

# Comprehension

“If you read and comprehend what you read, it stays in your brain. But if you read and don’t comprehend what you read, it will go in one side of your brain and SWOOSH real fast out the other side.”

Jake Scheffler, Grade 7

# Comprehension

Comprehension is the reason for reading. If readers can identify the words but do not understand what they are reading, they have not achieved the goal of reading comprehension. To gain a good understanding of the text, children must bring to it the foundational knowledge and skills of oral language, prior knowledge and experience, concepts about print, phonemic awareness, letter-sound relationships, vocabulary, semantics, and syntax. They must integrate what they bring to the text with the text itself. In order *to read to learn, children need to use problem-solving, thinking processes.* They must reflect on what they know and need to know (metacognition) and draw on a variety of comprehension strategies to make sense of what they read.

# Before, During, and After

- **Pre-reading**
  - Pre-reading prepares students for learning by activating their prior knowledge about the topic featured in the text.
- **During-reading**
  - During-reading strategies teach comprehension by making connections, generating questions, and determining importance by guiding the reader to use proficient reader strategies
- **After-reading**
  - After activities connect the old and new knowledge and help students frame it in some way to their lives.

# B-D-A Lesson Format

## Traditional Format

## Active Engagement Format

Before Reading

Assign Reading

During Reading

Read Assignment

Activate & build prior knowledge  
Make predictions  
Raise questions  
Set purpose

Guide ACTIVE Silent Reading

After Reading

Discussions to see if students learned main concepts, what they "should have" learned.

Clarify, Reinforce, and Extend knowledge

# ABC Brainstorming

## What Is It?

Students try to think of a word or phrase associated with the topic, matched to each letter of the alphabet.

## How Does It Work?

Have students list all the letters of the alphabet down a sheet of paper, leaving room beside each letter to write out the rest of a word or phrase. Let them work individually at first, thinking of as many words as they can that could be associated with the topic you identify. Do note: The topic should be big and general enough that students can actually think of a lot of possible terms. Then, in no particular order, let them begin filling in the blanks beside each letter of the alphabet. For instance, if the topic were **World War II**, students might list **Allies**, **Bombers**, **Concentration Camps**, **Dachau**, **Europe**, **French Resistance**, **Germany**, **Hitler**, **Italy**, **Japan**, and so on.

It seems to work well if you give students enough time to think of a lot of ideas, but then let them pair up or work in small groups to fill in blanks for letters they had not yet completed. Then, go around the room or get students to share possible terms for the different letters of the alphabet. Be open to a wide range of possibilities! Make sure students know that you're not looking for exact answers, just justifiable and relevant ones.

# Carousel Brainstorming

## **What Is It?**

Whether activating background knowledge or checking understanding after studying a topic, a carousel brainstorm allows you to have students pull out and think about what they know about subtopics within a larger topic.

## **How Does It Work?**

Begin by putting students in groups of 3 or 4. Give each group a sheet of newsprint/chart paper. Each group's sheet has a different subtopic written on it. One student serves as the recorder and has a particular color of magic marker. Explain that the students will have a short time (say, 30 seconds) to write down on their chart paper all the terms they can think of that they associate with their topic. Explain upfront that you will then have them pass their sheet over to the next group, and a new topic will be passed to them. Make it clear which direction you'll have them pass the sheets so that this is orderly AND so that each group will receive each of the subtopic sheets. At the end of the 30 seconds, tell them to cap their markers, remind them to keep their markers, but have them pass their sheets to the next group according to the pre-determined path for passing. After three or four passings, you will probably want to extend the writing time to 40 seconds, then 45 seconds, and perhaps up to a minute, because all the easy ideas will have been taken by previous groups, and the students will need more time to talk about and think of other terms to be added to the brainstorm list. Keep having students brainstorm, write, and pass until each group has had a chance to add ideas to each of the subtopic sheets. Let them pass it the final time to the group who had each sheet first.

# Carousel Brainstorming (continued)

## How Might You Push It a Step Further?

Go beyond the simple brainstorm and have the group who started with the sheet look it over when it returns to them, note all the other ideas that were added after it was passed around to the other groups, and then circle the three terms that they think are most essential, most important, or most fundamental to the topic at the top of their sheet. That way, they spend some time critically evaluating all the possible terms and topics and making decisions about which are most representative of or most closely associated with the given topic. Sometimes, students do this quickly or almost glibly, but often the groups will spend quite a while hashing this out. That indicates that they are really thinking about it. Then, have them try to write a definition for their topic, a statement that explains to someone who is unfamiliar with it what that topic is really about. Tell them that since they have already circled three terms that they consider essential or fundamental to their topic, they'll probably want to USE those three terms in their definition, or be sure to consider them for inclusion in their definition. While this has the limitation of having students think deeply about only ONE of the subtopics (the sheet they have before them, not all the other subtopics on the other sheets), it is still a great value in the depth of thinking and conversation as students take the strategy this much further.

