

D - During (Reading & Re-Reading)

Response Sheet

Students note key statements on the left and personal responses to them on the right; helps connect text to prior knowledge, and provides meaningful study guide later.

Sticky Notes

Students use "post its" to write thoughts/notes and stick to a text on which writing is forbidden. They can be removed and re-attached to a folder to record individual student "interactions" with text.

How is it used?

1. Students are given a stack (based on length of text) of sticky notes
2. Instruct students to summarize, question, jot down thoughts or ideas they are having about the text while reading. (The questions can be raised in class and answered then)
3. There is no right or wrong answer and assessment is solely based on the students' participation in transacting with the text.
4. Sticky notes can be saved, attached to a sheet of paper or a folder, and used later as part of a study guide to recall what a given text was about.

Text Rendering

A text rendering is a during reading activity that creates interaction between students and text.

How is it used?

Students are expected to mark their text in some way as they read, focusing on a few types of connections. If the text is duplicated on copy paper, they could write directly on their copy; however, if text is in a book that cannot be marked up, try to provide sticky notes as an alternative. At the end of the class period, the sticky notes can be removed and re-attached to a folder or other tracking sheet to record the students' text renderings.

A typical text rendering might focus on three types of student-text interaction. Using a code to simplify the process, the student might be directed to place a check (ü) next to some statements with which he/she agrees; an exclamation point (!) next to text that appears to state the main idea, and a question mark (?) near text which confuses the reader. Of course, the teacher may request some different types of connections to be made, with appropriate symbols, and with some students only one type of connection might be suggested at first until they become able to handle more than one.

During text rendering, a highlighter might be used to highlight the actual words that are connected to the symbol markings. Additionally, students can be encouraged to write marginal notations, if possible, to capture more of their thoughts as they read.

Following completion of the text rendering, it is important that students be given the chance to reflect on and share the connections they made. This can be done in numerous ways, but typically involve a

Think-Pair-Share or a Whip. If doing a Whip, it is best to ask students to simply read or restate the one statement that best captured the main idea. By hearing each student's response, no matter how many repetitions there are, the teacher can quickly determine how successful the reading went, how divergent the thinking was, and possible issues that have to be clarified before moving on, etc. Students are involved in a way that doesn't fault them for "wrong" answers, and may actually reinforce their effort or build up their understanding. At the very least, it puts the language of the text into an oral form, and weaker students begin to recognize the text as they look for and hear others read it.

ReReading

Students look back at the text to find support for an answer/opinion/position, or to find examples to contradict another's opinion/position.

How is it used?

1. Explain to students that "rereading" does not mean reading the entire passage again; instead, it is an effort to zero in or target specific text for its importance in defining or exemplifying key concepts. It may also be part of an I-search process to find additional supporting evidence.
2. In addition to ensuring that they are able to support their answer/opinion/position with information from the text, rereading can be used to practice students' ability to quickly locate information by using titles, headings, bold or italicized words etc.

Chunking

Breaking up reading passages into "chunks" (1 paragraph - 3 paragraphs)

How is it used?

Chunking is used with Before-During-After reading activities, so that students can get some reading done under the supervision of the teacher, rather than after class. Chunking makes the reading task more manageable, especially for weaker readers, who might be discouraged by lengthy assignment. Chunking can be part of an overall B, D, A plan, where one chunk of text is used as a lead in to the next. It is important to break text into meaningful chunks, with some complete ideas. Otherwise, it serves no useful purpose toward comprehension. Thus, plan carefully.

Do Now

Do Now is a quick question or thought-provoking statement that the students are asked to respond to within a given time (usually 3-5 minutes). The Do Now question can be written on the board, shown on an overhead or duplicated and passed out. The object is to engage students in writing their thoughts without the pressure of being correct and to focus the students on the concept that will be targeted in class that day.

How is it used?

"Do Now's" are most often used as "At the bell" activities to enable an efficient transition between hall time and class time, however, they can be used to:

1. Introduce a new unit or the next concept in the unit
2. Quickly review a learned concept.
3. Get thoughts on paper for later discussion or reflection

Prewrite Questions

Survey textbook and create questions that will probably be answered by the text. As students read, they look for information that will answer their questions.

How is it used?

An alternative is for students to try to anticipate the questions that a teacher might ask if he/she were planning to assess the students' comprehension. Then students read to locate the answers to such possible test questions.

LIT Circles

Literature Circle is a student centered reading activity for a group of 4-6 students. Each member of a circle is assigned a role which helps guide the group discussion of the text they are all reading. Literature Circles provide an opportunity for students to control their own learning by sharing their thoughts, concerns and understanding of the events of the text. While it seems that Literature Circles are meant for Literature only, they can be used with various forms of text. Lit Circle guidelines and expectations should be modeled numerous times before expecting students to undertake this independently. This is one activity that will require an investment of time to see its full benefit. Teachers who expect it to work well the first time may be disappointed. It is a great idea to proceed with a colleague, so you can compare notes and encourage each other until it takes off.

Group Roles:

Discussion Director: Develops a list of 4 or 5 questions pertaining to a section of the text for the group to discuss. Questions should be divergent, higher-level of thinking, and open ended. The discussion director facilitates the conversations to ensure the "larger ideas" in the text are discussed.

Connector: Makes connections between the text the group is reading and the outside world. Connect situations from the text to happenings at school or in the community, to similar events at other times and places, to other places, to other people or problems in the real world.

Vocabulary Enricher: Finds 5 to 8 especially important words in a given section of reading. Notes the page number, paragraph, word, and the definition for each word.

Summarizer: Prepares a brief summary of the given sections reading. Highlight the key points and main events.

How is it done?

1. Students choose their own reading materials

2. Small temporary groups are formed, based upon book choice (Different groups read different books)
3. Group roles are assigned and recorded by teacher (new roles can be added based on the number of students in each group)
4. Groups meet on a regular, predictable schedule to discuss their reading
5. All group members record the information shared in the group at each meeting
6. Discussion topics come from the students
7. Group meetings aim to be open, natural conversations about books, so personal connections, digressions, and open-ended questions are welcome
8. Students should rotate group roles with each new group
9. The teacher serves as a facilitator, not a group member or instructor
10. Assessment is done by teacher observation and student self-evaluation (Group projects would also be a great assessment)
11. When groups finish their chosen text, their responses are shared with the class, and new books are chosen and groups formed For more information: http://www.education-world.com/a_curr/curr259.shtml

KWL Chart

KWL Chart is a three-column chart that helps encompass the before-during-after components of reading a text selection.

K = What you know, W = What you want to know, L = What you've learned

How is it done?

1. Create one as a class on the chalkboard or have students work individually on a template or a blank sheet of paper.
2. Create three columns labeled K, W and L.
3. A topic is introduced by name or title only.
4. Before reading some text, students complete the K column, listing everything they know about the given topic or title. This can be done silently or in unison, with teacher recording the ideas on the class chart.
5. Students are then to complete the W column, listing everything they might want to know about the given subject. This is done in unison at first; eventually students do this independently.
6. If done independently, have several students share their K and W columns aloud with the class before the text is read.
7. After reading the given text, have students complete the L column, listing everything they learned from their reading, especially paying attention to W questions that were answered by the text. Again, it is best to do this in unison the first few times. (The L column serves as a review of what was read and as notes to study later!)