically to evaluate texts.

Corresponding TEKS Student Expectations:

- 9.10.B. & 10.10.B.: The student is expected to use elements of text to defend his/her own responses and interpretations.
- 9.11.A.: The student is expected to recognize the theme (general observation about life or human nature) within a text.
- 9.11.C.: The student is expected to analyze characters and identify time and point of view.
- 9.11.E.: The student is expected to analyze the development of plot in narrative text.
- 10.11.C.: The student is expected to describe and analyze the development of plot and identify conflicts and how they are addressed and resolved.
- 9.7.H.: The student is expected to draw inferences such as conclusions, generalizations, and predictions and support them from text.
- 10.7.G. & 11.7.G.: The student is expected to draw inferences such as conclusions, generalizations, and predictions and support them with text evidence and experience.

Materials:

- Appropriate reading materials/text
- *Story Impressions Guide*

Introduction:

This activity helps to activate students' schema. It promotes students' interest as they make predictions and compare their own story to the one in the text.

Lesson:

1. The teacher selects words or phrases that represent important characters, settings, and key elements of the plot of a narrative the students will read.
2. List clue words according to their sequence in the narrative, with arrows indicating the direction of the action.
3. The students then use these words to compose their own stories—their versions of what the upcoming story will be about.
4. After reading the selection, students compare their story to the one in their text. Students describe similarities and differences, including setting, characters, plot, etc.

Scaffold:

- Ask students to discuss movie previews they have recently seen in the theater. Then ask them to predict what the movie will be about. Discuss with students whether predictions based on previews are always correct.
- Before students write their story impressions independently, create several stories with the class or with a small group, providing lots of guidance in the form of think-alouds and modeling.

McGinley, W. J., & Denner, P. R. (1987). Story impressions: A prereading/writing activity. *Journal of Reading, 31*, 248-253.

Story Impressions

Name: Marisa Sanders

Date: November 2

Directions:

The words and phrases below were taken from "The Princess and the Tin Box," by James Thurber story that you will soon read. Using the words on the left column, make up your own story. Then read the story and compare your prediction to the author's story. Describe some of the similarities and differences between the two.

far country
king
prettiest princess
gold, platinum, silver toys
nightingale sang
sapphire/topaz bathroom
marriage
first prince
solid gold apple
second prince
diamond nightingale
third prince
great jewel box
fourth prince
gigantic ruby heart
fifth prince
small tin box
great interest and delight
selection
wedding

My story

A long time ago there lived a king and queen who were the parents of the prettiest princess in their far away country. They were very wealthy and lived in a beautiful castle full of the most luxurious furniture and clothes that money could buy. The walls had encrusted gems and the bathroom was adorned with sapphire and topaz. The castle had many servants who took care of the family and made sure they only received the best of things and care. The princess' toys were all made of gold, platinum, or silver. She had a nightingale in a golden cage that sang to her every night.

When the princess reached marrying age, all the princes from around the land came to offer their love. The first prince showed her a garden full of solid gold apples. The second prince took her to his castle where he had a nightingale adorned with diamonds. The third prince gave her a great jewel box as a present. The fourth prince told her that if she married him, he would give her a gigantic pendant in the shape of a heart made of rubies. But the fifth prince was poor and gave her only a tin box. However, the princess could see in his eyes goodness and honesty and was moved because he had made the present he'd brought, while the rest had obtained theirs with their riches.

With great interest and delight the princess shared with her nightingale the difficult choice she was about to make. The nightingale in the golden cage advised the princess to follow her heart and to choose the prince who had used his own hands and talent to make the gift.

Although the queen and king were disappointed at their daughter's selection, they were so delighted to see her so happy and in love that they soon agreed to the marriage.

The prettiest princess and the tin-box prince married in a beautiful ceremony. After the wedding the tin-box prince confessed that he was indeed wealthy, but that wanted a wife who would marry him for love and not for his belongings. The tin-box prince and the prettiest princess lived happily ever after.

