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**INTRODUCTION**

The principles of effective literacy instruction discussed in this chapter highlight the following key topics:

1. the contribution that current research on literacy instruction can make to program design and literacy instruction;
2. the importance of differentiating instruction to meet the needs of all learners;
3. the importance of recognizing the social nature of language, building a community of learners, and encouraging accountable talk;
4. the importance of teaching concepts and processes that will enable students to transfer their learning to new and increasingly complex situations.

**EFFECTIVE LITERACY INSTRUCTION IS RESEARCH BASED**

Over many decades, theorists and researchers have studied ways to improve teaching in order to enhance student learning. Effective literacy teachers explore relevant theories and embrace recognized research in order to provide the most productive learning environment and the best instructional practices for their students.

This section briefly describes the following concepts, which are highlighted in the research and professional literature on learning:

- brain-compatible learning
- higher-order thinking
- zones of cognitive development
- scaffolding and the gradual release of responsibility

**Brain-Compatible Learning**

Brain-compatible learning, also known as brain-based learning, is an area of research that strives to connect what teachers know about how students learn with what medical researchers know about how the brain works. Although this is still an evolving field, it provides important insights that support the effectiveness of certain teaching strategies and approaches. The chart on page 77 summarizes some of the key insights from current research.
Insights from Research on Brain-Compatible Learning

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What the Research Says</th>
<th>What Teachers Can Do</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Eighty per cent of what we learn and remember comes to us in a visual format.</td>
<td>Use graphic organizers and visual aids in teaching, and demonstrate how they help students with their thinking.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The brain is a pattern seeker.</td>
<td>Teach students how to recognize patterns in language, and show how these patterns can help them.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The brain can handle only a limited amount of new information at a time.</td>
<td>Scaffold the learning by chunking knowledge and skills into manageable bits.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New learning needs to be hooked into prior knowledge.</td>
<td>Activate or build on prior knowledge before learning begins. Model for students how to make connections to what they already know.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stress and fear shut down learning.</td>
<td>Give timely, positive feedback.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Movement stimulates the brain.</td>
<td>Provide an environment in which students feel comfortable taking risks.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Without challenge there is no learning.</td>
<td>Include physical movement and involve students in hands-on activities. Limit lessons to five to ten minutes in length followed by purposeful, active practice.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Teachers who are aware of these findings about brain-compatible learning create student-centred classroom environments that are orderly, flexible, supportive, and inclusive and that encourage risk taking. They understand that students must feel confident in their abilities and must approach all learning with a positive attitude and an open mind that equips them to believe, “Yes I can!”

To prepare the way for new learning, teachers provide their students with concrete, hands-on experiences that involve inquiry and experimentation and that draw on the students’ prior knowledge and experiences. They foster a learning environment where students are able to solve real problems, formulate opinions, create hypotheses, and develop a schema for language and literacy (a framework for understanding oral and written language and for acquiring new language skills and vocabulary).

Effective literacy teachers understand the importance of using non-linguistic representations of knowledge. They provide students with cues and questions at various levels and enable students to use a variety of graphic organizers to summarize their learning. They also make certain that they reinforce effort and provide recognition on an ongoing basis. They ensure that students receive appropriate, specific, and timely feedback that allows them to set goals and make continual progress.
Higher-Order Thinking

Research has shown that effective literacy instruction emphasizes higher-order thinking. Cunningham and Allington (1999) highlight the importance of creating classrooms where students discuss, summarize, evaluate, and compare ideas and information throughout their reading and writing experiences.

Anderson and Krathwohl’s taxonomy of higher-order thinking (described in Chapter 2, “Knowledge and Skills Required for Literacy”, p. 56) provides a framework for planning instruction that moves students beyond basic comprehension to points where they are able to use ideas and information in practical, creative, and critical ways. Students need opportunities to develop skills at all six levels of thinking described in the taxonomy, and they also need instruction that develops their metacognitive and critical-literacy skills, as well as the habits of mind necessary to be proficient and literate communicators.

Critical-literacy skills help students become informed consumers and users of information. Through classroom experiences with diverse texts of all types, students build an understanding of techniques that the information industries use in order to persuade and inform, as well as, in some cases, to deceive and manipulate their audiences.

For more information on higher-order thinking, metacognition, and critical literacy, see pages 55 to 64 in Chapter 2, “Knowledge and Skills Required for Literacy”.

Many additional skill-building strategies and tools that help to build thinking skills are described in the appendix. See the following examples:

- Anticipation Guides
- Brainstorming
- Coding the Text
- Cubing
- Double-Entry Journal
- Focusing Questions
- Four Corners
- Graffiti
- KWL
- Literature Circles
- Mapping
- Questioning the Author
- Ranking Ladder
- Somebody Wanted … But … So
- Think-Aloud
- Think, Predict, Read, Connect (TPRC)
- Value Line
- Walkabout

Zones of Cognitive Development

The theory of zones of cognitive development was put forward by Lev Vygotsky, a Russian theorist whose work on the nature of language and thought became influential in North America in the 1970s. Vygotsky used the term “zone of proximal development”
to refer to the zone, just beyond the student’s independent level of achievement, where learning can occur with the support of a knowledgeable teacher. He described it as “the distance between the actual developmental level as determined by independent problem solving and the level of potential development as determined through problem solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers” (Vygotsky, 1978, p. 860).

Based on this theory, when planning instruction teachers need to determine what each student already knows (the student’s zone of actual development) and, from that assessment, determine what the student needs to learn next (the zone of proximal development). As teachers plan, they consider how they will work within their students’ zones of proximal development to maximize learning.

When students are able to demonstrate their new learning independently, they have reached a new zone of actual development. Once students reach this zone, they are ready to be introduced to new learning. The process is cyclical in the sense that new learning always begins in the zone of proximal development; it is developmental in the sense that each newly acquired concept or skill advances the student towards greater understanding and proficiency in reading, writing, and oral/visual communication.

The following chart illustrates Vygotsky’s zones of cognitive development, and identifies how teachers and students share responsibility in the learning process.

“The teaching/learning process is a complex phenomenon. Everything counts – every word, thought, action and association – and the degree [to which] you (the teacher) orchestrate the environment, the presentation, and the design is the degree to which learning occurs.”

(Lozanov, as discussed in DePorter, Reardon and Singer-Nourie, 1999, p. 3)
Scaffolding and the Gradual Release of Responsibility

Building on Vygotsky’s theory of the zone of proximal development, researchers have developed the concepts of scaffolding and gradual release of responsibility.

The term scaffolding is a metaphor to describe the process of supporting students as they build new knowledge and skills. It involves breaking the knowledge and skills into small steps, modelling the steps, providing support as students learn the steps, and then gradually shifting responsibility to the students to apply the knowledge and skills independently.

Scaffolds may involve the use of tools (such as cue cards, analogies, resources, templates, guides, and models), or techniques (such as a compelling task, guidance on cognitive and social skills, or a teacher’s think-aloud).

Research indicates that scaffolding is helpful in all new learning situations. It is also useful in situations when students are unable to complete a task independently but could succeed with help from the teacher.

Before scaffolding can begin, teachers need to assess their students’ background knowledge and develop a comfortable working rapport with the class. Teachers should be aware that scaffolding is meant to be a temporary strategy to support new learning, not a long-term strategy, and that individual students may need different types of scaffolded support. New learning should always be scaffolded as the teacher works towards gradually releasing responsibility for and control of the relevant knowledge and skills to the students.

