

Effective Strategies to Increase Student Comprehension

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Comprehension

Want to facilitate students understanding of text before, during, and after reading

As well as:

Within,

Beyond,

and

About the text

PA Core:

Key Ideas & Details

Integration of Knowledge and Ideas


and

(Author) Craft & Structure

DRAWING INFERENCES

Making predictions

MAKING PREDICTIONS



make a **guess**
based on clues
from the text

You might be
correct, or the
author might
have surprised
you!

Jiffery Benson

The image is a vertical rectangular graphic with a yellow border. At the top, the words 'MAKING' and 'PREDICTIONS' are written in large, bold, blue and black letters respectively. Below the text is a cartoon illustration of a young boy with brown hair, freckles, and a blue t-shirt with a yellow star. He is smiling and has his right hand to his chin in a thinking pose. To the right of the boy, the text 'make a guess based on clues from the text' is written in a simple, black, sans-serif font. Below this, a larger block of text reads 'You might be correct, or the author might have surprised you!' in the same font. At the bottom right corner, the name 'Jiffery Benson' is written in a small, cursive font.

ASKING QUESTIONS

Formative Assessment
for Understanding



VISUALIZE

Mental picture in your mind.

When readers “lose” that picture,
meaning is not being made.

Visualizing



A Motion Picture in the
Mind

Making Connections



Use a Post-It when you can make a connection

Text to Self

A connection between the text and something in your own life experience.

Text to Text

A connection between the text and another story you have already read.

Text to World

A connection between the text and something occurring in the world.

ASKING QUESTIONS

During Reading – Fiction

Nonfiction too!

MAKING INFERENCES

how to make an inference...

Background Knowledge
[Schema]



text clues



What you
already know



What the
author tells you



EVALUATE AND
DETERMINE WHAT'S
IMPORTANT



ASKING QUESTIONS

After Reading



SUMMARIZE AND SYNTHESIZE
INFORMATION

Synthesizing

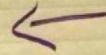
At first
I was
thinking



This story
is about a
lion eating
a mouse.

Now I am
thinking it is
about a lion
helping a mouse.

When I was
reading, I
was
thinking



But at the end I was
thinking... the story
was about being kind
and help can come in all
sizes.

MONITOR AND ADJUST THINKING WHILE
READING

COMPREHENSION FIX-UP STRATEGIES

Questions?





Notice and Note: Strategies for Close Reading

Three Parts:

1. The Questions We Pondered
2. The Signposts We Found
3. The Lessons We Teach

Introduction

- ❁ **Premise:** *We want them inside the text, noticing everything, questioning everything, weighing everything they are reading against their lives, the lives of others, and the world around them.*
- ❁ **Premise:** *We believe it is the interaction, the **transaction**, between the reader and the text that not only creates meaning but creates the reason to read.*

Part I

❁ The Role of Fiction

❁ The authors promote the *POWER* of fiction in the classroom:

❁ *Nonfiction lets us learn more; fiction lets us be more.*

❁ *It seems that not only is fiction a genre with broad appeal, but current research shows that it also affects the way we interact with one another.*

Part I: RIGOR

- ❁ *Rigor is not an attribute of a text but a characteristic of our behavior with that text. Put another way, rigor resides in the energy and attention given to the text, not in the text itself.*

Part I: Rigor

❁ *It's Rigor, Not Rigor Mortis*

- ❁ *When the text is too tough, then the task is simply hard, not rigorous.*
- ❁ *The essential element in rigor is engagement.*
- ❁ *Rigor, in other words, lies in the transaction between the reader and the text and then among readers. The essence of rigor is engagement and commitment.*

Part I: The Role of Talk

- ❁ *John Dewey said that the “vital habits” of democracy include “the ability to follow an argument, grasp the point of view of another, expand the boundaries of understanding, [and] debate the alternative purposes that might be pursued.*
- ❁ *Best developed through TALK.*

Part I: The Role of Talk

- ❁ The difference between *monologic* and *dialogic* talk”
 - ❁ *Monologic talk is authoritative and presumes that the goal of the listener is to agree with or learn from the speaker.*
 - ❁ *Dialogic conversation expects that the speaker becomes the listener and the listener becomes the speaker, that through give-and take new ideas might emerge, one might change one’s mind when the other is convincing, and the other might reshape an opinion when the first is persuasive.*

Part I: Role of Talk

- ❁ *Asking questions for which you already know the answer is inauthentic, yet that's the type of questioning that goes on in most classrooms.*
- ❁ *Research also reveals that in dialogic classrooms, students do more of the questioning, and as a result, achievement increases.*

Part I: What Is Close Reading?

