

Overview

1. The Academic Essentials

What are the skills students need to succeed in all academic classes?

2. The Process of Becoming a Reader

How can you improve students' reading processes in the content areas?

3. Tools for Thought

What are "Tools for Thought" and how can you use them to help students read, write, and think better?

4. Teaching by Design

What are the elements of effective instruction and how can you incorporate them into your instruction?

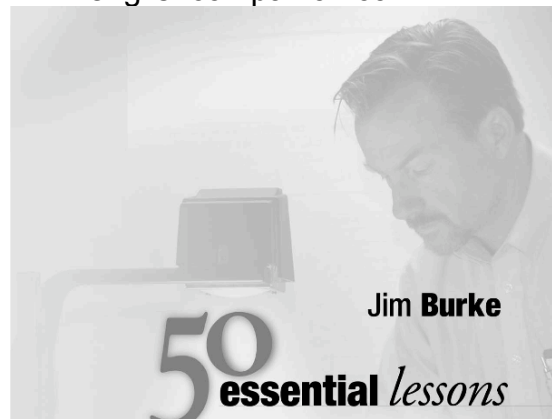
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Teaching the Academic Essentials

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WORKSHOP QUOTATIONS

Daybook	<p>First, therefore, we must seek what it is that we are aiming at; then we must look about for the road by which we can reach it most quickly, and on the journey itself, if only we are on the right path, we shall discover how much of the distance we overcome each day, and how much nearer we are to the goal toward which we are urged by a natural desire. But so long as we wander aimlessly, having no guide, and following only the noise and discordant cries of those who call us in different directions, life will be consumed in making mistakes—life that is brief even if we should strive day and night for sound wisdom. Let us, therefore, decide both upon the goal and upon the way, and not fail to find some experienced guide who has explored the region towards which we are advancing; for the conditions of this journey are different from those of most travel. On most journeys some well-recognized road and inquiries made of the inhabitants of the region prevent you from going astray; but on this one all the best beaten and the most frequented paths are the most deceptive. Nothing, therefore, needs to be more emphasized than the warning that we should not like sheep, follow the lead of the throng in front of us, traveling, thus, the way that all go and not the way that we ought to go.</p> <p>—Seneca, “On the Happy Life” (c. A.D. 58)</p>
“Well Words”	
1. Relax	
2. Connect	
3. Listen	
4. Exercise	
5. Celebrate	
6. Challenge	
7. Laugh	
8. Breathe	
9. Confront	
10. Change	
11. Ask	
12. Eat (well)	
13. Join	
14. Trust	
15. Give	
16. Learn	
17. Wait	
18. Delegate	<p>When we enter a house for the first time, we of course find it unfamiliar. By walking around for a while, however, looking into various rooms and peering into cupboards, we quickly get to know it. But what if we cannot enter the house, and our own knowledge of it comes from the instructions and plans that were used to build it? Moreover, what if those instructions and plans are written in a highly technical language that we find intimidating and incomprehensible? What if, try as we may, we cannot form any mental picture of the house? Then we are not going to get much of a sense of what it is like to live there. We are not going to be able to enter the house even in our imagination.</p> <p>—Keith Devlin, from <i>The Math Gene</i></p>
19. Simplify	
20. Enjoy	
21. Choose	
22. Create	
23. Love	
24. Refuse	
25. Accept	
26. Try	
27. Remember	
28. Praise	
29. Engage	
30. Toss	
31. Renew	<p>Although some students show up at school as “intentional learners”—people who are already interested in doing whatever they need to do to learn academic subjects—they are the exception rather than the rule. Even if they are disposed to study, they probably need to learn how. But more fundamental than knowing how is developing a sense of oneself as a learner that makes it socially acceptable to engage in academic work. The goal of school teaching is not to turn all students into people who see themselves as professional academics, but to enable all of them to include a disposition toward productive study of academic subjects among the personality traits they exhibit while they are in the classroom. If the young people who come to school do not see themselves as learners, they are not going to act like learners even if that would help them to be successful in school. It is the teacher's job to help them change their sense of themselves so that studying is not a self-contradictory activity. One's sense of oneself as a learner is not a wholly private construction. Academic identity is formed from an amalgamation of how we see ourselves and how others see us, and those perceptions are formed and expressed in social interaction. How I act in front of others expresses my sense of who I am. How others then react to me influences the development of my identity.</p> <p>—Magdalene Lampert, from <i>Teaching Problems and the Problems of Teaching</i></p>
32. Experience	
33. Participate	
34. Appreciate	
35. Balance	
36. Imagine	
37. Contribute	
38. Thank	
39. Clarify	
40. Limit	
41. Entertain	
42. Forgive	
43. Express	
44. Notice	
45. Grow	
46. Respect	
47. Risk	
48. Practice	
49. Honor	
50. Eliminate	
51. Smile	
52. Reward	

ACADEMIC ESSENTIALS MATRIX

		Abilities					
Skills		Generate • Questions • Hypotheses • Claims • Explanations • Examples	Evaluate • Importance • Effectiveness • Relevance • Validity • Accuracy	Analyze • Cause/Effect • Meaning • Implications • Logic • Consequences	Organize • Events • Information • Process • Ideas • Emphasis	Synthesize • Information • Events • Ideas • Sources • Perspectives	
	Read	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fiction • Information • Argument • Poetry 					
	Write	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reader Response • Narrative • Expository • Argument 					
	Talk	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion • Speech • Presentation 					
	Take Notes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expository • Research • Literary • Textbook 					
	Take Tests	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Multiple Choice • Essay • Short Answer • Standardized 					

Explanation of the Academic Essentials (AE) Matrix

The AE matrix gives structure, depth, and sequencing to my lessons. For example, when I decide which of the “Skills” (reading, writing, talking, taking notes, or taking tests) I need to focus on next, I then use the “Abilities” to organize and improve that instruction. If we are reading an article on the topic of personal success, for example, I might have students “generate” a list of factors they think contribute to such success. I might then have students, to increase their processing of the information, “evaluate” which *three* factors from their list are the most important, then “analyze” how they contribute to success. The matrix challenges me to achieve more but in a structured sequence; thus I might have students “organize” their three essential factors from most to least important or in some other logical order. Finally, to integrate the different skills, I would have students “synthesize” by first writing a well-organized paragraph and then, if time allows, discussing it with each other or the class. In addition, I would ask myself (before, during, and after this instructional sequence) what other skills—writing, talking, taking notes, taking tests—I could or should integrate. In this way, the AE matrix ensures my instruction is designed to achieve maximum effectiveness in ways that promote learning and academic success. A sixth “essential” (Managing Oneself) is not included here but is nonetheless...*essential*.

Instructional Principles

Effective instruction requires that students:

1. Work independently and with others to solve a range of intellectual problems.
2. Process material on multiple levels and in various ways.
3. Use tools and strategies to help them solve a range of academic problems.
4. Learn skills and knowledge through a variety of instructional modes.
5. Communicate their understanding by multiple means, including other media.
6. Monitor and evaluate their performance and progress towards goals.
7. Connect what they learn today to their other studies, the world, and themselves.
8. Develop and use skills and knowledge in the context of meaningful conversations.
9. Know what a successful performance looks like on all tasks and assessments.
10. Read a variety of types of texts, including multimedia and visual.

Burke, Jim. 2006. *50 Essential Lessons: Tools and Techniques for Teaching English/Language Arts*. Portsmouth, NH: *firsthand/Heinemann*.

The Four Cs of Academic Success

COMMITMENT

Commitment describes the extent to which students care about the work and maintain consistency in their attempt to succeed.

Key aspects of **commitment** are:

- *Emotional investment*: Refers to how much students care about their success and the quality of their work on this assignment or performance.
- *Effort*: Some students resist making a serious effort when they do not believe they can succeed. Without such effort, neither success nor improvement is possible.
- *Consistency*: Everyone can be great or make heroic efforts for a day or even a week; real, sustainable success in a class or on large assignments requires consistent hard work and “quality conscience.”
- *Faith*: Students must believe that the effort they make will eventually lead to the result or success they seek. *Faith* applies to a method or means by which they hope to achieve success.
- *Permission*: Students must give themselves permission to learn and work hard and others permission to teach and support them if they are to improve and succeed.

CONTENT

Content refers to information or processes students must know to complete a task or succeed on an assignment in class.

Content knowledge includes:

- *Discipline- or subject-specific matter* such as names, concepts, and terms.
- *Cultural reference points* not specifically related to the subject but necessary to understand the material, such as:
 - People
 - Events
 - Trends
 - Ideas
 - Dates
- *Conventions* related to documents, procedures, genres, or experiences.
- *Features, cues, or other signals* that convey meaning during a process or within a text.
- *Language* needed to complete or understand the task.
- Procedures used during the course of the task or assignment.

COMPETENCIES

Competencies are those skills students need to be able to complete the assignment or succeed at some task.

Representative, general **competencies** include the ability to:

- *Generate* ideas, solutions, and interpretations that will lead to the successful completion of the task.
- *Manage* resources (time, people, and materials) needed to complete the task; refers also to the ability to govern oneself.
- *Communicate* ideas and information to complete and convey results of the work.
- *Evaluate and make decisions* based on information needed to complete the assignment or succeed at the task.
- *Learn* while completing the assignment so students can improve their performance on similar assignments in the future.
- *Use* a range of tools and strategies to solve the problems they encounter.

CAPACITIES

Capacities account for the quantifiable aspects of performance; students can have great skills but lack the capacity to fully employ those skills.

Primary **capacities** related to academic performance include:

- *Speed* with which students can perform one or more tasks needed to complete the assignment or performance.
- *Stamina* required to maintain the requisite level of performance; includes physical and mental stamina.
- *Fluency* needed to handle problems or interpret ideas that vary from students’ past experience or learning.
- *Dexterity*, which allows students, when needed, to do more than one task at the same time (a.k.a. multitasking).
- *Memory* so students can draw on useful background information or store information needed for subsequent tasks included in the assignment.
- *Resiliency* needed to persevere despite initial or periodic obstacles to success on the assignment or performance.
- *Confidence* in their ideas, methods, skills, and overall abilities related to this task.

Academic Habits Self-Evaluation

DIRECTIONS

Assess yourself in each class using this scale: 1=Always 2=Usually 3=Sometimes 4=Rarely 5=Never

Academic Habits	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	TOTAL
1. I ask for help if I do not understand something.								
2. I bring all the necessary supplies.								
3. I bring my textbook.								
4. I check my work before I turn it in to make sure it satisfies all the requirements and is my "best work."								
5. I come to class on time.								
6. I complete all homework.								
7. I have a dedicated place where I do my homework.								
8. I keep my student ID card with me at all times.								
9. I keep old assignments, quizzes, and tests until the semester ends (to review and to prove my grades).								
10. I keep track of my standing in each class.								
11. I listen to what the teacher and other students say.								
12. I organize all notes and materials in a binder with section dividers that are labeled.								
13. I participate in full class discussions.								
14. I participate in small-group discussions.								
15. I read all the directions before taking tests or doing assignments.								
16. I review my tests/assignments after I get them back.								
17. I set aside specific time for doing homework.								
18. I set goals and make plans to help me achieve them.								
19. I study before all quizzes and exams.								
20. I take notes during lectures, discussions, or videos.								
21. I take notes when I read the assigned readings.								
22. I use a planner to keep track of events/assignments.								
23. I use specific strategies and aids to understand and remember information.								
24. I use specific strategies to help me do my work well and focus my attention.								
25. I write down the homework assignments.								
Grand Total								
Estimated (current) letter grade in this class								

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1. In _____ (favorite/strongest class), my teacher would say I am:
 1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____

2. In _____ (least favorite/hardest class), my teacher would say I am:
 1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____

3. Reflective Essay

Using the information (your scores) and words from above, write a 1–2 page reflection on the type of student you are and would like to be. Discuss those things you do well and those areas you need to improve to become an even better student. Be sure to provide examples and discuss them as they relate to the ideas in your paper.

