



Effective Instruction for Middle School Students with Reading Difficulties:

The Reading Teacher's Sourcebook

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Chapter 6: Comprehension



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Part 3 | Research-supported Instructional Practices

As struggling readers get older, the performance gap between them and average students their age continues to widen (Stanovich, 1986). In addition to basic skills instruction, struggling middle school readers may also need explicit instruction in strategies that will help them think about and understand what they read (Bryant, 2003). Struggling readers are often seen as inefficient processors of information and therefore need to be directly taught strategies to improve their reading skills (Swanson & Deshler, 2003). Swanson and Deshler, in their analysis of recent research on adolescents with learning disabilities, state that the overall goal of strategy instruction for older readers is to empower students to apply these strategies independently. Teachers of struggling readers must remember the goal of enabling students to be independent readers. Combined with the components of effective instruction discussed in the previous chapter, instruction in reading strategies in the areas of comprehension, vocabulary, fluency, and word recognition will allow students to move from relying heavily on teacher guidance to becoming independent learners.

It is clear that reading teachers need to know the major components of reading, but it is also helpful if struggling readers understand these terms. At the start of the year, teachers can define **comprehension**, **vocabulary**, **fluency**, and **word recognition** simply and clearly for students. (See Terms to Know on the following page for student-friendly definitions.) This way, the teacher and students will have a common language to use when talking about reading strategies. Explain to the students that assessments you have given them helped to determine their strengths and needs in comprehension, vocabulary, fluency, and word recognition. This may be a good time to talk with students individually about their assessment scores and to develop short-term and annual goals. Perhaps students can work independently in small groups or partners while you speak with students one on one. It is important to be both honest and encouraging when talking with older struggling readers. Most of the time, these students know that they have trouble reading, but they may have never been told their specific strengths and needs. Be sure to emphasize both. Students are often reminded of their weaknesses; it is encouraging for them to also be aware of their strengths. Additionally, it is possible that they have never had instruction in strategies designed to improve

their reading. It is helpful for an older struggling reader to take ownership of his/her needs. For example, a student might be able to clearly state and recognize: “I read fluently but I need to work on understanding what I read, and there are strategies I can use to help me with this.”

Now that students understand these terms, post definitions for *comprehension*, *vocabulary*, *fluency*, and *word recognition* in your room. These are the components of reading in which your students should improve.

Before beginning to teach specific strategies or skills:

- Explain to students that throughout the school year, you will be teaching them several strategies in the areas of comprehension, vocabulary, fluency, and word recognition.
- Tell students that you will give them a lot of practice and provide guidance when they first learn a strategy, but as they begin to catch on, you will expect them to use these strategies independently.
- Emphasize that the strategies you teach are not just for your reading class—they are for all reading. Ask students to brainstorm places and settings in which they will need to be able to read. Encourage students to practice using the reading strategies they learn in your class when they are:
 - In another class.
 - Working on homework.
 - Reading a magazine, newspaper, etc.

TERMS TO KNOW

Comprehension	The ability to understand what is read—the ultimate goal of reading
Fluency	The ability to read text quickly, accurately, and with expression
Skill instruction	Teaching students to perform a specific activity. Example: teaching students how to summarize text.
Strategy instruction	Teaching students to use a series of steps to work through solving a problem or completing a task. Example: teaching students to answer multiple-choice questions by reading all of the answer possibilities, eliminating any obviously incorrect responses, and then rereading the text to verify the best answer.
Think aloud	A type of modeling in which the teacher verbalizes what he or she is thinking in order to make the thought process apparent to students
Vocabulary	Words a person recognizes and uses orally or in writing
Word recognition	The accurate reading of words

Bos & Vaughn, 2006; NRP, 2000

SAMPLE LESSONS IN THIS BOOK

In the following sections, sample lesson plans targeting comprehension, vocabulary, word recognition, and fluency will be discussed in detail. The sample lessons are complete and can be implemented as they are or adapted to meet the needs of a particular class. Each plan is intended to be a sample of one lesson in a series of **skill instruction** and **strategy instruction** lessons. For example, one of the lesson plans included in this section teaches students how to summarize text. This sample lesson is designed to be merely one of several lessons designed to teach students to summarize text independently.

For the most part, the sample lesson plans are not designed to be taught in one class period. Students might need several opportunities for guided practice before moving on to independent practice. Then, after students are able to apply what they learn independently, they will need cumulative practice throughout the year.

Your goal is to arm your students with a toolkit of effective skills and strategies that they will eventually be able to apply independently with a variety of texts. The process of teaching new skills or strategies should be cumulative. This is why planning is so important.

The sample lessons that follow are designed:

- To be implemented directly in the classroom (usually not in a single class period, but over several class periods).
- To be a model and a guide for designing a series of lessons that teach and give multiple opportunities to practice each particular skill or strategy.

Note: The Daily Review component of each sample lesson describes a review of objectives and content that may have been covered on the previous day. This is not meant to dictate what should be taught on the day before the lesson, but an example of a quick review. Of course, teachers need to review the specific material that they taught in the previous lesson and merely use the sample Daily Review as a guide.

Chapter 6

Comprehension

Most struggling middle school readers have deficits in reading comprehension. Comprehension, the ability to gain meaning from text, is essentially the ultimate goal of reading. In order to provide appropriate instruction, it is helpful to be familiar with the characteristics and needs of struggling readers in the area of comprehension. Figure 17 lists some of these characteristics.

FIGURE 17. CHARACTERISTICS OF STRUGGLING VS. EFFECTIVE READERS.

Struggling Readers	Effective Readers
Have difficulty gaining meaning from text.	Continuously monitor reading for understanding, linking the content with their prior knowledge.
Have limited knowledge of strategies for gaining information from text.	Use a variety of effective reading strategies before, during, and after reading.
Need to be continually reminded that understanding and enjoyment are the primary goals of reading. Even when a student is working on word recognition or fluency, the main goal is comprehension.	Set a purpose for reading and adjust their rate and strategies depending on the text and content.

Adapted with permission from University of Texas Center for Reading and Language Arts. (2003). Special education reading project secondary institute — Effective instruction for secondary struggling readers: Research-based practices. Austin, TX: Author.

Comprehension strategies are employed before, during, and after reading. Effective readers automatically employ strategies to understand what they are reading. Struggling readers, however, need explicit instruction on how to use strategies to assist them in understanding what they read as well as ample practice in using these strategies with a variety of texts. Figure 18 lists some of these strategies.

FIGURE 18. STRATEGIES USED BY EFFECTIVE READERS.

Before Reading	During Reading	After Reading
Establish purpose for reading	Identify main ideas and supporting details	Summarize
Activate background knowledge	Create mental images: “Make a movie in your head” Make inferences Reread or use “fix-up” strategies when they do not understand	Make inferences
Make predictions	Make informed predictions/ verify predictions	Verify predictions
Generate questions about the text	Generate questions about the text	Generate questions about the text Summarize what was learned to respond to the questions
Evaluate text structure	Use text structure as a framework for comprehension Monitor understanding of words and use vocabulary strategies such as recognition of word parts and roots when they encounter unfamiliar words Monitor comprehension for understanding	

Adapted with permission from University of Texas Center for Reading and Language Arts. (2003). Special education reading project secondary institute — Effective instruction for secondary struggling readers: Research-based practices. Austin, TX: Author.

The comprehension lessons described in this book are organized in the following manner:

Before, During, and After Reading	Previewing Text and Question Generation
During Reading	Question Generation Mental Imagery Log Main Idea Strategy Identifying Text Structures and Using Graphic Organizers
After Reading	Summarizing Text Wrap-up/Main Idea Log

BEFORE- AND DURING-READING COMPREHENSION **SAMPLE LESSON**

Previewing Text and Question Generation

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The following question types are adapted with permission from Raphael, T. E., Highfield, K., & Au, K. H. (2006). *QAR now*. New York: Scholastic.

The ideas and materials for previewing and question generation were adapted with permission from materials developed by the Teacher Quality Research Project through funding from the U.S. Department of Education's Institute of Educational Sciences, grant contract number R305M050121A (Enhancing the Quality of Expository Text Instruction and Comprehension Through Content and Case-situated Professional Development; D. Simmons, S. Vaughn, & M. Edmonds).

The portion of this lesson on learning to ask and answer different types of questions is an adaptation of the Question-Answer-Relationship strategy (UTCRLA, 2003d; Blachowicz & Ogle, 2001; NRP, 2000; Raphael, 1986).

INTRODUCTION

The Question Generation Routine has two parts—previewing the text before reading and generating different kinds of questions during and after reading.

When students preview text and learn to ask questions about what they read, they understand and learn more from text. In particular, students benefit when, prior to reading, teachers: (a) preteach key words featured in the text and (b) identify the most important idea in the reading. For most text, this means identifying key names, places, or concepts that are important to understanding the text and preteaching them.

Question generation is one of the strategies recommended by the National Reading Panel (NICHD, 2000) in its synthesis of the research on reading comprehension. Generating questions during reading has been effective at improving the comprehension of students of all ability levels in grades 4–9 and in college (Pressley et al., 1992; Rosenshine, Meister, & Chapman, 1996). Research has also demonstrated that approaches to reading comprehension that include question generation improve the achievement of students with learning disabilities (Klingner & Vaughn, 1996; Palinscar & Brown, 1989; Therrien, Wickstrom, & Jones, 2006) and that English language learners benefit from efforts to improve their ability to generate questions during reading (Garcia, 2003; Francis et al., 2006). English language learners

taught to self-generate questions in their native language were able to transfer the strategy to reading in English and demonstrate improvements on standardized measures of comprehension administered in both languages (Muniz-Swicegood, 1994).

The question generation lessons described here include four stages in which students first learn to preview text and then to generate low-level literal questions and progress to generating higher-level questions. Taboada & Guthrie (2006) did a study in which they found that generating higher-level questions that required inferences from text enabled students to gain higher levels of understanding of concepts in expository text such as that found in content area textbooks.

The next section provides an overview of the Question Generation Routine. This routine is most appropriate for narrative text such as literature and social studies text, which contains many proper nouns. It can also be applied to other expository text, such as science text, by selecting nouns that represent key concepts, or “big-idea words”. It is less applicable to math text, unless students are reading biographies of mathematicians or some other extended text selection. The sample lessons in this section are based on a social studies unit on Texas history.

OVERVIEW OF THE INSTRUCTIONAL ROUTINE

Step #1: Preteach Key Proper Nouns or Critical Concept Nouns (“Big-idea Words”)

Students may be unfamiliar with key words that are presented in text. Sometimes not knowing the key names, events, places, or other proper nouns prevents students from adequately understanding and learning from text. You can assist them by taking a few minutes to preteach the key proper nouns or critical concept nouns that are truly essential for understanding the passage.

What is a key proper noun? It is a person, place, or thing that is essential for understanding the meaning of the selected text. A key proper noun is *not* a proper noun of low importance. If there are no key proper nouns in the text, this step can be eliminated; however, it may be useful to preteach key nouns that are *not* proper nouns, if they are unfamiliar and if understanding of these words is essential for comprehending the selection. These will be referred to as critical concept nouns, or “big-idea words.”

Step #2: Introduce the “Big Idea”

Students benefit from text for which they have an advanced organizer that gives them some background on the most important thing they will be learning. Teachers assist students when they tell them the most important thing they want the students to understand and remember from the reading. Providing this information prior to reading or discussing text is useful.

Step #3: Previewing Text

Students learn from previewing text when the purpose is to identify key ideas, link content to students’ background knowledge, and connect text to previously read text/content. The role for students is to quickly review the material, state what they know, and make predictions about what they’ll learn. Teachers help students when they keep previewing *brief and to the point* and when they confirm and extend correct responses and disconfirm incorrect responses.

Step #4: Students Asking and Answering Questions

Students with reading difficulties benefit from instruction that teaches them how to answer questions and how to develop questions. When students are provided meaningful opportunities to ask and answer questions during and after reading, they become more cognizant of their understanding. Learning to ask and answer different types of questions is an adaptation of the Question-Answer-Relationship strategy (UTCRLA, 2003d; Blachowicz & Ogle, 2001; NRP, 2000; Raphael, 1986).

It is usually best to introduce one type of question at a time; model how to answer each question type; provide guided practice as you scaffold instruction, providing support and feedback to students so that they can ask and answer questions appropriately; and ask students to generate different types of questions, calling on their classmates to answer them.

OBJECTIVE

- Students will learn important unfamiliar proper nouns or critical concept nouns that are central to understanding a text passage.
- Students will learn to preview the text and to connect key concepts with what they already know.

MATERIALS

- Planning Sheet for preparing the lesson (Figure 20).
- Multisyllable Word Reading Strategy poster, for review activity (see Appendix).
- Text passage or chapter.
- Learning logs (see Appendix).
- Overhead projector, chalkboard, or chart paper.
- List of important proper nouns or critical concept nouns (transparency of learning log can be used).

PREPARATION

1. Read through the passage or chapter and select the important proper nouns. If there are no proper nouns in the passage, select other nouns that are absolutely essential for understanding the passage (critical concept nouns, or “big-idea words”). Depending upon the subject area you teach, the number of appropriate words to select may range from zero to five.

Proper nouns and critical concept nouns are essential to understanding the meaning of the selected text. These words may not occur again in the same text but may be studied in another context such as in a lesson for another content area. A general guideline is to identify 1–2 “who,” 1–2 “where,”

and 1–2 “what” proper nouns.

For example, in an excerpt from a social studies text, possible important proper nouns are: *eastern hemisphere*, *Bering Strait*, *North Atlantic*, *Leanderthal Lady*, and *Beringia*.

Similarly, critical concept nouns, or “big-idea words,” represent concepts that are essential for understanding the text. This is *not* the same as preteaching all of the vocabulary words for the selection.

Sample “big-idea words” from a health selection might include: *bacteria*, *pathogen*, *streptococcus*, and *cholera*.

Most important proper nouns or critical concept nouns selected for this lesson should be *unfamiliar* to many students, but some of these words may be familiar to some students. Review these words to ensure students can read them and know what they are.

2. Identify the “big idea” of the passage. Ask yourself, “What do you think is the most important idea that you want all students to understand and remember from this reading?”

A Planning Sheet (Figure 20) is provided to organize the planning process.

DAILY REVIEW

Quickly review a skill, strategy, or concept that was previously taught and that the students need to practice. The following is an example based on the sample lesson Teaching the Multisyllable Word Recognition Strategy, found on page 257.

As needed, refer to the poster with the steps for the multisyllable strategy written on it. (This poster should be clearly visible in the room for student reference as they learn the strategy.)

FIGURE 19. MULTISYLLABLE WORD READING STRATEGY.

Multisyllable Word Reading Strategy	
1.	Find the vowels.
2.	Look for word parts you know.
3.	Read each word part.
4.	Read the parts quickly.
5.	Make it sound like a real word.

Adapted with permission from Archer, A. L., Gleason, M. M., & Vachon, V. (2005). REWARDS: Multisyllabic word reading strategies. Longmont, CO: Sopris West.