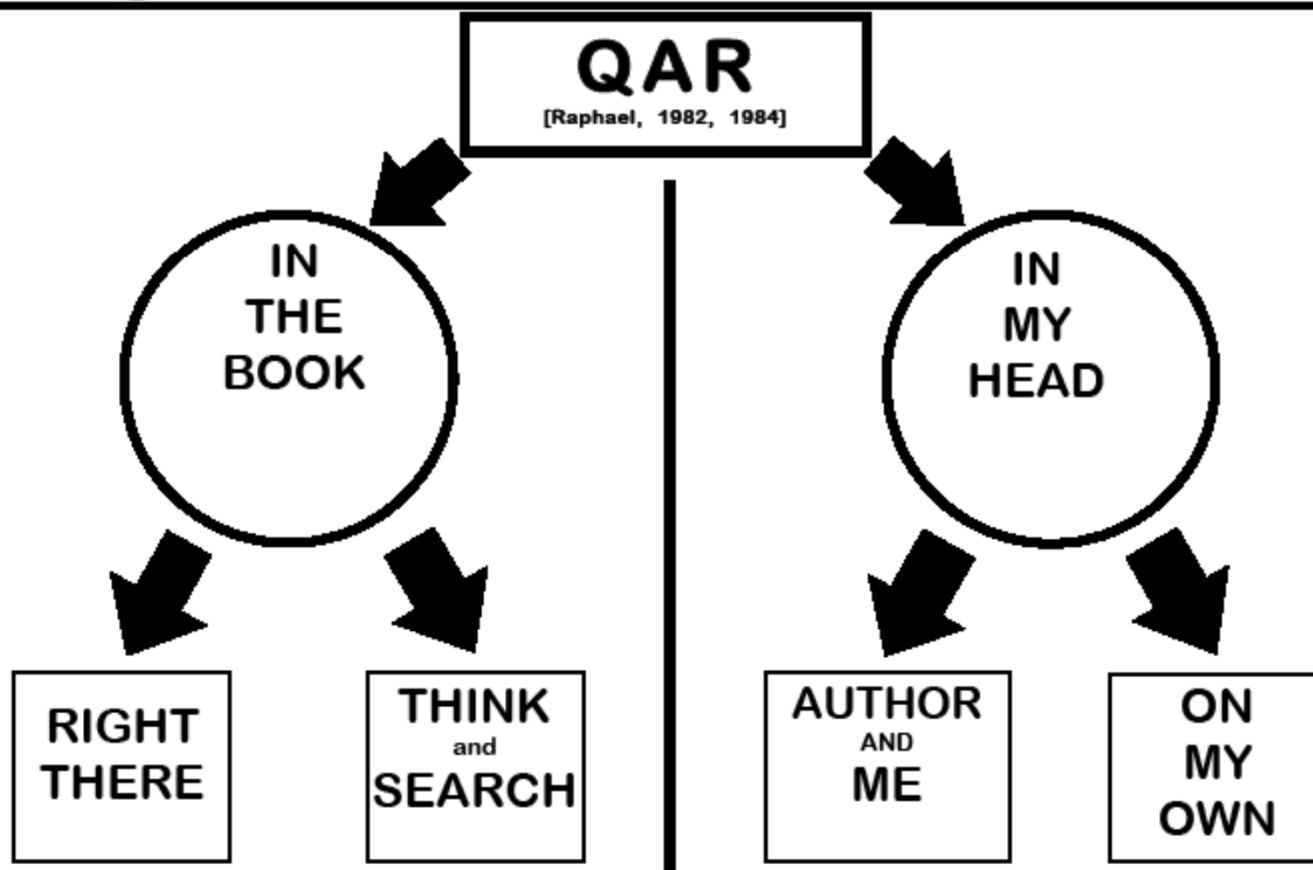
# Question Answer Relationships

A way to help students realize that the answers they seek are related to the type of question that is asked; it encourages them to be strategic about their search for answers based on an awareness of what different types of questions look for. Even more important is understanding where the answer will come from.

## Four QARs!

- **Right There.** The answer is in the text, and if we pointed at it, we'd say it's "right there!" Often, the answer will be in a single sentence or place in the text, and the words used to create the question are often also in that same place.
- **Think and Search.** The answer is in the text, but you might have to look in several different sentences to find it. It is broken up or scattered or requires a grasp of multiple ideas across paragraphs or pages.
- **Author and You.** The answer is not in the text, but you still need information that the author has given you, combined with what you already know, in order to respond to this type of question.
- **On My Own.** The answer is not in the text, and in fact you don't even have to have read the text to be able to answer it.





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**Question Answer Relationships**

*Raphael, 1982, 1984*

**In The Book QARs**

**RIGHT THERE**

*Answer in the text.*

**THINK & SEARCH**

*Put it together.*

**In My Head QARs**

**AUTHOR & YOU**

*Answer NOT in the story.*

**ON MY OWN**

*Don't even have to have read the story.*

## QAR for Lewis and Clark

Lewis and Clark followed the Missouri River for several hundred miles as they moved westward in the spring of 1804. Along with their goal of mapping the new territory, the two explorers were also instructed to keep careful records of their journey. As they traveled, the explorers gained a great deal of information through the difficult process of trying to communicate with the Native Americans they met. Their journals were filled with words, such as *skunk*, *hickory*, *squash*, *raccoon*, and *opossum*, which are Native American terms for plants and animals. After their return in September 1806, Lewis and Clark reported to President Jefferson and their journals were eventually published.

- Right There Questions:
  - What river did Lewis and Clark follow in the spring of 1804?
  - What was the goal of Lewis and Clark's journey?
- Think and Search Questions:
  - How long did it take Lewis and Clark to complete their explorations?
  - Why did the explorers keep journals during their travels?
- Author and Me Questions:
  - Who sent Lewis and Clark on their expedition?
  - Why was trying to communicate with the Native Americans a difficult process for Lewis and Clark?
- On My Own Questions:
  - How do you think Native Americans felt when explorers traveled through their lands?
  - How are newly discovered plants and animals named?

# Question Creation Chart

## Q-Chart

Create questions by using one word from the left hand column and one word from the top row. The farther down and to the right you go, the more complex and higher-level the questions.

	is	did	can	would	will	might
Who						
What						
Where						
When						
How						
Why						

# Questioning the Author

## What is it?

Questioning the Author is a protocol of inquiries that students can make about the content they are reading. This strategy is designed to encourage students to think beyond the words on the page and to consider the author's intent for the selection and his or her success at communicating it.

The idea of "questioning" the author is a way to evaluate how well a selection of text stands on its own, not simply an invitation to "challenge" a writer. Students are looking at the author's intent, his craft, his clarity, his organization...in short, if the author has done well, students can say so, and they can identify why they say so. Likewise, if students are struggling over a selection of text, it may be because it hasn't been written very clearly. Students can see this, and say so, but then they are invited to improve on it.

## How Does It Work?

The standard format involves five questions. Students read a selection of text (one or more paragraphs, but generally not as much as a whole page), and then answer these questions:

- What is the author trying to tell you?
- Why is the author telling you that?
- Does the author say it clearly?
- How could the author have said things more clearly?
- What would you say instead?