2 Tools and Texts

Elements of Effective Adolescent Literacy Instruction

Jim Burke

Research on adolescent literacy has identified certain common elements in effective adolescent literacy instruction. Drawing on a range of reports, articles, and books, as well as my own classroom practices, I offer the following recommendations for content area teachers intent on helping adolescents become better readers and writers.

What Teachers Do

- *Provide direct, explicit comprehension instruction* in which strategies to use, when to use them, and how to use them with a variety of types of text. Such strategies include summarizing, making inferences, evaluating importance, and visualizing.
- *Embed effective instructional principles in the content* so that students learn how to read, write, and think in ways specific to that subject area.
- *Provide access to background knowledge*—cultural literacy, vocabulary, personal experience—before, during, and after students read and write about a subject.
- *Design opportunities for purposeful discussion.* Examples might include literature circles, Socratic Seminar, or reciprocal teaching. Reciprocal teaching demands that students become the instructors in the following way: They work in groups of four, reading the assigned passage together, during which they make predictions, ask questions, clarify misunderstandings, and summarize what they learned, which they then share with the class through discussions.
- *Assess and monitor students' understanding* informally as they go, teaching them also how to monitor their own understanding and performance.
- *Embed test preparation into the curriculum* in ways that deepen understanding of the material as well as improve such skills in the context of that subject area.
- *Provide ample time for reading and literacy instruction.* This means giving students the time they need to learn how to read the text and adequate time to actually read and understand it.
- *Read aloud* to students those passages that are difficult, modeling for them not only how to read the passage but how you make sense of it as you read.

What Students Do

- *Write often and for different purposes.* Students should write in ways that are specific to the types of writing common to school and work; but they should also use writing to think, explore, and understand what they are learning.
- *Take notes when reading,* letting the format and content be dictated by the reading purpose. Such structured note taking strategies as “Reporter’s Notes,” “Q Notes,” or “Summary Notes” provide additional support.
- *Make connections* between what students are reading and have read, between the text and their own experiences and knowledge of the world.
- *Use graphic organizers* and other such cognitive tools to develop students’ ability to evaluate, analyze, organize, and synthesize. Use these tools then as the basis for subsequent writing or discussion.
- *Generate questions* before, during, and after students read a text. Such questions might be personal (make connections), strategic (evaluating importance), or practical (following directions).
- *Establish a clear, compelling purpose* for their reading or writing that allows students to evaluate the importance of information and monitor their progress toward that goal.
- *Engage in cognitive collaboration* before, during, and after working with a text. Students may have assigned roles or be preparing to bring to the group their understanding. Students collaborate to make sense of a range of challenging texts and to convey that understanding.

WAYS OF READING

While not representing a strict continuum or hierarchy, Ways of Reading describes *how* we read depending on our purpose. Which one we use—that is, *how* we read—depends on *why* we are reading.

Name	Description
Surface Reading	<i>Surface reading</i> is like rock-skipping at a lake: the reader touches down periodically but never goes below the surface to seek a deeper or even more complete understanding of the text. When finished, the reader can tell someone what the subject of the text is but not what it <i>means</i> .
Close Reading	<i>Close reading</i> is like jumping in and swimming in the water. You read all the words and make a serious effort to understand the text, paying attention to organization and punctuation as they affect meaning. When finished, the reader can identify the subject of the text and what it means, but not how the author created the text or its effect on the reader.
Critical Reading	<i>Critical reading</i> means you are not just swimming in the water but studying it; you are a diver who has come to examine the ecosystem to better understand how it works and how the elements relate to each other. Critical readers examine not just what the writer says but <i>how</i> the writer says it; they look also at what the writer does <i>not</i> say but may imply through imagery, language, or organizational patterns. Critical readers examine the narrators' reliability, arguments' effectiveness, authors' intentions, and stylistic devices. When finished, the reader knows the subject and meaning of the text, the author's purpose, and how the author achieved that purpose.
Reflective Reading	<i>Reflective reading</i> is reading to think. Such reading involves some elements of both close and critical reading; yet it is different, for the reflective reader <i>uses</i> reading to think; thus the text is itself a tool. We do such reading when conducting research; it is akin to grazing in many pastures, digesting what we find there to see if it relates to or brings clarity to our subject of inquiry. It is also how one might read a sacred, literary, or philosophical text from which one sought insight and inspiration. When finished, the reader has some new insight—into themselves, the world, or a subject of serious interest—that will contribute to their academic research or personal inquiry.
Concentric Reading	<i>Concentric reading</i> involves reading across other texts, moving out from an idea and making associations, connections to and through other texts. Carol Ann Tomlinson calls this “orbital reading.” Thus one might read a literary or historical text which leads to some other idea that can only be explored in a second text; there one finds ideas that lead the reader to still a third text, say one about the elements of effective argument. Many innovative thinkers read this way, making connections within their own and across other fields of study as one text suggests a new connection that the next text confirms and extends. When finished, the reader sees patterns and connections between texts, authors, disciplines, ideas, or eras.
Dynamic Reading	<i>Dynamic reading</i> is what Judith Langer calls “envisonment building.” Langer writes that “understandings grow and change and spiral and become transmuted. And ideas we have at one point in time may be gone in another. We don't merely add information. I use the term <i>envisonment</i> to refer to the world of understanding we have at one point in time, when we are reading, writing, or thinking.... Envisonments are always in a state of change, as new ideas, information or experiences come to mind—even after you have completed the overt literary experience.” (CELA <i>English Update</i> Spring 2003) When finished, readers understand that they are <i>not</i> finished, that their understanding of the text and its subject continues to change depending on their purpose, experience, and knowledge. One enters into a conversation with and through the text that is ongoing so long as the reader maintains a relationship with the text and its subject.

Here are some other ways to think about how we read. The top row represents readings that remain—in one respect or another—on the surface level; the deliberate and effective use of active reading techniques and strategies allows readers to “build *envisonments*” as Langer calls them, of greater sophistication.

Surface	Denotative	Literal	Concrete	Terminal
Deep	Connotative	Figurative	Abstract	Generative

VISUALIZING STRATEGIES: READING IS SEEING

Use Visualizing when:

- ❑ The text is difficult, in particular because it is abstract or hard to follow.
- ❑ Students struggle to see how the information or text is organized.
- ❑ Students find the material vague or foreign; lack of exposure or knowledge makes it hard to imagine what they are reading (e.g., ancient texts like Homer’s *Odyssey*)
- ❑ You want to provide students an alternative way to make sense of and respond to what they read, particularly with more spatial, visual abilities.

Draw the Text	Using the actual words from the text as your guidelines, translate the text into a drawing to help you see what it looks like, what is happening. Example: In Homer’s <i>Odyssey</i> , he describes the hall in which the suitors gather; yet it is so foreign to our experience. Draw the hall in precise detail, using each sentence in the section as a checklist of what to include, how to arrange it, and what it looks like.
Sensory Notes	Create a page with columns for the different senses (e.g., sounds, smells, etc.). As you read, write down any sensory details the text includes. When finished reading the selection, use those details to write a description of the scene that will show you understand what you read and help you see what it looks like and thus better visualize what you read. Students can also use this list of details to analyze the author’s style. Example: In <i>Tale of Two Cities</i> , Dickens uses abundant sensory detail to help readers see and sense the London of his era was like and how its people lived and looked.
Visual Explanation	Use some sort of symbolic means of representing movement and connections. One possibility is to envision those complex diagrams football coaches draw to show who is going where and doing what on a given football play. Example: In <i>Julius Caesar</i> , Cassius is left standing alone at the end of act one. Throughout the act, however, he is everywhere, talking to everyone. Using a set of dots somewhat like billiard balls that have an initial for each character in them (e.g., © for Cassius), show how Cassius moves through the act, then explain what it means that he stands alone at the end of the first act.
Perform the Text	Whether role playing a scene or creating a tableau to represent a moment, students create a physical, visible performance that corresponds with the text. Example: When reading <i>Lord of the Flies</i> , place everyone in formation to show the different dynamics in the opening scene as Jack enters and towers over Ralph who is blinded by the sun and impressed by the boy “who knows his own mind.”
Compare the Text	Comparing what you do not understand to what you <i>do</i> understand helps to create a visual sense of comparison. Example: Thus if you say, “Gatsby is like a grown up Holden Caulfield,” you might better understand the text.
Recast the Text	Recasting a written text into a movie script or even a poem can sometimes help you better understand it by thinking about it and working with it in a different, more visual genre. Example: Describe the battle scenes from <i>Odyssey</i> as Speilberg would the opening scene from <i>Saving Private Ryan</i> on D-Day in WW II.

INTERACTIVE READING (CREATED BY JIM BURKE)

<i>What to Do</i>	<i>How and Why to Do It</i>
Mark up the Text (Annotate)	<p>Reading with a pencil in your hand transforms you into a reader looking for something to mark; the pencil demands that you constantly evaluate the importance of the information as you read, checking each idea to see how it relates to your reading purpose. Use these different tools and techniques to make you a more interactive reader:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Highlighter: Highlighters are useful when you want to color code certain aspects of the text. The problem with using them as a general highlighting tool is that you often don't remember why you highlighted the words later on—like when you review for finals. • Pencil: Offers several advantages, including the fact that it can be erased. Underline no more than you need—key terms, important phrases—but as much as you should. Explain in the margin why you underlined words/phrases. Create your own codes or abbreviations for more efficient note-taking. • Sticky Notes: A useful variation on annotating the text with pencil since you cannot always write on the pages of your textbook. Simply keep a pad of 3 x 3 sticky notes handy. When you find an important passage, put in a sticky note to explain its importance or how you might use it in an essay. Another useful trick: in a difficult book, stop after each section or chapter and explain on the sticky note what the last section was about. If you get stuck, put a sticky note on the exact place where you got confused and explain what makes it hard to understand. This self-diagnosis develops your ability to monitor and fix up your own problems. • Mental Annotations: When reading, keep a running conversation in your head about what you <i>would</i> underline if you were annotating the text; this keeps you attentive and reminds you that you are reading the text for a purpose.
Ask Questions	<p>Asking questions is one of the most important habits for any reader to develop. Direct questions at the author, the characters, yourself, or the text itself. Which questions you ask will depend on why you are reading the text in the first place. Thus your first question is always, “Why am I reading this?” Here are a few examples of other questions you might ask:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What does this word mean in this context? • Why does the author include this scene or detail? • What does the character want most of all? • How does this text relate to others we have read (or to our studies about the Holocaust History?) • What was I trying to learn by reading this? Did I learn it? If not, which part should I reread?
Monitor Understanding: Keep Track	<p>You absorb so much information as you read. You must create a system, use some strategy or tool to help you keep track of what happens to whom and when. By keeping track of these details you become a more attentive, active reader, one who will be more likely to remember the important details later when you must take a test, write a paper, or participate in a class discussion about the text. Most graphic or note taking strategies will help, but here's a few that are very effective: Q Notes, Episodic Notes, Timeline Notes, Reporter's Notes.</p>
Comment and Connect	<p>We read about others' thoughts and experiences to better understand our own. Enter into conversation with the author, the characters—the text. Comment on what they do, say, feel, or think; agree or disagree as you wish; such interactions help you connect what you read to your own ideas and experiences. When possible, ask how a character, author, or text connects to others you have read or read about in this or other classes.</p>
Use Your Senses	<p>Authors, especially those writing narrative, pack their work with sensory details. Ignoring these details is like watching a movie with the sound turned off and your back to the screen. Bring the text to life and improve your understanding of it by doing any of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>See the Text:</i> use visualization techniques—drawing, acting it out, etc.—to help you <i>see</i> what you are reading. • <i>Listen to the Text:</i> Good readers use their ears as often as their eyes to read. Read aloud or develop your capacity to hear what you read; cultivate the “voice inside your head.” • <i>Use Sensory Notes:</i> This note-taking tool forces readers not only to look for sensory details but to evaluate them and identify the details that are most important to the story's meaning.
Predict the Future	<p>Good readers interact with what they read, arguing with the characters and authors, saying to themselves, “How can you do that?” They also constantly make predictions, speculating about what will happen next. Develop this habit further by using such questions as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What will happen next? Why do I think that? What effect would that have on the story? • What are some different possible endings to this situation or story? Which one is the author most likely to choose—and why? Which do I think is the most appropriate—and why?
Talk it Out	<p>Literary conversations are one of the best parts of reading a good book: We can't wait to tell others what we think about the book, or to hear what they have to say. Have students talk before, during, and after they read a text to help them process the text's ideas and their responses. Literature Circles are one option; using tools to prepare for discussions (e.g., Article Notes) is another. One other variation is to have someone play the role of the author or a character in the story and talk <i>as that person</i> to the class; such a class might, for example, treat the author as a visiting guest whom they can interview.</p>