Compare:	Similarities:	Differences:
Setting	The princess and king were rich and did live in a far away land.	There was no queen in his story.
Characters	In both stories there were five princes bidding for her hand.	In Thurber's story the princess does not marry the tin-box prince, but chooses the prince who gave her a big box where she can put all her new belongings (and future ones as well).
Plot	The five princes did try to persuade her using different material things.	The nightingale had no significant role in Thurber's story while in mine he was the princess' confidant.
Resolution	The princess did have to choose among the five princes who came to ask for her hand.	My princess was a better person, his was shallow and materialistic.
Other conventions	The princess did end up getting married.	His story is probably more realistic than mine.

Evaluate your story:

Although Thurber's story is well written, I liked my ending much better. It is more typical of stories that follow this format (fairy tales) and my central character had more redeeming qualities than his. My story also included the nightingale as a secondary character, which made my story more interesting. The nightingale represented wisdom and besides he could talk!

Story Impressions

Name: _____ Date: _____

Directions:

The words and phrases below were taken from *"The Princess and the Tin Box,"* by James Thurber, a story that you will soon read. Using the words on the left column, make up your own story. Then read the story and compare your prediction to the author's story. Describe some of the similarities and differences between the two.

My story

Compare:

Similarities:

Differences:

Setting

Characters

Plot

Resolution

**Other
conventions**

Evaluate your story:

Note to teacher:

List concepts or ideas for students to consider when making comparisons. Concepts could include

Think Like a Character

TEKS Objectives:

- The student analyzes literary elements for their contributions to meaning in literary texts.

Corresponding TEKS Student Expectations:

9.11.C.: The student is expected to analyze characters and identify time and point of view.

Materials:

- Reading material
- Paper or notebook

Lesson:

Ask students to answer questions related to one of their readings as if they were one of the characters from their book, the writer of a newspaper article, or a historical figure. Tell them that they must put themselves in the place of the person they will answer for and use their reading material to back up their responses. State questions so that students will respond to them in the first person, such as,

“How did you feel when you were arrested by the police?”

Instead of,

“What do you think Paul was feeling when he was arrested by the police?”

Scaffold:

- This activity will initially require a lot of modeling from you. At first, students will be unsure as to how much inference they can use. Some may have difficulty integrating their own experiences or insights into their responses and be too literal in their answers. One way to model this activity is to tell your students that you will now be one of the characters from their reading and that you will answer their questions. As students begin to ask you questions, model responses that are based on the text, but that also incorporate your interpretation of the character’s feelings and/or experiences.
- After several demonstrations, ask students to answer as one of the characters. Give them several opportunities to respond orally before having them answer in writing. You may ask students to work in small groups, in which one student is interviewed by the rest of the group, or in pairs, with students taking turns interviewing each other.
- As students become more comfortable in the role of a character, engage them in discussions regarding the character’s motivation and point of view.
- Students who are English language learners will benefit from working with English-speaking peers. Distribute ELL students throughout the class so that their peers may serve as models. Depending on the student’s level of oral proficiency, you may allow the student to first answer in his/her native language and then work on an English version.

Teaching Ideas:

- Have students work in pairs. One will act as the character from the story, novel, biography, or newspaper article, and the other will act as a journalist. You can write some of the questions and allow the student “journalist” to add his/her own.
- Routinely ask students to respond to book assignments (such as the questions that appear at the end of a chapter) in the first person.
- Have three students act as the same character. Ask two students to leave the room, while the class interviews the first one. Follow the same procedure with the other two students. Then ask all three students to return to class and receive feedback from the rest of the students. This feedback should include information such as how well the student described time and place, emotions, motivation, and point of view. Ask the student who gave the strongest responses to do a think-aloud and discuss how he/she prepared for the activity.

Adapted from Wood, K. D., Lapp, D., & Flood, J. (1992). *Guiding readers through text: A review of study guides*. Newark, DE: International Reading Association.

The following is a sample lesson using a selection from a state-adopted text:

Think Like a Character

Name(s): _____ Date: _____

Reading Selection: Excerpt from "The Necklace" by Guy de Maupassant

Directions:

1. Read the selection.
2. Imagine that you are the girl described in the passage.
3. Respond to the questions/prompts as if you were the character described.

