

Teaching Reading and Literacy in the Content Areas

Using the Power 30 Framework

What are Some Concerns About Teaching Reading and Literacy in the Content Areas

- Time



- Work overload



- Under-qualified

“Teachers who do not know much about reading are asked to teach reading to students who need it the most” (Bintz, 1997)



So Why Should We Teach Reading and Literacy in the Content Areas?

- After the third grade, students read more content area materials and they need necessary skills to use reading and writing to learn course content (Ulusoy & Dedeoglu, 2011)
- Teachers can increase their effectiveness in reaching more students by integrating content literacy strategies into their regular classroom instruction (Stephens & Brown, 2000)
- In an ideal world, all students would enter middle and high school knowing how to read and comprehend, but we do not live in an ideal world. Therefore, middle and high school teachers should be both teachers of reading and writing (Massey & Heafner, 2004)
- Through the use of content area literacy strategies, students can increase their ability to internalize the content of different courses, and develop conceptual understanding about subject matters (Stephens & Brown, 2000)

Calvin and Hobbes

MISS WORMWOOD, I'M NOT GOING TO LEARN THIS MATERIAL UNLESS YOU MAKE IT ENTHRALLING.



I SEE. AND WHAT WILL YOU DO IF THE REST OF YOUR LIFE DOESN'T ENTERTAIN YOU EVERY MINUTE?



WHAT, ...YOU THINK I'LL LIVE SOMEPLACE THAT DOESN'T GET CABLE?!



The Textbook is Not Enough

- “Huge numbers of our middle and high school readers struggle to comprehend textbooks, yet teachers are not providing the reading comprehension support that would benefit these students” (Ness, 2008)
- “Many kinds of texts-magazine articles, historical essays, letters to the editor, political speeches- are valuable precisely because they are not overly disciplinary, allowing non-specialists to read, enjoy, and respond to them” (Heller, 2011)

Power 30 Framework

- Power 30 was designed to help make teaching reading and literacy strategies in the content areas more effective:
 - Teachers are provided lesson plans weekly.
 - Reduces the stress of yet another prep.
 - Lessons focus on a variety of content areas.
 - Students explore how different reading and literacy strategies can be used in a variety of settings.
 - The articles, poems, and short readings are engaging for readers and nonreaders alike.
 - Tier II and Tier III vocabulary terms are included with each lesson plan
 - Tier II: High frequency vocabulary terms
 - Tier III: Content-specific vocabulary terms

Source: Beck, I., & McKeown, M. (2002). Bringing words to life: Robust vocabulary instruction. New York: Guilford Press

High 5! Comprehension Strategies

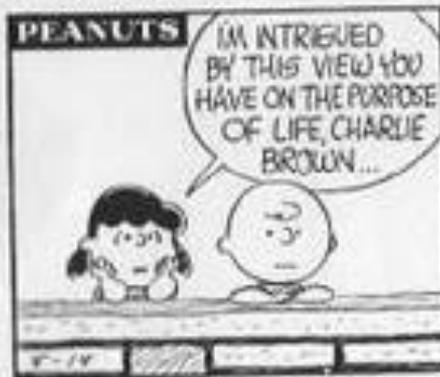
- Activating background knowledge
 - “The more information that a student has about the content, the clearer the text will become (NRP, 2000)
- Questioning strategies
- Analyzing text structure
- Creating mental pictures (visualization)
- Summarizing

Activating Background Knowledge

- Good readers use their prior knowledge to draw inferences from and elaborate on text (Afflerbach, 1986)
- Students with greater prior knowledge comprehend and remember more (Pearson, Hansen & Gordon, 1979)
- Merely having prior knowledge is not enough to improve comprehension; the knowledge must be activated, implying a strong metacognitive dimension in its use (Bransford & Johnson, 1972)
- Good readers use their prior knowledge to determine the importance of information in the text (Afflerbach, 1986)

Questioning

PEANUTS by Charles M. Schulz



Questioning

- “Encouraging readers to generate and answer questions before and during reading aids comprehension” (Block & Parris, 2008)
- There are three types of questions that a student can ask:
 - Right there in the text (factual): “What countries fought during the American Revolution?”
 - Think and search: Based on this chapter, what are the three most significant events that led up to the Civil War?
 - Beyond the text: What lessons from the Civil Right’s Era are still important in the present day?

Analyzing Text Structure

- “Text structure can be defined as how ideas in a text are interrelated to convey a message to a reader” (Meyer & Rice, 1984)
- “External text structure provides features that are organizational aides to facilitate reading, such as a table of contents, appendixes, a bibliography, headings, charts, graphs, and so forth” (Frank, Grossi, & Stanfield, 2006)
- “Expository text structures are complex and should be taught separately. These include: cause/effect, description, problem/solution, sequence, and so forth” (Dymock & Nicholson, 2010)

Creating Mental Images (Visualization)

- “Good readers are like architects when reading text. They can see the ribs and bones of the text” (Calfee, 1984)
- “Creating a mental image of the text being read enhances comprehension” (Block & Pressley, 2003)



Summarizing

- Block and Pressley (2003) define summarizing as “the ability to delete irrelevant details, combine similar ideas, condense main ideas, and connect major themes into concise statements that capture the purpose of a reading for the reader” (p. 117).

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