RESPONDING TO RESEARCH

Beating the Odds: Teaching Middle and High School Students to Read and Write Well

by Judith Langer (<http://cela.albany.edu>)

Feature One: Students learn skills and knowledge in multiple lesson types.

- ❑ Provide overt, targeted instruction and review as models for peer and self-evaluation
- ❑ Teach skills, mechanics, or vocabulary that can be used during *integrated* activities such as literature discussions
- ❑ Use all three kinds of instruction to scaffold ways to think and discuss (e.g., summarizing, justifying answers, and making connections)

Feature Two: Teachers integrate test preparations into instruction.

- ❑ Analyze the demands of a test
- ❑ Identify connections to the standards and goals
- ❑ Design and align curriculum to meet the demands of the test
- ❑ Develop instructional strategies that enable students to build the necessary skills
- ❑ Ensure that skills are learned across the year and across grades
- ❑ Make overt connections between and among instructional strategies, tests, and current learning
- ❑ Develop and implement model lessons that integrate test preparation into the curriculum

Feature Three: Teachers make connections across instruction, curriculum, grades, and life.

- ❑ Make overt connections between and across the curriculum, students' lives, literature, and literacy
- ❑ Plan lessons that connect with each other, with test demands, and with students' growing knowledge and skills
- ❑ Develop goals and strategies that meet students' needs and are intrinsically connected to the larger curriculum
- ❑ Weave even unexpected intrusions into integrated experiences for students

Feature Four: Students learn strategies for doing the work.

- ❑ Provide rubrics that students review, use, and even develop
- ❑ Design models and guides that lead students to understand how to approach each task
- ❑ Supply prompts that support thinking

Feature Five: Students are expected to be generative thinkers.

- ❑ Explore texts from many points of view (e.g., social, historical, ethical, political, personal)
- ❑ Extend literary understanding beyond initial interpretations
- ❑ Research and discuss issues generated by literary texts and by student concerns
- ❑ Extend research questions beyond their original focus
- ❑ Develop ideas in writing that go beyond the superficial
- ❑ Write from different points of view
- ❑ Design follow-up lessons that cause students to move beyond their initial thinking.

Feature Six: Classrooms foster cognitive collaboration.

- ❑ Students work in small and large groups to
 - ❑ Share their ideas and responses to literary texts, questions, etc.
 - ❑ Question and challenge each others' ideas and responses
 - ❑ Create new responses
- ❑ Teachers provide support during discussions and group work by
 - ❑ Moving from group to group
 - ❑ Modeling questions and comments that will cause deeper discussion and analysis
 - ❑ Encouraging questions and challenges that cause students to think more deeply

School-Wide Reading Improvement

For school-wide reading improvement to occur, the following conditions must exist

- Conception
- Commitment
- Consistency
- Content

Conception You cannot work toward or hope to achieve improvement if you do not know what you are trying to accomplish. Conception answers the question, "What does the program we want to create look like?" You can answer this question by several routes, including:

- Reading about other schools' programs
- Visiting (online or in person) other places with programs similar to yours
- Generating ideas among yourselves until a clear conception begins to emerge; then seeking additional support or guidance from others with previous experience
- Using data to create an accurate conception and using multiple sources of data throughout the program to make decisions about instruction and the program

Commitment No program will work if the teachers and administration are not genuinely committed to the program. Ideally such commitment would extend beyond the school to include parents and the community. Commitment is evident when:

- Teachers receive training they need to succeed
- Teachers have, and know how to use, the necessary resources
- Teachers use the same core strategies and tools across subject areas
- Teachers have time to learn from each other about what works and why
- A school sustains its commitment to the program over time
- Community agencies and members contribute materials, expertise, and support

Consistency Students learn from six teachers in as many subject areas each day. Consistency means teachers and students use the same terms and techniques in all subject areas so students can focus on learning content, not what each teacher means when they use a term.

Consistency exists when:

- All teachers use the same terms to refer to the same tools or techniques
- If, for example, the school has adopted "Q Notes" as one of its core note-taking techniques, this is the term that students and teachers use
- Teachers use the same techniques in similar, complementary ways
- Teachers evaluate the students' use of techniques by the same criteria

Content Engaging, challenging content remains at the heart of any effective instructional program. Successful school-wide programs embed the skills and related strategy instruction in the curriculum to support both teacher and student, allowing one to accomplish what the other asks. Thus the focus remains on learning skills and strategies within the context of the content of the course. As these skills and strategies are, however, an integral part of the course, teachers also:

- Model the effective use of the techniques when applying them to new or more difficult course content
- Monitor students' use of the techniques, especially struggling readers, and suggest alternative strategies or ways to improve their use of the current one
- Discuss which strategy a student used on a given assignment in order to make them and others more aware of how the strategy can be used
- Use student performance data on content assessments to measure and improve effectiveness of the skills and strategies

The Second Coming
By W. B. Yeats

Turning and turning in the widening gyre
5 The falcon cannot hear the falconer;
Things fall apart; the centre cannot hold;
Mere anarchy is loosed upon the world,
The blood-dimmed tide is loosed, and everywhere
The ceremony of innocence is drowned;
10 The best lack all conviction, while the worst
Are full of passionate intensity.

Surely some revelation is at hand;
Surely the Second Coming is at hand.
15 The Second Coming! Hardly are those words out
When a vast image out of *Spiritus Mundi*
Troubles my sight: somewhere in sands of the desert
A shape with lion body and the head of a man,
A gaze blank and pitiless as the sun,
20 Is moving its slow thighs, while all about it
Reel shadows of the indignant desert birds.
The darkness drops again; but now I know
That twenty centuries of stony sleep
Were vexed to nightmare by a rocking cradle,
25 And what rough beast, its hour come round at last,
Slouches towards Bethlehem to be born?

BEFORE	
1. I gather any materials (highlighter, notebook, stick notes, etc.) I might need.	Always Usually Sometimes Rarely Never
2. I choose a place without distractions to do my reading.	Always Usually Sometimes Rarely Never
3. Make sure I have a dictionary within reach.	Always Usually Sometimes Rarely Never
4. I go over any directions for the assigned reading.	Always Usually Sometimes Rarely Never
5. I preview (skim) the assignment to determine what it's about, how long it will take me, and how hard it is.	Always Usually Sometimes Rarely Never
6. I make a plan for how to take notes based on the assignment.	Always Usually Sometimes Rarely Never
7. I generate a purpose question about the text	Always Usually Sometimes Rarely Never
8. I make predictions about what I will read before beginning	Always Usually Sometimes Rarely Never
9. I ask myself what I already know about this subject, this story, or this author.	Always Usually Sometimes Rarely Never
10. I decide which reading strategy/strategies will be most useful.	Always Usually Sometimes Rarely Never
DURING	
11. I revisit my purpose and make sure I look for the information that will help me achieve it.	Always Usually Sometimes Rarely Never
12. I make connections to myself, the world, and other texts/studies.	Always Usually Sometimes Rarely Never
13. I identify the main idea and supporting details.	Always Usually Sometimes Rarely Never
14. I use previous experience and background knowledge to understand new information about the subject or story.	Always Usually Sometimes Rarely Never
15. I take notes, annotate the text, or highlight important details.	Always Usually Sometimes Rarely Never
16. I keep a list of questions about things I do not understand.	Always Usually Sometimes Rarely Never
17. I look up words I do not understand in the dictionary.	Always Usually Sometimes Rarely Never
18. I summarize what I read (in my head and/or in my notes) as I go	Always Usually Sometimes Rarely Never
19. I make predictions about what will happen.	Always Usually Sometimes Rarely Never
20. I monitor my understanding as I go and stop to use various "fix up" strategies when I get confused.	Always Usually Sometimes Rarely Never
21. I ask questions about what I read as I go.	Always Usually Sometimes Rarely Never
AFTER	
22. I stop and ask whether I know the answer to the purpose question I asked when I first began reading.	Always Usually Sometimes Rarely Never
23. I reread all or part of the text to answer remaining questions, examine the author's style, or review for tests.	Always Usually Sometimes Rarely Never
24. I evaluate all that I read to determine what is most important to remember in the future (e.g., for tests, papers, discussions).	Always Usually Sometimes Rarely Never
25. I use one or more strategies to help remember these details.	Always Usually Sometimes Rarely Never

Reading Improvement Plan

Based on your evaluation above, make a plan for what you will do to improve your reading performance. In your plan, identify just those actions (3-5) that you can do immediately to get rapid results; then discuss how you accomplish your plan and why it will make a difference.

Reading Process Worksheet

Directions: Use this sheet to adapt the reading process to your own class in general or one assignment in particular. Describe what *you* do during each stage of this process as well as what the students do.

Before		
Action	What the Teacher Does	What the Student Does
Set a purpose.		
Preview the text.		
Make a plan; choose a strategy or technique most appropriate to the task and text.		
During		
Read with a purpose.		
Connect what you do or read to other subjects you've studied, and to your own interests and experiences.		
After		
Pause and reflect on what was important, what you learned, and what you still do not fully understand.		
Reread to clarify, connect, or examine more closely (e.g., for a different purpose).		
Remember what you read and learned so you can apply it or demonstrate your understanding of it (e.g., on an exam).		

NAME: _____ PERIOD: _____ DATE: _____

PQ: _____

INC. MAGAZINE: MOST FASCINATING ENTREPRENEURS

#26 Rueben Martinez *Libreria Martinez Books and Art Galleries* (by Jeffrey L. Seglin)

—for simultaneously building a business and **nurturing** Latino culture

Rueben Martinez is a genius, and he has the grant to prove it. Last year, he became the first bookseller to receive one of those \$500,000 **fellowships** from the MacArthur Foundation that have come to be called "genius grants." The selection committee **lauded** Martinez for "**fusing** the roles of marketplace and community center to inspire appreciation of literature and preserve Latino literary heritage." All of that is certainly true, but that's not why we love Martinez. We love him because he exhibits the **improvisational** flair and **versatility** that is **innate** to master **entrepreneurs**.