Text passage:

She was one of those pretty and charming girls, born, as if by an accident of fate, into a family of clerks. With no dowry, no prospects, no way of any kind of being met, understood, loved, and married by a man both prosperous and famous, she was finally married to a minor clerk in the Ministry of Education (page 221).

Questions/Prompts:

1. What are your true feelings about your husband (the clerk in the Ministry of Education)?

2. Describe the man you dreamed of marrying all your life.

3. How did you feel about your status in life as you were growing up?

Vocabulary Map

TEKS Objectives:

- The student uses a variety of strategies to read unfamiliar words and to build vocabulary.
- The student acquires an extensive vocabulary through reading and systematic word study.
- The student analyzes literary elements for their contributions to meaning in literary texts.

Corresponding TEKS Student Expectations:

9.6.B., & 10.6.B.: The student is expected to rely on context to determine meanings of words and phrases such as figurative language, idioms, multiple meaning words, and technical vocabulary.

9.6.C., 10.6.C., & 11.6.C.: The student is expected to apply meanings of prefixes, roots, and suffixes in order to comprehend.

10.7.G. & 11.7.G.: The student is expected to draw inferences such as conclusions, generalizations, and predictions and support them with text evidence and experience.

Materials:

- Appropriate reading materials/text

Introduction:

Use vocabulary maps to assess students' background knowledge and to discuss vocabulary words related to the topic. Vocabulary maps also assist in connecting new concepts to known information and organizing information into categories.

Lesson:

Notes: This lesson is described using "A Man Called Horse" by Dorothy M. Johnson (a selection which appears in a state-adopted text) as a sample. The Vocabulary Map Lesson may take more than one class session to complete.

1. Write *Native American* on the board and draw a circle around it.
2. Ask students to think of words or ideas related to *Native American* (see figure 1).
3. List the words the students suggest on the board.
4. Discuss the words in the list. Next write these words on the vocabulary map, placing them in categories. With the class, label each category on the map (see figure 2).
5. Ask students to write sentences using the words/phrases from the various categories in the vocabulary map. For example:

Miccosukee, Crow, Sioux, Cheyenne, and Seminoles are some of the many Native American tribes in the United States.

6. Ask students to write a summary of what they know about Native Americans, using their vocabulary map.

Scaffold:

- If students have difficulty coming up with sentences, model while thinking aloud.
 - Have students work in pairs to come up with sentences.
7. Ask students to share what they would like to learn about *Native Americans*. Write these questions on the board. Examples are:
What were some of the Native Americans' ceremonies?
Why and when did Native Americans use body paint?
 8. Have students read "A Man Called Horse" by Dorothy Johnson. As they read, they should look for the answers to as many questions as possible. They should also look for new information about the topic to add to the vocabulary map.
 9. After students have finished reading the selection, ask if any of their questions were answered. Discuss answers and new information. Add new information about Native Americans to the vocabulary map. As information related to the structure of the story (plot and characters) is contributed, add it to the map as well.
 10. Now that students have read the selection, have them write three more sentences using words/phrases from the modified vocabulary map. For example,
When Crow tribe members captured prisoners, they performed a ceremony in which they painted their faces black and wore pieces of their victim's clothes.

Follow-up Activity:

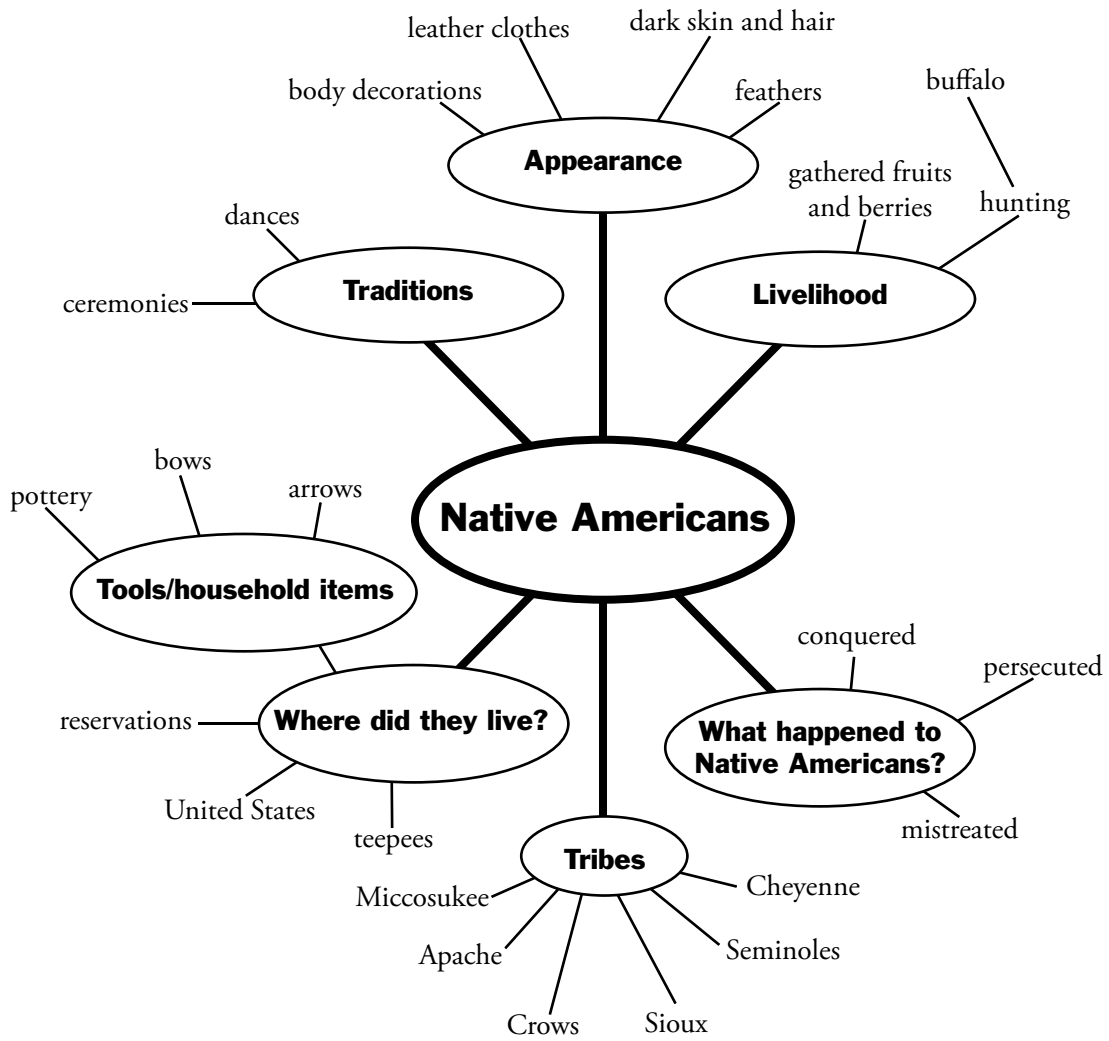
- Working in pairs or small groups, have students research the questions not answered by the reading selection.
- As they find new information, they should add to and/or modify their maps.
- Ask various groups/pairs to share their findings with the class.

Heimlich, J. E., & Pittelman, S. D. (1986). *Semantic mapping: Classroom applications*. Newark, DE: International Reading Association.

Figure 1. Student-elicited word list for *Native Americans*

teepees	Apache	gathered fruits and berries	Cheyenne
arrows	feathers	Crow	dances
bows	Miccosukee	buffalo	reservations
first Americans	Sioux	United States	ceremonies
conquered	hunting	Semioles	pottery
persecuted	dark skin and hair	mistreated	body decoration
leather clothes			

Figure 2. Class Vocabulary Map for Native Americans



Vocabulary Diagram

TEKS Objectives:

- The student uses a variety of strategies to read unfamiliar words and to build vocabulary.
- The student acquires an extensive vocabulary through reading and systematic word study.
- The student analyzes literary elements for their contributions to meaning in literary texts.

