

**Lesson Title:** Taking Turns

**Focus:** Cause and Effect

**Description of Lesson:**

Tell the students there will be two rounds played. In the first round, the teacher gives a cause and the student gives an effect that goes with the cause. After each student has a turn, switch roles for the second round. Then student gives the cause and the teacher gives the effect. Play again with students paired together.

Example:

Round One:

First student: "CAUSE: It was hot today."

Second student: "EFFECT: We went swimming"

Round Two:

First student: "EFFECT: Sally got an A on her test."

Second student: "CAUSE: She studied hard for her test."

**Lesson Title:** T-Chart

**Focus:** Cause and Effect

**Description of Lesson:**

Provide students with a sheet of paper and have them draw a T-Chart with the headings "Cause" and "Effect." Have students supply an effect for a cause or a cause for an effect.

Example:

Cause	Effect
Student didn't do homework.	
	Cat scratched my arm.

## Lesson Title: Inference Charades

Focus: Inference

### Description of Lesson:

Have students brainstorm a list of emotions. Write the emotions on slips of paper. Place the papers into a bowl or basket. Pair students. Without looking, one student draws a charade slip. They discuss with their partner how to act it out. Each partner takes a turn performing the action for the rest of the group. The students, who are acting as an audience, raise their hands to guess the action.

Examples of words that could be used:

Embarrassed  
Frightened  
Disappointed  
Uninterested  
Puzzled  
Overwhelmed  
Clueless  
Pondering  
Optimistic  
Frustrated  
Desperate  
Thrilled

## Lesson Title: Did You Say What I Thought You Said?

Focus: Inference

### Description of Lesson:

Inferences are a little difficult to explain. Has someone ever tried to tell you something without coming right out and saying it? If so, you had to **infer** what he or she was telling you. Has anyone heard the phrase "reading between the lines?" "That's what you do when you make an inference, you "read between the lines." Let me give you an example. Tyler, ask me what is wrong." (*Tyler says, "What's wrong?"* "Nothing." (Say this with a mad look on your face!!) "Now, is something wrong?" (The class will say YES.) "How could you tell?" (They will give you several different responses: tone of voice, body language...) "Congratulations! You just made an inference. Did I come out and tell you something was wrong with me?" (The class will say NO.) "But you could just tell, couldn't you? Give some other examples for students to guess. Then have students write their own scenario where the reader will have to infer what they are saying. **Remember**, don't come right out and tell the reader what you are saying, let them infer it!" (Give them five minutes to do this.) Now let's hear some examples and see if we can make inferences.

**Lesson Title:** Hand It To The Main Idea

**Focus:** Main Idea

**Description of Lesson:**

Have students trace their hand on paper.

Label the hand with the following information:

- Palm: Main Idea
- Thumb: Title and Author
- Fingers: Details

Choose a text at the students' independent or instructional reading level and have students fill out the hand with appropriate information. This is an introductory activity for students who struggle with the concept of main idea. Use the "hand" to teach the concept but not as a requirement for every text.

Choose a text at the students' independent or instruction

**Lesson Title:** Details That Support Main Idea

**Focus:** Main Idea

**Description of Lesson:**

Fill small bag with different candies (tiny candy bars, hard candy, suckers, etc.). Then add some objects that are unrelated to the candy or each other (pretzel, an advertisement for candy, etc.). Have students talk about which items do not belong and justify their choices. Talk about how the main idea of the bag is the candy you can eat, and the details are the specific types of candy. However, there are also some objects that do not belong - these things are irrelevant - they are details that seem related but do not directly support the main idea. They may be associated with the topic, but they do not support the main idea.

**Lesson Title:** Let's Make a Summary

**Focus:** Summary

**Description of Lesson:**

Read a story with students. Have students divide a piece of construction paper into six parts.

Label the sections:

- Setting
- Characters
- Plot
- Climax
- Ending
- Theme

Have students fill in boxes with information from the story you have read. Then write a summary sentence using the information.

**Lesson Title:** Get to the Point

**Focus:** Summary

**Description of Lesson:**

Have student draw a large pencil on a piece of paper (the eraser at top). Label the eraser as "Get To the Point." Then divide the pencil into three sections; Beginning, Middle and End. The point of the pencil (at the bottom) is labeled "Summary". Read a story and stop at each part so that the students can record the most important information. At the end of the story, have students write their own summary based on information written on their pencil!