Martinez's business, Libreria Martinez Books and Art Galleries, began its life as a small shelf in a barbershop in Santa Ana, Calif. For years, Martinez, a barber and the son of Mexican copper miners, lent copies of books like Juan Rulfo's *El Llano en llamas* to his customers. Eventually, he started selling books by Latino writers. By 1993, the book business had so outgrown its shelf that Martinez decided to put down his shears and turn the shop into a bookstore. He began hosting readings and community events, and Libreria Martinez was soon **thronged** with people. Martinez was fast becoming a leading **advocate** of **literacy** and cultural education in the Latino community. From 1997 until 2001, he partnered with actor Edward James Olmos to establish the Latino Book and Family Festival. It has since become the country's largest Spanish-language book **exposition**, now held regularly in four states. (You've got to love a guy who teams up with Lt. Martin Castillo of *Miami Vice*.)

Martinez, who left the festival to focus on his business, has three stores in California now, including one that focuses on children's books. Combined, they generate nearly \$1 million in annual sales. He would like to have as many as 25 locations by 2012. "The plan is that if a new store meets its goals, we'll open another," he says. And though business is booming, Martinez, who is now 65, still likes to make time to cut hair for some of his longtime customers. "If I cut one or two haircuts a month, I'm in heaven," he says. Of course, while he trims away, he also recommends a couple of good reads.

1. What I Learned	2. What I Already Know
3. What I Infer (about the characters, event, or situation)	

MAIN IDEA ORGANIZER

NAME: _____

Subject

What are you or the author writing about?

SUBJECT

Main Idea

What are you (or the author) saying *about* the subject? (i.e., what is the *point* you or the author want to make?)

MAIN IDEA

DETAIL

DETAIL

DETAIL

- Details
- + Examples
 - + Stories
 - + Quotations
 - + Explanations

DETAIL	DETAIL	DETAIL

EXPOSITORY READING: ROBO-LEGS

By Michael Marriott (*Upfront Magazine*)

New prosthetic limbs are providing increased mobility for many amputees — and blurring the line between humans and machines

5 With his blond hair, buff torso, and megawatt smile, Cameron Clapp is in many ways the quintessential California teenager. There are, however, a few things that set him apart: For starters, this former skater boy is now making his way through life on a pair of shiny, state-of-the-art robotic legs.

"I make it look easy," he says.

10 Clapp, 19, lost both his legs above the knee and his right arm just short of his shoulder after getting hit by a train almost five years ago near his home in Grover Beach, Calif. Following years of rehabilitation and a series of prosthetics, each more technologically advanced than the last, he has become part of a new generation of people who are embracing breakthrough technologies as a means of overcoming their own bodies' limitations.

15 "I do have a lot of motivation and self-esteem," Clapp says, "but I might look at myself differently if technology was not on my side."

The technology he's referring to is the C-Leg. Introduced by Otto Bock HealthCare, a German company that makes advanced prosthetics, the C-Leg combines computer technology with hydraulics. Sensors monitor how the leg is being placed on terrain and microprocessors guide the limb's hydraulic system, enabling it to simulate a natural step. It literally does the walking for the walker. The technology, however, is not cheap; a single C-Leg can cost more than \$40,000.

20 The C-Leg is one of the examples of how blazing advancements, including tiny programmable microprocessors, lightweight composite materials, and keener sensors, are restoring remarkable degrees of mobility to amputees, says William Hanson, president of Liberating Technologies Inc., a Massachusetts company that specializes in developing and distributing advanced prosthetic arms and hands.

Three sets of legs

30 For example, Clapp, who remains very involved in athletics despite his condition, has three different sets of specialized prosthetic legs: one for walking, one for running, and one for swimming. In June, he put all of them to use at the Endeavor Games in Edmond, Okla. — an annual sporting event for athletes with disabilities — where he competed in events like the 200-meter dash and the 50-yard freestyle swim.

Man or Machine?

35 But increased mobility is only part of the story. Something more subtle, and possibly far-reaching, is also occurring: The line that has long separated human beings from the machines that assist them is blurring, as complex technologies become a visible part of the people who depend upon them.

40 Increasingly, amputees, especially young men like Clapp, and soldiers who have lost limbs in Afghanistan and Iraq, are choosing not to hide their prosthetics under clothing as previous generations did. Instead, some of the estimated 1.2 million amputees in the United States — more than two thirds of whom are men — proudly polish and decorate their electronic limbs for all to see.

45 Long an eerie theme in popular science fiction, the integration of humans with machines has often been presented as a harbinger of a soulless future, populated with flesh-and-metal cyborgs like RoboCops and Terminators. But now major universities like Carnegie Mellon and the University of California at Berkeley, as well as private companies and the U.S. military, are all exploring ways in which people can be enhanced by strapping themselves into wearable robotics.

50 "There is a kind of cyborg consciousness, a fluidity at the boundaries of what is flesh and what is machine, that has happened behind our backs," says Sherry Turkle, director of the Initiative on Technology and Self at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, which studies technology's impact on humanity. "The notion that your leg is a machine part and it is exposed, that it is an enhancement, is becoming comfortable in the sense that it can be made a part of you."

55 While some users are eager to display their prosthetic marvels, others like them to appear more human. Besides selling prosthetics, Liberating Technologies, for one, offers 19 kinds of silicone sleeves for artificial limbs to make them seem more natural.

60 "There are two things that are important; one is functionality and the other is cosmetic," says Hanson, the company's president. "Various people weigh those differences differently. There are trade-offs."

65 But many young people, especially those who have been using personal electronics since childhood, are comfortable recharging their limbs' batteries in public and plugging their prosthetics into their computers to adjust the software, Hanson says.

Nick Springer, 20, a student at Eckerd College in St. Petersburg, Fla., who lost his arms and legs to meningitis when he was 14, recalls doing just that at a party when the lithium-ion batteries for his legs went dead.

"I usually get 30 hours out of them before I have to charge them again," he says. "But I didn't charge them up the day before."

70 **Terminator Legs**

When his legs ran out of power, he spent most of his time sitting on a couch talking to people while his legs were plugged into an electrical outlet nearby. According to Springer, no one at the party seemed to care, and his faith in his high-tech appendages appears unfazed. "I love my Terminator legs," he says.

75 Springer also remembers going to see *Star Wars: Episode III — Revenge of the Sith* with his father. While he liked the movie, he found the final scenes — in which Anakin Skywalker loses his arms and legs in a light-saber battle and is rebuilt with fully functional prosthetics to become the infamous Darth Vader — a little far-fetched.

80 "We have a long way to go before we get anything like that," he says. "But look how far humanity has come in the past decade. Who knows? The hardest part is getting the ball rolling. We pretty much got it rolling."

VOCABULARY

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

Definitions on back.

Title: _____

Author: _____

Subject: _____

1. Purpose Question (PQ): Identify the goal

2. Preview: Gather useful information

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

3. Pause and Reflect: List important details and ideas related to your PQ

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

4. PQ: Answer the PQ: What is the *subject* and the author's *main idea* about it?

5. Practice Questions: Create two test questions about the subject, article, or author

1. *Factual*: _____

2. *Inferential*: _____

6. Post: Post a comment or question on the board for class discussion

READING INFORMATION: EXPOSITORY WRITING

Violent Images May Alter Kids' Brain Activity

By Marilyn Elias

5 Media violence may trigger aggression in kids by stimulating brain regions involved in fighting for survival and storing readily recalled traumatic memories, a scientist will report Friday.

10 Functional magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) scans show that violent film clips activate children's brains in a distinctive, potentially violence-promoting pattern, says Kansas State University psychologist John Murray. He will speak at the Society for Research in Child Development meeting in Minneapolis.

The brain scans were done on eight youngsters, ages 8 to 13, as they watched TV for 18 minutes, six minutes each of boxing sequences from *Rocky IV*, non-violent PBS clips and just a blank screen marked with an "X."

15 Compared with MRIs done before the study, and scans taken during non violent scenes, the boxing images evoked much greater activation of three brain regions:

- The amygdala, which registers emotional arousal and detects threats to survival.
- The premotor cortex, an area believed to rev up when a person thinks about responding to a threat.
- 20 • The posterior cingulate, reserved for storing long-term memory of important, often troubling events. For instance, this area activates when Vietnam combat veterans and rape victims recall their trauma.

25 Although children may consciously know violence on the screen isn't real, their brains are treating it as real, the gospel truth," Murray says. There is no proof this brain activation will spur aggression, "but it does give us great reason for concern."

Flashbacks readily occur after post-traumatic stress; images of on-screen aggression also may recur and influence kids, he says.

30 One Yale University study showed a delayed effect a few days after youngsters watched aggressive TV spots. When prompted with cues similar to those in the TV scene, they, too, behaved aggressively.

But Murray's study "is way too small to make a for the brain-aggression link, says Yale psychologist Dorothy Singer, an expert on how TV affects children. "It's very important stuff, but we need larger numbers."

35 And kids' TV viewing habits don't promote belligerent behavior nearly as much as exposure to real violence and parents' failure to monitor their youngsters' activities, a recent study of 2,245 students showed.

Still, "if your child is watching lots of TV, then you have reason to be concerned," says Mark Singer of Case Western Reserve University in Cleveland. "Many, many studies show it isn't healthy."

PREDICT

- What do you think this text is about based on what you know about this subject, author, or text?

CLARIFY

- Which words, phrases, diagrams, or graphics do you find confusing? Why are they confusing?

QUESTION

- What questions should we ask and be able to understand about this text to show we understand it?

SUMMARIZE

- What are the most important points or events in this text? (Include details from the text that offer support)

RESPOND

- What is the author's attitude toward the subject of this text?
- What biases or beliefs does the author have about the world or this subject?
- What do you think of the author's perspective on the subject?
- What would other people think about

Summary Notes

BEFORE

- 1. Determine your purpose.
- 2. Preview the document.
- 3. Prepare to take notes.

DURING

- 4. Take notes to help you answer these questions:
 - Who is involved?
 - What events, ideas, or people does the author emphasize?
 - What are the causes?
 - What are the consequences or implications?
- 5. Establish criteria to determine what is important enough to include in the summary.
- 6. Evaluate information as you read to determine if it meets your criteria for importance.

AFTER

- 7. Write your summary, which should:
 - Identify the title, author, and topic in the first sentence.
 - State the main idea in the second sentence.
 - Be shorter than the original article
 - Begin with a sentence that states the topic (see sample).
 - Include a second sentence that states the author's main idea.
 - Include 3–5 sentences in which you explain—in your own words—the author's point of view.
 - Include one or two interesting quotations or details.
 - Maintain the author's meaning
 - Organize the ideas in the order in which they appear in the article.
 - Use transitions such as “according to” and the author's name to show that you are summarizing someone else's ideas.
 - Include enough information so that someone who has not read the article will understand the ideas.