Corresponding TEKS Student Expectations:

9.6.B., 10.6.B.: The student is expected to rely on context to determine meanings of words and phrases such as figurative language, idioms, multiple meaning words, and technical vocabulary.

9.6.C., 10.6.C., & 11.6.C.: The student is expected to apply meanings of prefixes, roots, and suffixes in order to comprehend.

10.7.G. & 11.7.G.: The student is expected to draw inferences such as conclusions, generalizations, and predictions and support them with text evidence and experience.

Materials:

- Appropriate reading materials/text
- Vocabulary Diagram or Four Square Vocabulary Map

Introduction:

You can use vocabulary diagrams to assess students' background knowledge and to discuss vocabulary words related to the reading selection. Vocabulary diagrams also assist in connecting new concepts to known information and can serve as a study tool.

Lesson:

1. On the board write the vocabulary words that will appear in today's reading. Distribute blank Vocabulary Diagrams to your students.
2. Ask students to work in pairs to complete their Vocabulary Diagrams. They may use the dictionary if needed.

Scaffold:

If student pairs have difficulty composing sentences, model while thinking aloud.

3. Call on students to share their completed diagrams. Allow for discussion and encourage students to improve on their definitions and/or make necessary changes to their work.
4. After they read the selection, have students refer back to their diagrams. Ask if additional meanings can be added to their diagrams now that the words have been read in context. If additional meanings for a word were learned, students should add the new definition to their diagram and write another sentence that reflects the new meaning.

Variation:

Similar lessons can be conducted using the Four Square Vocabulary Map. Several forms have been provided on the following pages. Select the one that best fits the word(s) being studied. In some instances, providing students with non-examples is the most effective way to differentiate a word from a similar one. Non-examples and antonyms help students in understanding the boundaries of a new concept. With some words, learning whether it's an adjective, verb, or adverb assists students when making sentences. For English language learners, having a word's cognate greatly increases the likelihood that they will remember the new word and its meaning.

Schwartz, R. M., & Raphael, T. E. (1985). Concept or definition: A key to improving students' vocabulary. *The Reading Teacher*, 39, 190-205.

Texas Education Agency. (2000). *Promoting vocabulary development: Components of effective vocabulary instruction*. Austin, TX: Texas Reading Initiative.

Vocabulary Diagram

Name(s): _____ Date: _____

Vocabulary word: Adjacent

Definition: next to

Synonym: aside

Antonym: distant

Sentence: The beautiful oak tree is adjacent to the house.

Picture:



Reading selection: "A Christmas Memory" by Truman Capote Page: 152

Vocabulary word: Dilapidated

Definition: shabby, falling apart

Synonym: decrepit, rundown

Antonym: pristine

Sentence: As a child, she lived in a small, dilapidated shack that was so close to falling down she often preferred to sleep outside.

Picture:



Reading selection: "A Christmas Memory" by Truman Capote Page: 146

Vocabulary word: Festooned

Definition: decorated

Synonym: ornamented, adorned

Antonym: plain, basic, unadorned

Sentence: During Christmas the office is festooned inside and out with lights, garlands, and
colorful decorations.

Picture:



Reading selection: "A Christmas Memory" by Truman Capote Page: 149

Vocabulary word: _____

Picture:

Definition: _____

Synonym: _____

Antonym: _____

Sentence: _____

Reading selection: _____ Page: _____

Vocabulary Diagram

Name(s): _____ **Date:** _____

Vocabulary word: _____

Picture:

Definition: _____

Synonym: _____

Antonym: _____

Sentence: _____

Reading selection: _____ Page: _____

Vocabulary word: _____

Picture:

Definition: _____

Synonym: _____

Antonym: _____

Sentence: _____

Reading selection: _____ Page: _____

Vocabulary word: _____

Picture:

Definition: _____

Synonym: _____

Antonym: _____

Sentence: _____

Reading selection: _____ Page: _____

Vocabulary word: _____

Picture:

Definition: _____

Synonym: _____

Antonym: _____

Sentence: _____

Reading selection: _____ Page: _____

Following are several variations of the Four Square Vocabulary Map.