Teacher:

Before we start today’s lesson, let’s quickly review our strategy, or plan, for reading words with more than one syllable. What is the first thing you do when you come to a long word you don’t know...Steven?

Student:

Find the vowels in the word.

Teacher:

Yes, you find the vowels because every syllable will have a vowel sound. What will you do next...Tamika?

Student:

You look for parts you know, especially at the beginning or end of the word.

Teacher:

Exactly right. What is the next step...Juana?

Student:

Read the parts. Then you put the parts together to read the word.

Teacher:

Yes. But sometimes the word doesn't sound quite right. Then what do you do...Marcus?

Student:

You have to play with it to make it sound right.

Teacher:

Yes. Good memory. Sometimes this step is hard. Let's try reading a word that you might need to work with so that it will sound like a real word.

Display the word dedicate on the chalkboard or overhead.

Teacher:

I see a closed syllable, *ded*, followed by an open syllable, *i* (*pronounce with a long "i" sound*), and then a silent *e* syllable, *cate*. If I put them together I would say *ded-I-cate* (*pronounce the "i" with a long "i" sound*). That doesn't sound quite right. Work with your partner to change the *i* sound and tell your partner the real word.

Give partners about 15 seconds.

What's the word—everyone?

Students:

Dedicate

Teacher:

Yes, *dedicate*. Remember, when you read a word with more than one syllable, sometimes the vowels don't follow the rules. Try other vowel sounds until it sounds like a real word.

STATE OBJECTIVE/PURPOSE

1. Introduce the strategy.

Teacher:

Today we will begin to learn a new strategy that will help you understand and remember the important ideas you read. Often, you are asked to answer questions

about what you read. You'll be able to answer more questions correctly if you learn how to *ask yourself* questions as you read and after you read. We're going to take several days to learn how to ask ourselves different kinds of questions when we are reading. First, let me tell you about the whole strategy. Then we'll learn the first step.

2. Provide an overview of the Question Generation Routine.

Teacher:

The first step is *previewing*. You preview a text *before* reading. We will be working on the previewing step today. Previewing has two parts: 1) identifying important proper nouns, or “big-idea words,” and 2) predicting what we will learn by thinking of what we already know about the big idea of the passage.

The next step is called “Ask the question.” We will practice asking and answering different types of questions about what we read, just like teachers do.

3. Introduce the rationale for preteaching important proper nouns, or “big-idea words”.

Teacher:

Textbooks are filled with lots of information. Sometimes there are important words that are hard to pronounce or that we haven't heard of before. If we don't know these words it can be difficult to understand what we read. Some of these words are proper nouns—proper nouns are names of people, places, or things. I'm going to teach you a few of the important proper nouns you will see in the passage before we start reading. When you know these proper nouns, it makes reading easier.

MODEL AND TEACH

Genre: Expository or narrative

Grouping: Whole class or small group

Note: This sample lesson, based on social studies text, will focus on preteaching proper nouns. Modify the lesson if you are preteaching critical concept nouns (“big-idea words”) instead of proper nouns.

1. Present and discuss 3–5 preselected important proper nouns, or “big-idea words”.

Write each word and a brief definition on the chalkboard, chart paper, or transparency (you may use a transparency of the student log for this). Definitions should be short and easily understandable to students.

- Sample introduction of the important proper noun *Leanderthal Lady*:
The Leanderthal Lady is a skeleton of a woman who lived 9,500 years ago. Workers discovered the skeleton near Leander, Texas, not too long ago.
- Definition to write on chart: Leanderthal Lady—9,500-year-old skeleton found near Leander.
- Teach the other proper nouns in the same way. Then read through the list chorally with students so they become familiar with reading the new words.

- Have students record the important proper nouns and their definitions in their learning logs.
2. Introduce the “big idea” (the topic of the selection).

Give the students a brief summary of the selected passage.

Teacher:

We will learn about how the earliest people got to Texas. Many people believe they may have been hunters who followed herds from Asia into North America.

3. Introduce method for previewing.

Model for students how to preview the passage by doing a **think aloud**. During your preview, you should tell students the “big idea” of the text first. Then go through previewing procedures to make connections to the big idea and to prior learning. As you model using a think aloud process, be sure to focus on the reasons for your predictions.

Note: Previewing should be brief and focused on connecting the big idea and prior learning to headings and visuals such as illustrations, maps, and diagrams. As a rule, you should not spend more than 10 minutes in any lesson on previewing.

Sample think aloud for a passage about Patrisia Gonzales:

Teacher:

When I look at this passage, the first thing I see is the title: *First Trail to Texas*. After reading the title and subheadings and browsing the chapter, I know that the big idea is that the earliest Texans may have been hunters who followed herds from Asia to North America. So I think we are going to learn about the path they followed to get here. There is also a map with lines from Asia to North America to South America. Maybe they will tell us where other people went, too. I also see a picture of elephant-like animals, and it says, “The first Americans hunted mammoths and other large mammals.” These must be mammoths, and maybe these are the animals that the people followed to Texas so they could hunt them. Earlier we read about the Leanderthal Lady, which was discovered almost 10,000 years ago, so I think we will learn that the earliest Texans came here 10,000 years ago or maybe much earlier.

GUIDED PRACTICE

Grouping: Whole class or small group

Using a different brief selection (such as a section of a chapter), preteach important proper nouns or critical concept nouns (“big-idea words”), and provide students with the overall “big idea” in no more than 1–2 sentences. Then have students preview the passage with you. Ask students what they notice about headings and visuals. Connect their responses to the “big idea” and their prior learning. Finally, create a prediction statement together by asking the questions:

- What do you think you will learn about _____ (the big idea)?
- Why do you think you will learn that?

INDEPENDENT PRACTICE

Grouping: Partners

Using a different brief selection, preteach important proper nouns or critical concept nouns and provide students with the overall “big idea” of the passage in no more than 1–2 sentences. Then have students work in partners to preview the chapter and “think aloud” to make connections to the big idea and to prior learning. Circulate through the room to monitor and scaffold. Ask students to state the reasons for their predictions.

Ask the questions:

- What do you think you will learn about _____ (the big idea)?
- Why do you think you will learn that?

Ask some pairs to share their predictions and to tell *why* they are making those predictions (based on headings, illustrations, diagrams, etc.).

GENERALIZATION

Ask students for examples of situations in which previewing text would be helpful as they prepare to read. Emphasize the fact that they can preview text in all of their classes by taking a few minutes to read the title, headings, and examine the illustrations, and then to think about what they may learn from the passage.

MONITOR STUDENT LEARNING

Each time students read an unfamiliar passage, have them first use the previewing routine in pairs or small groups. Circulate through the room to monitor students’ ability to accurately connect information from headings and visual materials to previously learned material to make valid predictions. Ask questions that require students to tell the *reasons* for their predictions.

PERIODIC/MULTIPLE OPPORTUNITIES TO PRACTICE

Use the previewing routine each time students read unfamiliar text. Once students become skilled at making valid predictions, turn the process over to them, but continue to preteach important proper nouns or “big-idea words” and to remind students to preview. Occasionally, return to previewing in partners so that you can monitor the process.

FIGURE 20. PREVIEWING PLANNING SHEET.

PLANNING SHEET
PREVIEWING

1. Preteach Proper Nouns or Critical Concept Nouns
Introduce, read, and define. Students write brief definition in learning log.

Who:

Where:

What:

2. Preview Text
Introduce the big idea of the text selection.

What is the most important idea that you want all students to understand and remember from this reading?

Important key concepts, subheadings, bolded print, etc.

Connections to prior learning:

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BEFORE- AND DURING-READING COMPREHENSION **SAMPLE LESSON**

Generating Level 1 ("Right There") Questions

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The following question types are adapted with permission from Raphael, T. E., Highfield, K., & Au, K. H. (2006). *QAR now*. New York: Scholastic.

The ideas and materials for previewing and question generation were adapted with permission from materials developed by the Teacher Quality Research Project through funding from the U.S. Department of Education's Institute of Educational Sciences, grant contract number R305M050121A (Enhancing the Quality of Expository Text Instruction and Comprehension Through Content and Case-situated Professional Development; D. Simmons, S. Vaughn, & M. Edmonds).

The portion of this lesson on learning to ask and answer different types of questions is an adaptation of the Question-Answer-Relationship strategy (UTCRLA, 2003d; Blachowicz & Ogle, 2001; NRP, 2000; Raphael, 1986).

OBJECTIVE

Students will increase literal comprehension of text by generating "right there" questions.

MATERIALS

- Text passage or chapter.
- Overhead projector, chalkboard, or chart paper.
- Learning logs (see Appendix).
- Red question cards (see Appendix).
- Transparency of Figure 22.

PREPARATION

1. Read through the passage or chapter and select the important proper nouns. If there are no proper nouns in the passage, select other nouns that are absolutely essential for understanding the passage (critical concept nouns, or “big-idea words”). Depending upon the subject area you teach, the number of appropriate words to select may range from zero to five.

Proper nouns and critical concept nouns are essential to understanding the meaning of the selected text. These words may not occur again in the same text but may be studied in another context such as in a lesson for another content area. A general guideline is to identify 1–2 “who,” 1–2 “where,” and 1–2 “what” proper nouns.

For example, in an excerpt from a social studies text, possible important proper nouns are: *eastern hemisphere*, *Bering Strait*, *North Atlantic*, *Leanderthal Lady*, and *Beringia*.

Similarly, critical concept nouns, or “big-idea words,” represent concepts that are essential for understanding the text. This is *not* the same as preteaching all of the vocabulary words for the selection.

Sample “big-idea words” from a health selection might include: *bacteria*, *pathogen*, *streptococcus*, and *cholera*.

Most important proper nouns or critical concept nouns selected for this lesson should be *unfamiliar* to many students, but some of these words may be familiar to some students. Review these words to ensure students can read them and know what they are.

Note: Previewing occurs only *once* for a passage or reading. If students will be reading the same passage over the course of 2 or more days, you should do the following:

- On Day 1, introduce the important proper nouns or “big-idea words,” have students write them in learning logs, and read through the list. Introduce the big idea and then preview the text.
 - On subsequent days of reading the same passage, have students review the list of important proper nouns (e.g., chorally read, read with partners), and tell them the big idea of the passage. It is not necessary to do the entire prediction activity again.
2. Identify the “big idea” of the passage. Ask yourself, “What do you think is the most important idea that you want all students to understand and remember from this reading?”
 3. Identify several Level 1 questions. Level 1 questions are literal comprehension questions. They can be answered using information taken directly from the text, so they are “right there” in the text. Example Level 1 “right there” questions for a social studies passage are:
 - How long ago did the Mound Builders move to the Caddoan Mounds?
 - Who were the Caddo people descendants of?
 - What kind of work did the Caddo do?
 - What did the Caddo trade?
 - In what shape did the Caddo make their houses?
 - What materials did the Caddo use to make their houses?

DAILY REVIEW

1. Preteach important proper nouns or critical concept nouns.

Introduce 3–5 new important proper nouns or critical concept nouns and provide brief definitions. Review reasons for preteaching important proper nouns or “big-idea words”.

Have students copy important proper nouns/concept nouns and definitions in their learning logs.

Read chorally the list of important proper nouns/concept nouns.

2. Preview the passage.

Present the big idea of the passage.

Remind students how to preview a passage. Students should look for key concepts by reading the title, bold print, and subheadings. They should look at the pictures or other information that stands out. Students should then connect the key concepts to the big idea and to what they already know and say how they made the connection. Assist students in making connections and correct misinformation.

Go through the preview as a whole-class activity. Call on students to say the key concepts and to make connections. Validate all students’ ideas, while making sure that information is accurate. List only accurate connections and information on the chart paper or chalkboard.

STATE OBJECTIVE/PURPOSE

Tell students that today they will learn how to ask themselves questions that can be answered using ideas found “right there” in the text.

Teacher:

Teachers ask questions to see whether students understand what they read. There are several types of questions that you can ask, and understanding the different types will make it easier to find the answers. Some questions require you to find facts about what you read, while others require you to draw conclusions or make inferences. There are two reasons why it is important to create and answer questions when you read. First, creating and answering questions helps you understand what you read, and second, it helps you remember important information about what you read.

MODEL AND TEACH

Model how to ask and answer “right there” questions.

Teacher:

Questions usually start with *who*, *what*, *when*, *where*, *why*, or *how*. When teachers create questions, they try to use lots of different question stems to make sure students understand different kinds of information.

1. Introduce the Level 1, “right there” question type.

Teacher:

Today we are going to learn about the first type of question. We call this a “right there” question because the information needed to answer it can be found in one place, word-for-word in the text. “Right there” questions can usually be answered in one word or one sentence. Answering “right there” questions is usually easy and requires little thinking or effort. If you look on your question cards, you will see the different question types: “right there,” “putting it together,” and “making connections”. Today we will just be practicing the “right there” questions.

FIGURE 21. “RIGHT THERE” (RED) QUESTION CARD.

Level 1—Right There

- Questions can be answered in one word or one sentence
- Answers can be found word-for-word in the text
 - > Who? > Where?
 - > What? > Why?
 - > When? > How?

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2. Use a short passage from your text to model how to create a “right there” question. Give students the passage or have it on the overhead projector. Preteach any difficult vocabulary words.

After reading the passage out loud to students, model creating “right there” questions. For example:

Teacher:

Let’s see, I need to make up a question that I can find in one place in the passage. The first sentence says, “More than 1,200 years ago, Mound Builders migrated, or moved, south into the Piney Woods region to the site of the Caddoan Mounds.” There is a lot of information in that sentence. One fact is that the Mound Builders moved to the Caddoan Mounds more than 1,200 years ago. I think I can turn that fact into a question. 1,200 years ago is a “when,” so I’ll start with that. When did the Mound Builders move to the Caddoan Mounds? Let me check the answer. More than 1,200 years ago. OK. That looks like a “right there” question because I can easily find the answer in one place, word-for-word, in my reading. The Mound Builders moved to the Caddoan Mounds more than 1,200 years ago. Now I’ll make up some more “right there” questions, and you see whether you can find the answers in your reading...

3. If students have difficulty writing “right there” questions, it may be helpful to have them first recognize “right there” questions. You might provide them with several questions and model with a “think aloud,” deciding whether each is a “right there” question.

GUIDED PRACTICE

Grouping: Whole class or small group

Practice creating and answering “right there” questions with your class. Remind students to look at their question cards to remember what a “right there” question is. It might be helpful to stick with a short section or paragraph during initial modeling and guided practice.

Provide more guided practice in whole-class or small-group formats. Some students may need additional guided practice over several days to master the process of generating “right there” questions.

INDEPENDENT PRACTICE

Grouping: Partners

Using a different brief selection, preteach important proper nouns or critical concept nouns and provide students with the overall “big idea” of the passage in no more than 1–2 sentences. Then have students work in partners to quickly preview the chapter.