- ❁ Be wary of the generalized concepts of close reading being promoted:
 - ❁ Observe what author has presented
 - ❁ Avoid imputing to the author anything that is not evident in the text
 - ❁ Avoid wandering from experience in the text to think about other experiences
 - ❁ Avoid parroting the judgments and interpretations of others for our own assessment

Part I: Characteristics of Close Reading

- ❁ It works with a short passage.
- ❁ The focus is intense.
- ❁ It will extend from the passage itself to the other parts of the text.
- ❁ It should involve a great deal of exploratory discussion.
- ❁ It involves rereading.

Part II: The Note and Notice Signposts

✿ Features that appeared in every well written:

1. Contrasts and Contradictions
2. Aha Moment
3. Tough Questions
4. Words of the Wiser
5. Again and Again
6. Memory Moment

Part II: Signposts

- ❁ *The more students noticed these signposts, the more they were using the comprehension processes: visualizing, predicting, summarizing, clarifying, questioning, inferring, and making connections.*

Part II: Contrasts and Contradictions

- ❁ *This is the point in the novel at which a character's actions or thoughts clearly contradict previous patterns or contrast with patterns the reader would normally expect, suggesting a change or offering new insight into the character.*

STOP and Notice and Note

Contrasts
and
Contradictions

When you're reading and
and a character says or
does something that's
opposite (contradicts) what
he has been saying or
doing all along,

You should stop and ask yourself:

"Why is the character doing that?"

The answers could help you make a
prediction or draw an inference
about the plot and conflict.

Part II: Aha Moments

- ❁ *These are moments when a character's sudden insight or understanding helps us understand the plot's movement, the development of the character, or the internal conflict he faces.*

Para, date cuenta y **ANOTA**



Cuando estés leyendo y un personaje descubre, entiende, o resuelve algo

para y pregúntate a ti mismo:

¿Cómo cambia esto las cosas?

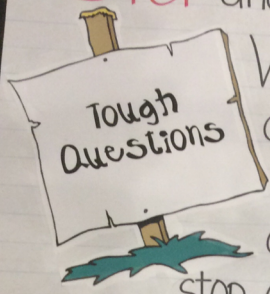
* Si el personaje resuelve un problema, acabas de descubrir/ aprender sobre el problema de la historia.

* Si el personaje aprende una lección, puede ser que hayas descubierto el **TEMA**.

Part II: Tough Questions

❁ *It is the point when the main character—a child or teen—pauses to ask, of himself or a trusted other, tough questions.*

STOP and Notice & Note



When you're reading and the character asks himself a really difficult question, stop and ask yourself,

"What does this question make me wonder about?"

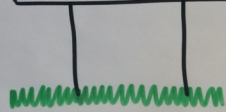
The answers will tell you about the **conflict** and might give you ideas about what will happen later in the story.

Part II: Words of the Wiser

❁ *This is the scene in which a wiser and often older character offers a life lesson of some sort to the protagonists. This lesson often emerges as a theme of the novel.*

Stop and Notice + Note

Words of
the
Wiser



When you're reading and a character (who's usually older + wiser) takes the main character aside and gives serious advice, you should stop + ask yourself:

What is the life lesson and how might it affect the character?

Whatever the lesson is, you've probably found a theme of the story.

Part II: Again and Again

- ❁ *This is the image, word, or situation that is repeated, leading the reader to wonder about its significance. Repetition might provide information about a character, about the conflict, about the setting, or about the theme.*