Jeffrey Wilhelm (2001, p. 14) describes how teachers can use think-aloud strategies to support new learning and gradually release responsibility to the student. He offers a four-step model for passing strategic expertise to students:

1. Modelling of the strategy (Teacher Does/Students Watch)
2. Apprenticeship of use (Teacher Does/Students Help)
3. Scaffolding strategy use (Students Do/Teacher Helps)
4. Independent use (Students Do/Teacher Watches)

This model aims to ensure that all students will learn by providing instruction that is developmentally appropriate. Wilhelm notes that if students are not progressing, the instruction has not been appropriate (see the chart “Roles for the Teacher and Students in the Key Instructional Approaches”, on page 91).

Carol Ann Tomlinson (1999a, p. 3) offers a model that she calls “the equalizer” to illustrate ways to adjust instruction in order to meet the needs of all students (see “Using ‘The Equalizer’ to Plan Differentiated Instruction”, on page 85).
Rosenshine and Meister (1992) describe six ways of providing scaffolded support to help students develop higher-order thinking skills. They are:

- presenting a new cognitive strategy
- regulating difficulty during guided practice
- varying the context for practice
- providing feedback
- increasing student responsibility
- providing opportunities for independent practice

Effective Literacy Instruction Is Differentiated

“Every child is entitled to the promise of a teacher’s enthusiasm, time, and energy. All children are entitled to teachers who will do everything in their power to help them realize their potential every day.”

(Tomlinson, 1999a, p. 5)

Tomlinson (1995) states that there are four characteristics that mould teaching and learning in an effective differentiated classroom:

1. Instruction is concept based and principle driven. All students have the opportunity to explore and apply the key concepts of the subject being studied. All students come to understand the key principles on which the study is based. Such instruction enables struggling learners to grasp and use powerful ideas and, at the same time, encourages advanced learners to expand their understanding and application of the key concepts and principles. Such instruction stresses understanding or sense making rather than retention and regurgitation of fragmented bits of information. Whereas a “coverage-based” curriculum may cause a teacher to feel compelled to see that all students do the same work, concept-based and principle-driven instruction invites teachers to provide varied learning options. All students thus have the opportunity to explore meaningful ideas through a variety of avenues and approaches.

2. Ongoing assessment of student readiness and growth are built into the curriculum. Teachers do not assume that all students need a given task or segment of study, but continuously assess student readiness and interest. They provide support when students need additional instruction and guidance, and extend student exploration when indications are that a student or group of students is ready to move ahead.

Effective literacy instruction in a differentiated classroom:

- is concept focused and principle driven;
- is based on ongoing assessment;
- allows for flexible groupings of students;
- involves students in making choices and setting goals for their learning.
3. Flexible grouping is consistently used. In a differentiated class, students work in many patterns. Sometimes they work alone, sometimes in pairs, sometimes in groups. Some tasks are readiness based, others interest based or constructed to match learning style. Still others may be a combination of readiness, interest, and learning style. In a differentiated classroom, whole-group instruction may also be used to introduce new ideas or to share learning outcomes.

4. Students are active explorers, with teachers guiding the exploration. Because varied activities often occur simultaneously in a differentiated classroom, the teacher works more as a guide or facilitator of learning than as a dispenser of information. As in a large family, students must learn to be responsible for their own work. Not only does such student centredness give students more ownership of their learning; it also facilitates the important adolescent learning goal of growing independence in thought, planning, and evaluation. Implicit in such instruction are (1) goal-setting shared by the teacher and the student based on the student’s readiness, interest, and learning profile, and (2) assessment predicated on the student’s growth and goal attainment.

Effective literacy teachers know that they must begin their instruction where their students are, rather than where they should be. They realize that all students learn at different rates, bring different skills and background knowledge to the classroom, have different strengths and interests, and learn in different ways. Effective literacy teachers create opportunities for all students to learn, and set high yet attainable targets for them, working “diligently to ensure that struggling, advanced and in-between students work harder than they meant to; achieve more than they thought they could; and come to believe that learning involves effort, risk, and personal triumph” (Tomlinson, 1999a, p. 2).

Planning for differentiated instruction requires the teacher to develop a detailed understanding of each student’s readiness, interests, and modes of learning (learning profile). The teacher must also consider the curriculum content, instructional approaches (processes), student products and performances, and the learning environment, in the light of student strengths and needs in order to select the most appropriate means of curriculum delivery.

**Focusing on the Student**

In planning how best to promote student success, teachers need to know where their students are in order to move them to where they need to go next. Teachers get this information through ongoing assessment and observation.

When students are ready for new learning, teachers develop learning opportunities that are just beyond the students’ current reach (see “Zones of Cognitive Development”, on page 78). Through explicit instruction, guidance, and modelling, they help the students to progress along a continuum of learning towards independence.
Effective teachers use the students’ interests to “hook” them into pursuing doable and authentic tasks. They also strive to understand their students’ preferred modes of learning.

A student’s preferred mode of learning is influenced by many factors, including his or her individual learning style, intelligences, gender, and culture (Tomlinson, 1999a; Gregory and Chapman, 2002). Understanding the student’s mode of learning enables teachers to discover how students learn best. With this information, teachers can teach to the strengths of the students. Teachers can also share strategies to help students progress in areas where they need support.

Teachers find out about their students’ preferred modes of learning through a range of formal and informal assessment strategies and tools, such as conferences, surveys, and reading logs. Assessing students’ readiness before learning and their progress during learning can help teachers choose from a range of instructional approaches, choices, and scaffolds, selecting those that are most appropriate to meet the varying needs, interests, and abilities of their students (Hall, 2004, p. 3). For more information about determining students’ learning strengths and needs, see page 21 of Chapter 1, “The Junior Learner”, in this volume.

**Focusing on the Curriculum**

Differentiated instruction does not involve changing the concepts or goals of the curriculum. Rather, it involves creating an equitable environment in which all students are able to reach their potential and achieve the goals. To create this equitable environment, teachers consider ways to differentiate the content, instructional approaches, student products and performances, and evaluation to allow all students to learn and succeed. Teachers need to have high expectations for all students and at the same time set targets for performance.

**Curriculum Content**

Differentiated content does not mean a “watered-down” curriculum for any student. When selecting content, teachers begin with the curriculum expectations, addressing the overall expectations and the most fundamental concepts and skills that their students need to learn. They find ways to provide the essential information and practice that will enable all students to acquire the same key information.

Teachers can differentiate the curriculum content in many ways, including the following:

- Use many texts of all types, suited to different reading levels.
- Provide time for accountable talk.

“Differentiating instruction means creating multiple paths so that students of different abilities, interests or learning needs experience equally appropriate ways to absorb, use, develop, and present concepts as a part of the daily learning process. It allows students to take greater responsibility and ownership for their own learning, and provides opportunities for peer, teacher and cooperative learning.”

*(Theroux, 2004, p. 1)*
• Allow students to demonstrate learning in a variety of ways.
• Reteach, if necessary.
• Give more time.
• Provide graphic organizers and anchor charts. See “Anchor Charts” in the appendix.
• Allow use of students’ first languages to capture their thinking.
• Encourage students to “go deeper” into a topic.
• Use a KWL organizer to begin learning, and design lessons around what students want to know. See “KWL” in the appendix.
• Target a variety of learning styles and multiple intelligences.
• Give “think time” to students.