# Questioning the Author

**Each employee must wash his hands thoroughly with warm water and soap after each trip to the toilet and before beginning work.**

<b>What is the author trying to tell you?</b>	The author is telling me that I must be clean before I can work at my job; in particular, I have to wash my hands whether I'm just starting work or if I've just been to the bathroom.
<b>Why is the author telling you that?</b>	I think it has to do with who the author is; in this case, I think the author is the Health Department, which is responsible for sanitation issues in restaurants. To keep customers of an eating establishment from getting sick and to reduce the transmission of disease, employees who handle food or utensils or plates have to make sure they have clean hands. If the author were the owner of the restaurant, though, she would probably want her employees to wash their hands for a similar reason, only in her case she is concerned about different consequences. If people who eat at her restaurant get sick because employees weren't clean, then it would hurt her business. A customer might also express the same sentiment as the Health Department or restaurant owner, but his motivation would simply be that he doesn't wish to get sick because of unsanitary practices by employees.
<b>Is it said clearly?</b>	It seems pretty clear and straight-forward.
<b>How might the author have written it more clearly?</b>	Well, it has a real legalistic sound to it. That's probably necessary because of a uniform health code and the nature of governmental agencies and the way that they communicate. You can hear the unspoken tagline: "By Order of the Health Department." In this case, it's probably written pretty clearly and might be hard to improve upon. It does seem a little wordy. For instance, if you tell someone to wash his hands, do you have to remind him to do so with soap and warm water?
<b>What would you have wanted to say instead?</b>	"Please don't make me eat your germs. Wash your hands before touching my food!"

# Discussion Web

**Discussion Webs** are "a special kind of graphic aid for teaching students to look at both sides of an issue before drawing a conclusion." They help students to organize their thinking, examine (and learn tolerance for) other points of view, and draw richer understanding from the materials they read.

1. Students *think* individually about the question that's up for discussion. They look in the text for information they might use to support their opinions.
2. Then they discuss their ideas with a partner (as a *pair*). The partners share supporting ideas from the text and from their own experiences.
3. Then the partners *pair* up with another set of partners. They work as a group of four to eliminate contradictions and inconsistencies in their thinking as they come to a consensus and decide upon one idea that a spokesperson for the group will *share* with the class. (There'll be plenty of time during the classroom discussion for dissenting opinions to be heard.)



# Discussion Web

- After reading *Jack and the Beanstalk*, kindergarten students were asked to discuss *Was it right for Jack to bring home things from the giant's castle?*
- After reading *The Little Red Hen* to kindergartners and first graders, she asks *Should the little red hen have shared her bread?*
- After reading *Island of the Blue Dolphins*, fourth graders were asked to respond to the question *Should Karana have gone back to get her brother Ramo?*

# Discussion Web

After reading Nancy Shaw's *Sheep* series, published by Houghton Mifflin (*Sheep on a Jeep, Sheep in a Ship, Sheep in a Shop, Sheep Out to Eat...*) the teacher uses a discussion web to answer a question.

Yes		No
They are soft to lean on.	<b>Would sheep make good pets?</b>	They're too big.
They would be fun.		They eat too much.
They are cute.		They are messy.
They're my size.		They are noisy.
They're easy to hold on to.		They are stinky.
Conclusion: <hr/> <hr/>		

# It Says, I Say, and So...

***It Says, I Say and So*** is a visual scaffold to teach the skill of inferences. Provide students with a question about the text that requires some inferential thinking. The key to the entire process is the good question. Students read the text and discuss the information in the text that helps answer the question. That information is placed in the “It Says” column. Using background knowledge, put information in the “I Say” column. The inference, “and So,” is made when the students combine what is written in the text with what they think from the “I Say” column.

Topic Name			
Questions	It Says	I Say	So
<b>What were the economic effects of World War II on the home front?</b>	Americans cut back their consumption of both luxuries and necessities to help the war effort. Opportunities arose for African Americans and Hispanics.	Just like in World War I, the relocation of 12 million men creates a shortage of labor – wages rise, women and minorities get the jobs. Everyone is saving money and when the men come home they get married and buy lots of stuff.	The economic effects were positive overall. The increases in production boosted industry, the rising wages and conservative habits created a great savings rate. After the war was over the Great Depression had ended, in large part because of the war.

# Somebody Wanted But So

SWBS is a framework which helps students summarize for fiction and nonfiction narrative texts (i.e. biographies, personal narratives, news stories, short stories, novels, etc.). It also helps students recognize main ideas and details, recognize cause and effect relationships, and make generalizations. **Somebody** stands for the character/historical figure; **Wanted** stands for the plot/motivation; **But** stands for the conflict/challenge; **So** stands for the outcome/resolution.

Somebody (character)	Wanted (goal/motivation)	But (conflict)	So (resolution)

# Sample: Biography

Somebody	Wanted	But	So
Dimitri Mendeleev	to arrange the 63 known chemical elements	there was little Overall understanding of how elements were related to each other	he created the periodic table based on atomic mass

# Sample: Fiction

Somebody	Wanted	But	So
Juliet	to marry Romeo	Romeo was a Montague, an enemy to her family	she and Romeo had Friar Laurence marry them in secret, without their families' knowledge

# Somebody Wanted But So: The CNN Headline News Version

Somebody ..	Somewhere ..	Wanted ..	But ..	So they ..	Then ..	And so ..

# Placemat

Students are divided into small groups and each group is gathered around a piece of chart paper. First, students think individually about a question and write down their ideas on their own section of the chart paper. Then, students share ideas to discover common elements, which can be written in the center of the chart paper.

- The strategy can be used with a wide variety of questions and prompts.
- Use the place mat strategy for a wide range of learning goals, for example:
  - to encourage students to share ideas and come to a consensus on a topic;
  - to activate the sharing of background knowledge among students;
  - to help students share problem-solving techniques in mathematics and science;
  - to take group notes during a video or oral presentation.
- You may choose several questions or issues for simultaneous consideration in a place mat strategy. To start, each group receives a different question or issue to work on. Once they have completed their discussion, the groups rotate through the various questions or issues until all have been explored.

**Residents:**

- Creates jobs
- Creates pollution
- Brings roads and technology
- Noisy
- Smelly

**Farmers:**

- Takes up valuable land resources
- Pollutes water table
- Pollution kills the plants
- Brings money and more people can buy farm products

“Should a mine be allowed to operate near our town?”

**Mining Company:**

- Mines the ore or mineral needed
- Creates jobs
- Brings roads and technology into the area
- Increases revenue in the area from taxes paid by the company
- Makes a profit

**Business Owners:**

- Create jobs
- Brings money and people into the area
- People buy goods and services



# History Frames

## What Are History Frames?

Here is one of the strategies that we ought to be using in history and social studies classes because it lets us take advantage of a tool that students probably already possess ... namely, the story maps they've been using in English and Language Arts and Literature for years and years.

When looking at stories and novels, students are often asked to focus on the "elements" of story: setting, characters, plot, and theme, among others.

When we look at historical events, **we're interested in the same things:**

- where and when did the event take place?
- who was involved?
- what was the problem or goal that set events in motion?
- what were the key events?
- how was it resolved?
- and, for theme, so what? what's the universal truth, the reason this matters?

