



# Effective Reading Strategies

*To read is to empower  
To empower is to write  
To write is to influence  
To Influence is to change  
To change is to live.*

*~ Jane Evershed ~  
More than a Tea Party*

## **A Curriculum Resource Guide for Secondary Reading**

Office of Curriculum and Instruction  
Division of Language Arts/Reading

## Effective Reading Strategies

### **Pre-Reading Strategies**

A - Z Predictions  
Anticipation Guide  
Think - Pair - Share  
KWL Plus  
Concept Definition Map  
A.B.C. Chart

### **During Reading Strategies**

Sticky Note Discussions  
Selective Underlining / Highlighting  
3 Minute Pause  
Read & Say Something  
Two Column Notes  
Sequence Chart  
Summarizing

### **After Reading Strategies**

Gist  
One Sentence Summary  
R.A.F.T  
Conclusion / Support Notes  
Concept / Vocabulary Map  
3.2.1 Strategy  
Power Notes  
FCAT Task Cards

# Before Reading



# Strategies



## Predictions

### “Making Predictions from A-Z”

**Predicting** involves previewing the text to anticipate what will happen next. The thinking processes involved in predicting assist students in making meaning (Block, Rodgers, & Johnson, 2004). By making predictions, readers are using the following processes: prior knowledge, thinking on a literal and inferential level, adding to their knowledge base, linking efferent and affective thinking processes, making connections, and filling the gaps in the author's writing (Block et. al., 2004). Making predictions while reading keeps the mind **actively focused** on the author's meaning and provides the reader with **motivation** and a **purpose** for reading.

1. The teacher chooses a reading selection.
2. Prior to distributing the “Making the Predictions A-Z” graphic organizer and article, the teacher chooses 3 - 5 letters and writes them on the line provided for directions. The teacher should choose letters at the beginning of words that students may find in the text or associated with the text.
3. Distribute the “Making Predictions from “A-Z” graphic organizers.
4. Read aloud the title of the reading selection before distributing to students. A brief discussion may be necessary.
5. Using the letters that are listed at the top under “Directions”, students will record words in the appropriate box that they think they will see in the upcoming text that begin with those letters. (i.e If reading selection title is “The Oklahoma City Bombing” ... one of the letters listed at the top could be “T” ... students might write “terrorist” in the box labeled “S-T-U). This step is done independently. (approx. 1 minute)
6. Students share their words with a partner and form a prediction about the text. (approx. 1 minute)
7. Discuss words and predictions with the whole group. (approx. 1 minute)
8. Distribute and read selection.
9. Return to words and predictions for discussions and after reading.

**"Making Predictions from A-Z"**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

<b>A-B-C</b>	<b>D-E-F</b>	<b>G-H-I</b>
<b>J-K-L</b>	<b>M-N-O</b>	<b>P-Q-R</b>
<b>S-T-U</b>	<b>V-W-X</b>	<b>Y-Z</b>

I predict that ...

---

---

---

---

## Anticipation Guide

Anticipation Guides (Herber,1978; Buhel, 2002) are an effective way to activate background knowledge about a topic before reading a selection. Based on their personal experiences, students respond to several statements that are related to the selection or topic.

### Directions:

1. Identify five or six major concepts to be learned in the material (film, lecture, text, science experiment). Keep the following guideline in mind:
  - \* When writing these statements, think about what students might already know about the concepts, paying particular close attention to common misconceptions.
  - \* Write statements that reflect large segments of text rather than specific details. Otherwise, students will simply skim to find the answer.
  - \* Avoid simple statements of true or false.
  - \* Word statements to provoke critical thinking.
2. Present the anticipation guide on the overhead or as an individual handout.

### Sample Anticipation Guide for Hamlet by William Shakespeare

**Directions:** On the continuum in front of each of the numbers, place an "x" that indicates where you stand in regard to the statement that follows. Be prepared to defend and support your opinions with specific examples. After reading the text, compare your opinions on those statements with the author's implied and/or stated messages.

Agree      Disagree

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. Families generally have a member's best interests in mind.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. Having a clear goal, and the ambition to achieve it, is honorable.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. Power eventually corrupts the people who have it.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. Revenge is the only way to gain true justice.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. One must take a stand against injustice, even if the personal cost is great.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. Evil often spirals out of control.