Sample verbs:

 The author:

- | | |
|--------------|--------------|
| • argues | • focuses on |
| • asserts | • implies |
| • concludes | • mentions |
| • considers | • notes |
| • discusses | • points out |
| • emphasizes | • says |
| • examines | • states |
| • explores | • suggests |

Sample summary written by a student

In “Surviving a Year of Sleepless Nights,” Jenny Hung discusses *success and how it may not be so good*. Hung points out that *having fun is better than having success and glory*. Jenny Hung survived a painful year because of having too many honors classes, getting straight A’s, and having a GPA of 4.43. Why would any of this be bad? It’s because she wasn’t happy. She describes working so hard for something she didn’t really want. At one point she says, “There was even a month in winter when I was so self-conscious of my raccoon eyes that I wore sunglasses to school.” She says she often stayed up late doing work and studying for tests for her classes. After what she had been through, she decided that it was not her life and chose her classes carefully once sophomore year came around.

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Test-Maker Tool

Book Title

Vocabulary

Sample Words: valiant, pessimistic, legitimate, persevere, bureaucratic, memoir

- Word
- Defined
- Explained

- Challenging
- Relevant
- Unimportant

Sample Question: which of the following best defines _____ as it is used in this sentence...

Factual

Question & Answer

Example: How long did the Wright brothers' first plane stay in the air?

- Find the answer *in the text*.

- Important
- Useful
- Irrelevant

Analytical

Question & Answer

Example: How—and why—does the character change by the end of the story? Provide examples.

- Find the answer *between the lines*.

- Insightful
- Useful
- Unimportant

Essay

Question & Response

Example: Agree or disagree: Socrates was guilty. Support your claim with specific examples from

the readings.

- Write one paragraph.
- Establish main idea for the paragraph.
- Develop your paragraph with supporting details/examples.
- Make sure your writing flows from one idea to the next.

- Challenging
- Interesting
- Superficial

Academic Essential: Testing

What It Is Testing dominates the curriculum more than ever. Tests are just one more type of text students must be able to read and make sense of if they are to succeed at school and in the workplace. Tests, like poems and editorials, come equipped with their own conventions and components; successful students learn to see and make sense of those components, while others drive past these helpful signs like oblivious drivers who just want to get home as quickly as possible. When I speak of “teaching test-taking,” however, I mean teaching students how to read them, how to take them.

Why Use It Students come to school with general skills but not the specific abilities needed to succeed on tests. Teaching test-taking means investing in the skills the students need to succeed not only in that teacher’s class but other classes, and state and national tests, also. It is important to teach these skills because otherwise those students who struggle would be at a distinct disadvantage when it comes to college entrance exams and those exams common to the workplace which one must take to advance.

When to Use It

While it would be nice to help kids learn how to take such tests *during* the test, that would defeat the purpose of the tests; thus teachers have the period of time before and after the test to prepare and debrief. Before, teachers can provide sample types of questions and rehearse with possible prompts that might appear (in some variation) on the test. After the test, have students reflect on how they prepared and which techniques helped them understand and remember best; discuss these by way of helping them better understand *why* these techniques were (or were not) effective. Also, discuss which questions or portions of the test stumped them. Put such questions up on the overhead to examine the language and components of the test in order to demystify testing. *After* students have taken the test they are primed to learn best as they can compare what they did with *how* they did.

How to Do It

Here are a few useful methods to use when teaching students to read and take tests:

- Make copies of all review materials (e.g., study guides, blank maps, practice tests) so they can rehearse with blank pages that emulate the conditions of the test.
- Create sample test questions as you go (see Test Creator handout) in order to learn more about the types of questions and the different elements they use to “trick” students.
- Put sample test questions on the overhead and do them, first, on their own, then, as a group, discussing what they answered and how they arrived at that answer.
- Discuss the process of studying and learning (as opposed to test-taking) by way of teaching students how to *prepare* for the test; *during* the test, students may use those test-taking techniques learned earlier.
- Teach them basic test-taking strategies: elimination; do the ones you know first; use details from one question to answer other questions; answer questions before looking at the answers; and “check (the question again) before choosing (the answer).”
- Teach them various techniques for remembering and understanding material: study cards, mnemonic strategies, study buddies, and others. Have a discussion about how others prepare and why that helps.
- Discuss testing strategies in general but also techniques that would help on the specific kinds of tests (multiple choice, matching, essay, short answer, fill-in, etc.)
- Teach them about the difference between understanding and remembering; then give them specific techniques to do both, but emphasize that understanding is deeper, more “sticky.”
- Teach them to recognize and answer the different types of questions: factual, interpretive, inferential, and personal (opinion).

READING ARGUMENTS

“Could It Be that Video Games Are Good for Kids?”

By Steven Johnson

Los Angeles Times 27 July, 2005

5 Dear Sen. Clinton:

I'm writing to commend you for calling for a \$90-million study on the effects of video games on children, and in particular the courageous stand you have taken in recent weeks against the notorious "Grand Theft Auto" series.

10 I'd like to draw your attention to another game whose nonstop violence and hostility has captured the attention of millions of kids — a game that instills aggressive thoughts in the minds of its players, some of whom have gone on to commit real-world acts of violence and sexual assault after playing.

I'm talking, of course, about high school football.

15 I know a congressional investigation into football won't play so well with those crucial swing voters, but it makes about as much sense as an investigation into the pressing issue that is Xbox and PlayStation 2.

Your current concern is over explicit sex in "Grand Theft Auto: San Andreas." Yet there's not much to investigate, is there? It should get rated appropriately, and that's that. But there's more to
20 your proposed study: You want to examine how video games shape children's values and cognitive development.

Kids have always played games. A hundred years ago they were playing stickball and kick the can; now they're playing "World of Warcraft," "Halo 2" and "Madden 2005." And parents have to drag their kids away from the games to get them to do their algebra homework, but parents
25 have been dragging kids away from whatever the kids were into since the dawn of civilization.

So any sensible investigation into video games must ask the "compared to what" question. If the alternative to playing "Halo 2" is reading "The Portrait of a Lady," then of course "The Portrait of a Lady" is better for you. But it's not as though kids have been reading Henry James for 100 years and then suddenly dropped him for Pokemon.

30 Another key question: Of all the games that kids play, which ones require the most mental exertion? Parents can play this at home: Try a few rounds of Monopoly or Go Fish with your kids, and see who wins. I suspect most families will find that it's a relatively even match. Then sit down and try to play "Halo 2" with the kids. You'll be lucky if you survive 10 minutes.

The great secret of today's video games that has been lost in the moral panic over "Grand Theft
35 Auto" is how difficult the games have become. That difficulty is not merely a question of hand-eye coordination; most of today's games force kids to learn complex rule systems, master challenging new interfaces, follow dozens of shifting variables in real time and prioritize

READING ARGUMENTS

between multiple objectives.

40 In short, precisely the sorts of skills that they're going to need in the digital workplace of tomorrow.

Consider this one fascinating trend among teenagers: They're spending less time watching professional sports and more time simulating those sports on Xbox or PlayStation. Now, which activity challenges the mind more — sitting around rooting for the Packers, or managing an entire football franchise through a season of "Madden 2005": calling plays, setting lineups, 45 trading players and negotiating contracts? Which challenges the mind more — zoning out to the lives of fictional characters on a televised soap opera, or actively managing the lives of dozens of virtual characters in a game such as "The Sims"?

On to the issue of aggression, and what causes it in kids, especially teenage boys. Congress should be interested in the facts: The last 10 years have seen the release of many popular violent 50 games, including "Quake" and "Grand Theft Auto"; that period has also seen the most dramatic drop in violent crime in recent memory. According to Duke University's Child Well-Being Index, today's kids are less violent than kids have been at any time since the study began in 1975. Perhaps, Sen. Clinton, your investigation should explore the theory that violent games function as a safety valve, letting children explore their natural aggression without acting it out in the real 55 world.

Many juvenile crimes — such as the carjacking that is so central to "Grand Theft Auto" — are conventionally described as "thrill-seeking" crimes. Isn't it possible that kids no longer need real-world environments to get those thrills, now that the games simulate them so vividly? The national carjacking rate has dropped substantially since "Grand Theft Auto" came out. Isn't it 60 conceivable that the would-be carjackers are now getting their thrills on the screen instead of the street?

Crime statistics are not the only sign that today's gaming generation is doing much better than the generation raised during the last cultural panic — over rock 'n' roll. Math SAT scores have never been higher; verbal scores have been climbing steadily for the last five years; nearly every 65 indicator in the Department of Education study known as the Nation's Report Card is higher now than when the study was implemented in 1971.

By almost every measure, the kids are all right.

Of course, I admit that there's one charge against video games that is a slam dunk. Kids don't get physical exercise when they play a video game, and indeed the rise in obesity among younger 70 people is a serious issue. But, of course, you don't get exercise from doing homework either.

ARGUMENT ORGANIZER

NAME: _____

Claim

What is the main point you will argue?

CLAIM

Reason

Why should readers accept your claim?

REASON

EVIDENCE

EVIDENCE

EVIDENCE

- Evidence**
- Facts
 - Figures
 - Statistics
 - Observations

EVIDENCE	EVIDENCE	EVIDENCE

Acknowledge & Respond
to other perspectives on the subject

ACKNOWLEDGE

RESPOND

ACKNOWLEDGE	RESPOND

Rhetorical Notes

Name: _____

Date: _____ **Period:** _____

<p>What is the subject?</p>	
<p>What is the author’s claim or main idea about this subject?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Name • Author • Genre • Title • Date • Rhetorical Verb <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Argues</i> • <i>Claims</i> • <i>Suggests</i> • Or similar verbs 	<p>(Write it as a statement using the guidelines listed to the left)</p>
<p>List three key points (quotations or examples) the author makes to illustrate and/or support this claim.</p>	
<p>How does the author develop and support this claim? Focus on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategies • Devices • Organization 	
<p>What is the author’s purpose? <i>The author attempts to persuade the reader to...in order to...</i></p>	
<p>Summarize the author’s argument, focusing on the subject, purpose, and rhetorical strategies used to achieve that purpose.</p>	
<p style="text-align: right;">Continue on the back →</p>	

Week of:							
Pages	Days of the Week					Total Pages:	Daily Average: Title(s)
	M	T	W	Th	Fri		
20							
15							
10							
5							
0							

1. Weekly Reflection

- What did you do well as a reader? _____
- What was difficult for you—and why? _____
- Strategies you used? _____

2. Factual Question (AKA "Right There" Question)

Question

Importance

Answer (Include page number)

3. Inferential Question (AKA "Author and You" or "Think and Search" Question)

Question

Importance

Answer

4. Essay Question (Based on the text you read this week)

Question

Importance

5. Vocabulary Words (Based on the text you read this week)

Word	Definition (<i>in your own words</i> but based on dictionary entry)
1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	

1:	2:	3:	4:	5:	Total:
-----------	-----------	-----------	-----------	-----------	---------------



MySpace.com article

The siren call of myspace.com

Do you MySpace? A growing number of South Sound teens use the Web site to express themselves and meet friends, but some adults worry about their sharing personal information.

By DEBBY ABE

The News Tribune

Eighteen-year-old Aaron VanMeer's daily routine goes something like this: Get home from school, grab a snack and slide in front of the family computer for his daily fix.

He's just gotta log on to MySpace.com, the Web site where millions of teens and young adults gather to socialize.

For an hour - OK, maybe three or four sometimes - the Puyallup High School senior sends messages to some of the 149 friends listed on his site, tinkers with his site profile and surfs through other MySpace pages.

"This Web site is pretty important to me and my friends' social lives. . . . It's an unphysical way of hanging out," he said. "It's probably the first and last thing I do each and every night."