**Lesson Title:** Comic "Call to Order"

**Focus:** Sequencing

**Description of Lesson:**

**\*Need comic strips from newspaper.**

Cut apart a comic strip for each pair of students. Have students put the comic strip in sequential order. Have paired students choose a topic that has several steps in a process. They record the steps on sequencing strips and cut the strips apart. Then each group trades their sequencing strips with another group.

**Lesson Title:** Story Wheel

**Focus:** Sequencing

**Description of Lesson:**

Have students trace a LARGE circle. Cut it out and fold it to make eight pie-shaped pieces. Divide the class into groups and assign a story to read. When the groups have finished their assigned reading, have them list the important events in the story. Emphasize that events should be chosen from the beginning, middle, and end of the selection. Next have students narrow the list of events to the eight MOST important. Once their choices are acceptable, have them write the events on the white paper segments, across the widest portion. Make sure they place a number in front of each sentence, indicating the order of the events. Write the title and author on the small circle and glue in onto the center of the wheel, over the points of the white piece. Have each group share its Story Wheel with the whole class.

**Lesson Title:** Figure It Out

**Focus:** Context Clues

**Description of Lesson:**

Write six lines. The first line has the unfamiliar word. Cover the rest of the lines with blank paper. Ask the students to identify the meaning of the word. (If a student thinks they know the meaning - they whisper it to me. Show the next line. Ask if they have a better clue of what the word is (example: part of speech). Continue to show each line, and ask the students the meaning of the unfamiliar word. When the whole sentence has been revealed and students have made their guesses - show the answer.

Example:

The norpul

The little norpul

The little norpul crawled

The little norpul crawled across the

The little norpul crawled across the limb

The little norpul crawled across the limb with the nut.

ANSWER: Squirrel

**Lesson Title:** No-Nonsense Vocabulary

**Focus:** Context Clues

**Description of Lesson:**

Make a list of 10 vocabulary words that you have been studying. Write a nonsense word example sentence on the board. Remind students that the real word is one they just studied. When they have guessed what the real word is, discuss the context clues you used in the example. Have students make their own No-Nonsense sentences based on assigned vocabulary. Have students exchange the sentences, so they can guess the real words. Make sure to have students give feedback as to how well the author used clues to help with meanings.

**Lesson Title:** Show Me Support

**Focus:** Character Analysis

**Description of Lesson:**

As a group, discuss several adjectives that describe the assigned character and pick the best one. Then have students look through the reading to find a line or a passage that proves the adjective applies to the character.

**Lesson Title:** Readers' Theatre

**Focus:** Fluency

**Description of Lesson:**

Readers' Theatre is an efficient and effective strategy for addressing fluency and comprehension because it engages students actively in reading with understanding. A suggested online source is:

<http://www.aaronshep.com/rt/RTE.html>

Students can also write their own Readers' Theatre scripts and perform them for the class. No props, make-up, or memorization of lines is required! Simply assign or choose character parts, read over the parts multiple times for fluency and prosody, and perform! Nonfiction (science and social studies content areas) can also be performed as Readers' Theatre.

**Lesson Title:** Fact or Opinion

**Focus:** Fact/Opinion

**Description of Lesson:**

Use several strips of paper and write one statement that is either a "fact" or "opinion" on each strip. Have students sort the strips accordingly. Also give students blank strips of paper and have them write their own "fact" or "opinion" statements. Remember, "fact" and "opinion" statements are found in persuasive text!

**Lesson Title:** Vote Fact! Vote Opinion!

**Focus:** Fact/Opinion

**Description of Lesson:**

Give each student a note card - one side of the note card has "opinion" written on it. The other side of the note card has "fact" written on it. As the teacher gives fact/opinion statements from a persuasive text, the students show the correct side of the card. As you talk about whether the statements are fact or opinion, write the opinion words on a chart for later comparison with "fact" words.

**Lesson Title:** You Decide

**Focus:** Figurative Language

**Description of Lesson:**

Have students make book with at least five pages. Write "time flies" on the board and have students copy statement and draw a picture of what they think "time flies" might mean. Discuss the meaning with students and have them use "time flies" in a sentence to show the correct meaning.