Again and Again

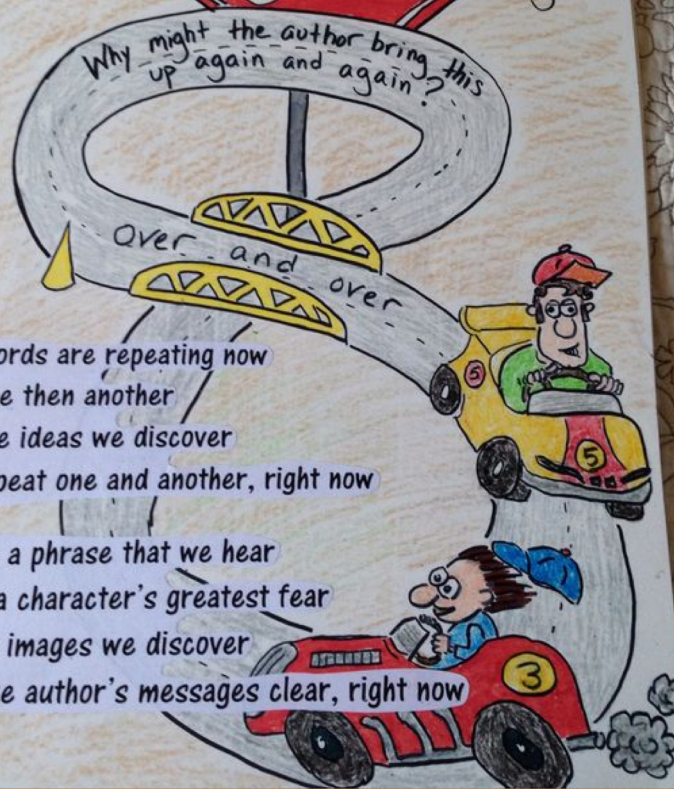
To the
tune
of
"Get
Together"

Why might the author bring this
up again and again?

over and over

Words are repeating now
One then another
The ideas we discover
Repeat one and another, right now

It's a phrase that we hear
Or a character's greatest fear
The images we discover
Make author's messages clear, right now

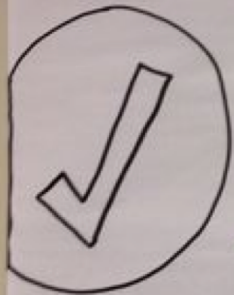


Part II: Memory Moment

❁ *A Memory Moment is a scene that interrupts the flow of the story and reveals something important about a character, plot, or theme.*

Memory Moments

Look for times when



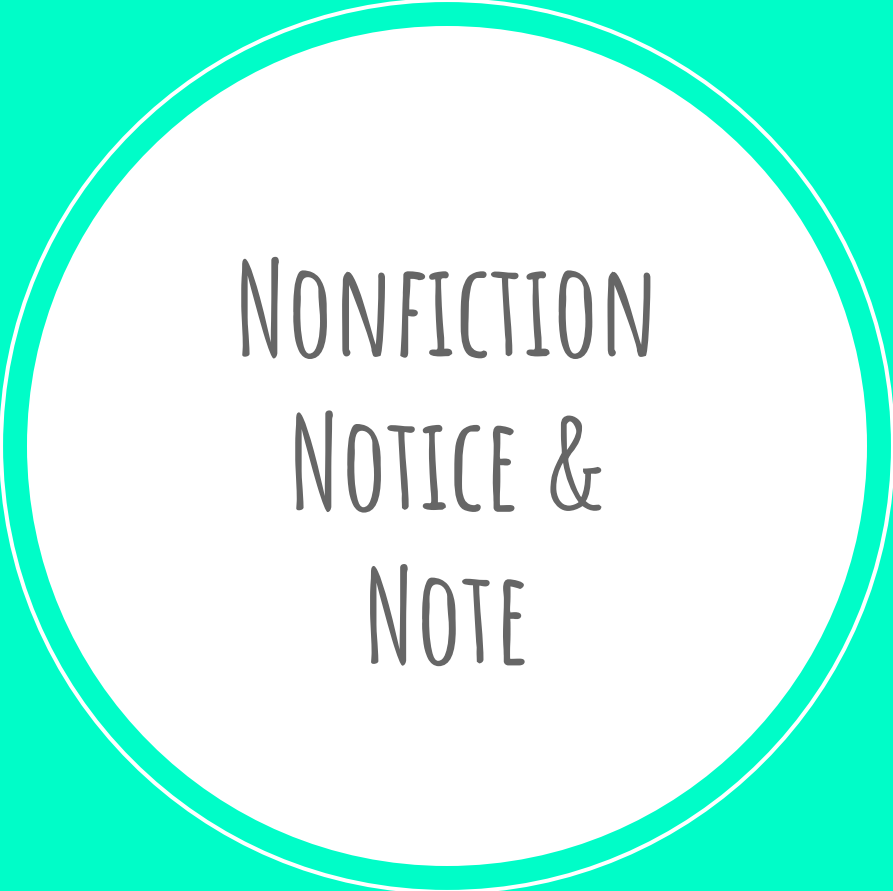
- The character starts remembering something, even right in the middle of an important event
- A character is thinking back on something from his/her past

Ask: Why might this memory be important? What can I learn about the character?