Next, have students work in partners to generate “right there” questions about the selection. Have students write their questions in their learning logs. They should also record their answers to the questions, along with evidence supporting each answer. Circulate and provide feedback and scaffolding as needed.

Ask pairs to share their “right there” questions and to tell where in the text the answer to each question can be found.

GENERALIZATION

Ask students for examples of situations in which asking themselves “right there” questions might help them understand and remember what they read. Emphasize the fact that they can preview text and ask themselves “right there” questions in all of their classes.

MONITOR STUDENT LEARNING

Each time students read an unfamiliar passage, have them use the previewing routine and generate Level 1 questions in pairs or small groups. Circulate through the room to monitor students’ responses. Ask questions that require students to tell the reasons for their predictions and to show where they found the answers to the Level 1 questions they generated.

PERIODIC/MULTIPLE OPPORTUNITIES TO PRACTICE

Use the previewing and question generation routine each time students read unfamiliar text. Once students become skilled at making valid predictions and generating Level 1 questions, turn the process over to them, but continue to preteach important proper nouns or “big-idea words” and to remind students to preview and generate questions. Occasionally, return to previewing and question generation in partners so that you can monitor the process.

FIGURE 22. LEVEL 1 “RIGHT THERE” QUESTIONS PLANNING SHEET.

<p style="text-align: center;">PLANNING SHEET LEVEL 1 QUESTIONS</p> <p>1. Preteach Proper Nouns or Critical Concept Nouns Introduce, read, and define. Students write brief definition in learning log.</p> <p>Who:</p> <p>Where:</p> <p>What:</p> <p>2. Preview Text Introduce the big idea of the text selection.</p> <p>What is the most important idea that you want all students to understand and remember from this reading?</p> <p>Important key concepts, subheadings, bolded print, etc.</p> <p>Connections to prior learning:</p> <p>3. Model Level 1 Questions Questions to use as examples:</p>

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BEFORE- AND DURING-READING COMPREHENSION **SAMPLE LESSON**

Generating Level 2 ("Putting It Together") Questions

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The following question types are adapted with permission from Raphael, T. E., Highfield, K., & Au, K. H. (2006). *QAR now*. New York: Scholastic.

The ideas and materials for previewing and question generation were adapted with permission from materials developed by the Teacher Quality Research Project through funding from the U.S. Department of Education's Institute of Educational Sciences, grant contract number R305M050121A (Enhancing the Quality of Expository Text Instruction and Comprehension Through Content and Case-situated Professional Development; D. Simmons, S. Vaughn, & M. Edmonds).

The portion of this lesson on learning to ask and answer different types of questions is an adaptation of the Question-Answer-Relationship strategy (UTCRLA, 2003d; Blachowicz & Ogle, 2001; NRP, 2000; Raphael, 1986).

OBJECTIVE

Students will increase literal and inferential comprehension of text by generating "putting it together" questions.

MATERIALS

- Text passage or chapter.
- Overhead projector, chalkboard, or chart paper.
- Learning logs (see Appendix).
- White question cards (see Appendix).
- Transparency of Figure 24.

PREPARATION

Read the passage and identify the following:

- 3–5 important proper nouns or key concept nouns.
- The “big idea”.
- Several Level 2, “putting it together” questions. Level 2 questions can be answered using ideas found in different places in the text or in a different text. Example “putting it together” questions include:
 - What are adobe villages?
 - Why were the Jumano called pueblo people?
 - Why did the Jumano have to irrigate their crops?

DAILY REVIEW

Preteach important proper nouns or critical concept nouns and preview the reading.

1. Introduce 3–5 new important proper nouns or “big-idea words” and provide brief definitions. Review reasons for preteaching important proper nouns. Read the list with class.
2. Have students copy important proper nouns or critical concept nouns and definitions in their learning logs.
3. Present the “big idea.” Remind students how to preview a passage. Students should look for key concepts by reading the title, bold print, and subheadings. They should look at the pictures or other information that stands out. Students should then connect the key concepts to what they already know and to the big idea and say how they made the connection. Assist students in making connections and correct misinformation.
4. Go through the preview as a whole-class activity. Call on students to say the key concepts and to make connections to what they already know and what they expect to learn. Validate all students’ ideas, while making sure that information is accurate. List only accurate connections and information on the chart paper, chalkboard, or transparency.
5. Ask a few students to generate Level 1, “right there” questions about the first one or two paragraphs of the reading.

STATE OBJECTIVE/PURPOSE

Tell students that today they will learn more about generating questions.

Teacher:

Why do we ask questions when we read?

Answers should include: “to check what we know about what we read,” “to test our understanding,” and “to help us remember important information about we read”.

MODEL AND TEACH

1. Model creating “putting it together” questions.

Teacher:

Remember that you can ask several types of questions and that understanding the different types will make it easier to find the answers. Some questions require you to find facts about what you read, while others require you to draw conclusions or make inferences. Last week we worked on asking and answering “right there” questions—the kinds of questions for which you can find the answer, word for word, in just one place in your reading.

2. Introduce the Level 2, “putting it together” question type.

Teacher:

This week we are going to learn about “putting it together” questions. Teachers like these questions because in order to find the answer, you have to put information together. That is, you usually have to use information from more than one place in your reading and put that information together to write an answer. “Putting it together” questions usually take a sentence or more to answer. Not only are “putting it together” questions a little more difficult to answer than “right there” questions, but they can also be harder to ask.

FIGURE 23. “PUTTING IT TOGETHER” (WHITE) QUESTION CARD.

Level 2—Putting It Together

- ❑ Questions can be answered by looking in the text
- ❑ Answers require one or more sentences
- ❑ To answer the questions, you have to look in more than one place and put information together
 - > Who? > Where?
 - > What? > Why?
 - > When? > How?

Adapted with permission from materials developed by the Teacher Quality Research Project through funding from the U.S. Department of Education’s Institute of Educational Sciences, grant contract No. R305M050121A (Enhancing the Quality of Expository Text Instruction and Comprehension Through Content and Case-situated Professional Development; D. Simmons, S. Vaughn, & M. Edmonds).

3. Model the process of generating Level 2 questions using a think aloud.

Teacher:

This passage is about the Jumano people. It says that different groups lived in adobe villages. And then it says the Spanish called all these groups Pueblo. Later it says the Jumano people are called Pueblo Jumano. So I can combine that information to make a question. Why were Jumano people called Pueblo Jumano? They were called Pueblo Jumano because at that time the Spanish called all the groups that lived in adobe villages Pueblo. I have to know that the Jumano lived in adobe villages and that the Spanish called the groups of people that lived in adobe villages Pueblo. So I had to put information together from different parts of the passage to answer that question. Let’s try some more...

4. Model this process several times.

GUIDED PRACTICE

Grouping: Whole class or small groups

1. Ask students several more “putting it together” questions and talk about the process you are using to generate these questions (finding ideas in two parts of the text that can go together and combining them to answer one question).
2. Read 2–3 paragraphs to students and as a class or small group, have students practice forming Level 2 questions. Have students give the answers to the questions they generate and tell where in the text the information to answer the questions can be found.
3. Give feedback and continue to model how to create and answer these questions as needed.

Students will likely need quite a lot of practice generating Level 2 questions. Do not go on to Level 3 questions until students are successful and comfortable with Level 2 questions.

INDEPENDENT PRACTICE

Grouping: Partners

Using a different brief selection, preteach important proper nouns, and provide students with the overall “big idea” of the passage in no more than 1–2 sentences. Then have students work in partners to quickly preview the chapter.

Next, have students work in partners to generate “putting it together” questions about the selection. Have students write their questions in their learning logs, along with the answers and evidence (where the answers are found).

Circulate and provide feedback and scaffolding as needed. Be prepared to model again as needed. If several students are confused, stop the independent practice and return to modeling and additional guided practice.

Ask pairs to share their “putting it together” questions and to tell where in the text the answer to each question can be found.

GENERALIZATION

Ask students for examples of situations in which asking themselves “putting it together” questions might help them understand and remember what they read. Emphasize the fact that they can preview text and ask themselves “putting it together” questions in all of their classes.

MONITOR STUDENT LEARNING

Each time students read an unfamiliar passage, have them use the previewing routine and generate both Level 1 and Level 2 questions in pairs or small groups. Circulate through the room to monitor students' responses. Ask questions that require students to tell the reasons for their predictions and to show where they found the answers to the Level 1 and Level 2 questions they generated.

PERIODIC/MULTIPLE OPPORTUNITIES TO PRACTICE

Use the previewing and question generation routine each time students read unfamiliar text. Once students become skilled at making valid predictions and generating Level 1 and Level 2 questions, turn the process over to them, but continue to preteach important proper nouns or “big-idea words” and to remind students to preview and generate questions. Occasionally, return to previewing and question generation in partners so that you can monitor the process.

FIGURE 24. LEVEL 2 “PUTTING IT TOGETHER” QUESTIONS PLANNING SHEET.

<p style="text-align: center;">PLANNING SHEET LEVEL 2 QUESTIONS</p> <p>1. Preteach Proper Nouns or Critical Concept Nouns Introduce, read, and define. Students write brief definition in learning log.</p> <p>Who:</p> <p>Where:</p> <p>What:</p> <p>2. Preview Text Introduce the big idea of the text selection.</p> <p>What is the most important idea that you want all students to understand and remember from this reading?</p> <p>Important key concepts, subheadings, bolded print, etc.</p> <p>Connections to prior learning:</p> <p>3. Model Level 2 Questions Questions to use as examples:</p>

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BEFORE- AND DURING-READING COMPREHENSION **SAMPLE LESSON**

Generating Level 3 ("Making Connections") Questions

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The following question types are adapted with permission from Raphael, T. E., Highfield, K., & Au, K. H. (2006). *QAR now*. New York: Scholastic.

The ideas and materials for previewing and question generation were adapted with permission from materials developed by the Teacher Quality Research Project through funding from the U.S. Department of Education's Institute of Educational Sciences, grant contract number R305M050121A (Enhancing the Quality of Expository Text Instruction and Comprehension Through Content and Case-situated Professional Development; D. Simmons, S. Vaughn, & M. Edmonds).

The portion of this lesson on learning to ask and answer different types of questions is an adaptation of the Question-Answer-Relationship strategy (UTCRLA, 2003d; Blachowicz & Ogle, 2001; NRP, 2000; Raphael, 1986).

OBJECTIVE

Students will increase inferential comprehension of text by generating "making connections" questions.

MATERIALS

- Text passage or chapter.
- Overhead projector, chalkboard, or chart paper.
- Learning logs (see Appendix).
- Blue question cards (see Appendix).
- Transparency of Figure 26.

PREPARATION

Read the passage and identify the following:

- Important proper nouns or critical concept nouns.
- The “big idea”.
- Several Level 3, “making connections” questions. Level 3 questions require students to use information from the text along with background knowledge/prior learning to make inferences. Example Level 3 questions for a social studies passage are:
 - What are some of the reasons that Patrisia Gonzales might not have had many friends in school?
 - How do you think Patrisia Gonzales’ family influenced her decision to teach others about Native American life?
 - Give an example of what Patrisia Gonzales might mean when she tells kids to “Open your hearts to all the endless possibilities that life might want to give you. And never give up on living a happy life.”
 - How is the biography of Patrisia Gonzales related to the other passages we have read in this chapter?
 - How is the life of Patrisia Gonzales the same as or different from [another biography you have read]?

DAILY REVIEW

Grouping: Whole class

Preteach important proper nouns or critical concept nouns and preview the reading:

1. Introduce 3–5 new important proper nouns or critical concept nouns and provide brief definitions. Review reasons for preteaching important proper nouns or “big-idea words.” Read the list with class.
2. Have students copy important proper nouns/critical concept nouns and definitions in their learning logs.
3. Present the “big idea.”
4. Go through the preview as a whole-class activity. Call on students to say the key concepts and to make connections. Validate all students’ ideas, while making sure that information is accurate. List only accurate connections and information on the chart paper, chalkboard, or transparency.
5. Read the first two paragraphs of the selection to the students, or have them read the paragraphs orally with partners, and have students generate 1–2 Level 1 and/or Level 2 questions. Ask some students to share their questions with the class and to provide the answers to the questions with an explanation of where in the text the answers are located.

STATE OBJECTIVE/PURPOSE

Tell students that today they will learn more about generating questions.

Teacher:

Why do we ask questions when we read?

Answers should include: “to check what we know about what we read,” “to test our understanding,” and “to help us remember important information about we read”.

Remember that you can ask several types of questions and that understanding the different types will make it easier to find the answers. Some questions require you to find facts about what you read, while others require you to draw conclusions or make inferences. Last week we worked on asking and answering “putting it together” questions, the kinds of questions that you can answer by combining information from more than one place in your reading. Today we will learn how to form and answer “making connections” questions. When you answer “making connections” questions, you use information you already know along with information from the reading. Teachers ask many “making connections” questions because good readers connect what they are reading with information they already know.

MODEL AND TEACH

1. Introduce the Level 3, “making connections” question type.

Teacher:

“Making connections” questions are different from “right there” and “putting it together” questions because you cannot answer them only by looking in the passage. To answer a “making connections” question, you need to think about what you just read and make connections to what you already know. Level 3 questions often start with the following question stems:

- How is this like...?
- How is this different from...?
- How is this related to...?

FIGURE 25. “MAKING CONNECTIONS” (BLUE) QUESTION CARD.

Level 3—Making Connections

- Questions cannot be answered by using text alone
- Answers require you to think about what you just read, what you already know, and how it fits together
 - > How is ____ like (similar to) ____ ?
 - > How is ____ different from ____ ?
 - > How is ____ related to ____ ?

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Note: The goal for Level 3 questions is to make extensions/connections to text. Students should try to “stay with the text” and integrate the text with their prior learning instead of answering questions “away from the text” without any connection to what they are reading.

2. Read a short passage with your class.
3. Model how to create a “making connections” question.

After reading the passage with students, discuss a few important ideas from the passage. Then model Level 3 questions.

Teacher:

This passage about Patrisia Gonzales talks about a woman who is alive today and who is part Kickapoo, part Comanche, and part Mexican. To write a Level 3 question, I have to ask about something that is related to what I’ve read but that I have to think a little bit more about. One question I have about this passage is: How is this passage related to the other passages in the People of the Mountains and Plains lesson? To answer this question, we have to think about what we’ve already read and relate it to what we learned today. So, we’ve read about different groups that lived in the mountains and plains areas of Texas a long time ago. Today we are reading about Patrisia Gonzales, who is a descendent of several of these groups. I think this passage is related to the other passages in this lesson because the authors want us to know that there are people living today who are related to those same groups of people who lived in Texas a long time ago. Let’s try to create some more Level 3, “making connections” questions...

Ask students several more “making connections” questions and talk about the process you are using to generate these questions (connecting ideas in the text with ideas they have already learned or already know about).

4. Since Level 3 questions are the most difficult to generate and to answer, be sure to provide students with many models of this process and to return to modeling as often as needed.