Figurative Language Statements:

1. Ants in your pants
2. Money doesn't grow on trees
3. More fun than a barrel of monkeys
4. She bawled her eyes out
5. Raining cats and dogs

**Lesson Title:** Figure It Out

**Focus:** Noting Details

**Description of Lesson:**

Write the following sentence on the board, overhead, or chart paper: "This place has a bed, a dresser, and a closet with clothes." Ask students, "What usually has these things?" Ask them to identify the place and give explanations as to how they knew the answer. Tell students they can use the following strategies as they read: 1. Notice important details 2. Think about what they already know on the topic 3. Visualize! Make a movie in your mind with the details given in the text. Have students create their own sentences - using details. Other students take turns figuring out where or what the sentence describes.

**Lesson Title:** Now What?

**Focus:** Predicting Outcomes

**Description of Lesson:**

Tell students they can ask themselves "What would I do if I were in the same situation?" when reading for predicting the outcome. Give the following formula:

Story Detail  
+ Background Knowledge  
Predicting Outcomes

Walk over to your classroom door. If it is open, put your hand on it. If it is closed, take hold of the door knob. Ask the students to predict what they think you will do next. Perform the motion. Tell the students they are making predictions based on the formula above AND that is how you make predictions in everyday real life. As human beings, it is impossible for us to NOT predict outcomes as we go through the day!

**Lesson Title:** The Comic Section

**Focus:** Sequencing, inference

**Description of Lesson:**

Teacher chooses one comic strip from the Sunday newspaper. For several weeks, cut the comic strips out of the Sunday paper and cut the individual squares of the strip apart. Collect in a zip-loc bag or manila envelope. As partners, a center activity, or a small group activity, have students "reconstruct" the comic strips by reading the speech bubbles and inferring meaning from the illustrations. For fun, set the timer and see which group can do this activity in the least amount of time.

**Lesson Title:** News! News! News!

**Focus:** Reading information text, using visual information, inferring content from a title, main idea, summary

**Description of Lesson:**

Teacher scans several types of newspapers over several weeks and selects student-friendly newspaper articles which include a short article, title, and picture/graph. Cut the article, title, and picture apart. In pairs or small groups, have students "reconstruct" the newspaper articles by matching the article with the correct title and correct picture/graphic.

**Lesson Title:** Snap It Up!

**Focus:** Building oral language, reading with prosody

**Description of Lesson:**

Teacher reads a trade book, excerpt, or article ignoring all ending punctuation in an expressionless voice. She follows up with a discussion about how the text "sounds" when punctuation is ignored. She then reads the text again with expression observing all ending punctuation. During the second reading, students will snap their fingers when periods are needed. Hopefully the students will conclude that ending punctuation does indeed make a difference. The book "Eats, Shoots & Leaves" by Lynne Truss is also excellent for teaching the importance of "reading the punctuation."

**Lesson Title:** Jiffy Jots

**Focus:** Main idea

**Description of Lesson:**

Teacher selects text on student's independent or instructional reading level. Student reads first paragraph and asks himself - "Who or What?" and "So What?" about the content of the first paragraph. Who or what is this paragraph *mostly* about? So what? What about them/it? Student jots down a "jiffy jot" in the left margin of the paragraph or on a small post-it note in the left margin of the text. A "jiffy jot" is 3-5 words that answer the questions "Who or What?" and "So What? What about them?" for each paragraph. This is an INTRODUCTORY activity only - it is not intended to be used with every paragraph of every text! For students who don't understand main idea of a paragraph, the "jiffy jot" strategy will help with understanding main idea.

**Lesson Title:** Tableau (pronounced "tab-low")

**Focus:** Visualization, determining importance

**Description of Lesson:**

A tableau creates a living photograph of characters and text information. After reading a text, students choose one scene to depict an important character or event from the story. Students meet in small groups or as partners to discuss and create the tableau scene/character. Tableau group freezes in place in front of audience to form a "silent frozen picture" that represents a significant character or moment in a story. Tableau members DO NOT move or speak. Audience members try to guess which character is being portrayed or which moment of the story is being depicted. For actual photographs of classroom tableaus, enter the term "tableau" into your Internet search engine. The term can also be spelled "tableaux."