Part II: Explaining the Signposts

- ❁ Decide upon an order for teaching the Notice and Note Signposts.
- ❁ Set aside time to teach each signpost lesson.
- ❁ Teach each signpost lesson with a text that illustrates the targeted signpost.
- ❁ Recognize that the model text you choose might be one that is not at a student's independent reading level.

Questions?



NONFICTION
NOTICE &
NOTE

WHY NONFICTION?

- More information produced in the last 30 years than in previous 5,000 years combined.
- Information is doubling every four years.
- Getting into good colleges requires a higher level of reading and writing than ever before.
- Unskilled jobs are disappearing - 80% or more of the companies with the greatest employment-growth potential assess writing during hiring.
- 50% of all companies take writing into account when making promotion decisions. (Gallagher 2006)

WHY NONFICTION?

"A book about real people or real things is called nonfiction. There won't be any talking animals or flying people in a book about real things. A counting book and books about trucks or dinosaurs or the planets are examples of nonfiction. When you read nonfiction, ask yourself, 'What did I learn?'" (p. 24)

WHY NONFICTION?

"Nonfiction books are about real people and real events. Some nonfiction might be about ideas or beliefs. A book about your favorite sports player or a book about a musician is nonfiction. So is a book about how the weather is changing. When you read nonfiction, you should ask yourself, 'What does the author want me to understand?'"
(p. 26)

WHY NONFICTION?

"Nonfiction is the group of texts in which the author makes claims or assertions about the real world, real people, real experiences, ideas or beliefs" (p. 27).

WHY NONFICTION?

"Nonfiction is a body of work in which the author purports to tell us about the real world, a real experience, a real person, an idea, or a belief" (p. 27).

THE GOAL:

Critical readers in the classroom = discerning readers outside the classroom

Students develop a lens useful for critically reading a politician, a commercial, or a ballot proposition.

A SLIGHTLY SKEPTICAL
STANCE MEANS
STUDENTS SHOULD
READ WITH THREE
QUESTIONS IN
MIND:



20

What Surprised Me?

21

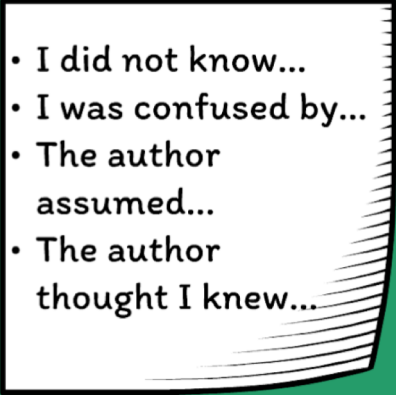
- Really??
- I was shocked about...
- I was surprised when...
- I never thought...
- I could not believe...

22

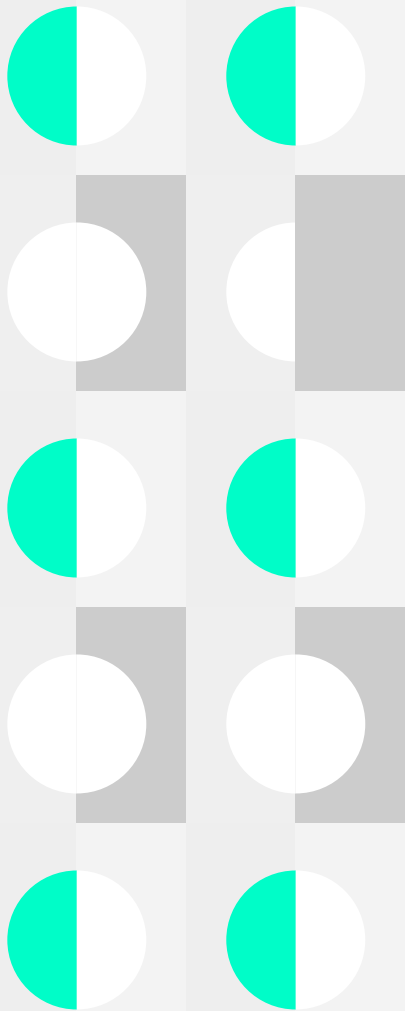
- If you teach only one stance, teach this one!
- Let students provide the discussions.
- Students must be open to what they are reading.