MySpace.com, along with similar sites, has exploded into a social necessity for more and more young people in the South Sound and across the country.

The free site allows members to create a personal Web page, called a profile, describing themselves and their interests.

Users can send e-mail and instant messages, and post music samples, snapshots and blogs by themselves and friends.

They can download music, talk to local and national band members, meet people and join online groups to ramble about topics as diverse as scrapbooking, music from the '90s or surviving cancer.

Yet for all the enthusiasm the site generates, it's also raising concerns among some parents and causing headaches for schools.

Parents wonder about the safety and content of the site, where tech-savvy kids spend hours each day communicating in the anonymity of cyberspace.

"The fact you don't know who you're meeting on there is kind of scary," said Bonney Lake resident Kim Halter, whose 14-year-old son recently joined MySpace. "It makes him happy, so I hate to just cut him off. I do watch him and limit the time he's on there."

Meanwhile, high schools are starting to see spillover effects from the site now that such a mass of teens has a forum to communicate with electronic speed.

"www.MySpace.com has hit schools with a vengeance," said Jim Boyce, dean of student affairs at White River High School in Buckley. "We have seen a very negative impact with MySpace.com as students from our school and others use it for negative purposes

such as threats, harassment and malicious gossip."

Massive popularity

Launched in January 2004, MySpace.com counts more than 46 million members. In November, an Internet measurement service found MySpace was the third-most-viewed site on the Internet in terms of total page views, outranking Google and eBay.

The site is open to anyone 14 or older, and advertisers use the site to reach 16- to 34-year-olds, according to information forwarded by Rena Grant with Edelman public relations firm for MySpace.

VanMeer, the high school senior, speculates most students at Puyallup High have a MySpace account. A quick search on the site found more than 900 users who say they attend the 1,650-student school.

Samantha Smith, a 15-year-old Curtis High School sophomore in University Place, says one of the most commonly asked questions when meeting another teen these days is "Do you have a MySpace?"

"Most of my friends at school are on it," she said.

If anything, users say one of the site's biggest downsides is too much MySpace.



“It pretty much is ruining my life because I’m constantly checking on it at work, at home, you name it,” said Travis Noble, 19, a Pierce College student who estimates he spends up to six hours a day on the site. “It’s such a time-waster. You spend your time on there instead of doing things you should be doing.”

University of Washington sociology professor and author Pepper Schwartz sees MySpace and similar social networking sites as a means to connect people in new ways and to maintain less intense relationships across distance and time.

It also feeds peoples’ desires to be a star.

“This allows you to be on the Web and to have your own page,” she said. “People like to read about their friends, their hobbies. We’re interested in ourselves and others.”

MySpace pages are as unique as each individual. Some feature girls’ dreams of the perfect date, photos of favorite actors and screen backgrounds decorated with hearts.

Others include photos of 16-year-olds mugging next to half-empty bottles of beer. Raunchier profiles ooze lewd and profane language and display snapshots of barely clothed women.

All sites contain thumbnail photos of virtual “friends” - MySpace users who’ve requested or been asked to join the member’s friends list, enabling them to exchange e-mail and post messages on each others’ sites.

Not all users are enamored with the site.

Travis Collett, 17, occasionally uses his MySpace account, but he said, “Most of the people in advanced placement classes (at Tacoma’s Wilson High School) don’t have them. A lot of them think it’s ridiculous, it’s an attention-getter. I think it’s a teenage girl thing.”

Schools, parents worry

Parent concerns have grown amid national media reports of problems at schools over information posted on MySpace sites or isolated cases of men assaulting or starting sexual relationships with underage girls they’ve met through the site.

In Graham, Claudia Chapman limits her 15-year-old daughter, Dani Clark, to chatting with known friends. Dani also must give Chapman her password, let her mom check her site profile and sit at the computer when the teen chats online.

“I’ve heard so much bad stuff about MySpace,” Chapman said. “Predators . . . can come in and act like a high schooler. Unless we know who they are, there’s blocked access to her. I don’t want her to become a statistic.”

Dani says her friends would flip out if their parents were as strict, but she doesn’t mind.

“I understand my mom’s trying to watch out for me,” the Graham Kapowsin High sophomore said. “That’s the one thing my mom and I can do, is play on the computer.”

The Washington State Patrol’s Missing and Exploited Children

Task Force began working on its first MySpace case a couple of weeks ago by posing as a teenager with a site, said Detective Sgt. Dan Sharp, who supervises the task force.

“We’ve noticed how the language and chatting in there is very sexual in nature,” Sharp said. “Then we received a profile of an adult advertising himself as being over the age of 18, and his language was sexual in nature.”

Preteens and adults alike should remember that personal information they post and discuss on MySpace can go to anyone on the Internet, including predators or pornographers, Sharp said.

He advises against placing a name, age, address, school, personal photo or other identifying information anywhere on the Web.

When a News Tribune reporter asked MySpace.com about safety concerns, the company’s public relations firm referred to the site’s safety tips area and provided a news release about its partnership with wired-safety.org to create a safer site.

MySpace.com lists extensive safety tips, and the news release said the site has algorithms, specially designed software and staff to monitor the site for rule violators and underage users.

“If we find out a user is under 14, we will delete his or her profile,” the safety tips say.

The list tells parents how to remove information from their child’s site or delete the profile altogether. MySpace profiles also



can be set so that users must approve who can view their site and send them e-mail.

Many teen users say they take care to avoid problems.

Jill Nguyen, an 18-year-old Foss High School senior, says she made up some of her profile details both as a joke and to keep from giving out too much personal information. She uses the site to communicate with friends, not meet new people.

“I don’t think it’s that dangerous,” she said of MySpace, “but you should always be cautious.”

Difficult to police

Aside from attracting predators, My Space, like any type of online communication, can lead to misunderstandings and become a technological monster.

Although most schools attempt to block the site from appearing on school computers, students often find ways to enter.

Mount Tahoma High commercial design teacher Lisa-Marie McDonald said students constantly try to sneak onto MySpace on one of the 30 computers in her room. Sometimes, they’re successful.

If she catches them on the site twice, she bans them from her class computers for the rest of the quarter.

“It’s the hugest problem I have,” McDonald said.

Meanwhile, at White River High, administrators have intervened to prevent disagreements over what’s written on MySpace blogs from

escalating into something serious, said Boyce, the dean of student affairs.

“Put yourself in a teenager’s shoes. Someone writes in and says ‘Jim Boyce is blah blah blah.’ You’d write in and say ‘no he isn’t.’ Another person would say ‘you shut up.’ That would happen at a school in the course of a day, but it doesn’t have the speed of the Internet.”

At Curtis High in University Place, administrators have asked students to remove two inappropriate photos posted on MySpace profiles in the past year, said associate principal David Hammond.

In one case, three cheerleaders wearing their Curtis outfits were photographed playfully spanking the backside of a fourth uniformed cheerleader, who was bent over to receive the swats.

In the other case, a boy took a camera-phone photo of a teacher, and posted the picture and inappropriate comments about the teacher on his MySpace site, Hammond said.

While schools generally can’t dictate what content students put on personal sites outside school, Hammond said they can impose discipline if the content leads to threats or violence at school.

With the less-serious Curtis cases, administrators talked with the students and their parents, and the students voluntarily removed the photos, he said.

Despite the concerns about MySpace and similar sites, neither the school administrators nor

Detective Sharp suggest banning teens from using MySpace.

Instead, they say young users need to learn about Internet hazards and parents need to monitor their computer use.

“I’m confident with some education, kids will do just fine,” Boyce said. “It’s up to parents and educators to help them become aware.”



Name: _____ Period: _____ Date: _____



Conversational Roundtable

Topic: _____

DIRECTIONS

Ask yourself what the focus of your paper, discussion, or inquiry is. Is it a character, a theme, an idea, a trend, or a place? Then examine it from four different perspectives, or identify four different aspects of the topic. Once you have identified the four areas, find and list any appropriate quotations, examples, evidence, or details.

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What do you consider the most pressing issue facing your generation?

- **Generate** a list of issues that worry your generation the most
- **Rank** the top three
- **Choose** the *most* pressing issue facing your generation
- **Explain** why that is the most pressing (i.e., urgent, important, troubling) issue facing your generation. Provide examples and explain, please.
- **Choose** from the following list the **most** pressing issue facing your generation, then explain your choice.
 - Anti-immigrant sentiment
 - Family breakdown
 - Global Warming
 - Local violence
 - Other
 - Poverty
 - War

Polling California's youth

A key question from the poll by New America Media:

What do you consider the most pressing issue facing your generation?



Note: Respondents were given multiple choices to answer each question and could choose only one.

Source: "California Dreamers," New America Media, April, 2007.

Directions

1. Skim the article in *two minutes* and write down *three* key ideas.
2. Use the title as a purpose question (PQ); this is what you are reading to understand.
3. Read the article, underlining key details related to your PQ.
4. Retell (summarize) what the article says about the PQ.
5. Respond to the article by writing your own opinion about what it says.
6. Relate: What connections can you make to other articles we have been reading lately?
7. Post a discussion question (DQ) on the board for us to use and consider.
8. Participate in the discussion, using your excellent questions to guide us.

WHAT'S ON THE MINDS OF YOUTH

Ilene Lelchuk, Amr Emam, *Chronicle* Staff Writers
Wednesday, April 25, 2007

Family disintegration and neighborhood violence are more distressing to California's teens and young adults than global warming or war, according to a new poll that aimed to take the pulse of Generation Next.

The survey of 600 California residents ages 16 to 22 commissioned by New America Media is one of the first to track down youths -- notoriously difficult survey targets -- solely by cell phone. It found that they are inwardly focused -- on their future marriages, parenthood, homeownership, education and communities.

Asked what they consider the most pressing issue facing their generation, 24 percent of those surveyed last fall said "family breakdown," 22 percent cited neighborhood violence, 17 percent named poverty and 14 percent named global warming. Just 3 percent cited war and violence throughout the world.

"This is a segment of the population that we think of as growing up to be like us. But in truth, they are who we're becoming," said Sandy Close, executive director of New America Media. Her Bay Area-based association of more than 700 ethnic media outlets nationwide also includes youth publications and Web logs.

In interviews Tuesday, young people who responded to the survey expressed more complex concerns than those captured by pollsters.

"The biggest challenge that faces my generation is for people to do the right thing," said Eric Beltran, a 19-year-old warehouse worker who lives in Livermore. "Most people take the wrong path. This happens because people get influenced by other people. That's why they end up taking drugs, selling drugs, robbing and even killing people."

"What jumped out at me in this poll," Close said, "is this yearning for traditional support structures. It's the ways people connect to each other, like family, like parenthood, like religion. I've found over the years their deepest fear is winding up alone."

Family psychotherapist and author Isolina Ricci of Tiburon, who specializes in guiding parents and children through divorce, was not surprised that family disintegration was a top concern

considering that divorce, remarriage, cohabitation, domestic violence and addiction affect many modern families at some point.

"It also may be that some young people are concerned about the fast pace of life, that it is bleeding away opportunities for closeness," Ricci said. "There is hardly any family time."

It's not all bad. Nationally, the divorce rate is leveling off, and 67 percent of children younger than 18 live with married parents or stepparents. The survey reflects those happier realities: 89 percent of the respondents said they were very or somewhat likely to get married or have a life partner and have children some day.

"Marriage is a good thing," said survey respondent Edmond Ho, 21, a student in San Diego. "But with the very high rate of divorce these days, it is turning into a very bad thing. I think people need to know each other better before they get married."