**Lesson Title:** Think-Aloud

**Focus:** Modeling of effective reading strategies that are “in the head” processes

**Description of Lesson:**

Struggling readers don't know what good readers *do* to be good readers. Struggling readers must hear the teacher and their peers TALK ABOUT THEIR THINKING while they are reading text. Simply ask a more proficient reader to “talk out loud” about how they determined the meaning of an unknown word in the text or how they detected the “unseen text” of an inference. Ask the proficient reader: “How do you know that?” “What did you think about (or see in your mind) when you were reading that?” We might feel very silly as adults when we “talk aloud” about our thinking but it is critical for struggling readers to HEAR how others negotiate text. If struggling readers knew what to do to be proficient readers, they'd already be doing it!

**Lesson Title:** Literacy Centers

**Focus:** Practicing newly-acquired literacy skills while building fluency and stamina

**Description of Lesson:**

Literacy centers (or literacy workstations) allow students the opportunity to practice newly developing skills. A Literacy Centers Handbook containing a description of each center and teacher ideas for 20 different Literacy Centers is available FREE on the Region 10 website. Go to [www.region10.org](http://www.region10.org). Click on “teachers” and then click on “English Language Arts.” Finally, click on “Literacy Centers Handbook” and print out.

## **Lesson Title:** Reader Response Journal

**Focus:** Responding to text/making connections while reading

### **Description of Lesson:**

As the students are reading independently during free reading time or silent sustained reading, require some type of response to what they have read during the time period. Some prompts for journal writing about their reading might be: "I know now that the character . . ." "The main character reminds me of . . ." "I was thinking . . ." "I don't understand . . ." "I think the character will . . ." "The character is like \_\_\_\_\_ because \_\_\_\_\_."

## **Lesson Title:** Bingo

**Focus:** Building sight vocabulary

### **Description of Lesson:**

Fold regular copy paper into half and continue folding in half until the paper is a palm-size square. When opened, it creates a 16 square bingo card. Using words from the word wall (or a list of sight words for the grade level), allow students to choose their words and fill out the bingo card. Teacher - using the word wall or the list of sight words - randomly calls out a word. Students can use diagonal lines, colors, or plastic chips to "mark" words on their cards. "Winner" can be determined (prior to starting game!) by covering 4 words in a row, covering 4 corners, blackout, etc. Have "winner" read selected words from his card to verify (and get another minute of time with text!)

## Lesson Title: Look In, Look Around, Look Back

**Focus:** Using various tools to learn unfamiliar words and their meanings

### Description of Lesson:

To give students one more tool for decoding unfamiliar words, use these hand motions and chant for a change of pace:

Teacher: "What can you try when you come to an unfamiliar word?"

"**Look in.**" ((hands in fists in front of body - extend index fingers downward on "look in")

"**Look around.**" (fingers extended - make a circle in front of body with index fingers on "look around")

"**Look back**" (fists closed with thumbs extended - bring thumbs back over shoulders in a "go to the back of the line" motion) Students are reminded to "look in" words for parts they know, "look around" words for context clues, and "look back" in their mind to recall reading strategies from previous lessons.

## Lesson Title: Analyze the Setting

**Focus:** Recognize the importance of setting as a literary element

### Description of Lesson:

Begin lessons by telling students they will be writing two different stories about a student who is their own age. On the overhead or board, make two columns labeled Story A and Story B. Under the heading for Story A, list a place, time period, family situation, a family income level for the first story. Under the heading for Story B, list a *different* place, time period, family situation, and family income level for the second story. Quickly brainstorm a simple plot for each story - each story has the same main character (who is the same grade level as the students) but has different experiences because *the setting is different*. Discuss with students the importance of examining the "setting" of a story as more than just the location of the events.

