

# Seven Instructional Strategies that Improve Comprehension

National Reading Panel,  
“*The Report of the National Reading Panel: Teaching Children to Read.*” (2000)

**1. Comprehension Monitoring** - the voice in your head that interacts with the text and prevents your mind from wandering off, that gives a purpose for reading, that predicts, confirms, and revises ideas about what is read.

**2. Cooperative Learning** - student to student interactions, working towards common goals through facilitated discussions and further processing of information

**3. Graphic Organizers** - visual representations that show relationships, connections, aid in storing and retrieving information.

**4. Answering Questions** - gives a purpose for reading

**5. Generating Questions** - assuming responsibility for learning, clarifying information and inferring beyond literal interpretation

**6. Story Structure** - sequence/ directions; listing/description; compare/ contrast' cause/effect; definition/ explanation; problem/solution; persuasion/argument; question/answer

**7. Summarizing** - synthesizing important (main) ideas and information

## Some “Strategies” for the Seven Instructional Strategies

### 1. Comprehension Monitoring

“Coding/Comprehension Monitoring” is an alternative strategy to selective underlining that avoids over identification of text and requires more student engagement and critical thinking as readers.

### 2. Cooperative Learning

The “Cooperative Classroom” pages from the Edge Teacher Edition summarize nine effective cooperative learning strategies for Edge classrooms and beyond.

### 3. Graphic Organizers

These examples of “Analytic Graphic Organizers” put all on one page 12 templates to use for understanding patterns of text organization/story structure and vocabulary/word study. Strengthen the strategy by having students write summary statements based on learning from the graphic organizer.

The “Text Structures in Informational Texts” has been around a long time but offers examples of key words, texts, etc. in addition to the graphic organizer.

### 4. Answering Questions

This chart of “Cue Questions Based on Bloom’s Taxonomy of Critical Thinking” puts a comprehensive resource on one page.

### 5. Generating Questions

We are used to asking lots of questions of students, but learning is enhanced when students ask and answer their own questions. “Request” is a strategy that provides models for students and helps guide them into developing higher-level questions of their own.

### 6. Story Structure

Use the “Analytic Graphic Organizers” chart or the “Text Structures in Informational Texts” to support instruction that helps students develop a strong understanding and ability to recognize the characteristics of different types of text structure.

### 7. Summarizing

The ability to summarize and paraphrase is one of the most critical skills are students can master. “Group Summarizing,” “Reciprocal Teaching” and “RAFT,” are three excellent tools to help students learn to synthesize and summarize.

The final two strategies in the packet are for word study: “Word Study” provides strategies for text structural analysis (affixes and roots) and “Interactive Word Walls,” might give you some new ideas for refreshing Word Wall learning.

## Coding/Comprehension Monitoring

### Description

This strategy helps students engage and interact with text and monitor comprehension as they read.

### Purpose

Use *during* reading to:

- Support content area learning by focusing on key concepts
- Provide a way for students to engage in a dialogue with the author
- Help students identify how they process information while reading
- Help students identify what is difficult in the text so they can select and apply comprehension strategies to support their reading
- Develop metacognitive awareness and ability to monitor one's own comprehension

### Directions

1. Explain that this strategy helps readers monitor their reading so they can identify what they do or don't understand.
2. Choose 2–3 codes that support the purpose of the reading and reinforce targeted literacy habits and skills.
3. Model the strategy using an overhead or whiteboard. Do a Think-Aloud while marking the codes so students witness the metacognitive process.
4. Guide the students in applying the coding strategy. Review the codes and have students code their reactions as they read on the page margins, lined paper inserts, or sticky notes.

#### Possible Codes:

- + New information
- \* I know this information
- ? I don't understand/I have questions
- P Problem
- S Solution
- C Connection
- ✓ I agree
- X I disagree

### Extensions

- Have students compare and discuss how they coded sections of the text.
- After students are comfortable with coding using the teacher-provided codes, encourage them to develop additional codes appropriate to the purpose for reading a particular text.

## Think-Aloud

### Description

A modeling strategy designed to help students learn how to monitor comprehension, engage actively with text, and direct their thinking as they work through the process of understanding a text.

### Purpose

Use *during* reading to:

- Engage students actively in thinking about how they are constructing meaning from text
- Enhance metacognitive awareness as students consider what they know and don't know
- Help students learn specific strategies for reading comprehension
- Enhance content-area reading comprehension