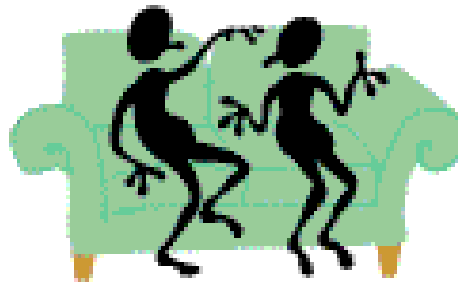
## Think-Pair-Share

**Think-Pair-Share** is a cooperative discussion strategy developed by Frank Lyman and his colleagues in Maryland. It gets its name from the three stages of student action, with emphasis on what students are to be **DOING** at each of those stages.

**1) Think.** The teacher provokes students' thinking with a question or prompt or observation. The students should take a few moments (probably not minutes) just to **THINK** about the question.

**2) Pair.** Using designated partners, nearby neighbors, or a desk mate, students **PAIR** up to talk about the answer each came up with. They compare their mental or written notes and identify the answers they think are best, most convincing, or most unique.

**3) Share.** After students talk in pairs for a few moments (again, usually not minutes), the teacher calls for pairs to **SHARE** their thinking with the rest of the class. She can do this by going around in round-robin fashion, calling on each pair; or she can take answers as they are called out (or as hands are raised). Often, the teacher or a designated helper will record these responses on the board or on the overhead.



## K-W-L Plus Chart

K-W-L Plus Chart is a 3-column chart that helps capture the before, during, and after components of reading a text selection.

\* **K** stands for **Know**

What do I already know about this topic?

\* **W** stands for **Will** or **Want**

What do I think I will learn about this topic?

What do I want to know about this topic?

\* **L** stands for **Learned**

What have I learned about this topic?

1. On the chalkboard, on an overhead, on a handout, or on students' individual clean sheets, three columns should be drawn; label column 1 **K**, column 2 **W**, 3 column **L**.
2. Before reading, students fill in the Know column with everything they already know about the topic. This helps generate their background knowledge.
3. Then have students predict what they might learn about the topic, which might follow a quick glance at the topic headings, pictures, and charts that are found in the reading. This helps set their purpose for reading and focuses their attention on key ideas.
4. After reading, students should fill in their new knowledge gained from reading the content. They can also clear up misperceptions about the topic which might have shown up in the Know column before they actually read anything. This is the stage of metacognition; did they get it or not?
5. Categorize the information from the L column. Find ideas that go together.



Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Period: \_\_\_\_\_

Topic: \_\_\_\_\_

*K*<sub>now</sub>

*W*<sub>ant to Learn</sub>

*L*<sub>earned</sub>

<i>K</i> <sub>now</sub>	<i>W</i> <sub>ant to Learn</sub>	<i>L</i> <sub>earned</sub>