When the poll results were broken down by race, they showed that African American and Latino youths were more worried about community violence than family problems.

"It all depends on who you are talking to," said Gwendolyn Smith with Literacy for Environmental Justice, a youth empowerment and environmental health group working with urban school kids in San Francisco's Bayview-Hunters Point, where about one-third of the city's African Americans live.

"Here we are talking about low-income kids, and they have bigger issues (than global warming) - such as eating every day, being shot up, harassed by cops, toxic waste dumps," Smith said.

Nearly half the survey respondents were immigrants or the children of immigrants. About 37 percent of the youth polled identified as Latino, 37 percent white, 10 percent Asian, 5 percent African American and 1 percent American Indian.

Even though global warming wasn't a top concern of today's young Californians, Denis Hayes, who coordinated the first Earth Day in 1970, said he was pleased the problem at least made it into their top four. The environmental movement needs them, he said. Historically, young people have led the most sweeping social changes, he said.

"But my impression is, by and large this tends to be a generation that is distrustful of politics and, much more likely than my generation, will go out and pitch in and build a house for Habitat for Humanity or build a park for Earth Day than work for the passage of a Clean Air act or for a politician," said Hayes, who now works with an organization in Seattle dedicated to renewable energy. "They tend to be really focused on the things that they can do that have an immediate consequence. It's a wonderful thing, but we also have some national issues that need to be resolved."

Poll respondent Melissa Redmond, 20, of Kensington, who attends Contra Costa College, said she really cares about global warming as well as the war in Iraq. "But things seem to be heading for the worst. It is very depressing."

New America Media's poll mirrors findings of other youth polls, including a survey by the Pew Research Center for the People & the Press released earlier this year that found 18- to 25-year-olds were generally happy with their lives and optimistic about their futures. Both Pew and New America Media conducted their surveys last fall.

The survey results being released today found that, despite California's high housing prices and growing college tuition costs, young people believe they'll go to college and have a higher standard of living than their parents.

"I do not think my generation faces any challenges. Nothing is impossible," said Chris Chong, 19, a student at East Los Angeles College who answered the survey. "If you choose to overcome any difficulty, you will do it."

"I think I will be richer than my parents because I have a better job. I grew up in the States and I have more benefits," said Beltran, whose mother grew up in Mexico.

Young people have very modern views on diversity, Close said. Just 1 percent listed racism or discrimination as the most pressing issue facing their generation. More than half the white and Asian youths, and just under half of the Latino and African American respondents said most of their friends are a different race or ethnicity. And 87 percent of all respondents said they would marry or enter a life partnership with someone of a different race.

The Concerns of California Youths

What do you think causes young people like you the most stress?

School, 33 percent; money, 22 percent; personal relationships, 12 percent; peer pressure, 11 percent; parents, 6 percent; drugs or alcohol, 5 percent; loneliness, 2 percent; work, 2 percent; other, 7 percent.

Which of these is the most important characteristic that defines your identity?

Race or ethnicity, 29 percent; music or fashion preference, 27 percent; religion, 16 percent; personality, 10 percent; sexual orientation, 3 percent; intelligence or education, 2 percent; family or friends, 1 percent; other, 3 percent.

Note: Respondents were given multiple choices to answer each question and could choose only one.

Source: "California Dreamers," New America Media

E-mail the writers at ilelchuk@sfchronicle.com and aemam@sfchronicle.com.

<http://sfgate.com/cgi-bin/article.cgi?f=/c/a/2007/04/25/MNGELPF0E71.DTL>

 **Discussion Cards** **Before the Discussion**

1. Complete the assigned reading (in or outside of class) and any related assignments.
2. On a 3 x 5 card, generate one discussion question that everyone would be able to respond to—even if they did not complete the assigned reading—but that connects to the text in a meaningful way.

Example: How is it that one very small group can dominate another group that is ten times larger?

On some level, does the dominated group have to give control to the controlling group?

(This question relates to South Africa; *Cry, the Beloved Country*; and *Lord of the Flies*.)

3. Write your response thoughts on the back of the card.
4. Form groups of 4 to 8 participants, keeping your discussion cards in hand.

 **During the Discussion**

5. In the new group, do a read-around of all the questions. Do not read the responses—just the question each person wrote down.
6. Choose two or three questions the group feels are especially useful (i.e., would ensure productive, meaningful discussion).
7. Appoint someone in the group to take notes (keep a record of your group's ideas) during the discussion. Put everyone's name at the top of this paper.
8. Discuss those questions, connecting when possible to the text you have been reading.
9. Choose *one* question from your two or three questions to offer to the full class for follow-up discussion. This should be your group's best question, the one that will yield the best thinking and discussion from the full class.
10. As a class, read aloud the final questions from each group.
11. Engage in a full class discussion, beginning with one of those questions.
12. Connect the discussion to the text.
13. Ask if there are other ways to interpret a passage or see an event.

 **After the Discussion**

14. Using your notes and new ideas from the class discussion, write a well-organized paragraph in which you summarize and respond to the text and the discussion.
15. Turn in all notes and evidence of your work.

“Snow,” from *How the Garcia Girl Lost Their Accents* by Julia Alvarez

Our first year in New York we rented a small apartment with a Catholic school nearby, taught by the Sisters of Charity, hefty women in long black gowns and bonnets that made them look peculiar, like dolls in mourning. I liked them a lot, especially my grandmotherly fourth grade teacher, Sister Zoe. I had a lovely name, she said, and she had me teach the whole class how to pronounce it. *Yo-lan-da*. As the only immigrant in class, I was put in a special seat in the first row by the window, apart from the other children so that Sister Zoe could tutor me without disturbing them. Slowly, she enunciated the new words I was to repeat: *laundromat, cornflakes, subway, snow*.

Soon I picked up enough English to understand holocaust was in the air. Sister Zoe explained to a wide-eyed classroom what was happening in Cuba. Russian missiles were being assembled, trained supposedly on New York City. President Kennedy, looking worried too, was on the television at home, explaining we might have to go to war against the Communists. At school, we had air-raid drills: an ominous bell would go off and we'd file into the hall, fall to the floor, cover our heads with our coats, and imagine our hair falling out, the bones in our arms going soft. At home, Mami and my sisters and I said a rosary for world peace. I heard new vocabulary: nuclear bomb, radioactive fallout, bomb shelter. Sister Zoe explained how it would happen. She drew a picture of a mushroom on the blackboard and dotted a flurry of chalkmarks for the dusty fallout that would kill us all.

The months grew cold, November, December. It was dark when I got up in the morning, frosty when I followed my breath to school. One morning as I sat at my desk daydreaming out the window, I saw dots in the air like the ones Sister Zoe had drawn—random at first, then lots and lots. I shrieked, "Bomb! Bomb!" Sister Zoe jerked around, her full black skirt ballooning as she hurried to my side. A few girls began to cry.

But then Sister Zoe's shocked look faded. "Why, Yolanda dear, that's snow!" She laughed. "Snow."

"Snow," I repeated. I looked out the window warily. All my life I had heard about the white crystals that fell out of American skies in the winter. From my desk I watched the fine powder dust the sidewalk and parked cars below. Each flake was different, Sister Zoe said, like a person, irreplaceable and beautiful.

Character Arc

Name: _____ Period: _____ Date: _____

DIRECTIONS Characters change over the course of a story; at least the important characters do. But *how* do they change—and *why*? We should also ask *which*, of all the different changes, is most important—and, of course, *why* it is so important. Use this tool (and these questions) to analyze how the character changes over the course of the story. You should also identify key moments (by indicating them on the arc) that caused the changes along the way.

PART ONE: ANALYZE

Beginning

Adjectives or Nouns

Adjectives or Nouns

End

PART TWO: SYNTHESIZE

DIRECTIONS Use your notes and ideas from Part One to help you write a paragraph in which you synthesize the character's changes and the causes and significance of those changes. Be sure your paragraph has a claim, organizes the information effectively, and provides specific examples that illustrate and support your claim.

Name: _____ Period: _____ Date: _____

Character Study

DIRECTIONS Choose one of the central characters in the assigned chapter or act. Answer the following questions as you read. Use these details to write a well-organized paragraph that begins with a claim about your character in this chapter/act.

Character's Name: _____ **Chapter/Act:** _____

Background Knowledge

What do you already know about this character?	Why is this detail important?
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Plot Details and Character Motivation

What are the key actions for your character?	Why does your character do each of these acts?
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Character's Perspective on Self and Others

How does your character feel about these events, other characters, and himself or herself?	Why does your character feel this way?
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Others' Perspective on Character

What do others think about your character, and how do their perceptions affect their actions?	Why do they have these thoughts about your character or act as they do in response?
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Plot Details: What Changes, and How and Why It Matters

What effect does your character have on the plot as a result of his or her actions in this chapter/act?	Why are these changes important, and how will they affect the rest of the story?
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Character Development: Does your character change by the end of the chapter/act? How? Why? *Write a well-organized paragraph on the back.*

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Reflective Reading Quiz

1. Generate **five** words that best describe _____ in _____ .
These should be words that capture not just what he does but why he does it; what he is like; and how he acts, thinks, and feels.
 2. Evaluate those five words and choose the **one** word that best describes _____ in _____ .
 3. Generate a claim in which you apply that word to _____ , explaining why this is the **best** word and providing examples from the text to illustrate and support what you say. Be sure to show how this word applies not only to what _____ is like but also to what he does (i.e., key actions or events) in _____ .
 4. Turn in your paragraph.
-
5. Get into groups, and using the words you generated for the quiz, begin a discussion about _____ .
 6. Evaluate all the different words people finally chose for their one word on the quiz. Then choose the **one** word your group will offer to the class as the single best word to describe _____ .
 7. Enter into a full class discussion guided by these words from step 6.

Core Skills

ASK QUESTIONS

- Who is involved?
- What are they doing? (Why?)
- What do they want very badly? (Why?)
- What is the situation or problem?
- Who is telling the story? (Why?)
- How is the story designed? (Why?)
- What is the source of tension?
- Can you trust the narrator?

MAKE CONNECTIONS

- I wonder why . . .
- What caused . . .
- I think . . .
- This is similar to . . .
- This is important because . . .
- This reminds me of . . .
- What I find confusing is . . .
- What will happen next is . . .
- I can relate to this because . . .

PREDICT

- What will happen next?
- Why do you think that?
- What effect will that have on the story or the characters?

SUMMARIZE

- What happened?
- What is essential to tell?
- What was the outcome?
- Who was involved?
- Why did this happen?
- Is that a detail or essential information?

STANDARDS/TEST CONNECTION

- The best word to describe the tone is . . .
- What device does the author use to . . .
- The writer organizes information: sequentially, spatially, comparatively . . .
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- This means that . . .

Core Skills

ASK QUESTIONS

- Who is involved?
- What are they doing? (Why?)
- What do they want very badly? (Why?)
- What is the situation or problem?
- Who is telling the story? (Why?)
- How is the story designed? (Why?)
- What is the source of tension?
- Can you trust the narrator?

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- I can relate to this because . . .

PREDICT

- What will happen next?
- Why do you think that?
- What effect will that have on the story or the characters?