23 What did the author think I already knew?



- 
- I did not know...
 - I was confused by...
 - The author assumed...
 - The author thought I knew...

- The author is the problem!
- Creates independent readers



26

What challenged, changed, or confirmed what I knew?



27

- At first I thought..., but now...
- I had to rethink...
- My understanding changed when...
- I was right/wrong about...

28

- We read nonfiction to learn.
- Learning is more than memorizing!
- We can change our mind!

ADOPT A
questioning
stance

- What surprised you?
- What did the author think you already knew?
- What changed, challenged, or confirmed what you already knew?

NOTICE & NOTE
THESE
signposts

- Contrasts and Contradictions
- Extreme or Absolute Language
- Numbers and Stats
- Quoted Words
- Word Gaps

AND USE
THESE FIX-UP
strategies

- Possible Sentences
- KWL 2.0
- Somebody Wanted But So
- Syntax Surgery
- Sketch to Stretch
- Genre Reformulation
- Poster

TO
DEVELOP

understanding

This chart appears on page 80.



Notice & Note

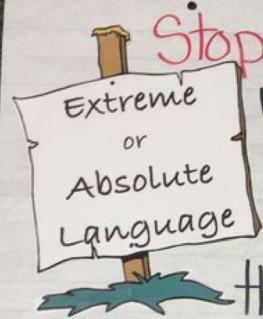
When you're reading and the author shows you a difference between what you know and what is happening in the text,

~or~

a difference between two or more things in the text, you should **stop** and ask yourself

"What is the difference and why does it matter?"

The answer will help you see **details** that show you the **main idea**, **compare** and **contrast**, understand the author's **purpose**, **infer**, make a **generalization**, or notice **cause** and **effect**.



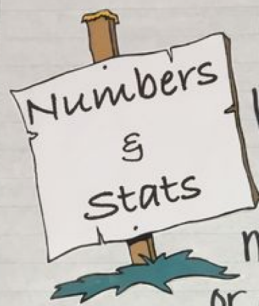
Stop

Notice & Note

When you are reading and you notice the author uses language that leaves no doubt, exaggeration, or pushes to the limit... you should **stop** and ask yourself:

"Why did the author say it like that?"

The answer will tell you something about the author's **point of view** and **purpose**. Or, you might realize the author is exaggerating to make you think a certain way.

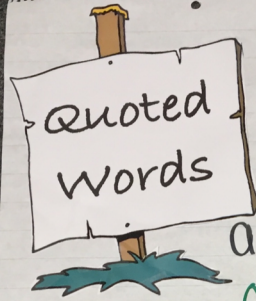


Notice & Note

When you're reading and you notice specific numbers, number words, or amounts, you should **stop**, and ask yourself

"Why did the author use these numbers or amounts?"

The answers might help you come to a **conclusion**, make a **comparison**, see the **details**, **infer**, find **facts**, or recognize **evidence**.

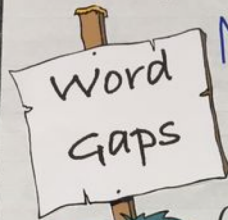


Notice & Note

When you're reading and you notice the author quoted a **Voice of Authority**, a **Personal Perspective**, or cited **Others Words**, **stop**, and ask yourself

"Why did the author quote or cite this person?"

The answer will help you think about the author's **point of view**, **purpose**, **bias**, or **conclusions**. Or these words will give a **perspective**, **facts** and **opinions**, or a **generalization**.



Word
Gaps

Notice & Note

What's happening

When you're reading and the author uses a word or phrase you don't know, you should **STOP** and ask yourself: "Do I know this word from someplace else?"

OR

Does this seem like technical talk for experts on this topic?

OR

"Can I find clues in/around the sentence to me understand the word?"

The answers will help you decide if you need to look the word up, or keep reading for more information

IT'S A QUESTION PARTY!

MY FAVORITE!



thank
YOU

The text "thank YOU" is centered on a white background. "thank" is written in a black, cursive script. "YOU" is written in a black, bold, uppercase sans-serif font. The word "thank" is surrounded by several gold stars of varying sizes. The word "YOU" is flanked by two black floral motifs, each consisting of three teardrop shapes pointing outwards. There are also several smaller gold stars scattered around the floral motifs and the word "YOU".