Categories of Information

--



## Concept Definition Map



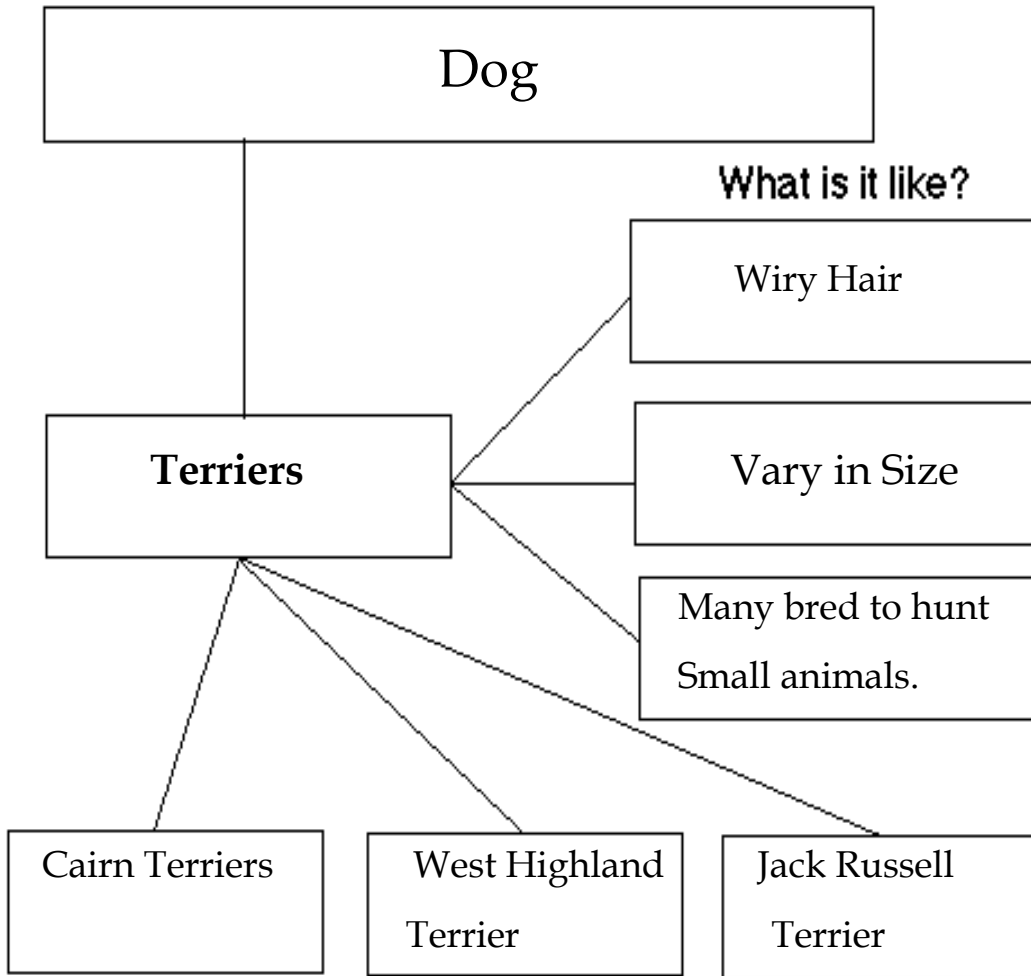
Concept Definition Maps help students expand word meanings and discover relationships between vocabulary words. They also help students develop elaborated definitions, rather than simple, one or two word descriptions. In addition, they provide students a way to learn vocabulary independently.

1. Use the concept definition map to help students visualize the components of a definition. The map includes three relationships essential to a “rich definition.” What is it (Category), “What is it Like (Properties), and what are some examples (Illustrations).
2. Begin Instruction by explaining to students that in order to understand new vocabulary, they need to know what makes up a word’s definitions. Go over the three questions that make up a definition.
3. Model the process using a familiar concept. Show them the map and describe its parts.
4. Sometimes it is helpful to have a comparison item. Once the students are done with the Concept Definition, ask them to write a definition using the information from the map.
5. Talk about why expanded definitions are so much better than those typically found in the dictionary. “Do you have a better understanding of the word?” “How does expanding a definition help you really know it?”

Sample Concept Definition Map

# Concept Map

What is it?



What is it like?

What are some examples?

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Period: \_\_\_\_\_

A.B.C. Chart  
**Concept Map**

**What is it?**

[Empty box for defining the concept]

**What is it like?**

[Empty box for describing characteristics]

[Empty box for describing characteristics]

[Empty box for describing characteristics]

[Empty box for defining the concept]

[Empty box for providing examples]

[Empty box for providing examples]

[Empty box for providing examples]

**What are some examples?**

Before having your students talk about a major topic, it's essential to activate their background knowledge about it. One way to do this is the ABC Chart. The idea is meant to be fairly simple. Students try to think of a word or phrase associated with the topic, matched to each letter of the alphabet.

Have students list all the letters of the alphabet down a sheet of paper leaving room beside each letter to write out the rest of a word or phrase. Let them work individually at first, thinking of as many words as they can that could be associated with the topic you identify. Do note: The topic should be big and general enough that students can actually think of a lot of possible terms. Then, in no particular order, let them begin filling in the blanks beside each letter of the alphabet. For instance, if the topic were **World War II**, students might list **Allies, Bombers, Concentration Camps, Dachau, Europe, French Resistance, Germany, Hitler, Italy, Japan**, and so on.

It seems to work well if you give students enough time to think of a lot of ideas, but then let them pair up or work in small groups to fill in blanks for letters they had not yet completed. In this way, you can let the brainstorming function like a Think-Pair-Share. This would be the "Pair" phase. Then, go around the room or get students to report out ("Share") possible terms for the different letters of the alphabet. Be open to a wide range of possibilities! Make sure students know that you're not looking for exact answers, just justifiable and relevant ones.

# During Reading



## Strategies

### Sticky-Note Discussions

Sticky-Notes discussions add variety to reading, and allow students to respond to the written text immediately. They are easy to implement in all content areas. Sticky-Note discussions are effective when used individually, in a small or large group, or a combination of settings.