### Directions

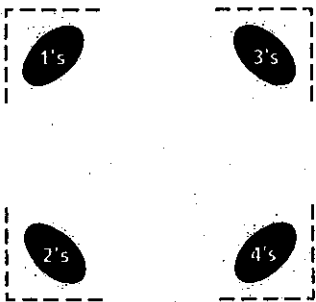
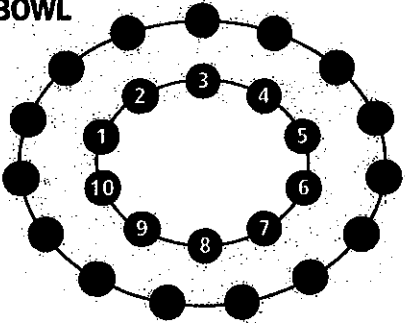
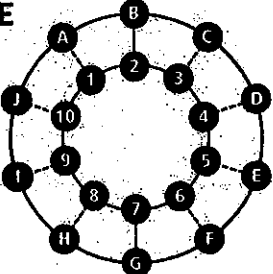
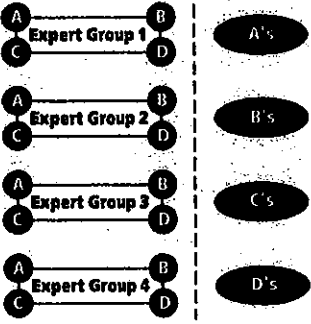
1. Consider what students need to know how to do during the reading task.
  - What meaning do you want them to construct from the content?
  - What reading comprehension strategy do you want them to learn and use?
2. Identify where you might pause during the passage to “think aloud” for your students.
  - Think about your own experiences related to the content/strategy.
  - Take what you know implicitly and make it explicit for students.
3. Mark the pauses with a sticky-note with a short notation of what you'll say.
4. Explicitly explain the think-aloud strategy before using it.
  - Tell students what the strategy is, why it helps, and when to use it.
  - Explain that you'll show them what's going on inside your head to construct meaning.
5. Read the text with the students as you do the think-aloud.
  - Have all students have a copy of the text to follow along *OR*
  - Put the text on an overhead projector so they can visually follow along.
6. Model the chosen thinking tasks by stopping to articulate what's going on in your head.
7. Give guidelines for students to practice doing a silent “think-aloud” using sticky-notes, such as:
  - Write down thoughts, questions, and connections as you read.
  - Have a “conversation” with the author. Write down what you would say to him/her.
  - Note your reading “moves”—where do you skim, have questions about words, or get confused.

### Extensions

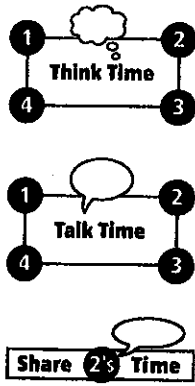
- Pair students to read a passage together and present think-alouds to each other, providing feedback to each other afterwards using a checklist or rubric.
- Use a think-aloud written protocol where students tape lined paper to each page so the text lines up with spaces to write notes. As students read, they write notes on the lined paper.
- Have students pair up and compare notations and complete some kind of independent response to a question or issue from the reading or from a collection of readings.

# The Cooperative Classroom

Cooperative learning strategies transform today's classroom diversity into a vital resource for promoting secondary students' acquisition of both challenging academic content and language. These strategies promote active engagement and social motivation for all students, but for English language learners, they create opportunities for purposeful communication. Regular use of such strategies has been shown to be effective (Johnson & Johnson, 1986; Kagan, 1986; Slavin, 1988). The following cooperative learning strategies are built into the lessons in the *Edge* Teacher's Editions.

STRUCTURE & GRAPHIC	DESCRIPTION	BENEFITS & PURPOSE
<p><b>CORNERS</b></p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Corners of the classroom are designated for focused discussion of four aspects of a topic.</li> <li>• Students individually think and write about the topic for a short time.</li> <li>• Students group into the corner of their choice and discuss the topic.</li> <li>• At least one student from each corner shares about the corner discussion.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• By "voting" with their feet, students literally take a position about a topic.</li> <li>• Focused discussion develops deeper thought about a topic.</li> <li>• Students experience many valid points of view about a topic</li> </ul>
<p><b>FISHBOWL</b></p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• One-half of the class sits in a close circle, facing inward; the other half of the class sits in a larger circle around them.</li> <li>• Students on the inside discuss a topic while those outside listen for new information and/or evaluate the discussion according to pre-established criteria.</li> <li>• Groups reverse positions.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Focused listening enhances knowledge acquisition and listening skills.</li> <li>• Peer evaluation supports development of specific discussion skills.</li> <li>• Identification of criteria for evaluation promotes self-monitoring.</li> </ul>
<p><b>INSIDE-OUTSIDE CIRCLE</b></p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students stand in concentric circles facing each other.</li> <li>• Students in the outside circle ask questions; those inside answer.</li> <li>• On a signal, students rotate to create new partnerships.</li> <li>• On another signal, students trade inside/outside roles.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Talking one-on-one with a variety of partners gives risk-free practice in speaking skills.</li> <li>• Interactions can be structured to focus on specific speaking skills.</li> <li>• Students practice both speaking and active listening.</li> </ul>
<p><b>JIGSAW</b></p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Group students evenly into "expert" groups.</li> <li>• Expert groups study one topic or aspect of a topic in depth.</li> <li>• Regroup students so that each new group has at least one member from each expert group.</li> <li>• Experts report on their study. Other students learn from the experts.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Becoming an expert provides in-depth understanding in one aspect of study.</li> <li>• Learning from peers provides breadth of understanding of over-arching concepts.</li> </ul>

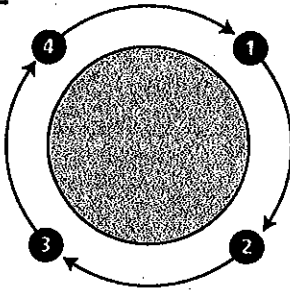
### NUMBERED HEADS



- Students number off within each group.
- Teacher prompts or gives a directive.
- Students think individually about the topic.
- Groups discuss the topic so that any member of the group can report for the group.
- Teacher calls a number and the student from each group with that number reports for the group.