Instructional Approaches (Processes)

According to Tomlinson, the process of learning starts when students begin to apply skills and concepts. To differentiate the learning process/activities, teachers look at alternative ways and means to scaffold learning. Some students may require structure and “chunking” of large tasks, while others are able to succeed with a more open-ended approach.

Teachers can differentiate their instructional approaches in many ways, including the following:
• Develop tasks at varying degrees of difficulty (but addressing the same goals).
• Group students in various ways.
• Use a variety of teaching strategies.
• Chunk large tasks for some and leave the process open for others.
• Create “experts” in the classroom.
• Allow students to create tasks or participate in creating them.
• Provide a variety of ways for students to demonstrate learning.
• Create rich tasks that are multilayered.

Student Products and Performance

Teachers who value and support differentiated learning realize that all students must have multiple opportunities to demonstrate what they have learned. To do this, students must have clear guidelines about what will be assessed.
As well, assignments must be designed so that products and performances allow students to demonstrate achievement of the curriculum expectations. Well-designed tasks will include checkpoints for students to see how they are doing, and should assess both the process and the end result. When performances are in the form of a test, the test needs to focus on a demonstration of learning rather than rote memorization.

Teachers can differentiate products and performances in many ways, including the following:

• Provide multi-levelled tasks and materials.
• Create and use rubrics.
• Chunk tasks and use mini-lessons to share ideas for each component.
• Allow for a number of ways for students to demonstrate their learning.
• Pair students to enable them to support one another in completing tasks.
• Allow students to create their own investigations.
• Provide opportunities for students to complete tasks independently or in a small group.
• Provide a range of tasks. (Note: Differentiated tasks must target the same expectations.)

For ways to differentiate the performance tasks, see the chart “Performance Tasks for Multiple Intelligences” in the appendix.

**Using “The Equalizer” to Plan Differentiated Instruction**

Tomlinson (1999a) has created an effective model, called “The Equalizer”, to guide differentiated instruction (see the chart on page 87). The Equalizer identifies a variety of instructional accommodations to challenge students at different levels of readiness. It offers a way to visualize the concept of differentiation and to consider ways to create a differentiated activity.

The Equalizer consists of nine components of classroom instruction and learning. Each component is a continuum, drawn to look like one of the sliding volume controls one might see on an audio mixer or receiver. Each continuum, from left to right, indicates increasing degrees of challenge. Learners who are advanced or at a higher level of readiness will generally be more appropriately challenged towards the right side of the continuum.
The Equalizer helps teachers to pinpoint a starting point for their students, based on the students’ readiness. Following are the nine components of instruction, and the beginning and end points on the continuum for each component:

1. Information or ideas are **foundational** when they are basic, straightforward, or close to what is already known. They are **transformational** if they cause students to stretch, bend, or modify the idea beyond the way it was presented in class or in the textbook.

2. Representations of ideas are **concrete** if they are tangible, can be physically manipulated, or deal with specific events. They are **abstract** if they focus more on meanings, implications, or principles.

3. Resources to solve a problem are **simple** if they deal with one or few events or meanings, perhaps in a big-picture way. They are **complex** if they deal with multiple events or meanings, perhaps in a more detailed way.

4. Directions to a solution have **fewer facets** if they require one (or few) steps, actions, or applications. They have **more facets** when they require a greater number of steps, actions, or applications.

5. Applications or insights may require **smaller leaps** by asking students to apply ideas in settings relatively like those they have already mastered, or to make connections among comfortable and familiar ideas. They may require **greater leaps** if they call for putting ideas to work in unfamiliar settings or making connections among widely different fields or ideas.

6. Solutions and approaches are **more structured** when students require relatively more guidance to complete them or are given fewer options. They are **more open** when they involve relatively greater improvisation or decision making for students to complete them.

7. Problems in research and in products are **clearly defined** when the steps and methods for solving them are easily evident, when all variables are relevant to the solution, and when there is a right answer. They are **fuzzy** when the problem itself is not clearly defined, the method for solving it is ambiguous, irrelevant variables are mixed with relevant ones, and there is no right answer.

8. Tasks are **less independent** when the planning, design, and other considerations are largely prescribed and modelled by the teacher. They become **more independent** as the student takes more responsibility for planning, designing, monitoring, establishing criteria for success, and other considerations.

9. “Pace of study and thought typically need to be relatively slower to enable additional practice or to allow greater depth of study, or relatively quicker to enable brisk exploration of the essentials or to eliminate practice that is redundant for a given learner” (Tomlinson, 2004b; italics added).
Strategies and Tools for Differentiated Instruction

Differentiated instruction is inclusive by nature; that is, most of the strategies that teachers use to differentiate the learning are intended to span all abilities. However, some strategies work particularly well for students who are currently struggling, while others may best suit those who are ready for enriched learning opportunities. Differentiating instruction for these students helps them to engage in the learning and reach their potential with increased satisfaction and decreased frustration.

Struggling learners often require more guided practice and support from the teacher before they attempt tasks independently. As Strickland, Ganske, and Monroe observe, “Struggling learners, in particular, need guided instruction that helps to make assigned tasks transparent to them. They don't function well in classrooms where there is a heavy emphasis on merely giving assignments and little emphasis on techniques such as modelling and coaching” (2002, p. 47).
Like all learners, these students benefit from instruction and activities that tap into their interests and preferred learning styles, and that allow for some choice. Keeping in mind that modelling and coaching are keys to success, teachers may find the following strategies, which are described in the appendix, particularly beneficial for struggling learners:

- Contracts
- Independent Projects
- Learning Buddies

Another beneficial strategy, Collaborative Learning, is described later in this chapter (see page 96).

Learners who need enrichment benefit from differentiation that provides challenging tasks and materials that target their gifts and talents. These tasks are often multilayered, requiring the students to think critically as they hypothesize, investigate, and solve problems. Gifted and talented students enjoy the opportunity to choose activities that are significant to them. This freedom to choose should also be reflected in the products or performances they are asked to create or perform to demonstrate their learning. Often teachers merely provide extra work when what students need is different work that allows for deeper learning.

Keeping in mind the students’ learning strengths, and the motivating power of choice, teachers may find the following strategies, described in the appendix, particularly beneficial for students who require enrichment:

- Contracts
- Curriculum Compacting
- Independent Projects
- Literature Circles
- Tiered Assignments

**Choosing Instructional Approaches**

Teachers select instructional approaches based on information obtained from assessments. Then through planned and purposeful literacy instruction, they help their students to develop the knowledge and skills they need to become strategic, motivated, and independent learners. The principles of scaffolding and gradually releasing responsibility to the student give teachers a way to think about how best to match their instructional approaches to the students’ current development, with the aim of preparing the students to use their new knowledge and skills independently (Wilhelm, 2001).
Although teachers use many different instructional approaches and tactics with their students, the present guide highlights four key approaches that teachers can use, separately and in combination, to move students towards independence in the classroom: modelling (including read-aloud and modelled writing); shared practice; guided practice; and independent practice. The following chart shows that these four approaches provide a range of options for scaffolding new learning and gradually releasing responsibility to the students.

**Key Instructional Approaches for an Effective Literacy Program**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Modelling</th>
<th>Shared Practice</th>
<th>Guided Practice</th>
<th>Independent Practice</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Read-Aloud</td>
<td>Shared Reading</td>
<td>Guided Reading</td>
<td>Independent Reading</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Modelled Writing</td>
<td>Shared Writing</td>
<td>Guided Writing</td>
<td>Independent Writing</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Teachers do not necessarily use the key instructional approaches in a linear fashion, always starting with modelling; rather, they select the approach that matches the students’ learning needs for the specific lesson or task. During any of these approaches, the teacher might interrupt the reading or writing activity to offer explicit instruction or a mini-lesson on an important concept (see “The Importance of Explicit Instruction”, on page 90).