1. Read aloud. When you come to a spot that you want to mark with a sticky note, explain why you are using it. As you read, make a note of things you noted.
2. Once students have the idea, you might suggest they mark one or two places per chapters. Limiting notes assists the students in narrowing down significant areas.
3. Begin sticky note discussions as a whole class. Start by sharing a place you have marked; one that mostly likely will encourage student discussion.
4. Engage students in examining why sticky note discussions help them become more involved in the reading than more traditional methods of teaching.



### **Selective Underlining/Highlighting**

### Selective Underlining/Highlighting:

- ★ Sets a purpose for reading.
- ★ Provides the opportunity for students to practice skimming, critical thinking, and analysis as they read.
- ★ Builds on comprehension and understanding of key words, phrases, vocabulary and main ideas and how they are interrelated.

### **Directions:**

1. Select an article from a journal, newspaper or a primary source document that is reproducible. (Option: photocopy a section/page of the textbook and make an overhead transparency for demonstration purposes.)
2. Provide highlighters for each student, preferably an assortment of colors.
3. Decide on your purpose for underlining or highlighting, demonstrate and model and then allow students plenty of opportunity to practice and share.
4. Some examples of highlighting uses: cause and effect (2 colors), text structure, key vocabulary and definitions (2 colors), compare/contrast, and ideas that are essential to the understanding of the text.
5. Students may then get together in pairs to share, compare and discuss their highlighting.

### **The Three-Minute Pause**



The Three-Minute Pause provides a chance for students to stop, reflect on the concepts and ideas that have just been introduced, make connections to prior knowledge or experience, and seek clarification.

**1) Summarize Key Ideas.** The teacher instructs students to get into groups (anywhere from three to five students, usually). Give them a total of three minutes for the ENTIRE process. First, they should focus in on the key points of the lesson up to this point. It's a way for them to stop to see if they are getting the main ideas. Explain to students to pause every 10 - 15 minutes to help fix new information in their memory.

**2) Add Your Own Thoughts.** Next, the students should consider prior knowledge connections they can make to the new information. Suggested questions: What connections can be made? What does this remind you of? What would round out your understanding of this? What can you add?

**3) Pose Clarifying Questions.** Are there things that are still not clear? Are there confusing parts? Are you having trouble making connections? Can you anticipate where we're headed? Can you probe for deeper insights?

### Read and Say Something

Read and Say Something is very effective for difficult material. Have students work with a partner so they can come up together with meanings for a piece of text.

1. Have students read their assignment silently, paragraph by paragraph or page by page. (more difficult materials require paragraph by paragraph.)

2. After students have completed the paragraph or page, have them turn to their partner and say something. They can say anything they want related to the article.

3. You will find that conversations about the meaning of the article occur naturally. You may want students to conclude this session by writing down questions they would like answered by the whole class or other teams.

4. Talk about how Read and Say Something worked for them as readers. "How did this strategy help you untangle meaning? Were you more actively engaged? Did it help you be more metacognitive?"

### **Two Column Notes**

Two-Column Notes is a note-taking strategy that divides a page into two columns. Students like this because it only requires them to fold a piece of paper in half; “hot dog style”. Students write main ideas and concepts in the left column and supporting details and information in the right column. This technique is especially useful for analyzing well-structured, content-rich, sequential reading selections.

The Two-Column Notes graphic organizer can be used in a variety of forms:

- **Main Idea-Detail Notes** – Students identify key concepts and their supporting details.
- **Opinion-Proof Notes** – Students isolate statements of opinion, bias, or limited point of view.
- **Hypothesis-Proof Notes** – Students identify predictions or theories and evaluate the evidence offered for their proof.
- **Problem-Solution Notes** – Students write the nature, causes, and effects of a problem in the left column and potential solutions in the right column.
- **Process Notes** – Students describe a process in the left column and then outline the specific steps in the process in the right column.

## Sequence Organizer

Sequence organizers provide structure for analyzing story events, determining character changes, identifying sequential processes of scientific investigation and solving a mathematics problem. Information contained in the sequence organizer flows naturally.