- Group discussion of topics provides each student with language and concept understanding.
- Random recitation provides an opportunity for evaluation of both individual and group progress.

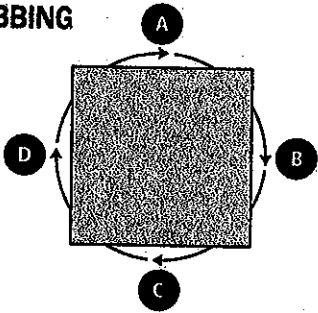
### ROUNDTABLE



- Seat students around a table in groups of four.
- Teacher asks a question with many possible answers.
- Each student around the table answers the question a different way.

- Encouraging elaboration creates appreciation for diversity of opinion and thought.
- Eliciting multiple answers enhances language fluency.

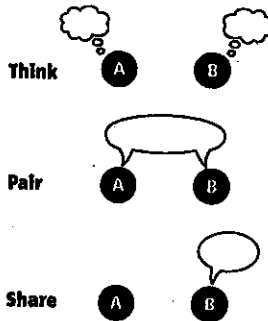
### TEAM WORD WEBBING



- Provide each team with a single large piece of paper. Give each student a different colored marker.
- Teacher assigns a topic for a word web.
- Each student adds to the part of the web nearest to him/her.
- On a signal, students rotate the paper and each student adds to the nearest part again.

- Individual input to a group product ensures participation by all students.
- Shifting point of view supports both broad and in-depth understanding of concepts.

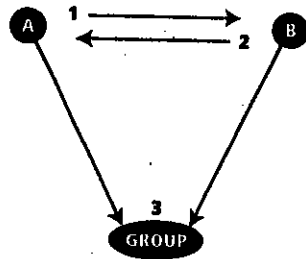
### THINK, PAIR, SHARE



- Students think about a topic suggested by the teacher.
- Pairs discuss the topic.
- Students individually share information with the class.

- The opportunity for self-talk during the individual think time allows the student to formulate thoughts before speaking.
- Discussion with a partner reduces performance anxiety and enhances understanding.

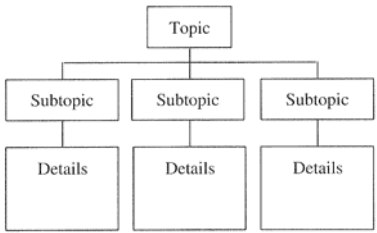
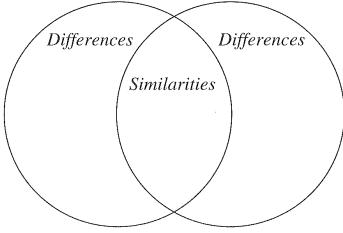
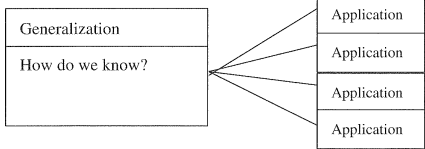
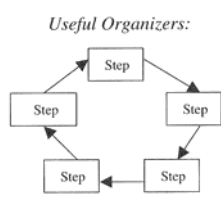
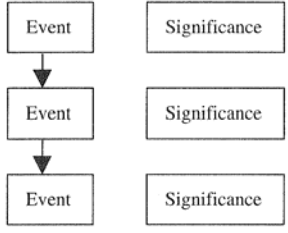
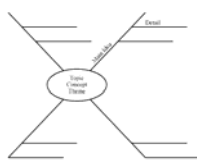
### THREE-STEP INTERVIEW



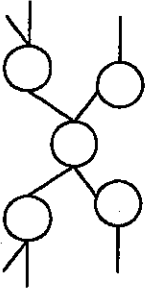
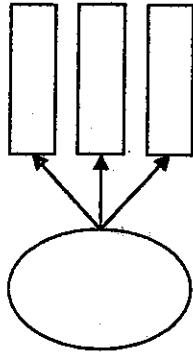
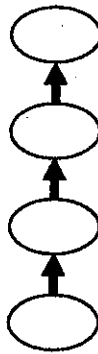
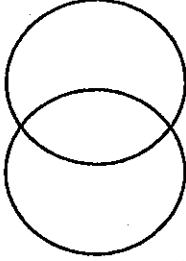
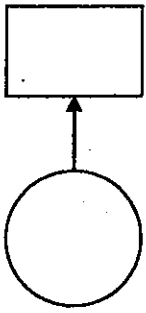
- Students form pairs.
- Student A interviews student B about a topic.
- Partners reverse roles.
- Student A shares with the class information from student B; then B shares information from student A.

- Interviewing supports language acquisition by providing scripts for expression.
- Responding provides opportunities for structured self-expression.