SUMMARIZE

- What happened?
- What is essential to tell?
- What was the outcome?
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- Why did this happen?
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Teaching Note-Taking Skills: Overview

What It Is

Note taking includes a range of formats and functions. In short, it means reading, writing, listening, viewing, or observing with a pencil in hand so students can capture their thoughts and prepare for subsequent writing assignments, discussions, or exams. Note taking includes graphic formats and marginal comments, as well as more traditional methods like outlines, lists, and Cornell Notes. Highlighting and underlining are not the same as taking notes; while readers “take note” of some idea or change when they highlight, they are not thoroughly processing the information the way they would if they annotated the same passage.

Why Use It

Taking notes demands that the students interact with the material and process it, making connections, evaluating importance, and organizing ideas into patterns that will not only prepare them for subsequent assignments but help them achieve deeper understanding of the material. Taking notes gives the students purpose and a process that ideally allows the students to use their own cognitive style and talents.

When to Use It

Have students take notes whenever they must make sense of and remember (so that they can later use) whatever they read, watch, hear, or observe. When students give presentations in class, they pay better attention (and behave better) when they have to take notes on each student’s presentation; it also improves their listening skills, which are essential for success in college and the workplace.

How to Do It

The four formats listed below offer a range of styles. Which one students use depends on their purpose and preferences.

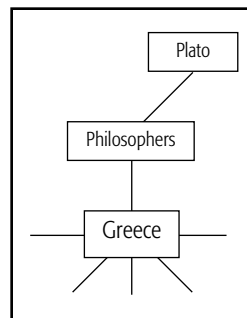
Q Notes

<p>Question Who was Plato?</p>	<p>Answers •Philosopher who wrote... •Student of Socrates</p>
---	--

Outline Notes

<p>1. Greece a. Philosophers</p>

Cluster Notes



da Vinci Notes



See the companion page, “Making Effective and Efficient Notes,” for more suggestions.

Consider these additional techniques for teaching and using note taking in your class:

- Model on the overhead (or by providing a sample on paper) how to take notes about a given text. If, for example, you ask students to take notes on a video, show them what that looks like, discuss which questions to ask, and help them format their notes.
- Put examples of exemplary notes (e.g., for reading the course textbook) on the overhead and give copies to everyone so they can refer to those examples when they do their reading. This is especially useful if some students use unique methods (e.g., color coding, graphic strategies, or the computer) in powerful ways.
- BDA: Remind them Before, During, and After that they should do certain things. Before beginning, for example, they should set a purpose, establish criteria for what to write down, and decide on the format that will be best suited to their purpose. During, they should note key terms and leave space to add material (or sample text questions) later. After, they should supplement their notes from additional reading and lectures to prepare for the test.

Now Try It! Have students read the assigned text and use the method that seems most appropriate to the task.

▶ Making Effective and Efficient Notes

▶ Overview:

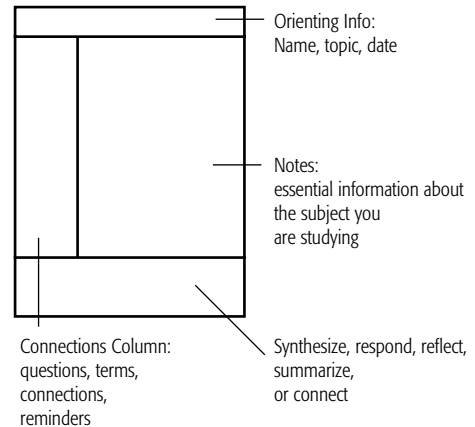
Good notes must be complete, coherent, and concise. Whether you are reading, listening, or watching, you must be able to make notes quickly in a format that will be helpful later on when you prepare to write, speak, or take a test.

▶ Page Layout

Divide the page into sections, which serve different purposes. There are four primary spaces you can use to arrange information on the page, as the sample page shows:

▶ Organize Information

Organize information into a visual format that you find helpful. This might include bullets, dashes, or numbers. Though an outline format is helpful, keep it loose so that you don't get confused as you make notes. Identify and organize information into categories that align themselves with chapters, headings/subheadings, major themes, or chronological events; such organization gives your notes structure and coherence. Use additional techniques such as underlining and ALL CAPS to quickly orient your eyes.



BENEFITS OF GOOD NOTES

- **Improve Recall:** Info is better organized, which aids the memory when tested.
- **Increase Understanding:** Organizing info forces you to digest it and establish connections between different ideas.
- **Increase Attention:** Whether reading or listening, taking good notes forces you to pay close attention to what you are studying. It does this by:
 - establishing a purpose
 - giving you a focus
 - determining what is important

▶ Abbreviate

You are the only one who must be able to use and read your notes. Each class or topic has words and ideas that come up repeatedly. Using symbols, abbreviations, acronyms, or other tricks to condense your notes helps you get down more information in a useful format. Here are some samples and suggestions:

- Shorten familiar words: info for information; NY for New York; WW2 for World War Two
- Use symbols to represent words or ideas: + for *add*; = for *equal*; w/o for *without*; & for *and*; b/c for *because*
- Use acronyms to abbreviate familiar terms: MWH for Modern World History; NATO, GNP, USA, UN, WWI
- Shorten words through omission: gov't for *government*; bldg. for *building*; pps for *pages*; prob for *problem*
- Abbreviate names: A = Atticus; BR = Boo Radley; BE = Bob Ewell; FDR = Franklin Delano Roosevelt
- Shorten common terms: RJ = Romeo and Juliet; Eng = English; OLine = Outline; BStorm = Brainstorm

▶ Telegraph

You do not need to write down *every* word you read or hear. Cut out unnecessary words. Example: "Atticus takes case" or "Germans lose battle; morale worsens."

▶ White Space

Don't crowd your page! Leave space between ideas (e.g., leave an extra space between main ideas). This leaves you room to add information later on and makes your notes easier on the tired eyes trying to read them.

▶ Set Purpose

Decide *why* you are taking notes so you know how to organize your information and evaluate what you should write down. If, for example, you are taking notes for a paper on consequences of a particular historical event, you need to pay special attention to information that might be of possible use. Keep asking yourself: "What is the question these notes are trying to help me answer?" (e.g., What are the primary consequences of...?)



Interactive Notes

Topic: _____

DIRECTIONS Use Interactive Notes to help you read informational or literary texts. Interactive Notes guide you through a reading process to help you develop your ideas and express them in academic language. You may put questions, comments, connections, or favorite lines in any column. Then use the prompts (or create your own) to help you write.

BEFORE Prepare to Read	DURING Question and Comment	AFTER Summarize and Synthesize
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • List: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ title(s) ✓ headings ✓ captions ✓ objectives ✓ themes ✓ words to know • Ask questions • Make predictions • Set a purpose • Decide what matters most 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I wonder why... • What caused... • I think... • This is similar to... • This is important because... • What do they mean by... • What I find confusing is... • What will happen next is... • I can relate to this because... • This reminds me of... • As I read, I keep wanting to ask... 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Three important points/ideas are... • These are important because... • What comes next... • The author wants us to think... • At this point the article/story is about... • I still don't understand... • What interested me most was... • The author's purpose here is to... • A good word to describe (e.g., this story's tone) is...because... • This idea/story is similar to...
Empty space for student input	Empty space for student input	Empty space for student input

Academic Writing

FOCUS	ORGANIZATION	DEVELOPMENT	PURPOSE
<p>Subject What you are writing about (e.g., Hamlet, the Depression, modern art)</p> <p>Main Idea What you are trying to say about the subject. This is also known as your “point,” as in “What’s your <i>point</i>?”</p>	<p>Cause-Effect Arranged to show connections between a result and the events that preceded it. Also known as Problem-Solution.</p> <p>Classification Organized into categories or groups according to various traits.</p> <p>Comparison-Contrast Organized to emphasize similarities and differences.</p> <p>Listing Arranged in a list with no consideration for other qualities.</p> <p>Mixed Organized using a blend of patterns. Might, for example, classify groups while also comparing or contrasting them.</p> <p>Order of Degree Organized in order of importance, value, or some other quality. Also known as Order of Importance.</p> <p>Sequential Arranged in the order that events occur. Also known as Time order or Chronological order.</p> <p>Spatial Arranged according to location or geographical order. Also known as Geographical order.</p>	<p>Examples Primary text Secondary texts Class discussions Outside world</p> <p>Details Sensory Background Factual</p> <p>Quotations Direct Indirect Primary text Secondary texts</p> <p>Explanations Importance Meaning Purpose Effect</p> <p>Elaborations Connections Clarifications Comparisons Contrasts Consequences Concessions</p>	<p>Cause and Effect Answers the question, “Why did it happen?”</p> <p>Classification Answers the questions, “What kind is it?” or “What are its parts?”</p> <p>Compare-Contrast Answers the questions, “What is it like?” or “How is it different?”</p> <p>Definition Answers the question, “What is it?”</p> <p>Description Answers the question, “What does it look, sound, smell, taste, or feel like?”</p> <p>Illustration Answers the question, “What is an example?”</p> <p>Narration Answers the question, “What happened and when?”</p> <p>Persuasion Answers the question, “Why should I want to do, think, or value that?”</p> <p>Problem-Solution Answers the question, “What is the problem and how can it be solved?”</p> <p>Process Analysis Answers the question, “How did it happen?”</p>

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**LESSON PLANNING TEMPLATE**

Class: _____ Period: _____ Date: _____

Lesson: _____**PLANNING**

- ▶ **Frame the lesson:** position the lesson within your curriculum and your students academic needs.
- ▶ **Establish Skill Set:** list specific instructional activities.
- ▶ **Gather and Prepare:** list the resources you'll need and suggestions for adapting lesson for your students.

TEACHING

- ▶ **Teach the lesson:**
 - develop instructional language, moves, and prompts
 - subdivide lesson
 - identify discussion topics
 - provide tangible and concrete examples

ASSESSING

- ▶ **Assess and Extend:**
 - list strategies to provide extra support or extra challenge
 - assess understanding of lesson
 - reinforce and extend lesson

Frame the Lesson _____

Essential Skill Set _____

Gather and Prepare _____

Teach _____

Assess and Extend _____

Notes:

You will find links to each book, program, or report on my website: www.englishcompanion.com.

Books by Jim Burke

Heinemann (www.heinemann.com)

- *50 Essential Lessons: Tools and Techniques for Teaching English Language Arts* (2007)
- *Letters to a New Teacher: A Month-by-Month Guide to the Year Ahead* (2006)
- *ACCESSing School: Teaching Struggling Readers to Achieve Academic and Personal Success* (2005)
- *The Teacher's Daybook: Time to Teach • Time to Learn • Time to Live* (2005)
- *School Smarts: Teaching the Four Cs of Academic Success* (2004)
- *Writing Reminders: Tools, Tips, and Techniques* (2003)
- *The English Teacher's Companion: A Complete Guide to Classroom, Curriculum and the Profession* (2003)
- *Tools for Thought: Graphic Organizers for Your Classroom* (2002)
- *Reading Reminders: Tools, Tips, and Techniques* (2001)
- *Illuminating Texts: How to Teach Students to Read the World* (2001)
- *I'll Grant You That: A Step-by-Step Guide to Finding Money* (2000)
- *I Hear America Reading: Why We Read • What We Read* (1999)

First Choice Education Group (www.firstchoicepub.com)

- *Academic Workout: Reading and Language Arts Grades 6-8* (2006)
- *Academic Workout: Reading and Language Arts Grades 9-10* (2007)

Great Source Education Group (www.greatsource.com)

- *Reader's Handbook: A Student Guide for Reading and Learning* (2002)

Scholastic (www.scholastic.com)

- *The Teacher's Essential Guide to Classroom Management* (November 2007)