**Directions:**

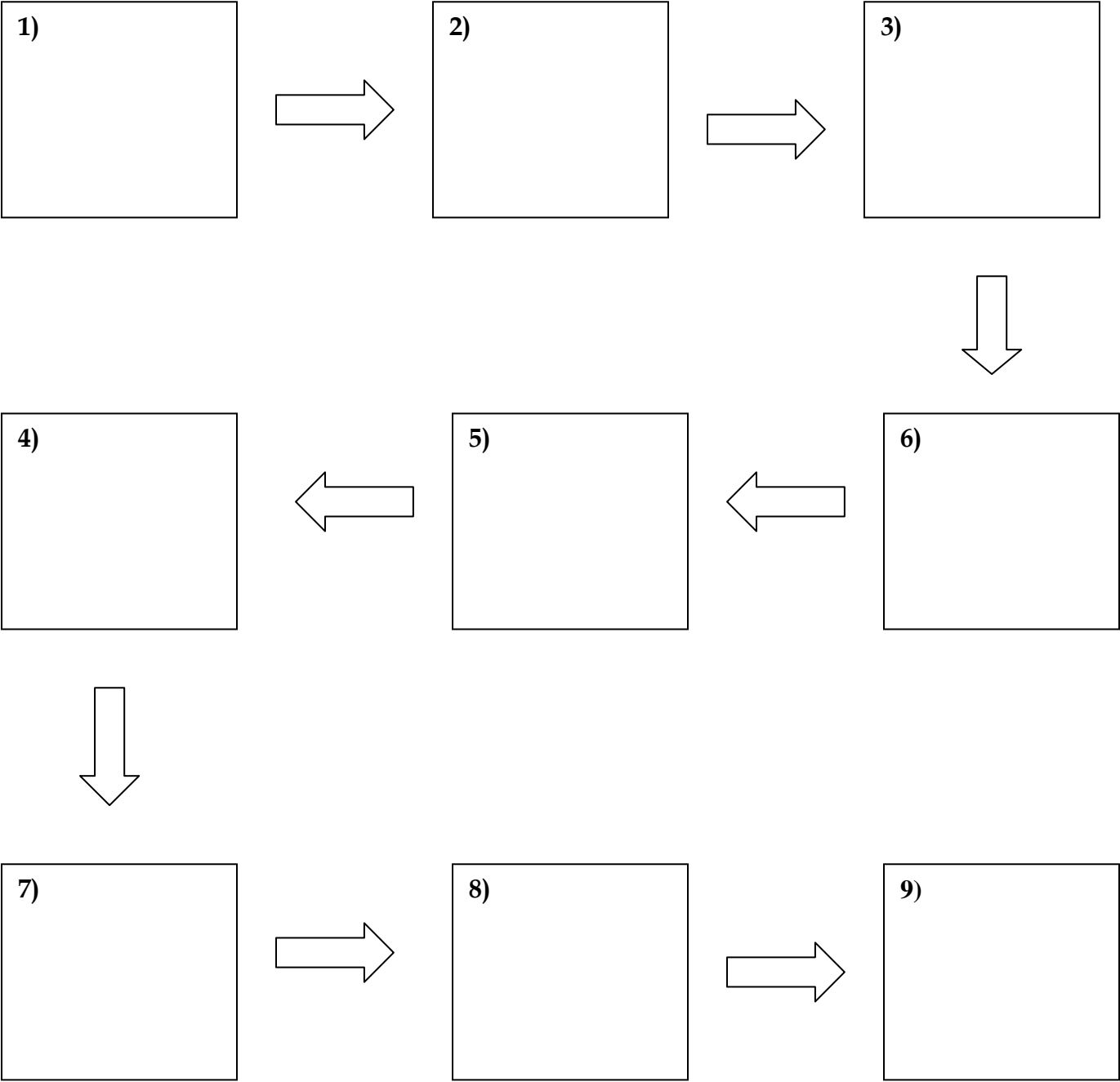
1. Begin with a familiar topic.
2. Choose a framework that works best with your topic.
3. Develop the sequence of events together.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

# Sequence of Events Chart

Topic: \_\_\_\_\_



**Summarizing**

Summarizing is how we take larger selections of text and reduce them to their bare essentials: the gist, the key ideas, the main points that are worth noting and remembering. You have to repeatedly model it and give your students ample time and opportunities to practice it. This strategy is truly about equipping your students to be lifelong learners.