## Lesson Title: Chunking Words

**Focus:** Reading across words

### Description of Lesson:

Prior to reading a selected text, teacher chooses two or three multisyllable words which are found in the passage and difficult for students. Teacher breaks words into syllables and types syllables out in very large font (48 or 60). Print, cut syllables apart, and place chunks in zip-loc bags for each student. At lesson, students empty bags and place word chunks randomly on desk. Teacher models/students follow by "pulling down a chunk" of a word at a time until the word is complete. Ask one student to read word. Example: conversation

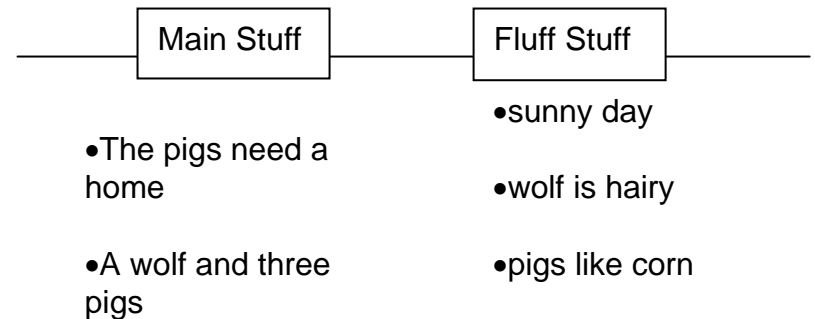
con	ver	sa	tion
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## Lesson Title: Main Stuff / Fluff Stuff

**Focus:** Separating interesting vs. important information in text

### Description of Lesson:

After reading aloud a familiar fairy tale or story, discuss how some information in texts is critical to understanding the story (main stuff) while other information is more descriptive to help the reader experience every aspect of the story (fluff stuff). Reread fairy tale or story aloud. Have students list information which is critical and information which enriches the reader's visualization. May want to use the visuals of solid metal or wood for "main stuff" and a cotton ball for "fluff stuff" with ELL students.



**Lesson Title:** Post-It Emotions

**Focus:** Character feelings

**Description of Lesson:**

Teacher selects a text on students' independent reading levels. The story should contain OBVIOUS shifts in the feelings of the main character. As students read the text, have them stop at critical points in the story and record (in 1st person) how the character is currently feeling on a post-it-note. Discuss shifts in feelings of the character and relate to students' own lives and emotions. Teacher then selects another text in which the character feeling shifts are LESS OBVIOUS. Have students do post-it-note activity again with this text and discuss nuances of character feeling changes within the story.

**Lesson Title:** Somebody Wanted But So

**Focus:** Story summary

**Description of Lesson:**

Fold a clean sheet of paper in four parts. In the upper left square, write the word "Somebody." In the upper right square, write the word "Wanted." In the lower left square, write the word "But." In the lower right square, write the word "So." SWBS contains all the basic elements to summarize the events in a story. "Somebody" - who is the main character?

"Wanted" - what did the main character want or need?

"But" - what problem did the main character have in getting what they wanted/needed?

"So" - how was the problem resolved? How did it end?

This is very effective when modeled many times with a read aloud or very familiar story first - before students use the strategy in partners or independently.

## Lesson Title: Staying Alive with 55

Focus: Story summary

### Description of Lesson:

On large chart paper, draw 55 blank lines with each line about two inches long. Using five lines with eleven blanks in each row works well. Read a familiar or simple fairy tale aloud and tell the students they will be creating a summary of the story using EXACTLY 55 words. After the story is completed, work with students to create a summary (in complete sentences with vivid word choice!) that both accurately depicts the story and is exactly 55 words in length. HINT: Writing in pencil helps! This activity is much harder than it looks and students will need to have watched the process in large group several times before they can attempt it in pairs or independently. Lots of fun!

## Lesson Title: Seen or Unseen Text

Focus: Inferencing

**Description of Lesson:** I understand. Students will fold a clean sheet of paper length-wise once, and then fold it again to create four columns. Then students will label the four columns as follows:

Paragraph #1	It Says . . .	I Say . . .	I understand.
Character #1	"SEEN"	"UNSEEN"	

Discuss with students how authors cannot possibly write down every word they need to describe characters, events, settings, plots, etc. ("seen" words). Authors give some of the work TO THE STUDENT in the form of "unseen" words. Help students understand "seen" text is *on the page* - you can put your finger on it. "Unseen" text is *beyond the page* - it happens in the mind of the reader. Find obvious examples of "seen" and "unseen" text to show. Have students keep the chart above as they are reading independently to make themselves more aware of when the author is using words to form an image ("seen" text) or using the reader's mind to form an image ("unseen" text)

## Lesson Title: Sequence Strips

**Focus:** Sequencing events from a text

### Description of Lesson:

Teacher reads text prior to lesson and selects 5-6 main events in the story. Type each event out in large font in the form of a sentence and cut the sentences apart - one sentence/event per strip. After students read the text, have them put the event strips in time order. This can also be done with nonfiction - i.e. steps in the scientific process, stages of life cycle, historical events, etc.