GUIDED PRACTICE

Grouping: Whole class or small groups

1. Read 2–3 paragraphs to students, and as a class or small group, have students practice forming Level 3 questions. Have students provide answers to their questions and explain how they used information from the text as well as background information to do so. Remind students that their questions may begin with the stems:
 - How is this like...?
 - How is this different from...?
 - How is this related to...?
2. Give feedback and continue to model how to create and answer these questions as needed.

Students will likely need quite a lot of practice generating Level 3 questions. Do not go on to independent practice until students are successful and comfortable with Level 3 questions.

INDEPENDENT PRACTICE

Grouping: Partners

Using a different brief selection, preteach important proper nouns and provide students with the overall “big idea” of the passage in no more than 1–2 sentences. Then have students work in partners to quickly preview the chapter.

Next, have students work in partners to generate “making connections” questions about the selection. Have students write their questions in their learning logs, along with answers and evidence supporting the answers.

Circulate and provide feedback and scaffolding as needed. Be prepared to model again as needed. If several students are confused, stop the independent practice and return to modeling and additional guided practice.

Ask pairs to share their “making connections” questions and explain how they used information in the text as well as background information to answer each question.

GENERALIZATION

Ask students for examples of situations in which asking themselves “making connections” questions might help them understand and remember what they read. Emphasize the fact that they can preview text and ask themselves “making connections” questions in all of their classes.

MONITOR STUDENT LEARNING

Each time students read an unfamiliar passage, have them use the previewing routine and generate Level 1, 2, and 3 questions in pairs or small groups. Circulate through the room to monitor students’ responses. Ask students to share the reasons for their predictions, show where they found the answers to their Level 1 and Level 2 questions, and explain how they combined information in the text with background knowledge to answer their Level 3 questions. Provide more modeling and guided practice, as needed.

PERIODIC/MULTIPLE OPPORTUNITIES TO PRACTICE

Use the previewing and question generation routine each time students read unfamiliar text. Once students become skilled at making valid predictions and generating all three levels of questions, turn the process over to them. Continue to preteach important proper nouns or “big-idea words” and to remind students to preview and generate questions. Occasionally, return to previewing and question generation in partners so that you can monitor the process.

FIGURE 26. LEVEL 3 “MAKING CONNECTIONS” QUESTIONS PLANNING SHEET.

<p style="text-align: center;">PLANNING SHEET LEVEL 3 QUESTIONS</p> <p>1. Preteach Proper Nouns or Critical Concept Nouns Introduce, read, and define. Students write brief definition in learning log.</p> <p>Who:</p> <p>Where:</p> <p>What:</p> <p>2. Preview Text Introduce the big idea of the text selection.</p> <p>What is the most important idea that you want all students to understand and remember from this reading?</p> <p>Important key concepts, subheadings, bolded print, etc.</p> <p>Connections to prior learning:</p> <p>3. Model Level 3 Questions Questions to use as examples:</p>

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DURING-READING **SAMPLE LESSON**

Mental Imagery Log

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Lesson adapted from: University of Texas Center for Reading and Language Arts. (2003). *Meeting the needs of struggling readers: A resource for secondary English language arts teachers*. Austin, TX: Author; and based on research by McNeil, 1992; Wood & Harmon, 2001; and Gambrell & Bales, 1986.

OBJECTIVE

Students will create mental images as they read and describe their mental images with words or illustrations.

MATERIALS

- Overhead transparency of short passage.
- Overhead transparency of blank mental imagery log (see Figure 27).
- Several blank mental imagery logs (student copies).
- Several copies of a short passage or chapter.

DAILY REVIEW

Teacher:

Yesterday we began reading... Who or what was the story about? Good. Can anyone remember...?

STATE OBJECTIVE/PURPOSE

Teacher:

When I say the word *mental*, to what part of the body am I referring?

Accept responses.

That's right, the head—more specifically, the mind. Today I am going to teach you a strategy that will help you understand what you are reading. We are going to make pictures in our

minds called mental images. Forming mental images, or pictures, while you are reading will help you better understand and remember what you read.

MODEL AND TEACH

Genre: Narrative or expository (works best to introduce with narrative text)

Grouping: Whole class

Introduce Mental Imagery

First, review the five senses with students: touch, taste, smell, sight, hearing.

Then tell students to close their eyes. Circulate around the room.

Teacher:

I want you to form a picture of a dog in your mind.

Think about how the dog in your mind looks, smells, feels, and sounds.

What color is your dog, Shelly? What kind of tail does your dog have, Jim? What does your dog smell like, Jose?...

Continue the same steps with other familiar objects such as shoes, cars, a room, etc.

Then read a sentence to your students and ask them to make a picture of the sentence in their mind. Then ask students what words in the sentence help them build the mental image.

Teacher:

Listen to this sentence. While I read it, make a picture of the sentence in your mind. “With a screech of its wheels, the bright red car sped around the corner.”

What word tells you that the car is moving quickly?

Students:

Sped.

Teacher:

That’s right, *sped*. So now our mental image is moving. We are making movies in our minds.

What do you see, Joe? What do you hear, Maria? Do you smell anything, Lisa? What kind of car do you see, James?...

Model Mental Imagery

Model the process of completing a mental imagery log (see Figure 27).

1. Project a short passage on the overhead.
2. Read the passage to the class. Ask students to make movies in their minds as they listen and follow along.

3. Tell the students that you are going to teach them to write a description or draw a picture of their mental images after reading each paragraph.
4. Reread the passage one paragraph at a time, and ask students to listen to the words and form a mental image or make a movie in their minds. Allow students to close their eyes while you read.
5. After reading each paragraph, stop and “think aloud” as you complete the mental imagery log at the overhead projector.

Teacher:

While I was reading that paragraph, I saw the ship with its sails up, cargo in place, and pots of food still dangling over cold fires. But all of the people were gone. So, on my mental imagery log, I can write, “The ship looked occupied, but the people were gone.”

Write the sentence on the mental imagery log transparency while you are saying it.

Or I can draw a picture. The words that really help me make a picture in my mind are “pots full of food dangling over a cold fire.”

Underline these words in the paragraph.

This image really captures how the people seemed to have just disappeared. So I will draw a picture of a large pot with food, hanging over a fire that has gone out.

Sketch the picture on the mental imagery log transparency.

6. Repeat steps 4 and 5 for several paragraphs.

GUIDED PRACTICE

Basic

Grouping: Partners or small groups

1. Give each group a blank mental imagery log and a brief passage or chapter.
2. Have students begin reading the passage or chapter with a partner.
3. Partners take turns reading one paragraph at a time.
4. After reading each paragraph, partners stop and share their mental images.
5. Partners help each other identify and underline any words that helped form their mental images.
6. Partners decide whether they are going to write a sentence describing their images or draw a picture. Then the students write a sentence or draw a picture in the appropriate space on the log.

During group practice, circulate around the room and listen. Remind students to make movies in their minds while they are reading.

Variation

Grouping: Whole class

1. Give students five different colors of highlighters or map pencils.
2. Choose a short passage that is very descriptive in nature.
3. Give each student a copy of the passage and project your copy on an overhead.
4. Ask students to listen for descriptive words while you read the passage aloud.
5. Reread the passage together and highlight sensory words or phrases together. For example, highlight anything that describes sound with blue, smell with yellow, etc.

HELPFUL HABIT | Most students love to see their writing projected on the overhead. If a student writes an especially descriptive paragraph, make an overhead transparency and use his/her writing for this exercise. If a student has unreadable handwriting, type the paragraph for the transparency.

INDEPENDENT PRACTICE

Grouping: Individuals

For independent practice, students will be expected to complete a mental imagery log on their own. This will not be on the same day of teacher modeling and guided practice. Students will most likely need several opportunities for guided practice before they are ready for independent practice. They will then need several opportunities to practice independently. This is true with teaching any strategy or skill. Students must be given opportunities to practice often so that the strategy or skill becomes a habit. One way to conduct independent practice for this strategy is below:

1. Give each student a copy of a passage or chapter and a blank mental imagery log.
2. Read the first paragraph to the class while the students follow along. Before you read, remind the students to make movies in their minds as they follow along.
3. Ask students to write a sentence or draw a picture in the appropriate space on their logs.

HELPFUL HABIT | Reluctant readers are usually reluctant writers. Set a timer for an exact time, even if it is only 2 minutes, and ask students to write or draw continuously until the timer rings and then promptly stop. Gradually, increase the amount of time that students are asked to write continuously.

4. When students are finished writing, ask for a volunteer to share his/her response. Project the blank log on the overhead and fill in with students' shared responses. Ask students to share which words from the text helped them form their mental images.
5. Continue this process, one paragraph at a time, until the passage or chapter is complete. Depending on the level of the text, you might continue reading each paragraph to the class, or you might ask students to read one paragraph at a time silently.

GENERALIZATION

Teacher:

Can anyone think of where the mental imagery strategy might be useful outside of this class?

Student:

When we read stories in English class?

Teacher:

Definitely. What story are you reading in English class right now?

Student:

We're reading *To Kill a Mockingbird*. We're reading the courtroom scene.

Teacher:

Oh, I love that book. So what should you be picturing in your mind as you read about the trial?

Student:

We should picture the courtroom with the judge and lawyers and all the townspeople watching the trial. We should also picture the jury.

Teacher:

That's exactly right. So when you go to English class today, pay attention as you are reading and make movies in your minds while you are reading. Tomorrow I am going to ask you whether making mental images helped you understand what you read in English class.

MONITOR STUDENT LEARNING

Check for appropriate responses on mental imagery logs.

PERIODIC REVIEW/MULTIPLE OPPORTUNITIES TO PRACTICE

Prepare by reading the text in advance and marking places conducive to creating a mental image. While reading with the class, stop at these places and ask students to make mental images. Ask questions about the images. Ask for words in the text that helped students form their images.

Periodically remind students to make movies in their mind while they read. Have students write descriptions or draw pictures of their mental images *and* give evidence from the text to support their images. Asking students to provide evidence is very important.

Periodically, or each day for a period of time, have students complete mental imagery logs in pairs or individually for paragraphs in assigned reading.

FIGURE 27. MENTAL IMAGERY LOG.

MENTAL IMAGERY LOG	
Title:	
Paragraph 1	Paragraph 5
Paragraph 2	Paragraph 6
Paragraph 3	Paragraph 7
Paragraph 4	Paragraph 8

Adapted with permission from University of Texas Center for Reading and Language Arts. (2003). Meeting the needs of struggling readers: A resource for secondary English language arts teachers. Austin, TX: Author; based on McNeil, J. D. (1992). Reading comprehension: New directions for classroom practice (3rd ed.). New York: Harper Collins; Wood, K. D., & Harmon, J. M. (2001). Strategies for integrating reading and writing in middle and high school classrooms. Westerville, OH: National Middle School Association; and Gambrell, L. B., & Bales, R. J. (1986). Mental imagery and the comprehension-monitoring of fourth- and fifth-grade poor readers. Reading Research Quarterly, 21, 454-464.

DURING-READING **SAMPLE LESSON**

Main Idea Strategy

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Vocabulary routine adapted with permission from Archer, A. L., Gleason, M. M., & Vachon, V. (2005b). *REWARDS Plus: Reading strategies applied to social studies passages*. Longmont, CO: Sopris West.

Main idea strategy adapted with permission from Klingner, J. K., Vaughn, S., Dimino, J., Schumm, J. S., & Bryant, D. (2001). *Collaborative strategic reading: Strategies for improving comprehension*. Longmont, CO: Sopris West.

TERMS TO KNOW

Detail	A specific, minor piece of information related to the topic
Main idea	What the text is mostly about
Topic	The subject addressed by the author

Encarta World English Dictionary; Vaughn & Klingner, 1999

The Get the Gist strategy was developed as a way to help students understand the concept of main idea (Klingner, Vaughn, & Schumm, 1998; Vaughn, Klingner, & Schumm, 1996). It teaches students to pay attention to the most relevant information in the text and guides them to developing a main idea statement based on the following information:

- Who or what the paragraph is about (the topic of the paragraph, which will usually be the subject of the main idea statement).
- The most important information about the “who” or “what”.

Students are taught to combine the above elements into a main idea statement with 10 words or less, eliminating nonessential details.

OBJECTIVE

The students will determine the **topic**, **main idea**, and important **details** of a paragraph.

MATERIALS

- Copies of a short passage or chapter.
- Blank main idea form overhead transparency.
- Transparencies of pictures or cartoons depicting simple actions.
- Several blank main idea forms (see Figure 29).

DAILY REVIEW

Spend 3–5 minutes on vocabulary review.

1. Show the previous day's words and definitions on a transparency or chart. Read each word to the students and have students repeat each one.

feisty	Strong and not afraid of arguing with people
pact	An agreement or a sworn promise
desolate	Very lonely and unhappy
dominant	More important or powerful than other people or things
anonymous	Written, given, or made by someone who does not want their name to be known
motive	A reason for doing something

Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary

2. Briefly review the meaning of each word. Note that these are student-friendly definitions that are easy for students to understand.
3. Ask students questions to promote deep understanding of the words. Have students discuss each question with a partner. Then call on partners to respond. Always ask students to give reasons for their answers. There can be more than one correct answer to these questions. The important thing is that the student's reasoning reflects the true meaning of the vocabulary words.

Teacher:

When might a *pact* be a *motive* for a crime?

(If someone has made a sworn agreement, they might commit a crime to keep their promise.)

Can a *feisty* person be *desolate*?

(If a person is really strong and not afraid of arguing with people, they might not have a lot of friends. They might feel very lonely sometimes.)

Why might a *dominant* person give an *anonymous* gift?

(Sometimes powerful or important people might not want anyone to know when they give someone a gift. They might want it to be a secret so they don't have a lot of publicity. Maybe if it were public that they did something nice then others would think they were "soft" or not as powerful.)

HELPFUL HABIT | Laminate a piece of construction paper and place it under each word you are asking students to read. It works as a guide to help the reader keep his or her place and the rest of the students focused on the word being read.

STATE OBJECTIVE/PURPOSE

Teacher:

Today I am going to show you a strategy, or plan of action, that will help you determine the main idea of each paragraph as you read. It is important to be able to identify main ideas so you can monitor your understanding as you are reading.

MODEL AND TEACH

Genre: Expository

Grouping: Whole class

1. Define main idea through the Get the Gist strategy.

Teacher:

The name of the strategy you will be learning today is "Get the Gist." If you get the gist of something you read or hear or see on TV, you understand the most important ideas. The Get the Gist strategy is a step-by-step way to help you find the most important ideas in paragraphs you read. The strategy has three parts:

- Ask yourself, "Who or what is the paragraph about?"
- Ask yourself, "What is the most important information about the 'who' or 'what?'"
- Say it in a main idea statement with 10 words or less.

One way to introduce this strategy to students is to teach it without text.

2. Project a cartoon or picture of an animal doing something. No words are necessary, just a character involved in some sort of action. For instance, you might project a transparency of a dog jumping to catch a Frisbee in his mouth. Perhaps there are surrounding trees, flowers, and sunshine. Now ask the students to look at the cartoon.