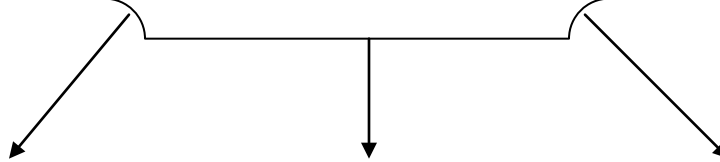
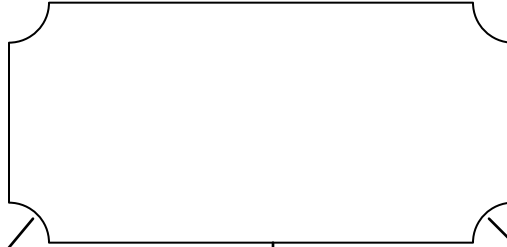
- After students have used selective underlining on a selection, have them turn the sheet over or close the handout packet and attempt to create a summary paragraph of what they can remember of the key ideas in the piece. They should only look back at their underlining when they reach a point of being stumped. They can go back and forth between writing the summary and checking their underlining several times until they have captured the important ideas in the article in the single paragraph.
- Have students write successively shorter summaries, constantly refining and reducing their written piece until only the most essential and relevant information remains. They can start off with half a page; then try to get it down to two paragraphs; then one paragraph; then two or three sentences; and ultimately a single sentence.
- Teach students to go with the newspaper mantra: have them use the key words or phrases to identify only Who, What, When, Where, Why, and How.
- Take articles from the newspaper, and cut off their headlines. Have students practice writing headlines for (or matching the severed headlines to) the "headless" stories.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Period: \_\_\_\_\_

# Summary Organizer

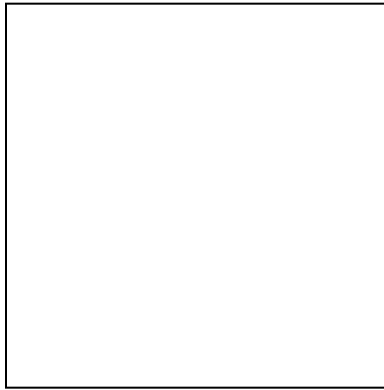
Subject



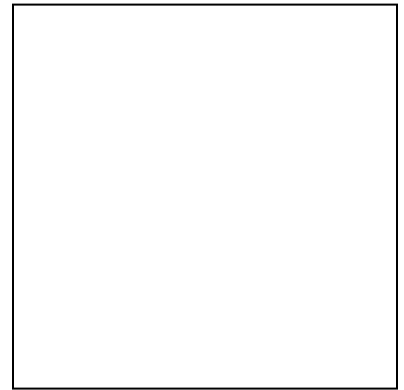
Who



What



Where



Why



When



How



# After Reading



# Strategies

**Gist**



The word "gist" is defined as "the main or essential part of a matter, "according to Webster's Dictionary.

This reading strategy forces students to squeeze meaning into a tight, precise summary.

The goal of GIST is to have students convey the "gist" of what they have read by summarizing the text in 20 words. Extraneous details must be discarded as a clearly defined focus is found. It is best to require a sentence format.

**Directions:**

1. Read 3-5 paragraphs of text.
2. Capture a summary in a sentence of exactly 20 words.
3. Repeat with the next 3-5 paragraphs. The second gist statement becomes a combination of the material in the first gist statement and the new material. However, the second statement is still limited to exactly 20 words.

Best suited for both expository and narrative text. For a novel, for example, have students write a gist statement for each chapter and revise the gist after every new chapter. Finally, they will have a gist statement of the whole book. For a textbook, have students write a gist statement for each section, then revise statements for a gist statement of the chapter.

**Samples of 20 word gist**

Scientific Thinking, one of the most important aspects of the age in which we live is the rise of modern science.

Ancient Greek manuscripts came to the attention of European scholars, there took place a kind of rebirth in scientific thinking.

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Directions

1. Read the article.
2. Fill out the 5Ws and H.

Who:

What:

Where:

When:

Why:

How:

3. Write a 20-word GIST.

_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____

**ONE-SENTENCE SUMMARY**

This strategy challenges students to summarize important information in just one sentence. The sentence should include pertinent information such as who does what to whom, when, where, how, and why. This is especially good for focusing students on gathering important information from a reading assignment.

**One Sentence Summary Frames**

<b>Description</b>	A _____ is a kind of _____ that .....
<b>Compare/Contrast</b>	_____ <b>X</b> _____ and _____ <b>Y</b> _____ are similar in that they both ..., but _____ <b>X</b> _____ ..., while _____ <b>Y</b> _____ ....
<b>Sequence</b>	_____ begins with ..., continues with ..., and ends with ....
<b>Problem/ Solution</b>	_____ wanted ..., but ..., so ....
<b>Cause / Effect</b>	_____ happens because ... _____ causes ....