## Lesson Title: Picture Perfect

**Focus:** Visualization

**Description of Lesson:** Have the students bring crayons or colored pencils and white paper to a group setting. The teacher reads a VERY descriptive text aloud (without illustrations!) and pauses several times while reading aloud to allow students to quickly "draw the picture in your mind." Remind students this is a "quick draw" activity. Drawing time should be about one minute for each pause. Be sure to use a text that is very descriptive and adds details throughout the entire text.

For example:

*The house was square with two windows and a door facing the street. (STOP to quick draw)  
The grass in the yard had grown so tall that it blocked the bottom half of the windows from anyone's sight. (STOP) The tree in the front yard was covered with leaves and entangled at the bottom with a green, leafy vine. (STOP) One lone flower - a daisy - cheerfully peeked at me through the tall grass under one of the windows as I climbed the crooked steps to the front door and arrived home.(STOP)*

**Lesson Title:** Phrase "Phun"

**Focus:** Reading with phrasing

**Description of Lesson:**

Choose a simple story that is unfamiliar to the students. Teacher begins reading the text aloud but uses awkward phrasing as she reads - i.e. reading past periods, stopping mid-sentence, reading chunks of text two words at a time, pausing where there is no comma, etc. Let students listen for several moments and be puzzled or confused. Ask "Is this story easy to understand?" "Why is it hard to understand?" Talk about the importance of phrasing and "reading the punctuation." Reread story with appropriate phrasing/punctuation and compare to the first read. Explain to students that phrasing includes times of reading silently, too. Appropriate phrasing and reading the punctuation during silent reading helps the reader hear "the voice in their mind" and understand the story.

**Lesson Title:** ROAR - Stands for "Really Outrageous Aloud Reading"

**Focus:** Reading with prosody - "read it like you're talking"

**Description of Lesson:**

Keep in mind that this activity is designed to create interest, be fun, and make students aware of reading with expression. It often takes something a bit different to draw a student's attention to reading aloud with a particular "voice" and fluency. Create 8-10 actions and record them on separate slips of paper. These actions should be able to be done in a classroom setting with no props and relative calm. Actions might include "read while holding your nose," "read while standing on one foot," "read while walking backward," "read while waving hello," etc. Choose a simple text with lots of dialogue and character speaking lines - *Goldilocks and the Three Bears* is a good example. Have students choose a character and an action slip. Whenever the character "speaks," the student must do BOTH the action and the voice of the character for the entire speaking part.

**Lesson Title:** Readers' Theatre**Focus:** Reading orally in an effective way**Description of Lesson:**

Readers' Theatre is the perfect way to allow students to read and reread text to build both comprehension and fluency. Any text can be written into the format of a script for Readers' Theatre. (Even nonfiction text can be given a boost by making it come alive in Readers' Theatre!) Choose very familiar and simple stories/fairy tales/nursery rhymes to read aloud. After reading them aloud, discuss whom the speaking characters might be to best tell the story. First as a group and then in pairs, write a Readers' Theatre script for the familiar story. Allow students time to rehearse and present the Readers' Theatre for the class. Even the most reserved students come alive when given this opportunity to practice and perform!

**Lesson Title:** Time for the News!**Focus:** Adjusting reading rate based on text level and content area vocabulary**Description of Lesson:**

Talk with students about how their reading changes depending on *what they are reading*. An easy, fiction book can be read much faster than a grade-level science book when learning a new concept. It is normal for readers to change their rate depending on how they are understanding the text. Have students write several short scripts for a "newscast"- some scripts should be fiction and very easy to read while others should be nonfiction and written several grade levels higher to challenge students. The main teaching focus is to make students aware of the need to change reading rate depending on their understanding of what they are reading.