Teacher:

In one or two words, tell me who or what this cartoon is about.

Students:

A dog.

Teacher:

What is the most important thing about the dog?

Students:

He's jumping to catch a Frisbee.

Some students may mention the flowers, or the trees, or that it is a sunny day. If this happens, ask questions to guide students to see the difference between the most important idea and non-essential details.

Teacher:

Is the sunny day the most important thing about the cartoon? If we just looked at this picture, would we say, "This is a picture of a dog on a sunny day," or would we say, "This is a picture of a dog jumping to catch a Frisbee"?

Now that the students have identified "who" or "what" the cartoon is about, and the most important information about the "who" or the "what," ask them to count on their fingers to come up with a main idea statement that has 10 words or less. For example:

- The dog is jumping to catch a Frisbee. (8 words)
 - The dog is catching a Frisbee in his mouth. (9 words)
 - The dog leaps to catch a Frisbee. (7 words)
3. Repeat with other cartoons or pictures if needed, until students clearly understand the concept of main idea and the Get the Gist strategy.
 4. Give students a copy of a short passage. The sample lesson is from a science passage about hurricanes.
 - Project a blank main idea form on the overhead (See Figure 29).
 - Preview the passage: Look at illustrations, title, headings, and bold words.
 - Write the title or topic of the selection on the line provided.
 - Prior knowledge: Ask students to think about what they already know about the topic. Accept responses.
 - Read the first paragraph with the students.
 - Reread the paragraph one or two sentences at a time. Think aloud as you identify who or what the paragraph is about and the most important thing about the "who" or "what." Be sure to include in the think aloud the *process* of deciding what is the most important thing and *why*. Record in appropriate spaces on the main idea form.
 - Think aloud the process of identifying important details in the passage. Ask questions such as, "Is this detail important?" "The important information in this sentence is..." "This detail is not important because..." Then record important details in the appropriate column.
 - Think aloud how you make sure that all of the important details are related to the main idea.

- After reading an additional paragraph, show students sample main idea statements, some that are correct and some that are incorrect. Discuss each statement and determine whether it is an accurate statement of the main idea.

GUIDED PRACTICE

Grouping: Partners

1. Give partners a blank main idea form.
2. Working with a partner, have students read the next paragraph and use the Get the Gist strategy. Ask students to work with their partners to come up with a main idea statement that includes:
 - Who or what the paragraph is about.
 - The most important thing about the “who” or the “what” stated in 10 words or less.
3. Share main idea statements with the class. Think aloud with the class to modify any statements that are inaccurate or incomplete. Also emphasize that all of the main idea statements do not have to be exactly the same in order to be correct.
4. Ask students to record important details that relate to the main idea.
5. Circulate around the room and be available to clarify and check for accurate details. Continue to ask questions such as, “What are the most important details?”
6. At the overhead, ask partners to share the important details and tell why they think the details they selected are important.

INDEPENDENT PRACTICE

Grouping: Partners, then individual

Provide an additional short passage or the next few paragraphs in a chapter and have students use a main idea form to develop a main idea statement and record key details.

Initially, have students work with a partner, and after students are more proficient, ask them to use this strategy independently.

GENERALIZATION

Teacher:

Think about your other classes. Raise your hand if you can think of a way to use the Get the Gist strategy in another class.

Student:

We could use the strategy in science class.

Teacher:

How would that look?

Student:

Well, we could find the main idea of each paragraph as we read the chapter.

Teacher:

That's right. Do you have to have a main idea form to do that?

Student:

Well, we could draw our own form, or we could just come up with a main idea statement for each paragraph and write down the important details.

Teacher:

Good thinking. Does anyone have a science textbook? Let's quickly look at a chapter together and see how we could take notes using the Get the Gist strategy...

MONITOR STUDENT LEARNING

Check accuracy of main idea statements and key details.

- Does the main idea statement encompass the significant details of the paragraph?
- Are the details accurate?
- Did students select key details that relate directly to the main idea?

PERIODIC REVIEW/MULTIPLE OPPORTUNITIES TO PRACTICE

Students determine the main idea of an entire passage or chapter. This is particularly important in narrative text because state tests, such as the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS), can ask students to identify a correct main idea statement for multiple paragraphs or an entire passage.

- Have students write the main idea statements for each paragraph in the passage.
- Use these statements to determine the main idea of the entire passage.

Students may also use the main idea statements of each paragraph to write a summary of the entire passage or chapter (See page 123 for a sample lesson). Students may also extend the main idea strategy to complete a main idea log (see Figure 53) or some other note-taking form.

FIGURE 28. SAMPLE PARTIALLY COMPLETED MAIN IDEA FORM.

MAIN IDEA FORM			
Name(s) _____		Date _____	
Title or Topic of the Selection <u>What are hurricanes?</u>			
Paragraph	Who or What is the Paragraph About?	Most Important Information About the "Who" or "What"	Key Details
1	Hurricanes	are large tropical storms with heavy winds.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Winds more than 74 mph • Large areas of rain • Produce tornadoes • Cause flooding
2	Hurricanes	form over warm ocean water.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Water must be over 79 degrees F • If have winds less than 74 mph are called tropical storms
3	Hurricanes	have calm centers with very powerful winds around them.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Center is called the eye • Eye is 10–30 miles wide • Wind around eye can gust to 186 mph

Note: The complete main idea statement is formed by combining the "Who or What" column with the "Most Important Information" column.

Adapted with permission from Klingner, J. K., Vaughn, S., Dimino, J., Schumm, J. S., & Bryant, D. (2001). Collaborative strategic reading: Strategies for improving comprehension. Longmont, CO: Sopris West.

FIGURE 29. MAIN IDEA FORM.

MAIN IDEA FORM			
Name(s) _____		Date _____	
Title or Topic of the Selection _____			
Paragraph	Who or What is the Paragraph About?	Most Important Information About the "Who" or "What"	Key Details

Note: The complete main idea statement is formed by combining the "Who or What" column with the "Most Important Information" column.

Adapted with permission from Klingner, J. K., Vaughn, S., Dimino, J., Schumm, J. S., & Bryant, D. (2001). Collaborative strategic reading: Strategies for improving comprehension. Longmont, CO: Sopris West.

DURING READING

Identifying Text Structures and Using Graphic Organizers

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Portions of this section on developing and using graphic organizers were adapted from Lenz, B. K. (1983). Promoting active learning through effective instruction: Using advance organizers. *Pointer*, 27, 11–13; Sprick, R., Sprick, M., & Garrison, M., (1993). *Interventions: Collaborative planning for students at risk*. Longmont, CO: Sopris West; and University of Texas Center for Reading and Language Arts. (2003). *Special education reading project secondary institute — Effective instruction for secondary struggling readers: Research-based practices*. Austin, TX: Author.

TEXT STRUCTURES

Good readers use text structure as a context for comprehension. Text structure refers to the organization of text. It is important that students are aware of and are able to recognize different types of text structures. When students identify text structures, they are more likely to activate background knowledge, preview the text efficiently, and understand the purpose of the text. The explicit teaching of text structures and how to recognize them is particularly important for students with learning disabilities and for English language learners (Dickson, Simmons, & Kameenui, 1998). Understanding the relationships among the ideas presented in text alleviates some of the complexity of information-dense expository text. Teachers can support students' understanding of text by using graphic organizers to illustrate how text is organized.

The two broad categories of text that older readers will encounter are narrative text and expository text. Saenz and Fuchs (2002) found that secondary students with learning disabilities must be taught the distinctions between expository and narrative text structures, and this is likely true for other struggling readers as well. It is important to explicitly teach the purpose, characteristics, and key terms related to each type of text. Explain to students how recognizing text structure will help them better understand, or comprehend, what they read.

Narrative text structure is commonly found in English language arts and social studies textbooks, particularly in biographies. Sometimes other textbooks provide biographies of leaders in a subject area (such as famous mathematicians or scientists). Figure 30 describes key elements of narrative text.

FIGURE 30. ELEMENTS OF NARRATIVE TEXT.

Examples	Fiction Autobiographies Legends	Historical Fiction Biographies Folktales	Science Fiction Fantasies Myths	Plays Mysteries
Purpose	To entertain or inform			
Characteristics	<p>Follow a familiar story structure</p> <p>Beginning: Introduction of setting, characters, and conflict</p> <p>Middle: Progression of plot, which includes rising action, climax, and falling action</p> <p>End: Resolution or solution to the problem</p>			
Narrative Terms (student-friendly definitions)	Exposition	Introduction of setting, characters, background information, and conflict		
	Setting	Time and place		
	Characters	People, animals, or other entities in the text		
	Conflict	Problem		
	Internal Conflict	A character's struggle within himself/herself		
	External Conflict	A character's struggle with another character		
	Rising Action	Events leading up to the climax; trying to solve the problem		
	Climax	Emotional high point of the story; conflict is addressed		
	Falling Action	Consequences or events caused by the climax		
	Resolution	Final outcome		

Adapted with permission from University of Texas Center for Reading and Language Arts. (2003). Special education reading project secondary institute — Effective instruction for secondary struggling readers: Research-based practices. Austin, TX: Author.

Expository texts can have several different text structures, and within one text, the text structure can change multiple times. This can present particular challenges to middle school readers. Figure 31 illustrates elements of expository text. It is helpful to explicitly teach students how to recognize different text structures. Focus on one structure at a time and add more as students master each one.

FIGURE 31. ELEMENTS OF EXPOSITORY TEXT.

Examples	Newspapers	Textbooks	Magazine Articles	Brochures	Catalogues
Purpose	To inform				
Characteristics	Titles Tables	Headings Diagrams	Subheadings Graphics	Boldface Words	Charts
Organization	One expository passage may be organized using several different text structures.				
Types of Organization	Cause-Effect		How or why an event happened; what resulted from an event		
	Chronology/Sequence		The order of events/steps in a process		
	Compare/Contrast		How two or more things are alike/different		
	Description/Categorization		How something looks, moves, works, etc.; a definition or characterization		
	Problem-Solution		What's wrong and how to fix it		
	Position-Reason		Why a point or idea should be supported; what's wrong with an idea		

Adapted with permission from University of Texas Center for Reading and Language Arts. (2003). Special education reading project secondary institute — Effective instruction for secondary struggling readers: Research-based practices. Austin, TX: Author.

As they attempt to identify expository text structures, it can be helpful for students to locate signal words commonly associated with different text structures. A list of signal words for each text structure is included in Figure 32 and in the Appendix.

Signal words can help students think about the relationships between ideas, but signal words should be only one piece of information that is used to determine the text structure. Some signal words can indicate more than one text structure. For example, the phrase “for this reason” may signal a cause-and-effect structure or a position-reason structure. It is important that students learn to *focus on what the author is trying to communicate about the information in the text*, rather than relying on only signal words. Figure 33 illustrates the connection between the author’s purpose and the text structure typically associated with it. A copy of this figure is included in the Appendix and can be used as a class handout.

As mentioned above, sometimes one passage may contain several different text structures. When there are multiple text structures in a single passage or when it is difficult to identify a text structure, teachers find it helpful to return to the primary focus of the passage or of the lesson. Teachers may ask themselves questions such as, “What is it I want students to know and be able to do as a result of reading the text?” and “What is the organizational pattern inherent in that primary focus?” For example, if a section of science text describes an activity in which students determine what will happen as a result of mixing certain chemicals, the overarching structure may be cause and effect. If, on the other hand, the focus is on comparing mixtures and solutions, the overarching structure may be compare/contrast. If the text describes an activity in which students combine substances and then determine whether this results in mixtures or solutions, the overarching structure is probably description/categorization.

FIGURE 32. SIGNAL WORDS.

Cause-Effect		
How or why an event happened; what resulted from an event		
Accordingly	For this reason	Next
As a result of	Hence	Resulting from
Because	How	Since
Begins with	If...then	So that
Consequently	In order to	Therefore
Due to	Is caused by	Thus
Effects of	It follows	When...then
Finally	Leads/led to	Whether

Chronological Order/Temporal Sequencing		
The order of events/steps in a process		
After	Following	On (date)
Afterward	Formerly	Preceding
Around	Immediately	Previously
As soon as	In front of	Second
At last	In the middle	Shortly
Before	Initially	Soon
Between	Last	Then
During	Later	Third
Eventually	Meanwhile	To begin with
Ever since	Next	Until
Finally	Not long after	When
First	Now	While

Compare/Contrast		
How two or more things are alike/different		
Although	Even though	Nevertheless
And	However	On the contrary
As opposed to	In common	On the other hand
As well as	In comparison	Opposite
Better	In contrast	Otherwise
Both	In the same way	Same
But	Instead of	Similar to
Compared with	Just as/like	Similarly
Despite	Less	Still
Different from	Likewise	Whereas
Either	More than	Yet

(figure continued on the next page)

Description/Categorization

How something looks, moves, works, etc.; a definition or characterization

Above	Down	Near
Across	For example	On top of
Along	For instance	Onto
Appears to be	Furthermore	Outside
As in	Generally	Over
Behind	Identify	Refers to
Below	In addition	Such as
Beside	In back of	To illustrate
Between	In front of	To the right/left
Consists of	Including	Typically
Describe	Looks like	Under

Problem-Solution

What's wrong and how to fix it

Answer	Problem	The problem facing
Challenge	Puzzle	The task was
Clarification	Question	Theory
Difficulty	Reply	This had to be accomplished
Dilemma	Resolution	To fix the problem
How to resolve the issue	Response	To overcome this
Lies	Riddle	Trouble
Obstacles	Solution	Unknown
One solution was	Solved by	What to do
Overcomes	The challenge was	What was discovered
Predicament		

Position-Reason

Why a point or idea should be supported; what's wrong with an idea

Accordingly	It is contended	Therefore
As illustrated by	It is evident that	Thesis
Because	It will be argued that	This contradicts the fact that
Consequently	Must take into account	This must be counterbalanced by
For instance	Since	This view is supported by
For this reason	The claim is limited due to	Turn more attention to
In conclusion	The implication is	What is critical
In order for	The position is	What is more central is
It can be established	The strengths of	

FIGURE 33. IDENTIFYING TEXT STRUCTURE.

If the author wants you to know...	The text structure will be...
How or why an event happened; what resulted from an event	Cause-Effect
The order of events/steps in a process	Chronological Order/Sequencing
How two or more things are alike/different	Compare/Contrast
How something looks, moves, works, etc.; a definition or characterization	Description/Categorization
What's wrong and how to fix it	Problem-Solution
Why a point or idea should be supported; what's wrong with an idea	Position-Reason

USING GRAPHIC ORGANIZERS TO HELP STUDENTS ORGANIZE INFORMATION

Graphic organizers help students understand what they read by connecting prior knowledge to new learning (Schwartz, Ellsworth, Graham, & Knight, 1998) and making the relationships within and between concepts clear and visual. Such organizers can be used before, during, and after reading to help students connect new information to prior knowledge, compare and contrast, sequence events, identify important information in the text, see part-to-whole relationships, and categorize information (Schwartz, Ellsworth, Graham, & Knight, 1998; Sprick, Sprick, & Garrison, 1993). Kim, Vaughn, Wanzek, and Wei (2004) examined the research on using graphic organizers with students with learning difficulties and concluded that, “Across the board, when the students were taught to use graphic organizers, large effect sizes were demonstrated on researcher-developed reading comprehension post-tests” (p. 114).