**RAFT**

This is a great strategy that integrates reading and writing in a non-traditional way. It asks that students take what they have read and create a new product that illustrates their depth of understanding; it may be used with fiction or nonfiction texts. The format is incredibly flexible and offers limitless opportunities for creativity for both you and your students. When you are first using a “RAFT” with your students, you will develop the specifics for each element in the acronym; they are as follows:

*RAFT* papers are simply a way to think about the four main things that all writers have to consider:

- **Role of the Writer**  
Who are you as the writer? Are you Abraham Lincoln? A warrior? A homeless person? An auto mechanic? The endangered snail darter?
- **Audience**  
To whom are you writing? Is your audience the American people? A friend? Your teacher? Readers of a newspaper? A local bank?
- **Format**  
What form will the writing take? Is it a letter? A classified ad? A speech? A poem?
- **Topic**  
What's the subject or the point of this piece? Is it to persuade a goddess to spare your life? To plead for a re-test? To call for stricter regulations on logging?

### **Sample RAFT Activity**

*R* = car in a junk yard

*A* = teen who destroyed the car

*F* = farewell letter

*T* = take care of your car (scolding)

A teacher assigns (or students select) a role, audience, format, and topic from a range of possibilities. Below is a chart with a few examples in each

of the categories; it is meant only as a sampling to spark new ideas and possibilities for building RAFTS:

Role	Audience	Format	Topic
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• writer</li> <li>• artist</li> <li>• character</li> <li>• scientist</li> <li>• adventurer</li> <li>• inventor</li> <li>• juror</li> <li>• judge</li> <li>• historian</li> <li>• reporter</li> <li>• rebel</li> <li>• therapist</li> <li>• journalist</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• self</li> <li>• peer group</li> <li>• government</li> <li>• parents</li> <li>• fictional character(s)</li> <li>• committee</li> <li>• jury</li> <li>• judge</li> <li>• activists</li> <li>• immortality</li> <li>• animals or objects</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• journal</li> <li>• editorial</li> <li>• brochure/booklet</li> <li>• interview</li> <li>• video</li> <li>• song lyric</li> <li>• cartoon</li> <li>• game</li> <li>• primary document</li> <li>• critique</li> <li>• biographical sketch</li> <li>• newspaper article</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• issue relevant to the text or time period</li> <li>• topic of personal interest or concern for the role or audience</li> <li>• topic related to an essential question</li> </ul>

# 3 - 2 - 1

[first suggested by Penny Juggins of Fairfax County, VA]

The idea is to give students a chance to summarize some key ideas, rethink them in order to focus on those that they are most intrigued by, and then pose a question that can reveal where their understanding is still uncertain. Often, teachers use this strategy in place of the usual worksheet questions on a chapter reading, and when students come to class the next day, you're able to use their responses to construct an organized outline, to plot on a Venn diagram, to identify sequence, or isolate cause-and-effect. The students are into it because the discussion is based on the ideas that they found, that they addressed, that they brought to class.

Students fill out a 3-2-1 chart like this:

**3 Things You Found Out**

**2 Interesting Things**

**1 Question You Still Have**

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

# 3.2.1

## 3 Things You Found Out

1.

2.

3.

## 2 Interesting Things

1.

2.

## 1 Question You Still Have

1.

## Power Thinking

Power Thinking is an alternative system for outlining information that is hierarchical in nature. It helps students differentiate between main ideas and details (Miller,1985; Sparks,1982). In other words, the information can be grouped according to main ideas, subtopics, and details. It considers information according to which level it belongs on, and we use numbers to signify those levels.