# History Frames

(continued)

## How Do These Frames & Maps Work?

**Characters:** Who are the people who were involved in this? Which ones played major roles, and which ones were minor?

**Setting:** Where and when did this event take place? Over what period of time?

**Plot:** This section is broken into three parts:

**Problem/Goal:** What set events in motion? What problem arose, or what were the key players after?

**Events/Episodes:** This is to get students to focus on summarizing...they focus on the key steps or events that capture the progress of the situation.

**Resolution/Outcome:** How was the problem solved? Was the goal attained? (It's probably pretty important to stress to students that they should go back to the problem or goal they identified in order to say how it was resolved or whether it was met.)

**Theme.** I think of this as the "so what?" of a history frame or story map. You might think of it as the universal truth or revelation, the larger meaning or importance, the moral, the "what we've learned from this," and so on.

Story Mapping

# HISTORY FRAME

<b>TITLE OF EVENT:</b>	<b>PARTICIPANTS / KEY PLAYERS:</b>
<b>PROBLEM or GOAL:</b>	<b>WHERE:</b> <b>WHEN:</b>
<b>KEY EPISODES or EVENTS:</b>	<b>RESOLUTION or OUTCOME:</b>
	<b>THEME/LESSON/So What?</b>

## Story Mapping

# GUIDE FOR CROSS-DISCIPLINARY APPLICATION

	<b>HISTORY</b>	<b>ENGLISH</b>	<b>SCIENCE LAB</b>
<b>Setting</b>	Where and When	Where and When	Time and Conditions
<b>Characters</b>	Who were the key players?	Who were the major (and minor?) characters taking part in the action of the story?	Equipment Used
<b>Plot: Problem/Goal</b>	What were the key players after? What problem were they tackling? What goal did they hope to achieve?	What event or situation sets the story in motion? What do they main characters hope to do?	What is the hypothesis the students intend to test, to prove, or to dispute?
<b>Plot: Events</b>	Key events	Key episodes	Steps in the experiment
<b>Plot: Resolution/Outcome</b>	What resulted? How was it resolved? Did the key players solve their problem or attain their goal?	Was the problem resolved, or was the character's goal met?	What results did you obtain?
<b>Theme</b>	Why is this event still important to us today? What is its enduring significance? What is there to be learned from it?	What is the message for us or for the rest of humanity? What's the moral, the universal truth, the common understanding?	So what? What do these results mean to us, to our understanding of science, to our ability to use science to solve real problems?

# Three Level Guides

Three-Level Guides are a supportive strategy when introducing a unit of work, to help students clarify an issue and articulate their opinions, to motivate and engage students, and to assess their understanding.

Students discuss statements about the text in small groups to reach consensus.

The statements are in three levels:

- literal reading from the lines of text (Level 1 statements)
- inferred reading between the lines of text (Level 2 statements)
- applied reading beyond the lines of text (Level 3 statements).

# Three Level Guides

(continued)

## Teacher preparation

- Using a chosen text, construct approximately five statements at each level. The guide should be able to be completed by students in one lesson.
- Begin construction by deciding the main ideas and concepts that you want students to get from the reading. These determine your applied level statements (Level 3 statements). Write these level statements first.
- Literal level statements (Level 1 statements) are constructed next. Decide which sections of the text focus on the main ideas and concepts that you want students to get from the reading.
- The inferred level statements (Level 2 statements) are constructed last. Design these statements to help students make inferences about what the author actually says. If you find this difficult, ask yourself, 'What does the print say? What does that mean? What doesn't it say?'
- The guide is presented to students with the statements organized so that the literal level is first, the inferred level next, and the applied level last.
- Students are presented with the text as well as with the Three-Level Guide. The text can be accessed by all students and be read aloud by the teacher.

# Three Level Guide

## Possible Text

### *Coal Sludge Blankets Kentucky Countryside*

INEZ, Ky., Oct. 14 (AP) — A gooey mixture of coal particles and water that leaked from a plant near here has been swallowing driveways, bridges and lawns in the countryside for the last four days.

Since Wednesday morning, work crews from the Martin County Coal Corporation have been trying to clean up the molasseslike waste material — 200 million gallons of it — that leaked from the company's coal preparation plant.

Moving about 10 miles a day, the sludge has continued to ooze along two mountain streams toward the Big Sandy River, which traces the border with West Virginia north of Inez.

Janice Maynard has been

trapped in her home by the sludge.

"In order to get to civilization, we have to walk through woods, down through a field and through a swampy area," said Ms. Maynard, who has a broken ankle. "I can't make that walk."

The Kentucky Department of Surface Mining issued four citations on Friday to the company for engaging in an unsafe practice by allowing the material to escape from its plant outside Inez, about 140 miles east of Lexington.

State and federal environmental agencies do not know how long it will take or how much it will cost to remove the huge glob of coal sediment, which is several miles long and up to 70 yards wide.

"We're still trying to determine

how best to attack the problem," said Heather Frederick, a spokeswoman for the Kentucky Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Cabinet.

No one has been injured by the leak, but authorities said fish and other wildlife have been killed. The state mining agency has ordered the company to replenish all fish and other aquatic life in the creeks.

Crews from Martin County Coal and its parent company, the A.T. Massey Coal Company, have been building rock dams to try to slow the flow of the material, said Bill Marcum, a company spokesman. Vacuum trucks, excavators and a dredging machine are being used.

"We're spending whatever we have to spend," Mr. Marcum said.

# Three Level Guide

**Literal Level** *(the author makes a statement that is in the same words or nearly the same words)*

1. The sludge is a combination of water and coal particles (*line 1 paragraph 1*).
2. The sludge is leaking from a coal preparation plant.
3. The coal company has gotten four tickets for violating mining codes
4. Crews from the coal company are building dams made of rocks to block the flow of sludge.

**Interpretive Level** *(the author makes a similar statement but in different words)*

1. The sludge is leaving people stranded
2. The company is willing to pay whatever it has to correct the problem
3. There is no timetable for solving this problem
4. Ten miles a day is a lot of land covered with sludge.

**Evaluation Level** *(these are statements that sum up particular thoughts expressed in the entire passage; rather than find specific references in the text, describe why you think the statement is appropriate for the passage)*

1. This article could be subtitled with a hit song from the musical the "Wiz".... "ease on down, ease on down the road"
2. A little leak can lead to all kinds of unintended consequences.