•**Lesson Title:** How Are You Feeling?

•**Focus:** Noticing changes in a character's feelings

•**Description of Lesson:**

•Have students make an event line of a character's feelings at critical moments in the text. Discuss how feelings change over time/events.

•Example: "My Trip to the Dentist"

Ouch!  
My tooth  
hurts!

*scared*

My mom  
called the  
dentist.

*anxious*

The  
dentist  
was really  
nice.

*relieved*

My mom  
said I  
was  
brave.

*proud*

**Lesson Title:** "Pickles"

**Focus:** Using context clues to determine word meaning

**Description of Lesson:**

In the text of reading group or in a read aloud for the entire class, select one word to cover with a post-it note/cover-up tape EVERY time it appears in the selection. Choose a word which is important to the text but not a new concept or vocabulary word for students. Say the word "pickles" each time the covered-up word is encountered in the text. Stop and discuss *how* the students are gathering clues about the mystery word. Transfer this learning to later independent reading and remind students they can use the information around an unknown word to determine the meaning of the word.

## Lesson Title: "Throw Away Your Troubles"

**Focus:** Generating discussion, easing concerns about reading, gaining insight into students' perceptions

### Description of Lesson:

Have students write a "trouble" they encounter while reading a text on a piece of paper - solving unknown words, understanding what they read, reading rate, etc. When finished, the students wad the paper up and "throw away their troubles" in the trash. Explain to students that reading groups/mini-lessons/discussions with peers/literacy centers, etc. are all meant to provide the information all "good readers" need to use to read and comprehend print. As the teacher, you might want to look through these "troubles" at a later time (without students present) to gain insight into their thinking about reading. Make sure reading mini-lessons throughout the year occasionally address the "troubles" listed on the papers.

## Lesson Title: "Body-build" Your Reading

**Focus:** Increase student accountability for self-monitoring and comprehension

### Description of Lesson:

Athletes and body-builders want to keep their bodies in shape so they often create routines consisting of diet, exercise, rest, and professional training sessions. Readers can follow a similar routine to "body-build" their reading skills by:

Good Food - Athletes require good "food" for energy. For readers, this includes becoming familiar with a great variety of different texts. Books, magazines, poems, newspapers, etc. are the "food" of readers!

Exercise/Weights - Athletes need to develop strong muscles. For readers, this includes USING the strategies taught in reading group and mini-lessons. Use those strategies to "beef up" your reading ability!

Sleep/Rest - Athletes need time to rest. For readers, time to reflect and think about what they are reading is important. Try to break a long text into parts and "read a little, think a little."

Training sessions - Athletes spend time with their coach and trainer. Readers get expert advice during reading group and are "coached" by peers when they share their thoughts about reading.

**Lesson Title:** Four Corners

**Focus:** Creating sensory images from words

**Description of Lesson:**

The teacher prepares and posts four poster boards in the four corners of the room. Each poster has the name of one of the five senses: seeing, hearing, tasting, touching, smelling.

Students are divided into 5 groups and each group stands by one of the five "senses" posters. The teacher identifies one event (example: a baseball game) and students brainstorm words/phrases USING THAT SENSE to create a visual image in the mind of a reader. List words/phrases on poster that an author might need when writing about the concept using that particular sense. Rotate groups to different senses for next round. Encourage students to write phrases (hot, buttery popcorn wafting past my nose) instead of single words (yummy) on posters.

**Lesson Title:** Read a little, think a little

**Focus:** reading for understanding, comprehension strategy for *during* reading, self-monitoring

**Description of Lesson:**

Prior to students reading the text, the teacher reads the text herself and determines several (3-4) places in the text to stop and discuss it. Place a post-it note on the text at the first stopping point and label it #1. Continue with other post-it notes throughout the text - placing them at critical points for discussion. Teacher creates discussion prompts or asks higher-level questions when the group stops at each post-it note. Struggling readers tend to just "read" the text by moving their eyes and saying the words - they aren't really constructing understanding of *what* they are reading. This activity forces them to read a small amount of text and think about what they just read - "read a little, think a little." Teacher can place post-it notes in text for each student prior to reading or the teacher can simply direct the students to insert and label post-its.