Several premade graphic organizers can work well with different types of text. These are often provided with textbooks, but teachers should ensure they correspond to the primary focus of the lesson. It is also relatively easy to design effective graphic organizers yourself that will meet the needs of the specific content of a text.

The steps to designing a graphic organizer are simple but require that teachers have a strong grasp of the concepts they plan to teach and what they expect their students to learn.

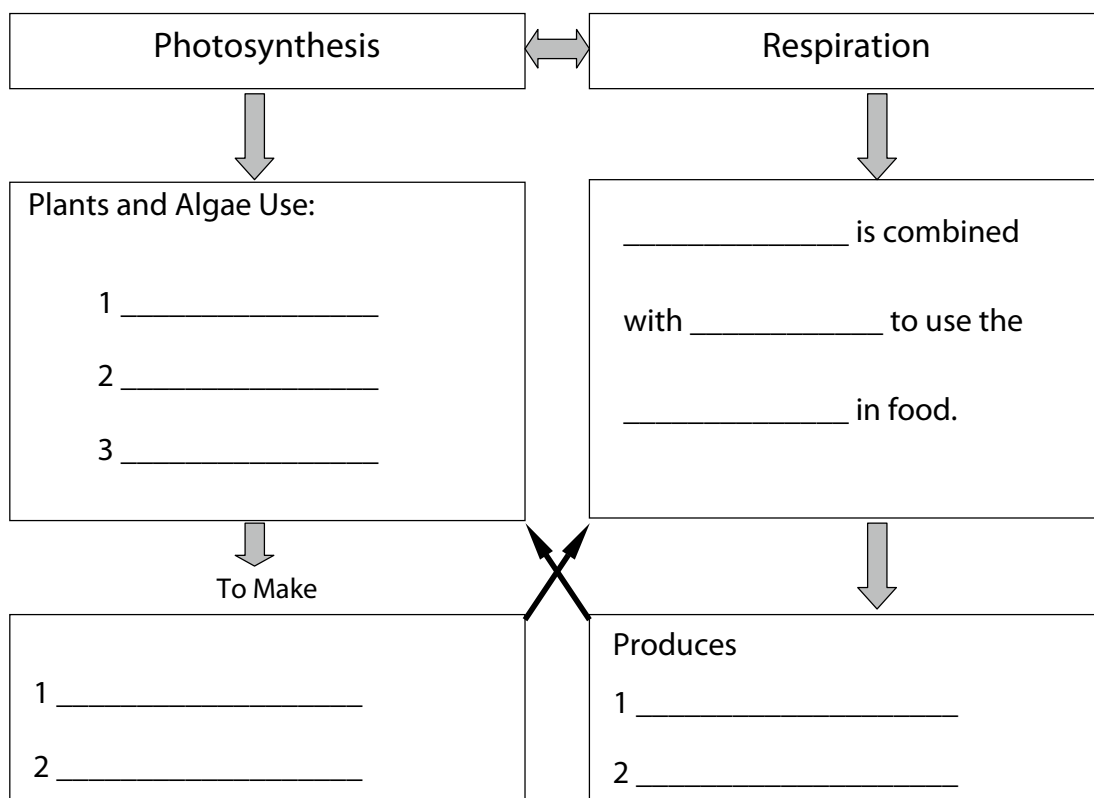
HOW TO DESIGN A GRAPHIC ORGANIZER

1. Read the text and list or outline the most important concepts, or “big ideas,” that students need to learn.

2. Identify the overarching text structure of the passage or of a section of the passage.
3. Organize the key concepts in a way that shows how they are related to one another. Your goal is to present the key concepts visually for students.
4. Provide relevant background information such as the relationship to previous lessons. Look for ways to connect to students' prior knowledge.
5. Add any terms, phrases, or ideas that clarify the relationships.
6. Check that the major relationships within and between concepts are clear and presented as simply as possible.
7. Provide blank space for students to fill in appropriate information. Students should be actively engaged in completing the organizer.

It is not necessary to add any peripheral information or “busywork” for students. It is important that the graphic organizer shows only the essential information that students need to learn. Figure 34 shows a graphic organizer that was created specifically for a science lesson.

FIGURE 34. TEACHER-DEVELOPED GRAPHIC ORGANIZER.



HOW TO USE A GRAPHIC ORGANIZER

Before reading:

- Show the graphic organizer to students and discuss students' prior knowledge.
- Use the graphic organizer as a tool to preview the chapter or text.
- Ask students to make predictions about the text based on the graphic organizer.

During reading:

- Have students fill in important information as they read the text.
- Confirm and/or modify students' predictions about the text.

After reading:

- Have students write a summary of the chapter or text using the graphic organizer as a guide.
- Have students use the graphic organizer to present the content orally to a peer, tutor, or mentor.
- Have students write study guide or test questions based on the graphic organizer.

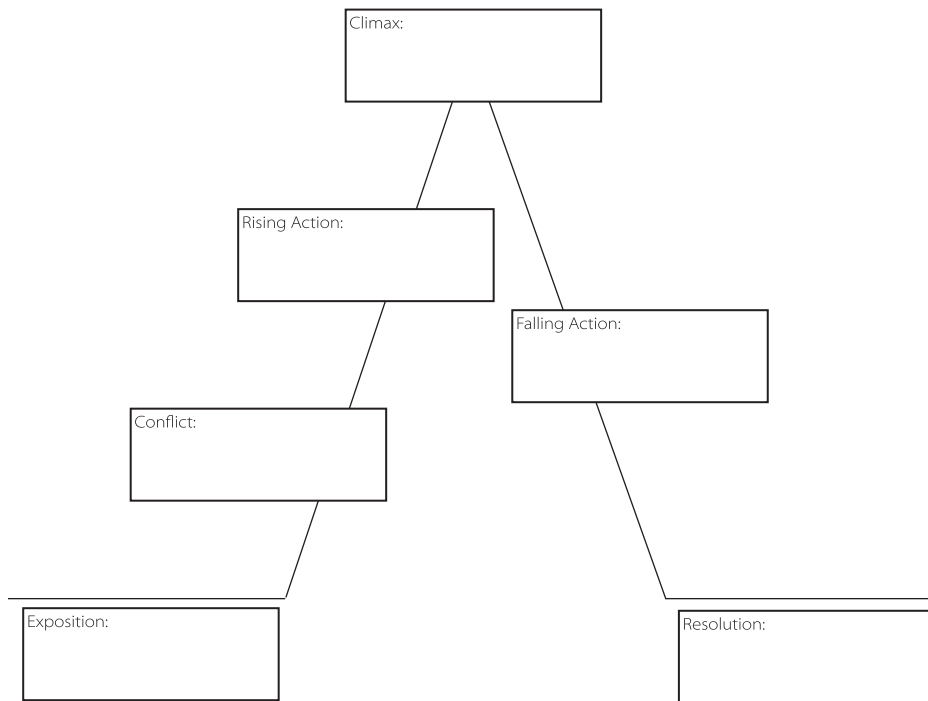
SAMPLE GRAPHIC ORGANIZERS

There are several types of graphic organizers that work well for different purposes. Samples of the following types are included in the Appendix.

Story Map

A story map is a graphic organizer designed for narrative text. Story maps may include elements such as exposition or introduction, conflict or problem, rising action, climax, falling action, and the resolution. Story maps may also contain a description of the characters and setting. Figure 35 is a sample story map.

FIGURE 35. SAMPLE STORY MAP.

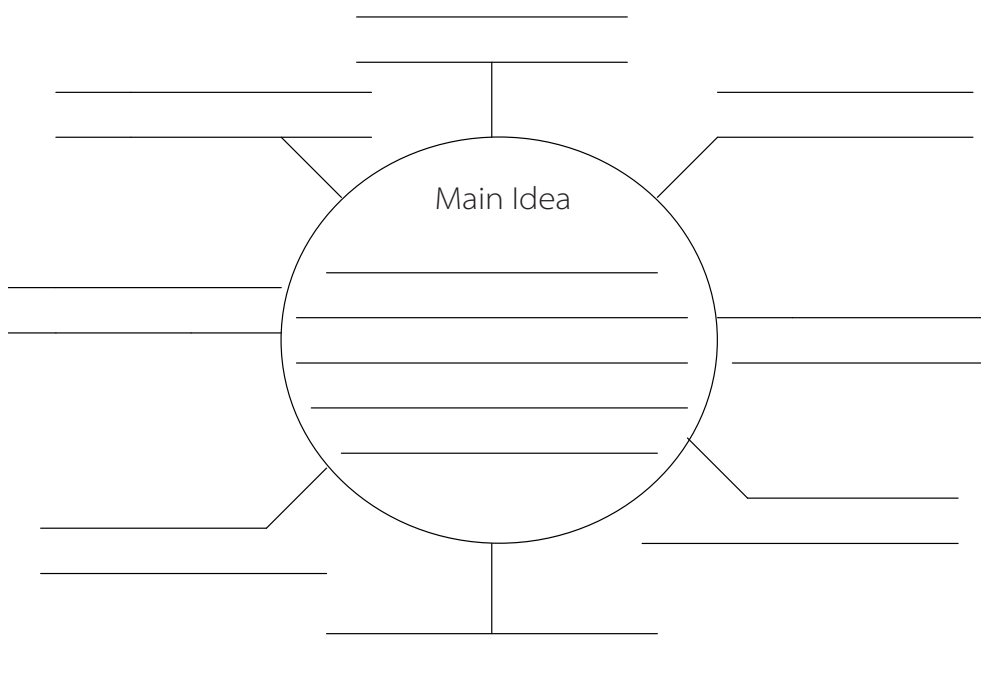


Adapted with permission from University of Texas Center for Reading and Language Arts. (2003). Special education reading project secondary institute — Effective instruction for secondary struggling readers: Research-based practices. Austin, TX: Author.

Main Idea Web

A main idea web is a simple graphic organizer that can be used with paragraphs, sections of a chapter, or entire textbook chapters.

FIGURE 36. MAIN IDEA WEB.



Know and Learn Charts

The Know and Learn Chart is a simple variation of the Know, Want to Know, and Learned (K-W-L) Chart (Ogle, 1986). This organizer can be made with two pieces of chart paper—one completed before and one after reading, or it can be written on the chalkboard or an overhead transparency. The goal of this organizer is to show students how to think about what they already know about a topic before reading and then to verify and modify their thinking after reading. Before reading a passage or chapter, ask students what they already know about the topic. Write all of their responses under the “K” on the chart. Then, after reading the passage or chapter, return to the chart, and with the students, think through which of their answers are correct and which answers need to be changed or modified.

FIGURE 37. KNOW AND LEARN CHART.

Know	Learn
What do I already know?	What did I learn?

Adapted with permission from Ogle, D. M. (1986). K-W-L: A teaching model that develops active reading of expository text. The Reading Teacher, 39, 564–570.

Partially Completed Outline

Students can complete this type of organizer either individually or in pairs while they are taking notes or as they read the text. Figure 38 illustrates a portion of a partially completed outline designed for a specific science text.

FIGURE 38. SAMPLE PARTIALLY COMPLETED OUTLINE.

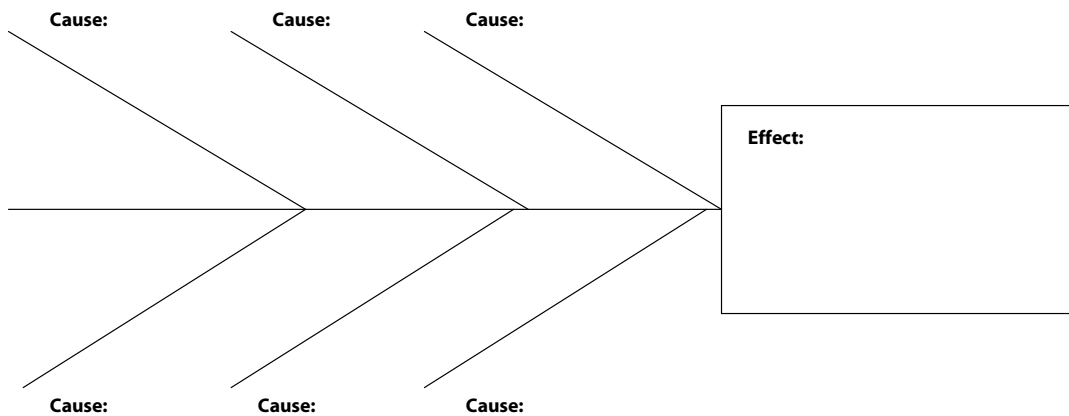
Life in the Ocean	
I. Things the oceans provide for organisms	
A.	_____
1.	Allows easy _____
2.	Ocean organisms use less _____ to move around
B.	_____
C.	_____ for life processes
D.	_____ outside the parents' bodies
E.	_____ (p. 317)
F.	_____ (p. 317)

Graphic Organizers Based on Specific Text Structures

Text structures can be represented by a variety of graphic organizers. Teachers may choose to have students complete only one of these organizers to represent a single overarching text structure, or the organizers can be combined or used sequentially to represent more than one important text structure within a lesson.