Four Square Vocabulary Map

Name: _____ Date: _____

Title: _____ Author: _____

Vocabulary Word: _____

<p style="text-align: center;">What is it?</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">What is it like?</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Examples</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Non-Examples</p>

Four Square Vocabulary Map

Name: _____ Date: _____

Title: _____ Author: _____

Vocabulary Word: _____

What is it?	What is it like?
Examples	Picture

Write a sentence with the vocabulary word:

Four Square Vocabulary Map

Name: _____ Date: _____

Title: _____ Author: _____

Vocabulary Word: _____

<p style="text-align: center;">What is it?</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Antonyms</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Synonyms</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Related words</p>

Rewrite the definition in your own words:

Word Parts

TEKS Objectives:

- The student uses a variety of strategies to read unfamiliar words and to build vocabulary.
- The student acquires an extensive vocabulary through reading and systematic word study.

Corresponding TEKS Student Expectations:

9.6.C., 10.6.C., & 11.6.C.: The student is expected to apply meanings of prefixes, roots, and suffixes in order to comprehend.

Materials:

Lists of prefixes, suffixes, roots, and base words

Lesson:

1. Explain to students the importance of learning prefixes, suffixes, and roots. Discuss how knowing the most commonly occurring word parts can help them figure out the meanings of hundreds of unknown words.
2. Teach only one prefix or suffix at a time, together with word families and their extensions. For example, once you have explained the prefix *tele*, meaning “from a distance,” have students create a word family list—*telescope*, *television*, *telepathy*, *telecast*, *telescope*, *teleprompter*, *telegraph*. Extensions of the word *telegraph* (*graph*—to write) might include *autobiography*, *autograph*, *bibliography*, *biography*, *topography*, *seismograph*, and *photograph*.
3. Ask students to work in pairs and to develop original words. For example, shopping via the television would be *teleshopping*, and *graphologist* might be someone who studies writing.
4. Have students illustrate their new words.
5. Write a sentence on the board that contains a word with either a prefix or suffix. Discuss how a word’s context can help us to confirm its correct meaning. Use a think-aloud to model how to figure out unknown words using affixes and context. For example:

Jay wanted to become a triathlete, an athlete who competes in running, swimming, and bicycling.

“Triathlete, hmmm. I know that *tri* means three and I know that an athlete is a person who is good at sports. I think this must mean a person who is good at three sports. Let’s see if that makes sense in this sentence. Yes, in this sentence, Jay is an athlete who likes to run, swim, and bicycle.”

6. After introducing *in-*, *dis-*, *-ness*, *mis-*, *under-*, *im-*, *-ite*, and *-less* and providing several practice opportunities, ask students to find the following words in “The Most Dangerous Game” by Richard Connell, a selection in one of the state-adopted texts.

indolently

opaqueness

underbrush

cosmopolite

disarming

misfortune

imprudent

moonless

Have students copy the sentence in which each word is found. Ask students to rewrite the sentence using another word or words that convey the same meaning, based on both their knowledge of word parts and the context.

7. After figuring out the meaning of each word on their own, students compare their work to their neighbor's. If their responses are different, each pair should discuss their responses and agree on the best one. If their responses are similar, the students should work to refine their answers to make them better.
8. Call on several pairs to share their answers and invite other students to comment and/or add to the response being discussed.

Scaffold:

- Have students make webs to illustrate the relationships among the word parts being studied (see Figure 1).
- Begin by teaching prefixes + base words (immature: not mature), because these connections are more obvious than prefixes + roots (immense: not measured).
- When you begin studying roots, focus first on those with Greek origins (e.g., *sphere*, *therm*, and *photo*) because they tend to have more obvious meanings than those of Latin origin (*fid*, *jest*, and *ject*).
- Use a think-aloud to model the procedure for figuring out the meanings of unfamiliar words by using knowledge of the root from a known word.
- Have students complete Venn diagrams as another way of seeing the relationships between words (see Figure 2).
- Provide ELL students and struggling readers with cards that they can carry from class to class and refer to whenever encountering new words. This will help them take an active role in their own learning and assist in long-term learning of the word parts they are working with. (See Figure 3 for sample word parts card.)