**Lesson Title:** The Face Behind the Text

**Focus:** author's point of view/fluency

**Description of Lesson:**

NOTE: This mini-lesson works best with fantasy and/or third person writing.

Students will identify one of the main characters in the text and create a mask out of a paper plate to represent the chosen character. Each student will then reread the character's dialogue to a partner using the character's voice. As students attempt to mimic the voice of their characters, they become aware of other dialogue the characters might say, additional ways to bring the voice to life, AND the author's perspective when "creating" characters and writing dialogue.

Students then go back and make "voice-building" revisions based on their insights from role-playing.

NOTE: This mini-lesson should be modeled several times by the teacher before students are asked to do it on their own. This activity strengthens the connection between reading and writing, builds fluency, and teaches point of view. Wow!

**Lesson Title:** Edit by Ear

**Focus:** Fluency, word-by-word reading

**Description of Lesson:**

Teacher reads a trade book, excerpt, or article ignoring all ending punctuation in an expressionless voice. She follows up with a discussion about how the text "sounds" when punctuation is ignored. She then reads the text again with expression observing all ending punctuation. During the second reading, students will snap their fingers when periods are needed. Hopefully the students will conclude that ending punctuation does indeed make a difference. Students will then read their own compositions (after having practiced several times) from the author's chair and note punctuation.

## Lesson Title: Two Words

**Focus:** Visualization, making mental images, reading for understanding

### Description of Lesson:

Show students a thought-provoking picture or read a short selection with a powerful message. Ask students to reflect and simply write two words that capture their thinking about the picture or text. Have students share their words with a partner and tell *why* they chose those two particular words. A class list of the words can be organized easily if each student's words are written on separate sticky notes. Sticky notes could be sorted later during a literacy center in a variety of ways: theme, tone, opinions, agree/disagree, shared thoughts, etc.

## Lesson Title: Tattle-Tale Titles

**Focus:** Accessing background knowledge, reflecting on text *prior* to reading

### Description of Lesson:

Read several books aloud to students *without showing or telling* them the title of the book. Brainstorm a list of appropriate titles for each selection. Compare with the real title and discuss students' choices. Later, read aloud a familiar book in which the students already know the title and the story. Brainstorm a list of alternate titles for the familiar book. What else might be a good title for "Goldilocks and the Three Bears"? Stress to students the importance and abundance of information contained in the title of each selection. Have them promise to NEVER skip reading the title again!

**Lesson Title:** Capture My Thoughts

**Focus:** comprehension, self-monitoring

**Description of Lesson:**

On several small sticky notes, have students write the following sentence starters:

- I'm thinking . . .
- This reminds me of . . .
- My friends might . . .
- I wonder if . . .
- Why would . . .

As the students are reading a selected text (or independently reading), have them stop at certain points and choose one of the post-it notes to complete. Join with a partner later to share post-it note reflections and *why* they were thinking that during their reading. All readers need to be reminded to be constructing meaning *as they read* - not waiting until they read the last word and ask "What was this about?"

**Lesson Title:** Truth or Trash?

**Focus:** Locating text evidence to prove an answer

**Description of Lesson:**

Teacher reads selection prior to lesson. Write 6-8 sentences about the story - some sentences are true statements while others are completely false. Cut the sentences apart into strips. After reading, students select a strip, read it aloud, and tell the group if the statement is "truth or trash." "Truth"- the event actually happened in the story. "Trash" - the event did not occur in the story or the details of the event have been changed. Challenge each answer and ask students to prove their answer with text evidence. If the answer is "truth" - give the strip back to the teacher. If the answer is "trash" - crumple up the strip and throw it in the trash!

**Lesson Title:** Would You Buy That?

**Focus:** Visualization, noticing details in text

**Description of Lesson:**

Students will write a descriptive paragraph of what they are wearing that day, paying close attention to the words they choose. They should be instructed that their goal is to entice someone to buy the "outfit" they are wearing. Students will then read their own compositions from the author's chair and the other students will select the top three outfits that they would be interested in purchasing based on the detailed descriptions. OR, students could work in partners, and as one student reads his/her partner's composition, the other acts as an artist in order to illustrate the description of the outfit. Links reading, writing and art!