Following is a brief overview of the key instructional approaches.

**Modelling:** The teacher shows how an experienced reader or writer reads a text or performs a writing task. For example, in a read-aloud activity, the teacher demonstrates expressive, fluent reading, and might think aloud at certain points to demonstrate how an effective reader determines the meaning of unfamiliar words, monitors comprehension, or uses other strategies for making meaning. A read-aloud or modelled-writing exercise can be a highly effective way to introduce a new strategy or a text that is beyond the students’ current ability.

**Shared Practice:** The teacher and students work together on a reading or writing activity. If the students already have a sense of what the appropriate strategies look like and sound like, a shared reading or writing exercise can provide an opportunity to discuss the strategies and use them with the teacher’s active involvement. It is also an ideal time to provide explicit instruction about the strategies and behaviours of successful readers and writers because the teaching is accompanied by hands-on learning.
Guided Practice: The students have an opportunity to apply new concepts, skills, or strategies previously taught during read-aloud, modelled writing, and shared reading and writing sessions, thus moving closer to independence. At this stage, the teacher is still actively engaged with the students – conferring, providing feedback, and intervening as required. The students share their thinking processes with the teacher and each other in order to consolidate their understanding. Students can practise the reading or writing strategy in pairs and interact in small flexible groupings. Accountable talk is an essential component at this stage of learning. Guided practice sessions provide opportunities for students to reflect on themselves as learners and help to build their metacognitive skills.

Independent Practice: This occurs after the students have had ample time to practise a new strategy with support from both the teacher and one another. While gradually giving the students more responsibility for their learning, the teacher still provides support and feedback as needed. The students receive individual feedback and praise for their successes in applying the strategy and in demonstrating their understanding to the teacher and to one another. Accountable talk remains a key component at this stage of learning.

Following independent practice, students are ready to apply their learning to a new genre, format, or situation. As students are faced with more challenging situations, they reflect and draw on prior learning and effectively apply the strategy to a new situation. At this stage, the teacher does an assessment of the learning demonstrated in each student’s work and helps the student to set new goals.

The chart on page 91 describes the roles of the teacher and students in each of the four key instructional approaches, showing how teachers might use the approaches in combination to release responsibility gradually to their students. Wilhelm calls this “passing strategic expertise to students” (Wilhelm, 2001, p. 14).

The Importance of Explicit Instruction

Explicit instruction refers to the clear, direct, and purposeful teaching of specific knowledge, skills, and strategies. It is usually a part of both modelling and shared practice, but it can also occur as a planned or spontaneous part of a guided or independent activity – whenever the teacher sees a need to introduce or clarify a concept.

Beers (2003) emphasizes the importance of explicit instruction for helping students to develop as readers, writers, and speakers. She notes that explicit instruction takes the guesswork out of what teachers want students to learn. Strategies, skills, and concepts are taught explicitly and directly. Explicit instruction helps students to understand that effective readers and writers consciously plan the strategies they need to enhance understanding and communicate ideas effectively.
Roles for the Teacher and Students in the Key Instructional Approaches

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Instructional Approach</th>
<th>Teacher’s Role</th>
<th>Students’ Role</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>MODELLING</strong></td>
<td>Teacher Does</td>
<td>Students Watch</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>This involves:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• identifying the specific strategy</td>
<td></td>
<td>This involves:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• explaining why students are learning the strategy, and when and where they will use it</td>
<td></td>
<td>• listening</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• showing how to do it</td>
<td></td>
<td>• observing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• thinking aloud while demonstrating</td>
<td></td>
<td>• thinking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students Participate</td>
<td></td>
<td>Students Do</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>This involves:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• listening and participating</td>
<td></td>
<td>using the strategy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• identifying where and when the strategy could be used</td>
<td></td>
<td>applying the learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• attempting the new learning</td>
<td></td>
<td>directing own activity</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| **SHARED PRACTICE**            | Teacher Does   | Students Watch |
| (usually in small groups)      | This involves: | This involves: |
| • thinking aloud               | • listening    | • using the strategy |
| • modelling                   | • observing    | • thinking aloud and talking about the strategy |
| • leading the discussion      | • scaffolding  | • solving problems |
| • explaining                   | • clarifying   | • correcting   |
| • involving students          | • giving feedback | • critically analysing the achievement |

| **GUIDED PRACTICE**            | Teacher Structures and Supports (as needed) | Students Practise |
| (as needed)                   | This involves:                                | This involves: |
| • observing                   | • using the strategy                          | • observing and monitoring |
| • scaffolding                 | • thinking aloud and talking about the strategy | • conferring |
| • clarifying                  | • solving problems                            | • assessing |
| • giving feedback             | • correcting                                  | • setting goals |
| • encouraging                 | • critically analysing the achievement        | providing opportunities for independent practice and application |

| **INDEPENDENT PRACTICE AND APPLICATION** | Teacher Watches | Students Do |
| This involves:                   |                | This involves: |
| • observing and monitoring       | • using the strategy                            | using the strategy independently |
| • conferring                     | • applying the learning                         | applying the learning |
| • assessing                      | • directing own activity                        | directing own activity |
| • setting goals                  | • thinking aloud to demonstrate understanding   | • thinking aloud to demonstrate understanding |
| • providing opportunities for independent practice and application | • assessing own work                            | • assessing own work |
| • planning additional support and future instruction | • reflecting                                     | • reflecting |
Explicit instruction can take the form of mini-lessons – short, focused lessons on a specific skill or strategy. In these lessons, teachers focus on one or two key strategies or skills that students need to know. Repeatedly and over time, the teacher instructs students through direct modelling and support. At times, the teacher highlights these concepts and skills for students by expressing them aloud.

**Effective Literacy Instruction Is Collaborative**

“Literacy thrives in a mutually supportive community of learners. Effective literacy instruction for junior learners is highly collaborative, with plentiful opportunities for genuine discussion and interaction among students and between the student and teacher. Collaborative learning invites students to make choices, derive pleasure from their learning, take risks, practise and refine their literacy and learning strategies, and develop independence. It provides a safe and positive environment for students to engage in the social interactions that are so important to this age group, and to explore the social nature of language and literacy.”

*(Literacy for Learning, p. 28)*

Collaboration *among educators* plays an important role in strengthening literacy instruction. As professionals, we recognize that our colleagues – ESL teachers, special education teachers, teacher-librarians, computer specialists, consultants, and grade partners – have a wealth of expertise that can help us meet the needs of our students. Collaboration with our peers becomes a valued teaching practice.

This team approach, combining professional talent, knowledge, and insight, not only improves learning opportunities for students but also assists in bringing teachers to their full potential in achieving student success.

The main focus of this section, however, is on enhancing literacy instruction by promoting collaboration *among students* and *between students and teacher*. To create a productive community of learners, teachers carefully consider the following in their planning and in their daily interactions with students:

- the importance of talk
- the social and emotional environment
- collaborative learning
- student groupings
- routines to support learning

“We need to set up our classrooms so that students are able to achieve both academically and socially and also acquire the life skills necessary to become thoughtful, contributing members of our democratic society.”