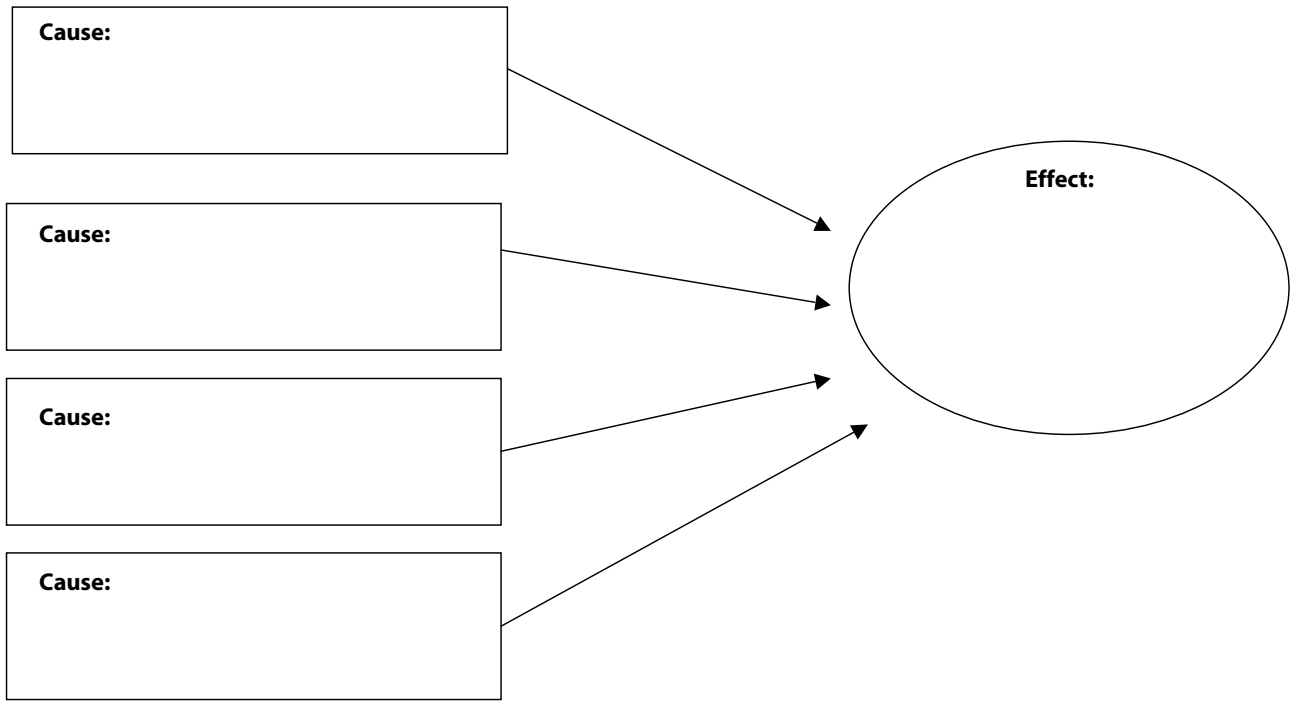
Cause-Effect (how or why an event happened; what resulted from an event)

FIGURE 39. CAUSE-EFFECT HERRINGBONE.



Based on Jones, B. F., Pierce, J., & Hunter, B. (1989). *Teaching students to construct graphic representations*. *Educational Leadership*, 46(4), 20–25.

FIGURE 40. CAUSE-EFFECT SEMANTIC MAP.



Chronology/Sequence (the order of events/steps in a process)

FIGURE 41. CHRONOLOGY/SEQUENCE GRAPHIC ORGANIZER.

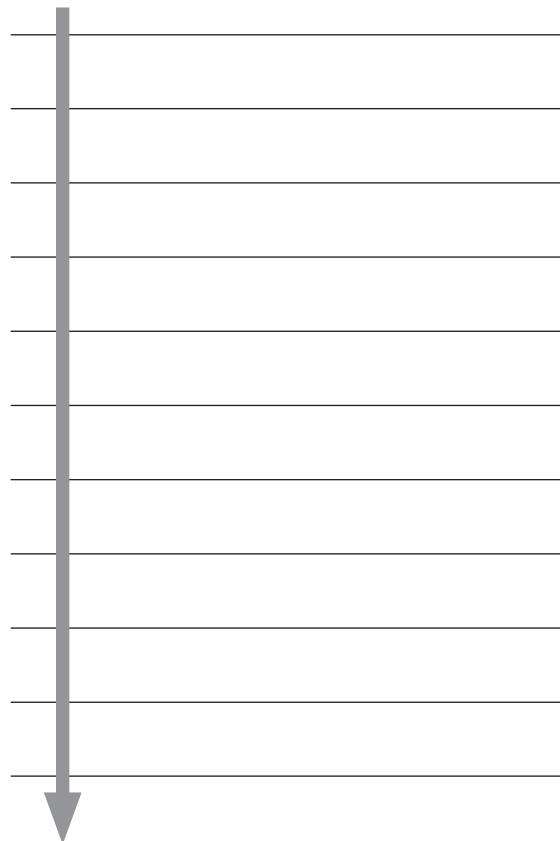


FIGURE 42. TEMPORAL SEQUENCING EXAMPLE.

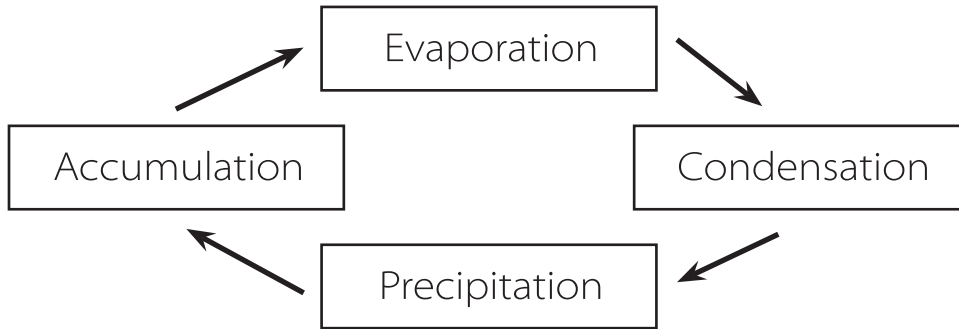
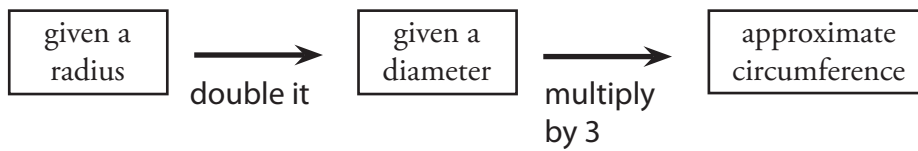
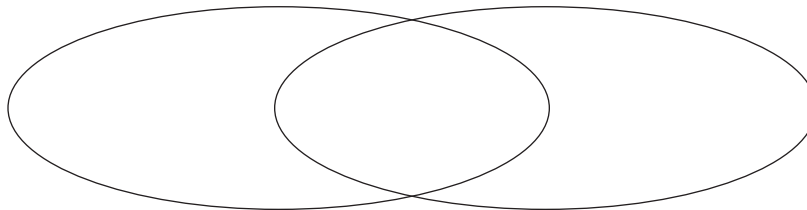


FIGURE 43. CHRONOLOGICAL ORDERING/SEQUENCING EXAMPLE.



Compare/Contrast (how two or more things are alike/different)

FIGURE 44. COMPARE/CONTRAST GRAPHIC ORGANIZER.



Description/Categorization (how something looks, moves, works, etc.; a definition or characterization)

FIGURE 45. DESCRIPTION GRAPHIC ORGANIZER (WEB).

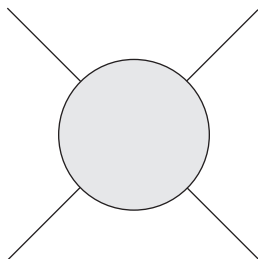


FIGURE 46. DESCRIPTION GRAPHIC ORGANIZER EXAMPLE 1 (CHART).

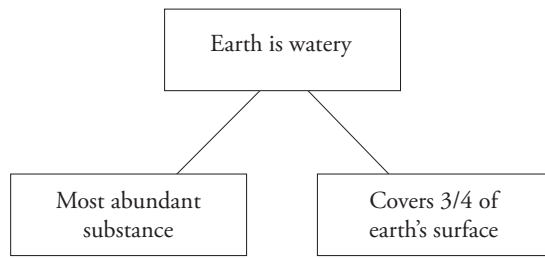
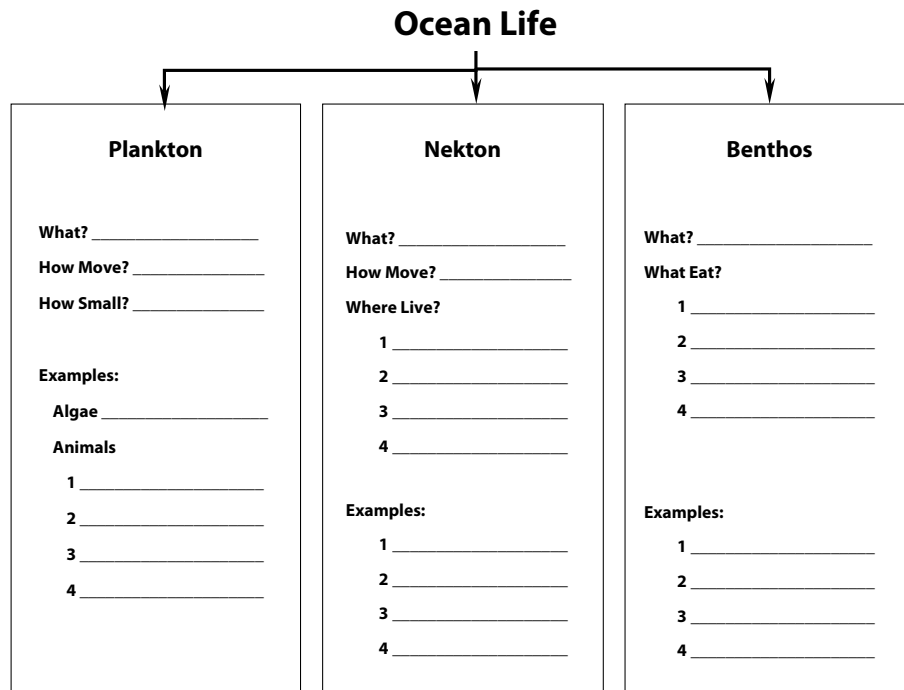


FIGURE 47. DESCRIPTION GRAPHIC ORGANIZER EXAMPLE 2 (CHART).



Problem-Solution (what's wrong and how to fix it)

FIGURE 48. PROBLEM-SOLUTION GRAPHIC ORGANIZER.

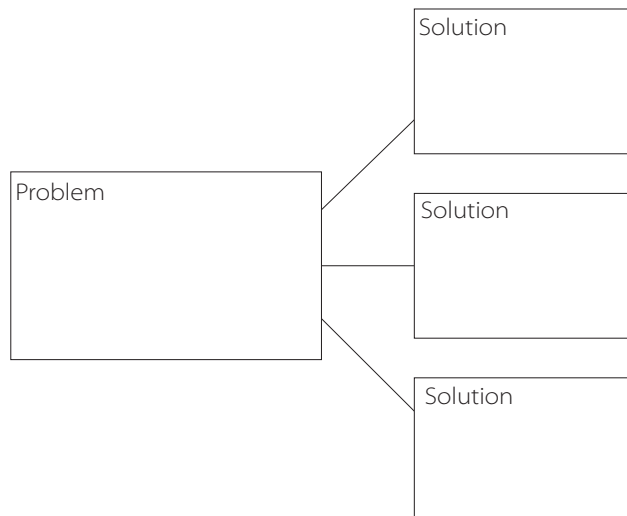
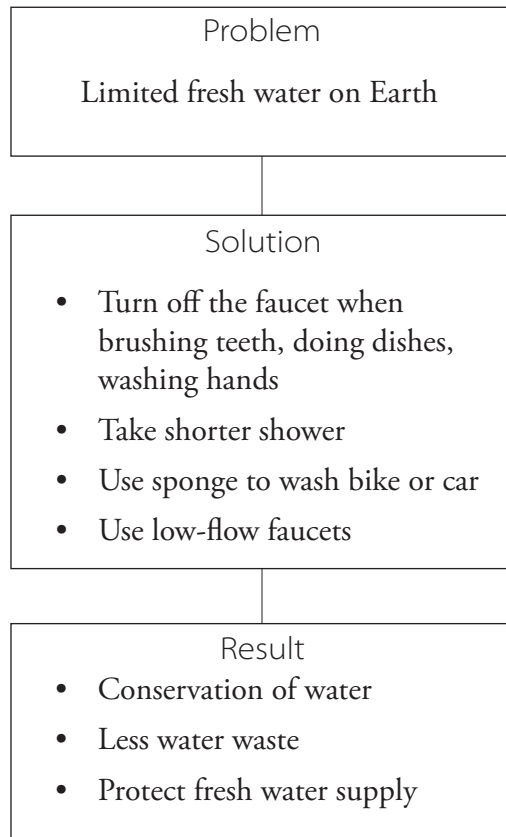
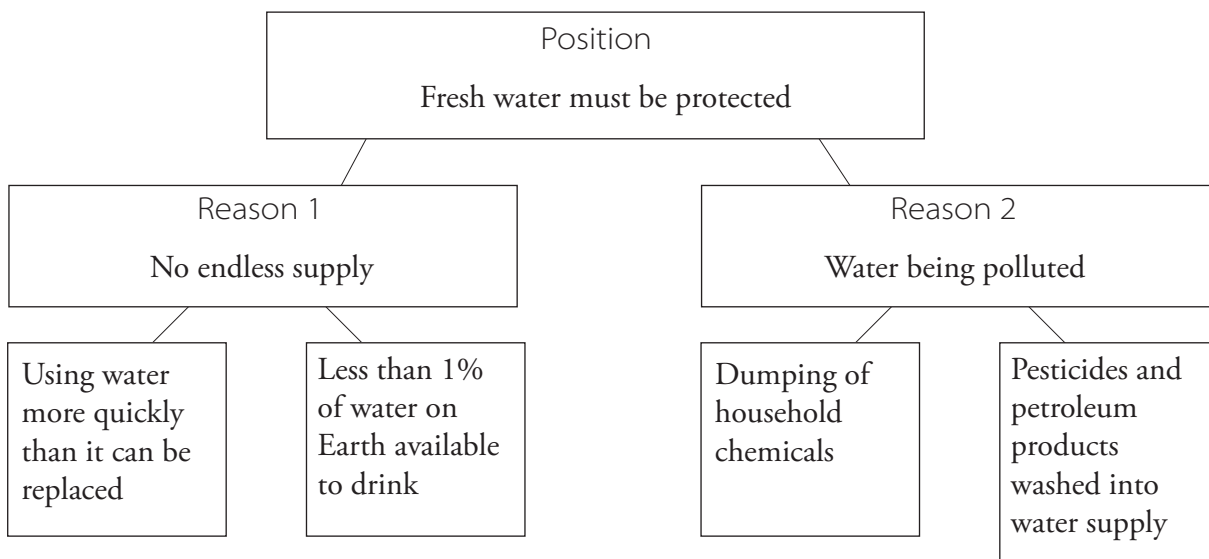


FIGURE 49. PROBLEM-SOLUTION-RESULT GRAPHIC ORGANIZER EXAMPLE.



Position-Reason (why a point or idea should be supported; what's wrong with an idea)

FIGURE 50. POSITION-REASON GRAPHIC ORGANIZER EXAMPLE.



AFTER-READING **SAMPLE LESSON**

Summarizing Text

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Adapted with permission from Archer, A. L., Gleason, M. M., & Vachon, V. (2005b). *REWARDS Plus: Reading strategies applied to social studies passages*. Longmont, CO: Sopris West.

OBJECTIVE

Students will write a summary that is concise and includes the most important information from an entire passage.

MATERIALS

- Text (expository or narrative); expository for introductory lessons.
- Figure 51: How to Write a Summary.
- Transparency of a chapter with main idea statements (ideally from a recent lesson).

DAILY REVIEW

Review Get the Gist with students.

Teacher:

Yesterday we read Chapter 6 and found the main idea of several paragraphs. How did we find the main idea of each paragraph, Joel?