## Examples of Analytic Graphic Organizers

<p><b>MAIN IDEAS</b></p> 	<p><b>COMPARE/CONTRAST</b></p> 	<p><b>GENERALIZATION</b></p> 																	
<p><b>CAUSE/EFFECT</b></p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse; margin-top: 10px;"> <thead> <tr> <th style="width: 50%;">CAUSE(S)</th> <th style="width: 50%;">EFFECT</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr><td> </td><td> </td></tr> <tr><td> </td><td> </td></tr> <tr><td> </td><td> </td></tr> </tbody> </table>	CAUSE(S)	EFFECT							<p><b>PROCESS CYCLE</b></p> <p style="text-align: center; margin-bottom: 5px;"><i>Useful Organizers:</i></p> 	<p><b>SEQUENCE</b></p> 									
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<p><b>CONCEPT DEFINITION</b></p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse; margin-top: 10px;"> <thead> <tr> <th style="width: 33%;">Concept</th> <th style="width: 33%;">Definition</th> <th style="width: 33%;">Visual Illustration</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr><td> </td><td> </td><td> </td></tr> </tbody> </table>	Concept	Definition	Visual Illustration				<p><b>CONCEPT MAP</b></p> 	<p><b>PREDICTION ORGANIZER</b></p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse; margin-top: 10px;"> <thead> <tr> <th style="width: 25%;">My Prediction</th> <th style="width: 25%;">Evidence For</th> <th style="width: 25%;">Evidence Against</th> <th style="width: 25%;">Actual Outcome</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr><td> </td><td> </td><td> </td><td> </td></tr> </tbody> </table>	My Prediction	Evidence For	Evidence Against	Actual Outcome							
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# Text Structures in Informational Texts

Text Patterns	Definitions	Key Words	Maps/Webs	Examples of Texts	Examples of Student Writing								
<b>Description</b>	Descriptive details about characteristics, actions, etc.	Descriptive adjectives and words like: <i>on, over, beyond, within, behind, underneath, on the left/right, appears to be, as in, looks like</i>		The crocodile is the master of deception in water. It stalks its prey and then swiftly closes in for the kill.	Goose bumps make me shiver. I get little bumps on my skin. They look like sesame seeds.								
<b>Problem/Solution</b>	Sets up a problem and its solutions	Propose, conclude, a solution, is resolved, result, the reason for, the problem or question, the effect, one idea		One problem to resolve in crocodile watching is transportation. How can an observer get close enough...	Goose bumps make me shiver. But they disappear as soon as I cover up with a jacket or sweater.								
<b>Time / Chronological Order</b>	Gives information in order of occurrence	First, second, third, later, before, after, finally, now, then, next, earlier, during, afterwards, until, meanwhile, eventually, next week, tomorrow, today, immediately, initially, as soon as, following, preceding		Archaeologists have helped us to understand that the evolution of the crocodile began with...	Goose bumps make me shiver. First I get cold. Then I shake all over.								
<b>Comparison / Contrast</b>	Looking at two or more items to establish similarities and differences	While, yet, but, unlike, rather, instead, on the other hand, although, even though, still, otherwise, as opposed to, like, similarly, likewise, same, both, as well as, in common		The power of the crocodile is like that of a monstrous machine. With one lunge it can... Compared to the alligator the crocodile...	Some people get goose bumps from fear. Others get goose bumps when they are touched emotionally.								
<b>Cause / Effect</b>	Give reason / explanation for happening	Because, since, if then, due to, as a result, for this reason, on account of, consequently, in order to, effects of, is caused by, when...then, leads to		We observed the crocodile as it stalked a raccoon... As a result of the noise we made, the rabbit bolted...	Goose bumps make me shiver. When the temperature drops below 45 degrees, my skin crinkles into goose bumps...								
<b>Argument / Support</b>	States a position & supports it with data, emotional appeals, expertise, credibility, honesty, and urgency	Almost, often, if-then, in most cases, maybe, might, probably, usually, according to, due to, consequently, as a result, when...then, leads to	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>Position</td> <td>Support</td> </tr> <tr> <td> </td> <td> </td> </tr> <tr> <td> </td> <td> </td> </tr> <tr> <td> </td> <td> </td> </tr> </table>	Position	Support							No longer on the endangered list, alligators are still in peril due to overbuilding. Therefore to save the keystone of the wetland ecosystem, we must stop development and protect the habitat.	If goose bumps occur only in mammals, then the term "goose bumps" is misleading because a plucked goose technically does not qualify. Maybe they should be called "Chill Bumps!"
Position	Support												