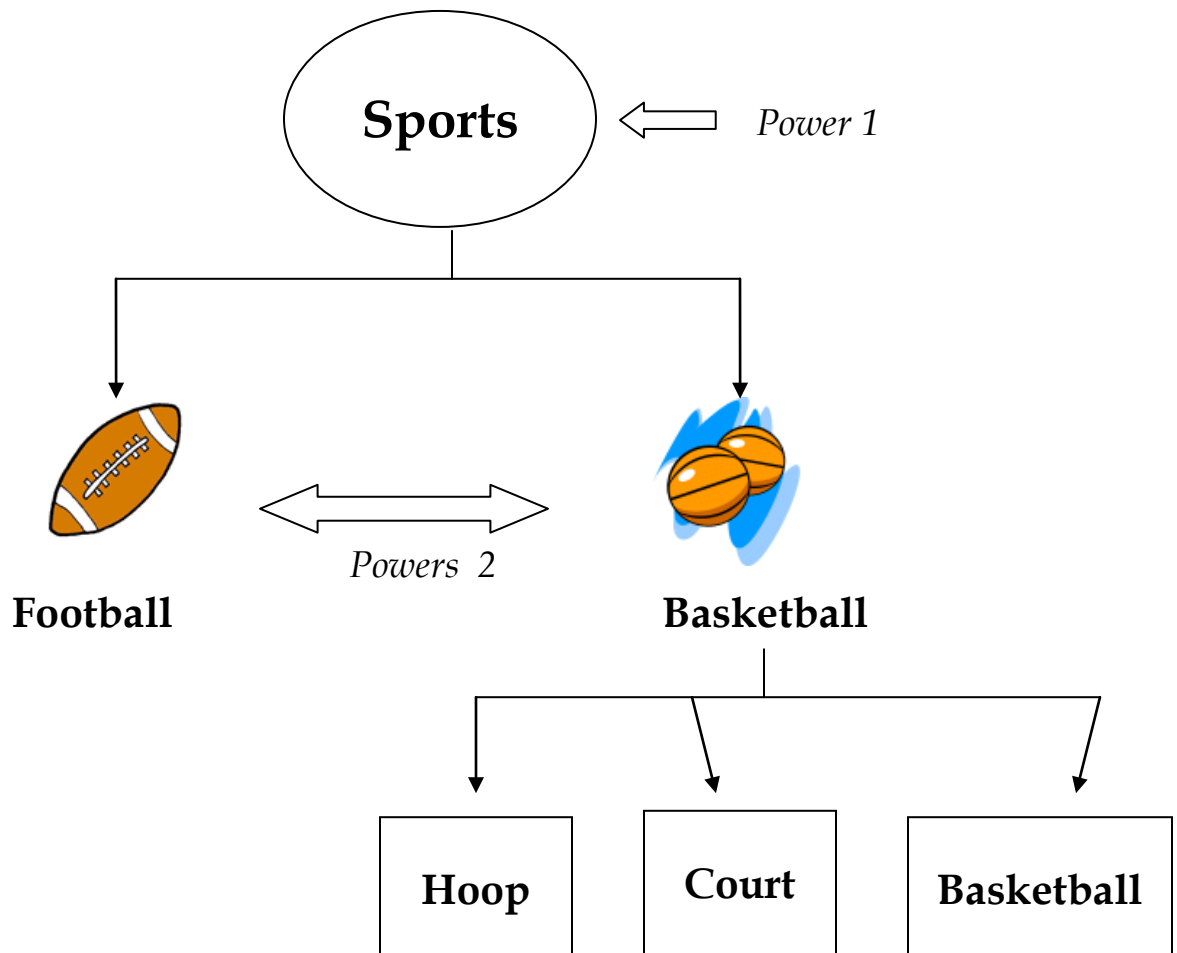
1. Begin by providing students with the following information:

**Power 1:** Main idea, thesis, topic

**Power 2:** Detail or support for Power 1

**Power 3:** Detail or subtopic for a Power 2 ...and so on...

Example:





*Power 3* →

## **Three Themes of Geography**

### **1: Location**

2: Absolute

3: latitude and longitude coordinates

3: street address

### **2: Relative**

3: in the Atlantic Ocean

3: west of Madagascar

3: 30 miles south of Albany

### **1: Place**

2: Human Characteristics

3: houses

3: wheat fields

3: cities

2: Physical Characteristics

3: mountains

3: rivers

3: deserts

### **1: Human-Environment Interaction**

2: Depend On

3: living near water

3: trees for lumber, paper

2: Modify

- 3: clearing land for farming
- 3: grading to create roadways
- 3: creating reservoirs

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

### “ Power Thinking ”

Subject: \_\_\_\_\_

**1:**

2:

3:  
3:

**2:**

3:  
3:

**1:**

2:

3:  
3:

2:

3:  
3:

**1:**

2:

3:  
3:

2:

3:

3:

### References

Ph.D Santa M. Carol, Havens T. Lynn, Valdes J. Bonnie. Project CRISS  
Creating Independence through student owned strategies Third Edition.  
Dubuque, Iowa Kendall/Hunt Publishing Company