Ganske, K. (2000). *Word journeys: Assessment-guided phonics, spelling, and vocabulary instruction*. New York: Guilford Press.

Irwin, J. W., & Baker, I. (1989). *Promoting active reading comprehension strategies: A resource book for teachers*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall. Figure 2. Venn Diagram for *bio* and *sphere*.

Figure 2. Venn Diagram for *bio* and *sphere*.

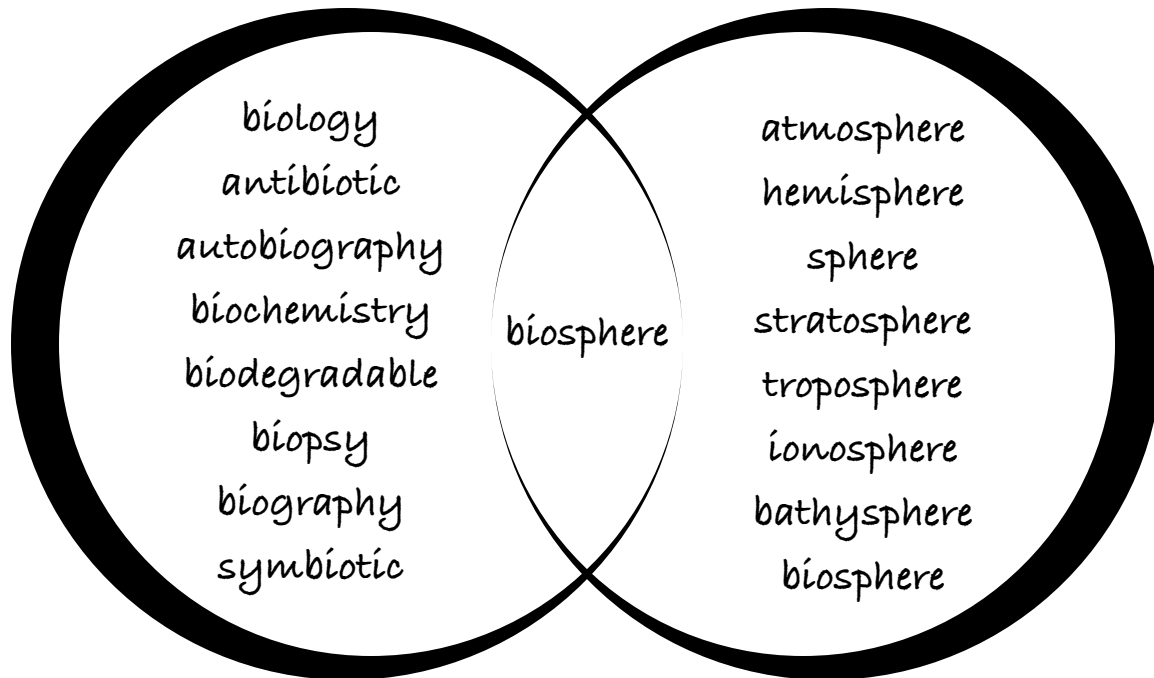


Figure 3. Sample *Word Parts* card.

Frequently Used Prefixes

a	not	amoral	inter	between	intermediate
ante	before	antecedent	mini	small	minimum
anti	against	antisocial	mono	one	monotone
auto	self	autonomous	neo	new	neophyte
bi	two	bicycle	poly	many	polygon
bio	life	biology	post	after	postnatal
circum	around	circumnavigate	pre	before	prepare
contra	against	contrast	quad	four	quadruplets
dec, deca	ten	decade	semi	half	semicircle
dis	not	disagree	sub	under	submarine
ex	out	excommunicate	syn	together	synchrony
geo	earth	geologist	tri	three	tripod
homo	same	homogeneous	uni	one	unicorn
in, il, im	not	impossible			

Figure 1. *Tele-* and *-Graph* Web