## Cue Questions Based on Blooms' Taxonomy of Critical Thinking

<b>Lower-Order Thinking Skills</b>	<b>Higher-Order Thinking Skills</b>
<p><b>1. KNOWLEDGE</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What is ...?</li> <li>• How is ...?</li> <li>• Where is ...?</li> <li>• When did _____ happen?</li> <li>• How did _____ happen?</li> <li>• How would you explain ...?</li> <li>• How would you describe ...?</li> <li>• What do you recall ...?</li> <li>• How would you show ...?</li> <li>• Who (what) were the main ...?</li> <li>• What are three ...?</li> <li>• What is the definition of...?</li> </ul>	<p><b>4. ANALYSIS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What are the parts or features of ...?</li> <li>• How is _____ related to ...?</li> <li>• Why do you think ...?</li> <li>• What is the theme ...?</li> <li>• What motive is there ...?</li> <li>• What conclusions can you draw ...?</li> <li>• How would you classify ...?</li> <li>• How can you identify the different parts ...?</li> <li>• What evidence can you find ...?</li> <li>• What is the relationship between ...?</li> <li>• How can you make a distinction between ...?</li> <li>• What is the function of ...?</li> <li>• What ideas justify ...?</li> </ul>
<p><b>2. COMPREHENSION</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How would you classify the type of ...?</li> <li>• How would you compare ...? contrast ...?</li> <li>• How would you rephrase the meaning ...?</li> <li>• What facts or ideas show ...?</li> <li>• What is the main idea of ...?</li> <li>• Which statements support ...?</li> <li>• How can you explain what is meant ...?</li> <li>• What can you say about ...?</li> <li>• Which is the best answer ...?</li> <li>• How would you summarize ...?</li> </ul>	<p><b>5. EVALUATION</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Why do you agree with the actions? the outcomes?</li> <li>• What is your opinion of ...?</li> <li>• How would you prove ...? disprove ...?</li> <li>• How can you assess the value or importance of ...?</li> <li>• What would you recommend ...?</li> <li>• How would you rate or evaluate the ...?</li> <li>• What choice would you have made ...?</li> <li>• How would you prioritize ...?</li> <li>• What details would you use to support the view ...?</li> <li>• Why was it better than ...?</li> </ul>
<p><b>3. APPLICATION</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How would you use ...?</li> <li>• What examples can you find to ...?</li> <li>• How would you solve _____ using what you have learned ...?</li> <li>• How would you organize _____ to show ...?</li> <li>• How would you show your understanding of ...?</li> <li>• What approach would you use to ...?</li> <li>• How would you apply what you learned to develop ...?</li> <li>• What other way would you plan to ...?</li> <li>• What would result if ...?</li> <li>• How can you make use of the facts to ...?</li> <li>• What elements would you choose to change ...?</li> <li>• What facts would you select to show ...?</li> <li>• What questions would you ask in an interview with ...?</li> </ul>	<p><b>6. SYNTHESIS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What changes would you make to solve ...?</li> <li>• How would you improve ...?</li> <li>• What would happen if ...?</li> <li>• How can you elaborate on the reason ...?</li> <li>• What alternative can you propose ...?</li> <li>• How can you invent ...?</li> <li>• How would you adapt _____ to create a different ...?</li> <li>• How could you change (modify) the plot (plan) ...?</li> <li>• What could be done to minimize (maximize) ...?</li> <li>• What way would you design ...?</li> <li>• What could be combined to improve (change) ...?</li> <li>• How would you test or formulate a theory for ...?</li> <li>• What would you predict as the outcome of ...?</li> <li>• How can a model be constructed that would change ...?</li> <li>• What is an original way for the ...?</li> </ul>

## ReQuest

### Description

This strategy helps students develop the ability to ask and answer questions about their reading to deepen comprehension and critical thinking. Students take on the role of the teacher to form questions about a reading selection and the teacher models how to answer. Then the teacher asks questions that require higher level thinking to influence the students to frame more challenging questions about the ideas presented in the reading selection. (Manzo, 1969, 1985)

### Purpose

Use *during* reading to:

- Build students' abilities to generate good questions about their reading
- Allow students to hear well-defined answers and learn the mental processes behind them
- Allow students to hear different perspectives about the same text
- Help students differentiate lower level informational questions from higher level questions that demand analysis, evaluation, or synthesis
- Help students monitor their learning through questioning

### Directions

1. Discuss how teachers select the questions they ask students from the text.
2. Tell the students they are to take on the role of a teacher while reading and develop questions about the information, ideas, and relationships found within the content.
3. Have the students read a portion of the selection independently and write a list of questions.
4. Invite the students to ask the teacher their questions. The teacher responds with clear, complete answers in a think-aloud fashion that shows students the mental process the teacher used to derive the answer.
5. When students have finished asking their questions, the teacher asks the students a few questions about the same passage. These questions should focus on higher level thinking to guide the students in framing more challenging questions with the next selection.
6. Repeat the process with the next portion of the selection.
7. After three or four segments are discussed using ReQuest, have the students predict how the selection will conclude and have them read the remainder of the selection independently.

### Extensions

- Form small groups to work together and revise the questions before posing them to the teacher.
- Ask students to define the strategies they used in writing their questions.
- Give students questioning prompts based on Bloom's Taxonomy of Critical Thinking to help them learn how to ask questions that demand higher order thinking.
- Combine ReQuest with the Question-Answer Relationship (QAR) strategy to help students ask literal, inferential, and evaluative questions.
- Once students are comfortable with teacher-student ReQuests, have them do Reciprocal Peer Questioning. (King, 1990)

## Group Summarizing

**Description**

This strategy helps students work together to preview text before reading, locate supporting information and examples during reading, and summarize their ideas on a four-quadrant chart after reading. The charted information provides a structure to write the group summary.