# 5-4-3-2-1

Informational text forms are written to communicate information about a specific subject, topic, event or process. These texts use subject specific vocabulary, organizational patterns and diagrams to express ideas clearly and make them easier to read. Providing students with an approach to reading informational texts helps them to become more effective readers. With the 5-4-3-2-1 Strategy, students complete an organizer, using the material they have just read. They are to find 5 key words from the text, 4 facts related to the main topic, 3 new words and their meanings, 2 facts you already know, and one question they still have after reading the passage.

<b>5</b>	<b>key words from the text:</b> 1. 2. 3. 4. 5.
<b>4</b>	<b>Facts related to the main topic:</b> 1. 2. 3. 4.
<b>3</b>	<b>New words and what they mean:</b> 1. 2. 3.
<b>2</b>	<b>Facts you already know:</b> 1. 2.
<b>1</b>	<b>Questions you still have:</b> 1.

# Inquiry Chart

## (I-Chart)

One way to help students gain understanding of critical reading skills and strategies is through the use of Inquiry Charts (I-Charts). The I-Chart was developed as an instructional procedure that nurtures critical thinking and reading. Based upon work done by Ogle with K-W-L and McKenzie with data charts, this graphic tool helps students use more than one piece of text or source of information. It is extremely useful when the different sources do not agree because it allows students the opportunity to recognize those differences and reconcile them through critical thinking.

Within this strategy, learners will identify a topic, document what they already know, and gather information from a variety of sources. Once gathered, the students can summarize and compare their findings from the multiple sources. Although the teacher will be in primary control of the process in the beginning, the goal is to gradually release responsibility to the learners. Over time, working within this basic framework, students will increase their critical thinking skills and have greater independence in their own learning.

# I-Chart

	What are some assessment terms associated with reading?	What assessment process and tools are used in my district to determine reading proficiency?	What is the difference between formal and informal assessment? Examples?	How is reading assessed by the MAP?	How can I best help my students prepare for MAP?	What is the diagnostic/prescriptive approach to reading? How can I take advantage of it?
What do I already know?						
Source 1						
Source 2						
Source 3						
Source 4						
Source 5						

# Bio-cube

Using biographies to engage students in active learning provides teachers with many opportunities for motivation. Biographies of current, well-known figures can help students draw parallels to their own lives, while biographies of figures from the past can help students make connections to content area subjects in meaningful ways.

## **Students will:**

- Acquire knowledge by completing research on self-selected subjects using Internet sources
- Comprehend, interpret, and evaluate information using both print and online tools
- Communicate their findings using a completed Bio-Cube to prompt them
- Demonstrate comprehension of what they have learned about summarizing information during class discussions

# BIO-CUBE PLANNING SHEET

Use this planning sheet to prepare for the online Bio-Cube activity by filling in the information for each side of the cube. Since space on the cube is limited, you will need to summarize your information.

## **Side Prompt Information:**

- 1 - Person's name, time period, and place**
- 2 - Personal background**
- 3 - Personality traits**
- 4 - Significance**
- 5 - Biggest obstacle**
- 6 - Important quotation**

Adapted from McLaughlin, M., & Allen, M.B. (2002). Guided comprehension in action: Lessons for grades 3–8. Newark, DE: International Reading Association.

# Anticipation Guide

## **Steps:**

- Identify major concepts students are expected to learn.
- Determine ways these concepts might support or challenge their beliefs.
- Create usually 8 to 10 statements: important points, concepts, controversial ideas, misconceptions – no simple, literal ones.
- Students react to statements, defend opinions before reading.
- Read to confirm or disconfirm responses.
- Anticipation guides lead to great conversations both before and after a learning activity.

# Anticipation Guide

*The Giver by Lois Lowry*

In a world with no poverty, no crime, no sickness and no unemployment, and where every family is happy, 12-year-old Jonas is chosen to be the community's Receiver of Memories. Under the tutelage of the Elders and an old man known as the Giver, he discovers the disturbing truth about his utopian world and struggles against the weight of its hypocrisy.



# Anticipation Guide

## *The Giver by Lois Lowry*

Before Reading		After Reading
	1. Sometimes it is OK to lie.	
	2. Memories play an important part of your life and who you are.	
	3. It is better to never experience cold or hunger.	
	4. The past repeats itself.	
	5. People in society accept things they usually would not if they were on their own.	
	6. It is better to be part of a group than to be alone.	
	7. It is better to remain ignorant about some aspects of life.	
	8. It is better to be in a safe environment and never feel fear.	

# INSERT

(Interactive Notation System for Effective Reading and Thinking)

1. Give students a copy of a text.
2. Think aloud and model the notations.
3. Pair students to think aloud with each other.
4. Invite students to share their notations.

✓ = I agree

X = I disagree

+ = That's new

? = I don't understand

\* = That's important

\*! = That's awesome

# Cubing

Cubing is a strategy designed to prepare students in reading and writing. In writing it can be used as a pre-writing activity to stimulate students' thinking about a topic. In reading, cubing can be used to strengthen students' comprehension of a topic or concept and help expand students' understanding of a topic, concept, character, and/or text from various perspectives. Many teachers create a visual (cube) prop so students have something tangible to work with. Teachers can use the cubing as a post-reading strategy to discuss issues that lead students to think critically about the topic under study. A teacher can use the strategy with the whole class, as small group work, and/or on a one-on-one basis. Almost any topic can be cubed. Cubing requires students to apply information they have been studying in new ways. The cubing method can also be modified to allow the teacher to create his or her own parameters or perspectives.

This strategy allows students to explore a topic from six different points of view. The name cube comes from the fact that cubes have six sides and students explore a topic from the following six perspectives:

- **Describe it:** How would you describe this topic/issue/event/person? Describe key characteristics/points/and/or attributes including size, shape, and colors.
- **Compare it:** What is it similar to?
- **Associate it:** What does it make you think of? How does the topic connect to other topics/issues/subjects? How does this decision/event connect to other decisions/events? How does this person/character relate to other people/characters?
- **Analyze it:** Tell how it is made or what it is composed of. How would you break the topic/problem/issue/event/decision into smaller parts?
- **Apply it:** What can you do with it? How is it used? How does it help you understand other topics/issues/decisions/events?
- **Argue for or against it:** Take a stand and list reasons for supporting or not supporting it.
  - I am for this because ....      - This works because .....
  - This does not work because....      - I agree because .....
  - I am not for this because ....      - I disagree because ....