*(Routman, 2000, p. 537)*


**The Importance of Talk**

Because junior students are generally social by nature, they enjoy sitting with others and sharing experiences. Teachers capitalize on this in the junior grades by providing multiple opportunities to engage in accountable talk. Talk not only promotes intellectual development, it also helps students to develop a sense of community and instils a sense of belonging (Cole, 2003). Throughout the junior grades, students learn to use talk to solve problems, refine their thinking, connect to the ideas of others, and get along with others.

Talk is the “major motor of intellectual development” (Calkins, 2001). Talking with others and sharing ideas is fundamental to learning, but not all talk sustains learning. For talk to promote learning, students need to be accountable for what they say and how they listen. They need explicit instruction in oral communication strategies, and opportunities to practise, so that they are equipped to interpret what others are saying, ask relevant questions, and engage in debate or respectful dialogue.

Students need to develop the ability to disagree in an agreeable way, keep an open mind yet continue to be independent thinkers, solve problems cooperatively, and reach consensus. These important interpersonal skills can all be developed through literacy learning. To help students improve these skills, teachers can model accountable talk and then post anchor charts in the classroom that describe procedures and guidelines for appropriate behaviour. See, for example, “Listening to and Learning From My Peers” in the appendix.

Fountas and Pinnell (2001) focus on oral language as the foundation for development in reading and writing. It is through talk that students learn a new skill or concept, clarify their understanding, and develop an appreciation and understanding of other points of view. Through discussion, students are able to articulate what they believe, listen to the beliefs of others, take in new information, modify their beliefs, or strengthen them by clarifying their rationale and support. Engaging in rich dialogue helps students to come to new understandings and develop their reasoning ability.

Because accountable talk requires students to observe the rules of reason and logic, it encourages them to speak, listen, read, write, and think critically. Practice in critical thinking helps students develop as critical learners, make thoughtful decisions about their learning, and take responsibility for it.
Teachers who understand the value of accountable talk provide time throughout the day for students to interact with their peers. To facilitate this interaction, they organize the classroom so that students can easily converse with one another without having to move their desks or speak loudly. Creating small groups of desks or having small groups of students sitting around a table facilitates participation in conversation. Small-group settings encourage students to share and clarify their thoughts, opinions, and ideas – ultimately leading the students to a deeper understanding.

Many of the skill-building activities and tools in the appendix promote accountable talk. For example, see the following topics:

- Book Talks
- Carousel
- Four Corners
- Graffiti
- “I” Message
- Inside-Outside Circle
- Jigsaw
- Listening To and Learning From My Peers
- Literature Circles
- Place Mat
- Questioning the Author
- Ranking Ladder
- Retell, Relate, Reflect
- Say Something
- Tea Party
- Think/Timed-Pair-Share
- Value Line
- Walkabout

For more information about oral communication as a foundation for literacy learning, see page 31 of Chapter 2, “Knowledge and Skills Required for Literacy”.

The Social and Emotional Environment

When students feel supported and respected by their teachers and peers, they are more likely to welcome new tasks and challenges with confidence. In Reading With Meaning (2002), Miller suggests that, by establishing bonds and relationships early in September, the teacher lays the foundation for a caring and respectful learning community throughout the year.

It is important for students to bond not only with the teacher but also with each other. This bonding requires time – for students to get to know one another, to discover each other’s strengths, and to value each other’s differences.

To create an inclusive and respectful environment, teachers set and model clear expectations for appropriate behaviour. They require students to demonstrate respect for themselves, others, and their surroundings; to value their own knowledge and experiences and those of all their classmates; to listen attentively; and to be helpful and encouraging to one another.
When problems arise, teachers respond immediately, either by speaking privately to those involved or by facilitating a discussion between or among those involved (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2003, p. 13.25). By helping students to learn acceptable behaviour and positive ways of relating to one another, teachers reinforce a sense of community and responsibility that facilitates teaching and learning (for example, by allowing teachers to hold uninterrupted discussions or conferences with individuals or small groups).

One way to foster mutual respect and inclusion in the classroom is to create classroom agreements. Gibbs (2001) suggests four specific agreements that can be made with students to encourage a sense of inclusiveness and mutual respect in the classroom: attentive listening; appreciation/no put-downs; the right to pass (that is, to decline to participate or to share personal information during discussions); and mutual respect.

To encourage inclusiveness and mutual respect, the teacher may do the following:

- Invite students to share with their classmates their personal preferences for reading materials and/or their thoughts and opinions on books (for example, through book talks, author’s chair sessions, or literature circles).
- Offer students opportunities to share their written work with their classmates at various stages of the writing process (for example, through an author’s chair session).
- Offer differentiated instruction to respond to a variety of strengths and needs (for example, small groups, groups with memberships that change according to need).
- Ensure that the classroom literacy resources are culturally diverse enough to represent the broad community (for example, they should include material in the students’ first languages and a wide variety of books, newspapers, and music).
• Ensure that the class literacy resources reflect different interests, including gender-related interests (for example, comic books, manuals, magazines, and Internet websites, in addition to traditional texts).

• Ensure that the class literacy resources reflect students’ personal situations (for example, stories or articles about children coping with disabilities, illness, divorce, death in the family).

• Create visual displays to reinforce positive messages about living and working together (for example, photo collages, inspiring quotations, and anchor charts that summarize class agreements and routines).

For related information, see “Personal Identity”, page 17 in Chapter 1, “The Junior Learner”.

Many of the skill-building activities and tools in the appendices of this volume aim to encourage a positive social and emotional environment. For specific activities to promote self-esteem and mutual respect, see the following topics in the appendix:

• Car Wash
• Extended Name Tags
• “I” Message
• Listening To and Learning From My Peers

Collaborative Learning

A key strategy for building a learning community is to incorporate collaborative learning into daily activities. Collaborative learning (also called cooperative learning) is an instructional approach that requires students of varying abilities to work together in small groups or teams to solve a problem, complete a project, or achieve a common goal. The teacher may assign each group or team member a specific responsibility that is essential to the successful completion of the task.

Extensive research has revealed that students learn more effectively through collaborative learning than through individual, competitive, or teacher-centred approaches (Gibbs, 2001, p. 159). From the moment humans are born, they learn through social interaction with the people around them. Through communication with others, they solidify, deepen, and extend their thinking. Humans are social beings, and their brains grow in a social environment.

The major advantages of collaborative learning are the increased levels of achievement and retention that occur when students are concerned about one another’s learning, and talk through their problems. Through this approach, students develop respect and empathy for others and the ability to work as part of a team. These are very important life skills.
Collaborative learning does not replace good teaching; it usually follows it. When it is well managed, collaborative learning can be a powerful way to motivate students and provide them with peer support as they engage in inquiry, debriefing, and the consolidation of skills, concepts, and strategies. It also provides the teacher with a way to differentiate instruction by structuring groups and tasks in a variety of ways.

Simply putting students into groups, however, will not, in itself, improve student achievement. Teachers who use collaborative learning successfully carefully analyse the successes and challenges that individual students encounter while working in groups, and respond with strategic shifts in their teaching to ensure that all students succeed as collaborative learners.

According to Johnson and Johnson (1999), teachers should explicitly incorporate the following five elements into collaborative learning opportunities:

1. **Individual accountability/personal responsibility:** Each group member is held responsible for his or her own learning, as well as for the learning of the other group members. In the end, each member is held responsible for the outcome. Each student is held accountable as a productive member of the group, and cannot easily opt out or “hitchhike” along the way. When teachers ignore this element of collaborative learning, they increase the likelihood that students will be unable to work effectively in groups, and student achievement is likely to decline. Students must understand the expectation that they will learn together, and then demonstrate their individual mastery of the material.

