

Using Text Sets to Promote Comprehension

Note to Coach: This guide is written to help you make the most of the video we are providing you. It is organized into sections of interactive activities: before watching the tape followed by sections related to the lesson (before, during, after reading). Professional development is stronger if participants are urged to think about what they will watch, and then discuss it afterward. Of course, the benefit ultimately is watching the lesson again in its entirety, after this training session.

BEFORE WATCHING THE VIDEOTAPE

Before starting the tape we will work through a series of questions and activities to set the stage for our viewing.

Question 1: Ask teachers to identify some of the biggest challenges that they face when teaching comprehension in content area texts. Record responses on chart paper or a white board that all can see.

Question 2: How can we, as teachers, meet these challenges?

Let your audience know that they will be watching a demonstration by Dr. Tom Gill in a third grade classroom using text sets alongside the grade-level text that not all the children can read.

Question 3: Ask the group about text-sets...what do they look like/do they have any in their repertoire?

Question 4: Ask how many people are using text sets or have used them.

Dr. Gill will structure his lesson using text sets around before, during, and after reading activities.

Brainstorming Activity on Steps to Prepare A Lesson Using a Text Set:

Have the group brainstorm a list of steps a teacher would take to prepare a lesson based on a text set. Then, order the items on the list. You could let them work in small groups for 5-10 minutes to brainstorm first and then create a group list. Post responses on chart paper or on a white board for all to see.

NOTE TO COACH: The list below is what you would hope to generate with the group before watching the first segment of the video...some possible points that teachers would contribute to the discussion. If all the items aren't generated, return to the list AFTER watching the first segment and add some! Probe the group to see if they can add the additional points.

- 1) Use assessment results from PALS to determine the reading levels of students.
- 2) Group students according to their reading levels.
- 3) Define the purpose of the target lesson in relation to SOLs.
- 4) Create or select a text set from your school bookroom that would include books appropriate for the reading levels of students in class.
- 5) Select material from their text book or other texts for a whole-class read aloud to share background information on the lesson topic.

WATCH: *Start the video and play it until you see the title screen Before Reading Activities.*

Before Reading Section of the Video

Brainstorming: Before Reading activities

What kinds of activities can we use before reading that will help students comprehend the text when they do read and increase their motivation to read?

List the activities teachers come up with on a three-column chart under the BEFORE column.

WATCH: *Start with the screen entitled Before Reading and play the video until you see the title screen entitled During Reading.*

INTERACTIVE QUESTIONS AFTER THIS SEGMENT:

Question 1. Why did Dr. Gill model looking at the Table of Contents and previewing chapter headings? (They should answer that it will help students categorize their information.)

Question 2. Are there other benefits to drawing students' attention to the structure of content area text?

During Reading Section of the Video

Brainstorming: During Reading activities

What should be happening during reading that would support comprehension? (answers would include things like helping students with vocabulary as needed, reading to children from the text but expecting them to read their own books)

List the activities teachers come up with on a three-column chart under DURING column.

WATCH: *Start with the screen entitled During Reading and play the video until you see the screen entitled After Reading.*

INTERACTIVE QUESTIONS AFTER THIS SEGMENT:

Question 1. Why does Dr. Gill read to the students?

Question 2. Why does he ask them to share their theories about why dinosaurs became extinct?

Question 3. What does he do after he gets their theories? (Goes back to the text to see how their theories compare to those of experts.) Why? (To model going to the text to check their theories.)

Question 4. How would you describe Dr. Gill's technique to getting a response from the student who initially didn't know how to answer? (He made the question more concrete by asking the student for an example of an animal. Based on that example, he started to ask him a series of questions that by increments made it possible for the student to answer.)

After Reading Section of the Video

Brainstorming: After Reading activities

How can teachers support children's learning when they are finished reading? Is comprehension a 10-question check list?

List the activities teachers come up with on a three-column chart under AFTER column.

WATCH: *Start with the screen entitled After Reading and play the video until you come to the end of the tape.*

INTERACTIVE QUESTIONS AFTER THE LAST SEGMENT:

Question 1. What was the purpose of having the students complete the animal inventory sheet?

Question 2. What would be a possible follow up activity on another day that you might do with this class to continue to help them meet the SOLs for this lesson? (Ask the teachers to brainstorm in small groups and report back to the whole group.)

Question 3. Ask teachers to share how they've been using text sets if they're already using them. If not, ask them to brainstorm how they might use them to meet SOLs using the Before, During, and After Reading structure.

Postscript. The proof is in the using of this activity! We encourage you to help teachers assemble text sets and use them alongside graphic organizers in their content lessons.

The Reading First in Virginia PD Office

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