# Cubing (continued)

## **How to Use the Strategy:**

Begin by selecting the topic to be cubed. This is a good end of unit activity since students need to be very familiar with the topic prior to beginning this activity. Next, divide students into six small groups; assign one of the six perspectives to each group. Then have each group of students brainstorm ideas about the topic from their assigned perspective. Following the brainstorming and discussion within their group, each group chooses a scribe and collaboratively writes a paragraph exploring that perspective. Afterwards, each group reads its paragraph to the class. Other students react to connections the group has made and may pose ideas for revisions and make new connections. Finally, after each group has shared its paragraph with the class and made any needed revisions, each paragraph is taped to a side of a cardboard cube and displayed in the classroom.

Topic is [Friendship](#) in “Holes” – Intermediate Grades

Topic is [The Civil War](#) in fifth grade social studies

# Graphic Organizers

## **What Are They?**

A graphic organizer *is usually a one-page* form with blank areas for the student to fill in with related ideas and information. Some organizers are very specific; others can be used with many topics. For the most part, the information on a graphic organizer could just as easily be filled in on a form or written as a list. The organizer gives the child another way to see the information. Some of the organizers allow for the information to be written or drawn, opening the activity up to younger grades.

## **Using a Graphic Organizer**

Many graphic organizers are designed for general use. To keep things flexible, most directions and labels on the organizers do not give many details for how to use it. When a child first uses one kind of organizer, it is recommended that a sample organizer be drawn on the board for the class to fill in together. This also gives the opportunity for children to understand that sometimes there might be more answers than there are spaces on the organizer. You can fill in part of the organizer or add specific directions before photocopying it for the class. Graphic organizers can be used to reinforce topics from any subject. Enjoy!

# Graphic Organizers

[Houghton Mifflin](#)

[Balanced Reading](#)

[Enchanted Learning](#)

[Read Write Think](#)

# 3-2-1

## **What Is a 3 - 2 - 1?**

The idea is to give students a chance to summarize some key ideas, rethink them in order to focus on those that they are most intrigued by, and then pose a question that can reveal where their understanding is still uncertain. Often, teachers use this strategy in place of the usual worksheet questions on a chapter reading, and when students come to class the next day, you're able to use their responses to construct an organized outline, to plot on a Venn diagram, to identify sequence, or isolate cause-and-effect. The students are into it because the discussion is based on the ideas that they found, that they addressed, that they brought to class.

## **How Does It Work?**

Students fill out a 3-2-1 chart with something like this:

**3 Things You Found Out**

**2 Interesting Things**

**1 Question You Still Have**

Now, that's just the suggested version. Depending upon what you're teaching, you can modify the 3-2-1 anyway you want. For instance, if you've just been studying the transition from feudalism to the rise of nation-states, you might have students write down **3** differences between feudalism and nation-states, **2** similarities, and **1** question they still have.

# 3-2-1

3	Things you found out: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>•</li><li>•</li><li>•</li></ul>
2	Interesting things: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>•</li><li>•</li></ul>
1	Question I still have: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>•</li></ul>



# Reading Circles

Students are divided into groups of a certain size – for example, five members. Each student is assigned a specific role and responsibility to carry out during the small-group discussion.

- Reading Circles can be used with fiction and non-fiction text as well as with a variety of genres.
- It is important to familiarize students with the expectations of each role prior to students working independently. Introduce one role at a time to the entire class.
- A series of days may be necessary to introduce roles, depending on the class group.
- To introduce roles, use short text (picture book, article, short story) that does not pose comprehension difficulties for the students.
- Display roles on chart paper for easy reference.
- It is important to consider the composition of small groups, allowing students the opportunity to work with classmates of various abilities, interests, backgrounds, home languages, and other characteristics.
- Group size is flexible and determined by student needs.
- Once students grasp roles, the length of the text will determine the pace and the duration of the activity.
- To maintain student enthusiasm, rotate roles when using a long piece of text.
- Repeating this activity throughout the year allows students the opportunity to experience different roles, different group dynamics and the opportunity to improve skills.
- The roles are intended to scaffold students to a discussion of a text so that they will later not need the support of the roles
- Time the exercise to keep students focused on the task.
- For role options, see Student/Teacher Resource, Sample Reading Circle Role Cards.
- Assign two students to a role: one struggling and one confident reader, to ensure that struggling readers can receive the necessary peer support to complete their role.

# Sample Reading Circle Role Cards

Text Title \_\_\_\_\_

Author \_\_\_\_\_

Pages \_\_\_\_\_

## **Summarizer**

Create a graphic organizer based on the day's reading. Choose an organizer that is suitable to the type of text read. E.g. Plot Graph, Story/Article Pyramid, Sequence Chart, Venn Diagram. Using the ideas on your graphic organizer, write a 5-8 sentence summary of the text.

## **Consider the following when summarizing:**

What are the elements (setting, character, plot, conflict, climax) of the story?

What is the main idea?

What are the key points?

What are the main events?

# Sample Reading Circle Role Cards

Text Title \_\_\_\_\_

Author \_\_\_\_\_

Pages \_\_\_\_\_

## **Questioner**

Prepare questions to help the group discuss the day's reading. Generate questions that invite group members to share their thoughts, feelings, reactions, and concerns about the text. Use the following suggestions to support the development of a variety of questions. Give one of your own responses to each question.

Who ...? What ...? When ...? Where ...? Why...? How...? If ...?

What is the main idea of this passage?

How did you feel about the character \_\_\_\_\_? I felt ...

What predictions did you make as you read? Which predictions were confirmed?

Did anything in the text surprise you?

If you could meet the author, what would you ask her or him? I would ask...

What lesson or message is the author trying to teach you?

# Sample Reading Circle Role Cards

Text Title \_\_\_\_\_

Author \_\_\_\_\_

Pages \_\_\_\_\_

## **Reflector**

Find connections to the day's reading. This means connecting the reading to personal experiences, community happenings, news stories, media or other people and problems.

This reminds me of the time I ...because ...

This reminds me of when I read ... because ...

This reminds me of something I heard about ... because...

These connections helped me to understand the text because ...

# Sample Reading Circle Role Cards

Text Title \_\_\_\_\_

Author \_\_\_\_\_

Pages \_\_\_\_\_

## Wordsmith

Choose 3-5 words from the day's reading that may be new, different, difficult, interesting or important.

Word \_\_\_\_\_

Page Number \_\_\_\_\_

I predicted that this word means...