2. **Positive interdependence:** The group must establish a common goal that is both clear and meaningful, and all members must make a commitment to its successful achievement. Johnson and Johnson cite other types of positive interdependence, but identify having a common goal as the most important type for the success of a group.

3. **Use of collaborative skills:** It is vital to teach students collaborative skills in school, as many students may not learn them elsewhere. Students who work together effectively and efficiently are able to accomplish far more than those who do not. Depending on the specific needs of the students in the class and the purpose of a lesson, teachers may choose to explicitly teach social, communication, or critical-thinking skills as part of a collaborative lesson (see the Sample Lesson at the end of this chapter). Only after students have successfully demonstrated that they have internalized a skill does the teacher introduce a new one. This process allows for the scaffolding of skills over the course of the year.

4. **Face-to-face interaction and positive feedback:** The teacher ensures that the physical set-up of groups encourages students to work together and to communicate effectively. Because of their close proximity, students are able both to listen with their ears and to “read” body language with their eyes. They can pick up on tone of voice, choice of words, and the subtleties of posture and gestures. In this way, they develop their ability both to interpret and to communicate meaning. The teacher also encourages students to applaud the successes and efforts of each group member.
5. **Processing of the group effort and the results:** At the end of each collaborative learning lesson, students need time to discuss, describe, and reflect on the academic and collaborative success of the group, its individual members, and the whole class. To ensure continued improvement over time, the students and teacher set new goals to be addressed in future collaborative sessions. To practise this element of collaborative learning successfully, the groups may need to continue working together over several days or weeks, or even for a full school year.

Many of the skill-building activities and tools in the appendix are designed to promote collaborative learning. See the following topics:

- Book Talks
- Brainstorming
- Carousel
- Four Corners
- Graffiti
- Jigsaw
- Learning Buddies
- Listening To and Learning From My Peers
- Literature Circles
- Place Mat
- Ranking Ladder
- Roundtable
- Study Guide Project
- Tea Party
- Value Line
- Walkabout

**Student Groupings**

“Students need opportunities to experience collaborative learning in flexible and dynamic groupings. These groupings evolve and vary in size and composition as required by the task and the needs of all the students. Teachers continually assess their students to determine the groupings that will best meet their needs. A mixture of whole-class, small-group, paired, and individual learning is ideal. Groups can be heterogeneous (mixed) or homogeneous (similar or the same), and can be organized according to needs, interests, abilities, first languages, components of a task, or other considerations. It is not productive to stream students into static groupings, as these groupings limit the interaction and feedback that [are] essential for the development of effective communicators and literacy learners.”

*(Literacy for Learning, p. 40)*

**Group Size**

Teachers determine the size of student groups on the basis of the complexity of the task being assigned, assessment data, and the past experience of the students with collaborative work. If, for example, the goal is to have the students share their thinking, then pairs of students would be an efficient and effective grouping. If, on the other hand, the goal is to evaluate material or solve a problem, groups of three or four would be good choices.
The size of a group can have a significant impact on the learning of its members. According to Marzano, Pickering, and Pollock (2001), groups with more than five members are less effective than smaller groups. If students have had little experience with working in groups, it is essential that they begin working in pairs and work their way up to larger groups over time.

**Group Formation**

When arranging students into groups, teachers consider a variety of criteria to maximize the learning experience for all participants. These criteria include the strengths, skills, ability levels, needs, interests, and backgrounds of each student. Teachers acquire this information from their assessments.

At times it is useful to group students of similar ability together in homogeneous groupings (for example, when the students are practising a particular skill that involves using a text independently); in general, however, heterogeneous groupings are a better choice. Differences make collaborative learning powerful and help students to appreciate the kinds of differences they will encounter in groups throughout school and life. The weakest group that a teacher can put together is one in which everyone thinks the same way.

**Group Duration**

Johnson and Johnson (1999) identified three types of collaborative learning groups:

1. **Informal groups.** These can be created on the spot and usually last for no more than a few minutes during class time. See the descriptions of groups for Think/ Timed-Pair-Share or Inside-Outside Circle in the appendix.

2. **Formal groups.** These are designed to last for longer periods of time, such as several days or weeks. The learning opportunities provided must be carefully designed by the teacher to incorporate the five basic elements described above under “Collaborative Learning” (pages 97–98).

3. **Base groups.** These may last for a term or the full school year. An example of the base-group approach is Tribes Learning Communities (TLC), created by Jeanne Gibbs (see Gibbs, 2001), which explicitly supports teachers through the process of creating a safe and respectful learning environment for all students. Developing group cohesiveness takes time, but when students realize that they will be spending long periods of time together, they work hard to develop the collaborative skills required to achieve success as a group.

“A … classroom that succeeds cannot be one in which the teacher teaches the whole class all the time nor can it be one in which children are assigned to static reading groups…. Instruction that treats them all the same or that arbitrarily divides them into three groups will not meet their diverse needs.”

(Allington and Cunningham, 2003, p. 239)

“Students of low ability actually perform worse when they are placed in homogeneous groups with students of low ability – as opposed to students of low ability placed in heterogeneous groups.”

(Marzano, Pickering, and Pollock, 2001, p. 87)
Routines to Support Learning

Clearly established rules and routines enable teachers to maximize the time available for effective instruction and practice and to minimize interruptions. Teachers begin explicit instruction in, and modelling of, these rules and routines in September and continuously reinforce them throughout the year. It is important to keep in mind, however, that rules and routines are most successful over the long term if students are involved in establishing them.

Routines based on established expectations of classroom behaviour help students to know what to expect and what is expected of them, so that they are able to focus on learning. Routines encourage students to take an active role in the learning community, to exercise their choices responsibly, to manage time effectively, and to move forward in addressing their goals.

Routines may be established for a wide range of classroom activities, but it is important for the expectations for behaviour to be similar in all routines. Students are more likely to meet expectations when the routines are simple, logical, and reasonable.

Teachers and students can work together to develop routines for general activities such as sharpening pencils, taking washroom breaks, and using computers. They can also develop routines for a variety of literacy activities, such as writing in reading-response journals during independent reading sessions, submitting work, scheduling conferences, and exchanging their books.

Consistency of Routines Across Subjects and Grades

When all teachers of the junior grades in a school establish and use similar routines, students quickly learn what is expected of them. Consistency across subjects and grades expands students’ sense of comfort, builds their self-assurance, and promotes an environment where they feel comfortable taking risks in their learning.

Teachers use explicit instruction and modelling to convey their expectations for working collaboratively and sharing the classroom space. These include expectations for:

- using and maintaining classroom and school resources (such as anchor charts, word walls, book displays, reference books, sign-out systems for classroom resources and the school library);
- organizing and maintaining the students’ own work spaces, storage spaces, and surroundings;

“Time invested in the introduction and practice of routines will pay off in the form of a smooth-running classroom.”

(Ontario Ministry of Education, 2003, p. 13.22)

“Teaching responsibility for choices is an incremental, necessary step on a pathway of continued learning.”

