

DOINGWHATWORKS



SAMPLE MATERIAL

Story Elements Graphic Organizer

Lake Forest North Elementary School, Delaware

Topic: Improving K-3 Reading Comprehension

Practice: Focus on Text Structure

In the early elementary grades at Lake Forest North Elementary School, teaching story elements is a key component of comprehension instruction. Erin Green, a third-grade teacher, uses this graphic organizer during a lesson on teaching text structure with a specific focus on identifying problem and solution.

Part II: Plan a Text Discussion

Here are some questions to consider as you are preparing students for text discussion:

Selecting Text	
1. What kind of text will you choose (e.g., narrative, nonfiction, genre type, etc.)?	
1. What is the text about?	
1. Is this text more suitable for small-group discussions or partner-sharing?	
1. What features of the text make the reading relevant, interesting, and engaging?	
1. What features make this a high-quality text for your lesson (e.g., richness of information, vocabulary, text structure)?	
1. How does this reading relate to your instructional goals or purpose?	
1. What is the reading difficulty level?	
1. What background information might students need in order to understand this text?	
1. How will you scaffold the reading for the students who will find it most challenging?	
1. Are there layout/graphic clues to support students' comprehension and discussions (e.g., bold headings, pictures or photos, tables, charts)?	
1. What issues or content might be difficult for students to understand?	
1. Will this text elicit meaningful conversation among the students?	
1. What kinds of conversations do you expect/hope for?	
Structuring the Discussion	

Part II: Plan a Text Discussion

Here are some questions to consider as you are preparing students for text discussion:

Selecting Text	
1	What kind of text will you choose to discuss? (genre, format, length, etc.)
2	What is the text about?
3	Is this text more suitable for small-group discussions or partner-sharing?
4	What features of the text make the reading relevant, interesting, and engaging?
5	What features make this a high-quality text for your lesson (e.g., richness of content, vocabulary, text structure)?
6	How does this reading relate to your instructional goals or purposes?
7	What is the reading difficulty level?
8	What background information might students need in order to understand this text?
9	How will you scaffold the reading for the students who will find it most challenging?
10	Are there layout/graphics cues to support student comprehension and discussion (e.g., bold headings, pictures or photos, tables, charts)?
11	What issues or content might be difficult for students to understand?
12	Will this text elicit meaningful conversation among the students?
13	What kinds of conversations do you expect to have?
Structuring the Discussion	

1. How will you introduce students to the concept of text discussion as a way to better understand meaning?	
1. What discussion norms or rules will you establish (e.g., taking turns, listening to peers, paying attention)?	
1. How do you plan to deal with common challenges, such as students who dominate or are reluctant to speak, keeping students on task, pacing the discussion?	
1. How will you structure the discussion to complement the text, instructional purpose, and readers' abilities and grade level?	
1. Will you have students discuss the text in small groups, in pairs?	
1. How do you see your role in the discussion?	
1. How will you encourage students to talk and listen to each other (e.g., give higher-order questions, graphics, or pictures for partners to discuss)?	
1. How will you scaffold discussion (e.g., ask for clarification, whether students agree with a prior statement, or if someone has more to add)?	
1. How will you use modeling to encourage student participation?	
1. What comprehension strategies will you encourage students to use during discussions (e.g., main idea, questioning, summarizing, visualizing, etc.)?	
1. How will you build in guided reading and other practice opportunities for students?	
1. How will you adapt instruction for younger or less-developed readers in your classroom (e.g., read-alouds, shared reading, pictures paired with text)?	
1. How will you move students from teacher-lead to independent pair-share or small-group discussions?	
1. Do you plan to incorporate specific small-group or partner strategies such as those demonstrated in the slideshows (e.g., using question games, talking chips, microphones, question stems)?	
Brainstorm some questions you can ask to...	

<p>How will you introduce students to the concept of text discussion as a way to better understand meaning?</p>	<p>How will you introduce students to the concept of text discussion as a way to better understand meaning?</p>
<p>What discussion norms or rules will you establish to get students talking to one another during the discussion?</p>	<p>What discussion norms or rules will you establish to get students talking to one another during the discussion?</p>
<p>How do you plan to establish common language, such as words or phrases, with your students in preparation to engage in text discussion?</p>	<p>How do you plan to establish common language, such as words or phrases, with your students in preparation to engage in text discussion?</p>
<p>How will you introduce the discussion process and establish norms at a grade level?</p>	<p>How will you introduce the discussion process and establish norms at a grade level?</p>
<p>Will you have students discuss the text in small groups or pairs?</p>	<p>Will you have students discuss the text in small groups or pairs?</p>
<p>How do you see your role in the discussion?</p>	<p>How do you see your role in the discussion?</p>
<p>How will you encourage or prompt students to ask and answer questions, give higher-order questions, give evidence, and give feedback to one another?</p>	<p>How will you encourage or prompt students to ask and answer questions, give higher-order questions, give evidence, and give feedback to one another?</p>
<p>How will you establish the discussion (e.g., set the ground rules, establish student roles, and set the discussion) at the beginning of the year?</p>	<p>How will you establish the discussion (e.g., set the ground rules, establish student roles, and set the discussion) at the beginning of the year?</p>
<p>How will you use modeling to encourage and establish norms?</p>	<p>How will you use modeling to encourage and establish norms?</p>
<p>How will you encourage students to ask and answer questions, give evidence, and give feedback to one another?</p>	<p>How will you encourage students to ask and answer questions, give evidence, and give feedback to one another?</p>
<p>How will you establish the discussion and other norms expected for students?</p>	<p>How will you establish the discussion and other norms expected for students?</p>
<p>How will you establish the discussion for younger level students in your classroom (e.g., read aloud, shared reading, partner reading, etc.)?</p>	<p>How will you establish the discussion for younger level students in your classroom (e.g., read aloud, shared reading, partner reading, etc.)?</p>
<p>How will you establish the discussion for older level students in your classroom (e.g., read aloud, shared reading, partner reading, etc.)?</p>	<p>How will you establish the discussion for older level students in your classroom (e.g., read aloud, shared reading, partner reading, etc.)?</p>
<p>Do you plan to incorporate specific strategies or norms into the discussion (e.g., using a discussion protocol, asking open-ended questions, etc.)?</p>	<p>Do you plan to incorporate specific strategies or norms into the discussion (e.g., using a discussion protocol, asking open-ended questions, etc.)?</p>

Brainstorm some questions you can ask for...