Accept responses. Students should recall that after reading each paragraph they decided who or what the paragraph was mainly about and what was the most important information about the “who” or the “what”. Then they came up with a main idea statement in 10 words or less.

Klingner, Vaughn, & Schumm, 1998; Vaughn, Klingner, & Schumm, 1996; Vaughn & Klingner, 1999

STATE OBJECTIVE/PURPOSE

Teacher:

Today we are going to use our main idea statements to come up with a summary of an entire passage. A summary is a shortened version of something, and it contains only the most important points. Summarizing will help you in all reading because the overall goal of any reading is to understand the most important points. Summarizing is a skill you will be expected to use throughout your life. You may be asked to give a summary of a phone conversation or a summary of what was discussed in a meeting. You can impress your friends, your teacher, your parents, and maybe someday even your boss with good summarizing skills.

MODEL AND TEACH

Genre: Expository

Grouping: Whole class

Introduce Summarizing

One way to introduce students to summarizing is through a movie clip.

1. If possible, show your students an appropriate scene or segment from a popular movie.
2. Tell students that you are going to show them several written summaries of the scene and that you want them to pick the best summary. Remind students that a good summary will be a shortened version of the scene and will include only the most important information.
3. Show students several correct examples and incorrect examples of good summaries of the scene. Correct examples should be short summaries that include only the most important points. Incorrect examples can be lengthy and/or include information that is either irrelevant or too general.
4. Discuss each summary with the class and identify whether each statement is an accurate or inaccurate summary of the scene. Elicit discussion to emphasize the reasons that nonexamples are not good summaries.

Model Summarizing

Display the following procedure for writing a summary and lead students through each step.

FIGURE 51. HOW TO WRITE A SUMMARY.

SUMMARY: A shortened version of something that includes only the most important ideas.	
HOW TO WRITE A SUMMARY	
Step 1	LIST the main ideas for each paragraph in the passage.
Step 2	UNDERLINE the main idea statements that include the most important ideas from the passage.
Step 3	COMBINE any ideas that could go into one sentence.
Step 4	NUMBER the ideas in a logical order.
Step 5	WRITE your summary in one paragraph.
Step 6	EDIT your summary.

Adapted with permission from Archer, A. L., Gleason, M. M., & Vachon, V. (2005b). REWARDS Plus: Reading strategies applied to social studies passages. Longmont, CO: Sopris West.

Display all of the main idea statements from section one of Chapter 6 on the overhead.

Teacher:

Today we are going to write a summary for Section 1 of Chapter 6. We completed Step 1 of the Summarizing Strategy yesterday in class: LIST the main ideas for each paragraph in the passage. Let's review the statements we wrote. Catherine, will you read the first statement?

Call on individual students to read a main idea statement until you have read through them all.

Step 2 asks us to UNDERLINE the main idea statements that include the most important ideas from the passage. Look at each main idea statement again and discuss with the class which main ideas to keep, which to leave out, and why.

Constantly remind students that only the most important information goes in the summary. Model the process of deciding which ideas are important.

Now that we have identified only those main idea statements that contained the most important information, Step 3 asks us to COMBINE any ideas that could go into one sentence.

Think aloud as you read the statements and identify some that could be combined into a single sentence. Discuss these decisions with the students.

Step 4 says we should NUMBER the ideas in a logical order. We need to read the main idea statements and decide how to put them in order so that they make sense.

Think aloud through the process of ordering the remaining main idea statements.

Teacher:

Once we have underlined the important statements, combined the ones that go together, and numbered all the remaining ideas in an order that makes sense, we are ready to write our summary. The summary should be only one paragraph long.

Continue to think aloud as you write on an overhead transparency a summary that is several sentences in length, is a shortened version of the passage, and contains the most important information from the passage.

The last step is to EDIT the summary. When we edit something we have written, we check for correct capital letters, punctuation, spelling, and, most of all, whether what we have written makes sense.

Model checking capitalization, punctuation, and spelling one at a time. Finally, be sure to read the entire summary to model the process of checking to be sure it makes sense.

GUIDED PRACTICE

Grouping: Small groups or partners

Step 1. Direct students to look at the next section of Chapter 6. Project the main idea statements for Section 2 of Chapter 6 on the overhead. Pass out one copy of the same main idea statements to each group or pair of students. Give students 2–3 minutes to read all of the main idea statements with their partners or small groups.

Step 2. Give students 1–2 minutes to think about and discuss the section as a whole with their partners or small groups. Then call on individual students to share their thoughts on the big ideas of the section. Next ask students to underline the main idea statements that are most closely related to those big ideas. Give them 2–3 minutes, and then ask for volunteers to share which statements they excluded and why. Based on their responses and the class discussion, underline important statements on the overhead.

Step 3. Give students 2–3 minutes to decide whether any of the statements can be combined into one sentence. Again ask volunteers to share, lead the class in discussion of the decisions, and note which statements can be combined on the overhead.

Step 4. Give students 3–4 minutes to number the statements to put them into a logical order. Again ask volunteers to share, lead the class in discussion of the decisions, and number the statements on the overhead.

Step 5. Give students 5–7 minutes to use the statements to develop a summary of Section 2 of Chapter 6. Then ask for volunteers to share their summaries. Discuss the accuracy of each summary by asking, “Is this a shortened version of the section?” and “Does this summary include the most important information from the section?” If needed, discuss ways to modify the summaries.

Step 6. Give students 3–4 minutes to edit their summaries. Remind them first to check capital letters, then punctuation, then spelling, and, finally, to read their summaries to be sure that they make sense.

INDEPENDENT PRACTICE

Grouping: Partners

Ask students to read a short passage or chapter one paragraph at a time. Students can alternate reading paragraphs aloud to each other. After each paragraph, tell students to discuss who or what the paragraph was mainly about and the most important information about the “who” or the “what”. Then ask students to write a main idea statement for the paragraph in 10 words or less.

Review steps 1–6 of how to write a summary, in Figure 51, and ask students to work through each step with their partner.

Circulate around the room and be available for assistance.

Depending on the length of the chapter or passage, students will probably need 30–60 minutes to complete steps 1–6.

When all pairs have a summary written, ask for volunteers to share their summaries.

Discuss and evaluate each summary.

HELPFUL HABIT		Even though this is independent practice, it is essential that you circulate around the room while groups are working in order to check for understanding and to provide guidance and additional modeling as needed.
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GENERALIZATION

Teacher:

How can you use your summarization skills outside of this class?

Student:

Our English tests always ask us to choose the best summary.

Teacher:

That’s right. Many tests will ask you either to choose the best summary or to write a summary yourself. Why do you think teachers want to know whether you can identify or write a summary?

Student:

Because teachers want to know whether we understand the most important information.

Teacher:

Exactly. Summarizing indicates that you most likely understand the most important ideas from your reading.

MONITOR STUDENT LEARNING

Check that students have appropriately excluded any main idea statements that are irrelevant or redundant.

Check for accurate and concise summaries that are a shortened version of the reading and include the important ideas or information from the entire passage or chapter.

PERIODIC REVIEW/MULTIPLE OPPORTUNITIES TO PRACTICE

Chapter Summary

Grouping: Pairs, small groups, or individuals

1. Rather than having students read an entire chapter, assign each pair or group of students a section of a chapter to read and complete all six steps of writing a summary.
2. Return to whole group and one section at a time, in consecutive order, have students read their section summary.
3. Write down the summary for each section.

Choosing a Summary

Grouping: Pairs, small groups, or individuals

1. After reading a passage or chapter, show students several correct examples and incorrect examples of summaries.
2. Ask students to choose the best summary.
3. Ask students to share their responses. Discuss why each option is either a correct example or an incorrect example of a summary.

Completing a Summary

Grouping: Pairs or individuals

1. Write a summary of a passage or chapter but leave out one sentence (see Figure 52).
2. Give students three or four sentence choices to complete the summary, with only one sentence being correct.
3. Ask students to choose the best sentence to complete the summary and discuss why the other sentences are incorrect.

FIGURE 52. EXAMPLE OF CHOOSING A SUMMARY.

Summary of "The Princess and the Pea" by Hans Christian Andersen

Once upon a time, there was a prince who wanted to marry a princess. He searched and searched, but it was very difficult to find a real princess. During a storm, the old king heard a knock at the city gate and found a girl standing soaking wet in the rain. She said that she was a real princess, but she certainly didn't look like one! The old queen decided to test this girl. She put a single pea underneath 20 mattresses that the princess had to lie upon all night. _____.

Now they all knew that this girl was a real princess because only a true princess could be that sensitive. She and the prince were married and the pea was put in a museum.

Which sentence best completes the summary?

- a. No ordinary person could feel a pea under all those mattresses.
- b. The next morning, the princess said she didn't sleep at all because she was lying on something hard.
- c. The mattresses were decorated with gold-and-purple-laced pillows.
- d. The queen also stacked 20 blankets on top of the 20 mattresses.

AFTER-READING **SAMPLE LESSON**

Wrap-up/Main Idea Log

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Adapted with permission from University of Texas Center for Reading and Language Arts. (2003). *Special education reading project secondary institute — Effective instruction for secondary struggling readers: Research-based practices*. Austin, TX: Author.

OBJECTIVE

Students will complete a main idea log by identifying important information, developing a main idea statement, generating questions, and writing possible test questions based on the information in the text.

MATERIALS

- Textbook chapter or short passage.
- Blank main idea log overhead transparency (see Figure 53 for main idea log).
- Several blank main idea logs (student copies).

DAILY REVIEW

Teacher:

We have been practicing writing main idea statements. About how many words should the main idea be, Yeimi? That's right, 10. Who can tell me the two components of a main idea? That's right, who or what the paragraph is about and the most important information about the "who" or "what".

STATE OBJECTIVE/PURPOSE

Teacher:

Today we are going to learn how to complete a main idea log. Completing a main idea log will help you understand what you read. You can also use this log as a study guide. You will practice finding important information; writing the main idea of a passage in 10 words or less; generating questions; and making up test questions.

MODEL AND TEACH

Genre: Expository

Grouping: Whole class

1. Provide an instructional-level passage to students. (See the Assessing Reading Fluency section of Chapter 2: Selecting and Administering Assessments to learn how to determine whether a text is at a student's frustration, instructional, or independent reading level.)
2. Preview the text: To determine the topic of the article or chapter, direct students to look at the:
 - Title/subtitle.
 - Headings/subheadings.
 - Boldface words.
 - Illustrations.
 - Charts.
 - Graphs.
 - Maps.
 - Diagrams.
3. Prior knowledge: Ask questions about what students already know about the topic of the passage.
4. Read the passage aloud with the students. There are several ways to read a passage with your class:
 - a. **Last word:** Modeling fluent reading, the teacher reads the passage aloud and stops at the last word of every sentence. Then, the students chorally read the last word of each sentence. All students are encouraged to follow along with a pencil or finger. It sounds like this:

Teacher:

Suddenly, the dog jumped over the...

Students:

...fence.

Teacher:

The little girl followed after...

Students:

...him.

- b. **Choral reading (repeated):** The teacher reads a sentence or two and then students read the same sentences chorally. This way the students have heard a model of fluent reading before they read the sentences.
 - c. **Choral reading (alternating):** The teacher reads one to two sentences. Then, students read next one to two sentences chorally. Continue to alternate teacher reading and students reading chorally.
 - d. **Highlighted sections:** Highlight sentences or groups of sentences like you would lines in a play. Students follow along and read their highlighted section at the appropriate time.
5. Project a blank main idea log on an overhead.
 6. Think aloud as you complete the form. Identify three or four important ideas from the entire passage. Record the ideas in the first section.
 7. Using the important information, create a main idea statement with 10 words or less. Record the statement in the next section. Emphasize that the main idea is concise (10 words or less) and about the entire passage.
 8. Generate three questions about the entire passage using question starters: who, what, when, where, why, and how. Record them in the third section.
 9. Create at least one question about the passage that students might see on a test. Record it in the final section.

GUIDED PRACTICE

Grouping: Small groups

1. Provide students with a second instructional-level passage.
2. Ask students to preview the passage and identify the topic.
3. Connect the topic of the passage with students' prior knowledge by questioning or providing statements about the topic.
4. Read the passage with the students.
5. Place a second blank main idea log on an overhead.
6. One section at a time, lead students through each section of the log:
 - a. Allow small groups 3–5 minutes to find important ideas. Ask each group to share one important idea from the passage. Record four of these on the overhead log.
 - b. Allow small groups 3–5 minutes to formulate a main idea statement. Ask each group to share its statement. Discuss the accuracy of the statements: Are they concise? Are they about the entire passage? Record one example on the overhead log.

- c. Allow small groups 4–5 minutes to generate questions. Ask each group to share one question. Record examples on the overhead log.
- d. Allow small groups 3–5 minutes to formulate a test question. Ask each group to share its question. Record an example on the overhead log.

INDEPENDENT PRACTICE

Grouping: Small groups or partners

1. Provide an independent-level passage to partners or small groups.
2. Ask partners or small groups to preview the passage and identify the topic.
3. Direct partners or groups to tell each other one thing they already know about the topic.
4. Have students read the passage aloud to each other.
5. Instruct partners or small groups to complete the main idea log.
6. Circulate around the room and check for accurate responses.
7. Ask partners or groups to share either a main idea statement or a possible test question with the class.

GENERALIZATION

Teacher:

How could you use the main idea log in your other classes?

Student:

We could use it to study for science or social studies tests.

Teacher:

How would that work?

Student:

We could come up with our own test questions.

Teacher:

That's right. What else?

Student:

As we are reading the chapter, we could write down the most important ideas from the passage and come up with the main idea of the entire chapter. Then we could use our main idea logs to quiz our friends.

Teacher:

Very good. I know you have a social studies test on Friday over Chapter 12. Why don't we complete a main idea log together, and then you can use it to help you study for the test?

MONITOR STUDENT LEARNING

Check main idea logs for:

- Important information that is related to the entire text.
- Use of important information to develop the main idea statement.
- Questions that relate to the important information.

PERIODIC REVIEW/MULTIPLE OPPORTUNITIES TO PRACTICE

Main Idea Logs

Periodically, have students complete a main idea log with an instructional-level passage (guided practice) or an independent-level passage (independent practice).

Main Idea Logs Using Science and Social Studies

Choose an interesting chapter in your students' grade-level science or social studies text. Have students work in partners to complete a main idea log using the science or social studies chapter as the text.

Student-generated Questions

1. After reading a passage, chapter, or story, ask partners or small groups to generate questions and make a quiz over the text.
2. Collect all quizzes.
3. Have each group take a quiz made up by another group in the class.
4. Discuss questions and answers.

FIGURE 53. MAIN IDEA LOG.

MAIN IDEA LOG	
Title of passage: _____	
Identify three or four important ideas from the passage:	
1. _____	
2. _____	
3. _____	
4. _____	
Write the main idea of the entire passage (10 words or less):	

Generate three questions about the important ideas: (Who? What? When? Where? Why? How?)	
1. _____	
2. _____	
3. _____	
Create one question about the passage that might be on a test:	

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