(Allen, 2000, p. 19)
• meeting for whole-group and small-group instruction, discussions, and conferences (for example, read-alouds, guided reading, peer editing);

• engaging in accountable talk (when to talk, how to speak and listen with respect, where to meet for discussion, acceptable noise levels);

• behaving respectfully (for example, not disrupting others while working independently; respecting rules and routines);

• participating in various instructional activities (for example, what to do during independent reading or guided reading);

• finding a quiet space to work;

• keeping track of homework assignments and submitting finished work;

• solving problems.

Routines help the teacher and students to use time effectively, including transitional times at the beginning and end of the school day and between activities. For example, students might use transitional times to engage in meaningful literacy tasks such as the following:

• recording a strategy learned during a reading or writing lesson or a content-area activity (for example, making predictions, asking questions, identifying points that need clarification, reflecting on themselves as readers or writers)

• recording ideas or questions about their writing in a writer’s notebook

• recording pertinent information in their agendas (for example, homework, assignments, things to do)

Teachers can help students to follow routines by:

• setting clear expectations;

• consistently reinforcing the expectations (for example, with anchor charts and constructive feedback);

• using praise to reinforce self-managing behaviour;

• teaching students how to help each other.
Structuring Collaborative Learning Lessons

Collaborative learning requires deliberate planning, explicit teaching, and multiple opportunities to practise, in order for students to have successful experiences. The gradual-release-of-responsibility model, which includes teacher modelling, followed by shared and guided practice, and leading to independent participation, ensures that students clearly understand what is expected of them during collaborative learning sessions. The Sample Lesson at the end of this chapter demonstrates how teachers can use collaborative learning to enhance academic learning.

Teaching Social, Communication, or Critical-Thinking Skills

The following steps will support the implementation of skills as part of a collaborative learning lesson:

1. Choose one skill.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Social Skills</th>
<th>Communication Skills</th>
<th>Critical-Thinking Skills</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• getting into groups</td>
<td>• attentive listening</td>
<td>• planning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• bringing necessary materials</td>
<td>• asking for help or giving help</td>
<td>• making suggestions or responding to suggestions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• staying with group until task is</td>
<td>• asking questions or responding to</td>
<td>• asking for reasons or giving reasons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>done</td>
<td>questions</td>
<td>• paraphrasing to show understanding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• greeting others</td>
<td>• giving instructions or following</td>
<td>• asking for feedback or giving feedback</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• introducing oneself and/or others</td>
<td>instructions</td>
<td>• checking accuracy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• calling your members by name</td>
<td>• disagreeing politely or responding to</td>
<td>• checking understanding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• waiting patiently</td>
<td>disagreement</td>
<td>• persuading others</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• saying “Goodbye”</td>
<td>• talking in quiet voices</td>
<td>• summarizing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• saying “Thank you”</td>
<td>• giving praise or responding to praise</td>
<td>• compromising</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• apologizing or accepting</td>
<td>• encouraging others to participate</td>
<td>• reflecting on experience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>apologies</td>
<td>• resolving conflict</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Teaching Social, Communication, or Critical-Thinking Skills – Continued

2. Use a T-Chart to discuss what the skill will look like and sound like. For example:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Attentive Listening</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Actions</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>– One person talks at a time.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>– Listeners look at the speaker.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>– Listeners try to be aware of their own listening.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>– Listeners acknowledge the message and the messenger.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>– Listeners nod heads to signal understanding or agreement.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>– Listeners try to “see with their ears, hear with their eyes”.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>– Listeners are silent and attentive.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3. Model the skill. Ask for student volunteers to help model the skill. Show both “yes” and “no” examples of the skill.

4. Practise the skill before using it in the collaborative groups. Role play scenarios as a whole class and present both “yes” and “no” examples.

5. Practise and apply the skill in established collaborative groups. Some teachers find it useful to rotate students through specific roles that complement the collaborative skill being learned. For example, the roles for attentive listening might be:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Role</th>
<th>Actions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>ENCOURAGER</strong></td>
<td>– “draws out” the reluctant student</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>– attempts to motivate the team</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>– encourages all members to participate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>– shows appreciation through positive comments after people have spoken</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>PARAPHRASER</strong></td>
<td>– checks for understanding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>– clarifies ideas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>GATEKEEPER</strong></td>
<td>– equalizes participation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>– shuts the gate for one and opens it for another</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>RECORDER</strong></td>
<td>– writes down group decisions and answers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>– makes sure things get recorded</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

6. Process group implementation of the skill (see the “Collaborative Learning Group Assessment” form, on pages 113–114, at the end of the Sample Lesson).

7. Once the skill is mastered, introduce a new skill.

8. Repeat the cycle.
Effective Literacy Instruction Leads to Learning That Is Transferable and Enduring

Literacy skills are transferable in that they help students to learn in all areas of the curriculum throughout their school years. Literacy skills are enduring in that they are important life skills that will help students to succeed personally and professionally throughout their lives.

Integrating Literacy Learning Across the Curriculum

Students use literacy strategies and skills in all subject areas at school. In the junior grades the literacy demands increase dramatically. Students are expected to read and write more independently and more often, to read longer and more difficult texts in different subject areas, and to assume more responsibility for independent study and learning. They are asked to remember more information; to explore, summarize, and interpret meaning in every subject area; and to make meaningful connections across the curriculum. They are also exposed to more specialized concepts and technical terms. Each discipline has its own “embedded literacy” – frequently used text forms, conventions, and vocabulary that are specific to the subject area. It is important for students to become familiar with the forms of expression particular to a discipline and also with any special knowledge required to read their content-area textbooks and reference materials.

The challenges and opportunities presented by these increasing literacy demands are best met by integrating literacy instruction across the curriculum. Effective teachers make explicit how language learning applies to other curriculum areas. Their long-term planning is deliberate and thoughtful, so that what they are teaching in language is taught in a timely way in order to support what students will need to be able to do in other subjects.

Teachers of all subjects need to participate in literacy instruction. In classrooms where more than one teacher is responsible for instruction, it is essential that teachers meet regularly to plan integrated, cross-curricular instruction and activities that promote the systematic development of literacy skills. This involves:

- purposefully connecting reading, writing, talking, listening, and thinking;
- teaching literacy strategies and skills in all subjects;
- offering authentic cross-curricular learning experiences that connect to students’ lives and to the wider world;
- providing time for students to integrate and practise new knowledge and skills in all subjects;

“Literacy knowledge and skills are best developed in all areas of the curriculum by a consistent combination of intensive instruction, teachable moments, and student practice.”

(Ontario Ministry of Education, 2002b, p. 6)
• encouraging students to think critically and reflect metacognitively in all subjects;
• using tools and technologies in meaningful ways to support literacy learning in all subjects;
• working with other teachers to develop a whole-school approach to literacy.

Relevant and Authentic Literacy Instruction

Effective teachers understand that, in order for learning to be enduring, it must be meaningful and relevant to students. Instruction needs to be centred on authentic learning experiences, engaging students in activities that have meaning and substance, and that promote wonder and inquiry. Students need to see the value in what they are learning and understand how it applies to their lives.

When students see that they are writing or reading for a real purpose, they are more likely to be fully and actively engaged. For example, in a persuasive writing lesson, students may be asked to write a letter relating to a real concern they have, in order to bring about a desired change.

Students need to understand that what they are learning in their language classes is applicable to new and increasingly complex situations in all subject areas, both in school and outside of school. For example, the skills required to write a procedure can be used in science and art classes and also when students are learning to bake a cake at a friend’s house.

When students learn how to take point-form notes in language class, this skill will be relevant not just in history class this year but also in ten years’ time, when they are listening to a university lecture.