**Purpose**

Use *before*, *during*, and *after* reading to:

- Involve students in constructing a meaningful synthesis of what they have read
- Help students learn how to do a summary before they are asked to create their own
- Provide practice in paraphrasing
- Allow students to demonstrate understanding of concepts through the completed group summary chart
- Link the different parts of the reading process
- Develop higher order critical thinking skills

**Directions**

1. Providing four major topics, model the group summary process by preparing a sample of a completed chart. Then set up the topics for a chart with prepared summary sentences. After students read, have them link the sentences to the topic/concept and write the sentences in the correct chart quadrant.
2. Divide students into small groups.
3. Have each student create a four-quadrant chart and label each quadrant with the topic or concept. Explain the purpose for reading is to learn important information about each of the topics or concepts they selected.
4. During reading, students jot down notes under each heading with page number references.
5. After students have read the text and make their notes, tell the group to discuss with one another what information and ideas they found that were important about the key words or concepts on the chart.
6. When the group agrees that the supporting information is important, it is added to the chart.
7. Once the charts are finished, ask the group to re-read what they have written and be sure their ideas are clearly expressed.

*Sample Group Summarizing Charts*

**Part 1. Individual Ideas:** As you read, take notes on your individual chart about important information related to the four key topics or ideas. List page numbers next to each note.

<p><b>Key topic/Idea:</b> _____</p>	<p><b>Key topic/Idea:</b> _____</p>
<p><b>Key topic/Idea:</b> _____</p>	<p><b>Key topic/Idea:</b> _____</p>

**Part 2. Group Ideas:** Discuss your ideas with your group and come to agreement on important information. Add the agreed-upon ideas to the group summary chart. Re-read the final chart to be sure all ideas have been clearly expressed.

<b>Key topic/Idea:</b> _____	<b>Key topic/Idea:</b> _____
<b>Key topic/Idea:</b> _____	<b>Key topic/Idea:</b> _____

### **Extensions**

- Ask students to preview the text passage or chapter before reading to identify four major topics or concepts presented by the author.
- Have students create their charts on the whiteboard or wall poster, so others in the class can see how the ideas of different groups are similar or different.
- Have students use the group summary chart to write an individual summary.

## Reciprocal Teaching

### Description

Reciprocal teaching is a collaborative routine for improving reading comprehension. Four-person teams use the skills of summarizing, questioning, clarifying, and predicting to bring meaning to the text. (Palinscar and Brown, 1984)

### Purpose

Use *during* reading to:

- Improve students' skills at summarizing, questioning, clarifying, and predicting
- Help struggling readers practice the habits and skills of strong readers
- Encourage collaborative exploration of text

### Directions

1. Create groups of four students.
2. Distribute one note card to each member of the group identifying each person's role.
  - a. summarizer
  - b. questioner
  - c. clarifier
  - d. predictor
3. Have students silently read a few paragraphs of the assigned text selection. Encourage them to use note taking strategies, such as selective underlining or sticky notes, to help them better prepare for their role in the discussion.
4. At the given stopping point, the Summarizer will highlight the key ideas up to this point in the reading.
5. The Questioner will then pose questions about the selection.
6. The Clarifier addresses confusing parts and attempts to answer the questions.
7. The Predictor can offer guesses about what the author will tell the group next.
8. The roles in the group then switch one person to the right, and the next selection is read. Students repeat the process using their new roles. This continues until the entire selection is read.

Note: It is important to teach, model, and practice each of the four roles/skills before expecting students to do all four together.

### Possible Verbal Prompts:

Summarizing: The important ideas in what I read are \_\_\_\_\_

Questioning: What connections can I make? How does this support my thinking? What is the author telling me by this comment?

Clarifying: I don't understand the part where \_\_\_\_\_  
I need to know more about \_\_\_\_\_

Predicting: I think \_\_\_\_\_, I wonder \_\_\_\_\_, I predict \_\_\_\_\_

### Extensions

- Use with Paired Reading or Save the Last Word for Me
- Have students write individual summaries after they finish reading the selection together.

## Role-Audience-Format-Topic (RAFT)

### Description

This strategy asks students to creatively analyze and synthesize the information from a particular text or texts by taking on a particular role or perspective, defining the target audience, and choosing an appropriate written format to convey their understanding of the content topic. (N. Vandervanter, in Adler 1982; Santa, 1988)

### Purpose

Use *before*, *during*, and *after* reading to:

- Enhance comprehension of main ideas, organization, and point of view
- Process information and reflect in unusual ways about concepts they have read
- Provide a creative, authentic way of communicating what was learned that can enhance students' engagement in writing or presentation tasks
- Encourage students to consider perspectives different than their own
- Help students communicate what they have learned using their preferred learning styles

### Directions

1. Explain that a RAFT is a strategy that provides a way to creatively analyze and synthesize the information from a particular text or texts by taking on a particular **Role** or perspective, defining the target **Audience**, and choosing an appropriate written **Format** to convey their understanding of the content **Topic**.
2. Model how to brainstorm and select the four components of a RAFT for students using a simple text or well-known concept/topic.