I could use (new word) \_\_\_\_\_ instead of the  
(synonym) \_\_\_\_\_

The rest of the passage helped me to figure out the meaning of the word  
\_\_\_\_\_ by ...

# Sample Reading Circle Role Cards

Text Title \_\_\_\_\_

Author \_\_\_\_\_

Pages \_\_\_\_\_

## **Researcher**

Dig up some background information on any topic related to the text. This could include the history or geography of the book's setting, information about a time period portrayed in the book or information about a specific individual. Check in the library using an internet search engine or ask your Teacher-Librarian for support. This is not a formal research report but an opportunity to share related and interesting information.

I used \_\_\_\_\_ to gather information about ...

When I looked up \_\_\_\_\_ I found ...

# Sample Reading Circle Role Cards

Text Title \_\_\_\_\_

Author \_\_\_\_\_

Pages \_\_\_\_\_

## **Designer**

Create a visual related to the day's reading. It can be a sketch, cartoon, diagram, flow-chart or stick-figure scene.

When I read \_\_\_\_\_ I could picture ...

My image relates to the story because ...

The words that helped me to visualize this image are ...

# Summarizing

## **What Is Summarizing?**

Summarizing is how we take larger selections of text and reduce them to their bare essentials: the gist, the key ideas, the main points that are worth noting and remembering. Webster's calls a summary the "general idea in brief form"; it's the distillation, condensation, or reduction of a larger work into its primary notions.

## **What Are We Doing When We Summarize?**

We strip away the extra verbiage and extraneous examples. We focus on the heart of the matter. We try to find the key words and phrases that, when uttered later, still manage to capture the gist of what we've read. We are trying to capture the main ideas and the crucial details necessary for supporting them.

## **When You Ask Your Students to Summarize.....**

### **What Usually Happens?**

- they write down everything
- they write down next to nothing
- they give me complete sentences
- they write way too much
- they don't write enough
- they copy word for word

### **What Did You Want Them To Do?**

- pull out main ideas
- focus on key details
- use key words and phrases
- break down the larger ideas
- write only enough to convey the gist
- take succinct but complete notes



# Sum It Up

NAME	DATE
TITLE of READING SELECTION	

1. Read the selection and underline the key words and main ideas. Write these in the blank area below where it says "Main Idea Words."
2. At the bottom of this sheet, write a one-sentence summary of the article, using as many main idea words as you can. Imagine you only have \$2.00, and each word you use will cost you 10 cents. See if you can "sum it up" in twenty words!

Main Idea Words:

*"Sum It Up" for \$2.00*

_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

*Adapted from Pat Widowson  
Surry County (NC) Schools*

# LESSON CLOSURE

Today's lesson .....

.....

..... . One key idea was .....

.....

..... . This is important because .....

.....

..... . Another key idea .....

.....

..... . This matters because .....

.....

..... . In sum, today's  
lesson .....

.....

.....

..... .

# Intra-Act

Intra-Act is an after reading strategy that engages a group of readers in a reflective discussion. Individual readers reach personal conclusions or decisions based on their reading experience and this follow-up discussion.

- Choose a reading selection on a controversial topic. Be sure that students can form clear and informed opinions about the topic.
- Introduce the selection with a discussion of the differences between factual and opinionated information. Stress the need to defend opinions with supporting evidence.
- Identify a number of opinionated statements from the reading selection. Arrange these statements on a grid (leaving space for student names) with "Yes" and "No" check boxes beside them.
- Divide the class into small groups. Each group first reads and summarizes the document.
- Next, have members of each group respond to the value statements provided on the handouts, writing in their own names and responding "Yes" or "No" to reflect their agreement or disagreement with the statement.
- Now, have students write in the names of their team members and predict how they will respond to the statements by marking the "Yes" or "No" boxes under their names.
- Finally, ask group members to share their predictions inside the group. Mark correct and incorrect predictions on the grid. Engage students in a discussion of their reasons for supporting specific statements.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Total Score \_\_\_\_\_

Percentage of Correct Predictions \_\_\_\_\_

<b>Statements</b>	<i>Name</i>	<i>Name</i>	<i>Name</i>	<i>Name</i>
	Yes No _____	Yes No _____	Yes No _____	Yes No _____
	Yes No _____	Yes No _____	Yes No _____	Yes No _____
	Yes No _____	Yes No _____	Yes No _____	Yes No _____
	Yes No _____	Yes No _____	Yes No _____	Yes No _____

+: Predictions were correct

-: Predictions were incorrect

# Plus, Minus, Intriguing (PMI)

A PMI is used for affective processing to talk about the pluses, minuses, and intriguing points felt about a lesson, concept or issue.

- What I liked  
*Pluses (+)*
- What I didn't like  
*Minuses (-)*
- What I thought was intriguing  
*Questions or thoughts*