1. ...build on student background knowledge.	
1.help students make text connections to their own experiences or other texts.	
1. ...get students to make predictions and draw inferences.	
1. ...help students to think about and summarize or retell what's happening and what the story is about.	
1. ...help students focus on and discuss text structure in narrative and nonfiction texts.	
1. ...help students think deeply about the text and at a higher level about its meaning.	
1. ...encourage students to locate text evidence to justify responses.	
1. ...encourage students to make up questions that get them thinking (e.g., providing question stems, asking them to share assumptions, ideas, or wonderings).	
1. ...follow up on student responses and encourage students to apply comprehension strategies.	
1. ...prompt discussion about new or challenging words, phrases, or passages.	
1. ...help students to reflect on the text by drawing or writing in a journal or using sticky notes to mark a text as preparation for a discussion the next day.	

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	... help students to think about and summarize or retell what's happening and what the story is about
	... help students focus on and discuss text structure in narrative and nonfiction texts
	... help students think deeply about the text and at a higher level about its meaning
	... encourage students to locate text evidence to justify responses
	... encourage students to make up questions that get them thinking (e.g., providing question stems asking them to state assumptions, ideas, or wordings)
	... follow up on student responses and encourage students to apply comprehension strategies
	... provide discussion about how to differentiate words, phrases, or passages
	... help students to reflect on the text by drawing or writing in a journal or using sticky notes to mark a text as preparation for a discussion the next day

Planning Tool for Teaching About Text Structure

Teaching Strategies	Planning Notes
Identify a narrative or informational text structure you would like to teach or review	
Select texts that are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • good examples of the particular structure you are teaching • engaging, interesting • appropriate to the students' reading level • high quality, have rich language 	
Model how to identify text structure Explain why understanding text structure is important	
Use tools, mnemonics, visual reminders to help students remember elements of narrative text structures OR Help students to identify clue words in informational texts	
Use graphic organizers (maps, charts, cards, diagrams) to help students match structure to content	
Plan questions to help students understand text structures	
Plan activities for students to explore text structure on their own, in pairs or groups (diagrams, games, dramatizations, etc.)	
<i>(other teaching strategies here)</i>	

Planning Tool for Teaching About Text Structure

Planning Notes	Teaching Strategies
	Identify a narrative or informational text structure you would like to teach or review
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * good examples of the particular structure you are teaching * engaging, interesting * appropriate to the students' reading level * high-quality, non-fiction language
	Model how to identify text structure Explain why understanding text structure is important
	Use text, graphics, visual organizers to help students tentatively identify elements of narrative text structures OR Help students to identify cue words in informational texts
	Use graphic organizers (maps, charts, outlines, diagrams) to help students match structure to content
	Plan questions to help students understand text structure
	Plan activities for students to explore text structure on their own, in pairs or groups (diagrams, games, dramatizations, etc.)
	(Other reading strategies here)

Teacher Self-Assessment: Gradual Release of Responsibility

Part I.

Use this chart to reflect on your current practices in providing reading comprehension instruction.

	Weekly	Monthly	Rarely	Describe how? In what ways?
Ways I model or explain reading comprehension strategies				
1. I teach my students different reading comprehension strategies, such as activating prior knowledge, predicting, questioning, visualization, monitoring, clarifying or fix-up strategies, inferring, and retelling.				
1. I explain when, how, and why to use reading comprehension strategies.				
Ways I model reading comprehension strategies				
1. I use thinkalouds to show students how I go about understanding texts.				
1. I show students how to use comprehension strategies with different types of texts.				
Ways I provide students opportunities for guided practice				
1. I monitor students individually, in pairs and small groups to ensure they're using strategies effectively.				
1. I check for understanding and use of specific reading strategies.				
1. I work with individual students who are struggling with reading comprehension strategies.				
Ways I support students' independent use of reading comprehension strategies				
1. I provide students with physical reminders of strategies, when and how to use them.				
1. I provide opportunities for students to practice reading comprehension strategies with their peers.				
1. I provide opportunities for students to practice during independent center work.				

Teacher Self-Assessment: Gradual Release of Responsibility

Part I

Use this chart to reflect on your current practices in providing reading comprehension instruction.

	Weekly	Monthly	Rarely	Describe how? in what ways?
Ways I model reading comprehension strategies				
1				I teach my students different reading comprehension strategies such as activating prior knowledge, monitoring, clarifying, or fix-up strategies, inferring and predicting.
2				I explain when, how, and why to use reading comprehension strategies.
Ways I provide students opportunities for guided practice				
1				I use the lessons to show students how I go about understanding texts.
2				I show students how to use comprehension strategies with different types of texts.
Ways I support students' independent use of reading comprehension strategies				
1				I monitor students individually in pairs and small groups to ensure they're using strategies effectively.
2				I check for understanding and use of specific reading strategies.
3				I work with individual students who are struggling with reading comprehension strategies.
1				I provide students with physical reminders of strategies when and how to use them.
2				I provide opportunities for students to practice reading comprehension strategies with their peers.
3				I provide opportunities for students to be working independent center work.