*Example of a teacher-created RAFT assignment for Global Warming and Pollution Unit*

**Directions:** Choose a role, audience, format, and topic that interests you from this list or create your own choices that will help you effectively summarize what you learned in this unit.

Role	Audience	Format	Topic
Environmental scientist	U.S. Congress	PowerPoint presentation	The need to immediately enforce pollution laws
CEO of a pollution-producing product	The corporation's lawyer in a class action suit by consumers to halt production	Data charts that show pollution has not caused temperature changes	Product manufacturing is not causing temperature change
Person whose parent died from a pollution-caused illness	Michael Moore	Interview for the movie <i>Sicko</i>	Why global warming is a personal crisis as well as a national and global crisis
Acid rain (personified as if it is a person)	Manufacturing managers at an annual conference	Protest song	The destruction of nature by mankind
Your idea	Your idea	Your idea	Your idea

3. Assign a text for students to read. Before reading, note the different perspectives in the text.
4. Brainstorm possible roles, audiences, formats, and topics related to the text that students may use to design their preferred RAFT. See the next page for some generic ideas for roles, audiences, and formats to stimulate thinking. Selected RAFT elements should be related directly to the text reading that lend themselves to summarizing what has been learned.
5. Students select the four components that most interest them to communicate their learning.

## Word Study

### Description

The word study strategy is a way of analyzing the structure of unknown words to derive the meaning by decomposing words into prefixes, roots, and suffixes that are within words. It is often combined with contextual analysis of the sentence or passage.

### Purpose

Use *before* or *during* reading to:

- Define unknown words
- Make words memorable through understanding the origins of the words

### Directions

1. Identify words in an upcoming reading selection that can be analyzed by word parts.
2. Focus instruction on identifying the root word and seeing how the prefix and suffix function together with the root to create word meaning.
3. Have students practice covering the prefixes and suffixes to see the root words, then follow with practice in adding and removing prefixes and suffixes.
4. Once students are comfortable with the word parts strategy, teach them the specific word parts that relate to the content area and topic(s) of learning by providing practice with many words with the same prefix or suffix. This process of comparing words helps students more than memorizing an abstract definition.

### Extensions

- Combine word study with instruction in context clues.
- Use vocabulary instruction strategies as appropriate to the specific words, such as word study for a simple word like chimney sweep or a concept definition map for more complex words like freedom.
- Focus instruction on multiple words by teaching a specific term along with other words that share the same root or the same prefix/suffix to show the links between words and to reinforce other words related to the same concept.

*Cross Content Sample*  
**Word Study**

<p><b>English Language Arts</b></p> <p><i>During</i> study of roots as a vocabulary development strategy</p> <p>Have students partner together to brainstorm lists of words that contain frequently used roots.</p> <p>Examples:</p> <p><b>terr = land, earth</b> terrarium, subterranean, terrace, Mediterranean, territory</p> <p><b>volv = to roll</b> revolver, involvement, revolve, evolve</p> <p><b>mal(e) = bad</b> malaise, malady, malaria, malicious, malignant, maladjusted</p>	<p><b>Mathematics</b></p> <p><i>After</i> reading a chapter on measurements</p> <p>Have students work in small groups to figure out the meanings of words with the Greek root <i>meter</i> or <i>metr</i>, which means measure.</p> <p>Examples:</p> <table border="0"> <tr> <td>meter</td> <td>diameter</td> <td>metronome</td> </tr> <tr> <td>geometry</td> <td>barometer</td> <td>metric</td> </tr> <tr> <td>perimeter</td> <td>symmetry</td> <td>dioptrimeter</td> </tr> <tr> <td>metrology</td> <td>anemometer</td> <td>metrical</td> </tr> <tr> <td>thermometer</td> <td>sphygmomanometer</td> <td></td> </tr> </table>	meter	diameter	metronome	geometry	barometer	metric	perimeter	symmetry	dioptrimeter	metrology	anemometer	metrical	thermometer	sphygmomanometer	
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geometry	barometer	metric														
perimeter	symmetry	dioptrimeter														
metrology	anemometer	metrical														
thermometer	sphygmomanometer															
<p><b>Science</b></p> <p><i>During</i> and <i>after</i> reading scientific text</p> <p>Create a word wall for key roots related to the science course, adding words throughout the year that include the root.</p> <p>Examples:</p> <p><b>Centr (Greek) = center</b> centrifugal, centripetal, concentric, centralize</p> <p><b>Derm (Greek) = skin</b> dermatitis, hypodermic, taxidermy, endoderm, dermis, pachyderm, ectoderm</p> <p><b>Bio (Greek) = life</b> Biology, antibiotic, biosphere, biodegradable, biopsy, biochemical, bioluminescence, biometrics, amphibious</p>	<p><b>Social Studies</b></p> <p><i>During</i> various geography units</p> <p>Review roots that are common in geography, such as geo, cosm, poli, terr, and popul. Have students keep a list of geography words with these roots as they read text chapters.</p> <p>Example:</p> <table border="1"> <tr> <td>geo (the earth)</td> <td>geography, geology, geocentric</td> </tr> <tr> <td>cosm (universe, world)</td> <td>cosmopolitan, cosmos</td> </tr> <tr> <td>poli (city, state)</td> <td>metropolis, cosmopolitan</td> </tr> <tr> <td>terr (to roll)</td> <td>territory, Mediterranean, subterranean</td> </tr> <tr> <td>popul (people)</td> <td>population, populous</td> </tr> </table>	geo (the earth)	geography, geology, geocentric	cosm (universe, world)	cosmopolitan, cosmos	poli (city, state)	metropolis, cosmopolitan	terr (to roll)	territory, Mediterranean, subterranean	popul (people)	population, populous					
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popul (people)	population, populous															