# Clock Buddies

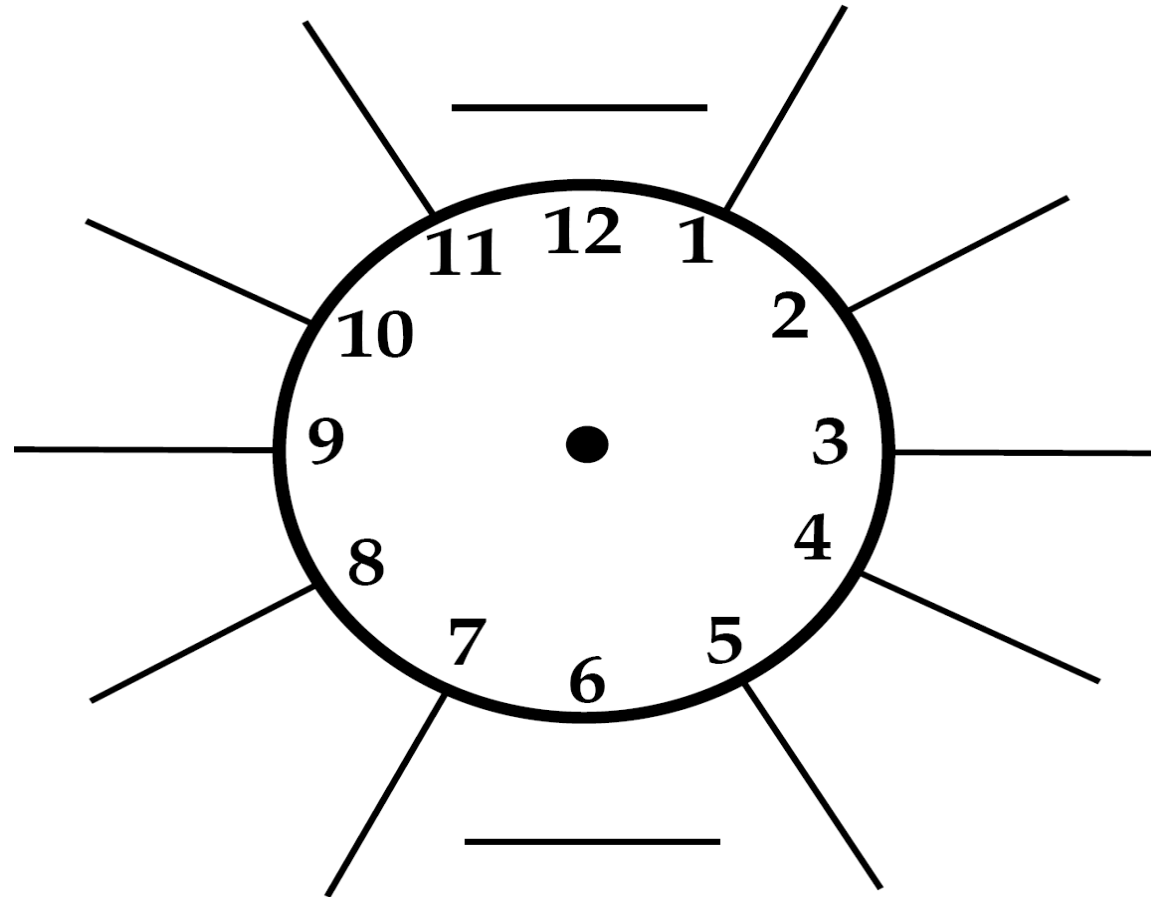
## **What Are Clock Buddies?**

Clock Buddies is meant to be a quick and easy way to create pairs for partnered activities while avoiding the problem of kids always having the SAME partners. It begins with a clock face, with slots for names extending from each hour on the dial. The basic idea is that each student has his or her own copy of a Clock Buddies sheet, with the names of 12 classmates on each hour's slot. Each of those other students, in turn, has this student's name in the matching hour slot on each of their clock sheets.

## **How Does It Work?**

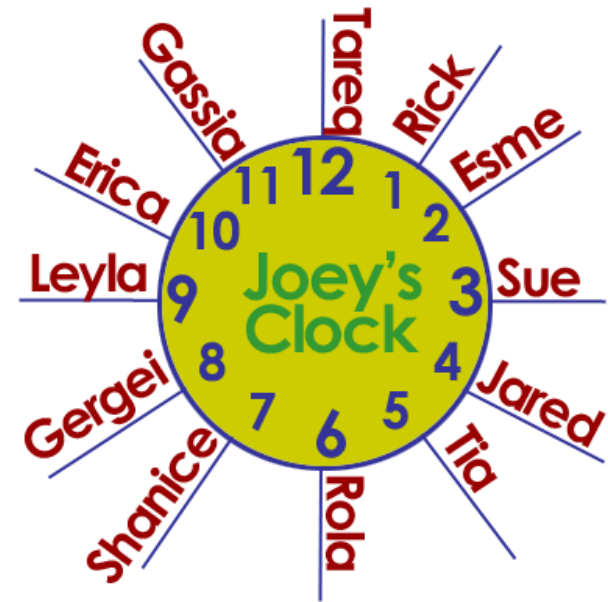
When the teacher needs to quickly pair up students without it always being the same partners every time, she can say to the class: "Get with your 4 o'clock buddy." Each student will pull out his or her clock buddies sheet, look at the 4 o'clock slot, and then join the partner indicated. This works because when the strategy is set up, it is done so that partners always have each other's names on their matching hour on the clock buddy chart.

# CLOCK BUDDIES



### **Sounds Complicated...How Do I Set It Up?**

Look at the example graphic that appears here. This is Joey's clock buddies chart, and 12 of his classmates are listed on it. If we were to pull out Rick's chart, we'd see that Joey's name is on Rick's 1 o'clock slot, and other children's names fill out the rest of his clock.



### **What's the Best Way to Set It Up?**

Clock buddies are chosen by giving each student a clock handout with a blank line next to each hour. Each student then goes to classmates to find a buddy for each hour. If Mike goes to Joe, Joe signs Mike's clock at \_\_\_PM and Mike signs Joe's clock for the same time. Students cannot use a name twice and all hours must be filled in. The clocks are then attached to the inside cover of their notebook or workbook. When you want students to work with a buddy, you call out a random time, for example, "It's time to work with your \_\_\_\_\_ o'clock buddy." Students will then move to and work with the buddy whose name is at that time slot.



# Websites for Literacy Strategies

## **Strategies for Reading Comprehension**

<http://curry.edschool.virginia.edu/go/readquest/strat>

## **SEDL – Building Reading Proficiency at the Secondary Level**

<http://www.sedl.org/pubs/reading16/12.html>

## **Reading as a Strategic Activity**

<http://www.justreadnow.com/strategies/index.htm>

## **Content Literacy form Literacy Matters**

<http://www.literacymatters.org/content/intro.htm>

## **Reading Strategies to Guide Learning**

<http://www.sdesa6.org/content/docs/ReadingStrategiestoGuideLearning080808.pdf>

## **Learning Strategies Database**

<http://muskingum.edu/~cal/database/general/reading.html>

# Websites for Literacy Strategies

## **Reading Strategies: Scaffolding Students' Interactions with Texts**

<http://www.greece.k12.ny.us/instruction/ela/6-12/Reading/Reading%20Strategies/reading%20strategies%20index.htm>

## **Prereading Strategies and Activities**

[http://media.wiley.com/product\\_data/excerpt/86/07879689/0787968986.pdf](http://media.wiley.com/product_data/excerpt/86/07879689/0787968986.pdf)

## **Florida Center for Instructional Technology**

<http://fcit.usf.edu/fcat/strategies/default.htm>

## **Novel Links**

<http://english.byu.edu/Novelinks/Index%20of%20strategies.htm>

## **Reading Strategies**

<http://www.msu.edu/user/lambjen3/TE301.html#SequentialRoundtableAlphabet>

## **Forty Best-practice Instructional Activities**

[http://www.learner.org/jnorth/tm/InstrucStrats\\_40Best.html](http://www.learner.org/jnorth/tm/InstrucStrats_40Best.html)