## Interactive Word Wall

### Description

A Word Wall is a systematically organized collection of displayed words. Both students and teachers can suggest additions to Word Walls. Students are asked to interact with words on the Word Wall on an ongoing basis. In this way, the words become an integral part of students' reading, writing, and speaking vocabulary.

### Purpose

Use *before, during, and after* reading to:

- Build vocabulary related to a particular instructional focus
- Help students develop analytical skills like classification and deduction
- Support students in their writing and other composing activities
- Build sight word reading fluency
- Provide a visual reference tool to help students remember important words related to a specific topic or focus

### Directions

1. Create a list for a word wall that will help students deepen their vocabulary and enhance reading comprehension.

Examples of word wall lists:

- Words connected to an upcoming unit of study
  - Words connected to specific instructional areas (e.g., math order of operations, historical terms, literary devices)
  - Difficult words found in textbook chapter
  - Words connected to a theme, book, or author
  - Related root words with different prefixes and affixes
2. Refer to the word wall throughout the unit of study about the content concept it relates to, being sure students are actively interacting with the words on the wall.

Examples of interactive activities:

- Sort the words into categories and label them (list-group-label or word sort)
- Use 3–5 words on the wall to write a summary sentence about a main concept
- Create an analytic graphic organizer that relates the words to one another
- Write a narrative piece—short story, poem, description—that links several words on the word wall together in a meaningful way
- Create a word game using the words on the wall—a crossword puzzle, word search, paired compare/contrast

### Extensions

- Have students keep a triple-entry journal with terms on the word wall.
- Have students create slide shows or visual presentations about the words on the wall.

*Cross Content Sample*  
**Interactive Word Wall**

<p><b>English Language Arts</b></p> <p><i>During</i> and <i>after</i> reading and writing descriptive essays</p> <p>As students read exemplary descriptive essays, create a Word Wall of adjectives that create vivid word pictures.</p> <p>Have students interact with the words, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identifying them during reading and discussing how they create reader interest.</li> <li>• Revising a non-descriptive essay to a descriptive one by adding colorful, specific adjectives from the Word Wall.</li> <li>• Creating an original piece using at least 15 adjectives from the Word Wall.</li> <li>• Editing each others’ descriptive essay drafts to provide feedback about adding adjectives to create visual imagery.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Mathematics</b></p> <p><i>After</i> reading a text chapter on probability and solving problems related to coin and die tossing</p> <p>Help students understand the importance of probability in today’s world by creating an Interactive Word Wall of real life applications that are related to probability, e.g., weather forecasting, winning a sports championship, defective parts, living to age 100, or winning a national lottery.</p> <p>Have students interact with the Word Wall terms, such as :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Researching and calculating the probability for one of the Word Wall applications.</li> <li>• Writing a short persuasive essay on the importance of understanding mathematical probability, related to three or more Word Wall applications.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Science</b></p> <p><i>Before, during, and after</i> reading articles in a computer technology course about the new “thinking” technology called the Semantic Web</p> <p>As the class reads articles about the Semantic Web, have students create a Word Wall with important terms, such as search engine, algorithms, relational database, RDF, GPS, logic engine, DNA computer, cubits, and quantum computing.</p> <p>Have students interact with these words, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Creating Triple-Entry Vocabulary Journal entries about each word on the wall that include a definition in their own words and a visual memory aid.</li> <li>• Writing a short Quick Write defining the Semantic Web, using at least nine terms from the Word Wall.</li> <li>• Drawing a Venn diagram that compares the World Wide Web and Semantic Web using Word Wall terms.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Social Studies</b></p> <p><i>During</i> and <i>after</i> reading a chapter on the ways production, distribution, and consumption differ in various countries in a Economics class</p> <p>As students read about these systems, have them create Word Wall cards and post them under one of the three categories on the wall: production, distribution, and consumption.</p> <p>Have students interact with these words, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Scrambling the words on the wall and asking students to list and group the words into the three systems of production, distribution, and consumption.</li> <li>• Having students select a country they have studied and pick one word from each of the three systems that best represents that country’s systems of production, distribution, and consumption.</li> <li>• Having students select a word from the wall and do a short charade or role play, having other students guess the word they are portraying.</li> </ul>