Literacy Instruction, Inquiry Skills, and the Independent Learner

An integrated approach to literacy instruction allows students to practise their skills in a variety of contexts. Literacy learning becomes relevant and transferable – both to other subjects in the classroom and to the students’ continuously changing and information-driven world.

Knowledge is rapidly expanding and changing; it is impossible to keep up with the flood of new information. We cannot teach students all that they will need to know in the future, when they go out into the world as responsible citizens. We do not know at this moment what knowledge and skills they will require. It is, however, possible to give students the tools to acquire and apply the necessary knowledge and skills. This can be done by building on their natural curiosity and their desire and ability to question and learn.

Fountas and Pinnell describe two kinds of inquiry: “information seeking, which involves seeking clarification, explanation, justification, or confirmation”, and “wondering, which involves others in reflecting, predicting, exploring, and considering possibilities”.

(Fountas and Pinnell, 2001, p. 260)
Students who have strong inquiry skills will be able to find whatever information they need in order to achieve their goals. Regardless of the format the information is packaged in, they will be able to apply their inquiry and thinking skills in order to find and process what they need and respond constructively.

Explicit teaching of the inquiry process is part of the curriculum in most subjects. In addition, teachers can model the process of inquiry for students. As they work to improve their own practice, teachers can share with students the purpose of the inquiry, the method, and the ongoing thinking and learning. The teacher’s example will provide a useful reference for students as they pursue their own inquiries.

Literacy learning both depends on and encourages the development of inquiry skills. Inquiry helps students to see and set real purposes for reading, writing, talking, listening, viewing, and representing. Students use inquiry to refine their reading and writing skills, and become better “meaning makers”. As they search for answers in a text, question the purpose and audience for a piece of writing, and engage in rich discussions and share their personal insights with their peers, students strengthen their ability to interpret texts and to form, refine, and articulate their own views. In this way, they develop into competent, independent learners and problem solvers equipped to achieve their learning goals and meet the challenges of the future.
PLANNING CHECKLIST FOR EFFECTIVE LITERACY INSTRUCTION

The following strategies should assist teachers when planning literacy instruction for all learners but especially those whose readiness is low in relation to the general skills and specific goals the teacher has identified.

ASSESSMENT FOR LEARNING:

☑ Have I assessed student readiness?
☑ Have I assessed student interests?
☑ Have I assessed student learner profiles, considering multiple intelligences and learning styles?
☑ Does my assessment inform my instruction?
☑ Is my assessment fair and equitable?

CONTENT:

☑ Have I identified the main ideas or concepts that I want students to understand at the end of this lesson/unit?
☑ Are the Ontario curriculum expectations addressed?
☑ Have I planned for collaboration and co-teaching?
☑ Have I sought students’ input into the planning process and considered their lives outside of the school context?
☑ Have I considered antiracist issues and gender issues?

PROCESS:

☑ Have I considered readiness, interest, and learner profiles, including diverse life experiences?
☑ Have I planned for students to access their schema?
☑ Have I considered cross-curricular links?
☑ Have I included support staff?
☑ Have I built in opportunities for independent work?
☑ Have I scaffolded new learning?
☑ Have I planned for practice and feedback throughout the lesson/unit?
☑ Does my process allow for flexible grouping?
☑ Do my work spaces allow students to work in groups, pairs, or independently?

(continued)
PLANNING CHECKLIST FOR EFFECTIVE LITERACY INSTRUCTION – CONTINUED

- Have I allowed for differentiation based on interest? Ability? Learner profile?
- Have I allowed enough time to explore materials, reflect, and share learnings?
- Are there a variety of instructional strategies, reading and writing activities, and hands-on investigations?
- Have I included graphic organizers?
- Are there sufficient interesting, useful, and varied resources to support this unit?
- Have I considered multiple intelligences when planning learner opportunities?
- Do my planned activities reflect the “lifelong learnings” – the essential concepts – I want my students to attain and retain?
- Have I posted reference points around the classroom?
- Are students comfortable and familiar with transition routines and group work?
- Have I established respect for the diverse needs and paths of discovery for all students in my class?
- Do I have a balance of teacher-guided, student-guided, compulsory, and differentiated activities?
- Have I allowed for independent projects?
- Have I planned on using a taxonomy of higher-order thinking for critical questioning and thinking?
- Have I created contracts that allow for goal setting and time management?

PRODUCTS:

- Have I provided clear expectations of the culminating task?
- Does the culminating task reflect student readiness, interest, and learner profiles?
- Have I built in self-assessment checklists and feedback loops that students can access while creating the final product?
- Are products varied in means of expression, difficulty/complexity, and evaluation?
- Have I considered student choice?
- Have I considered possible extensions?
- Have I provided opportunities for student input?
- Have I considered the needs of all of my students?
Sample Lesson – Applying Literacy Skills to Content Area Subjects (Grade 4: Provinces and Territories of Canada)

These activities may take up to five days to complete

PURPOSE OF THE LESSON
The lesson illustrates that:

• skills and strategies learned in language classes are transferable to other content areas and also to situations outside of school;
• accountable talk is critical to the development of literacy skills and supports learning in all subject areas. The collaborative learning structures used in this lesson involve accountable talk, allowing students to build on the ideas of others and deepen their learning.

CONTENT AREA FOCUS
To help students gain knowledge of the provinces and territories of Canada.

CURRICULUM EXPECTATIONS
From The Ontario Curriculum, Grades 1–8: Language, select expectations that relate to:

• speaking for a variety of purposes;
• reading for a variety of purposes;
• writing for a variety of purposes.

From The Ontario Curriculum: Social Studies, Grades 1 to 6; History and Geography, Grades 7 and 8, 2004, p. 41 (Canada and World Connections strand, Grade 4):

• name and locate the various physical regions, provinces, and territories of Canada and identify the chief natural resources of each.

PRIOR KNOWLEDGE
Before this lesson, students need opportunities to learn and engage in the following:

• Rallyrobin (see appendix)
• Graffiti (see appendix)
• Asking and answering simple and complex questions
• Round Robin (see appendix)
• Whip Around (see appendix)
• Using the inquiry process
• Formulating questions for inquiry

ASSESSMENT

• Rallyrobin (see appendix): Circulate to hear the students' thoughts.
• Graffiti (see appendix): Collect the graffiti sheets to assess students' prior knowledge of the provinces and territories of Canada. (Assign each student a different coloured pencil or marker and ask students to write their name beside their comment.)
• Circulate to observe and coach students as they complete their research and prepare for their presentation.
• Observe Inside-Outside Circle (see appendix).
• Observe group processing (on a daily basis) to assess how group members work together and process their information.

• Assess how each student uses his or her social skills in presentations and whole-group activities.

• Review students’ journal entries to determine what students have learned each day and over time and if they have met the curriculum expectations for this series of lessons.

MATERIALS/TEACHER PREPARATION

• thirteen pieces of chart paper, with the name of a different province or territory written in the centre of each sheet

• additional chart paper to create a T-chart

• Four-column chart (Fact/Question/Search/Learning), one per group on 11” x 17” paper

• Research organizer (text structure template) - two copies maximum per student

• Reflection journals

• Resources related to the provinces and territories of Canada

MODIFICATIONS AND ACCOMMODATIONS

• To assist ESL learners, make dual-language anchor charts

• Make available resources at various levels of complexity, including many picture resources and dual-language books.

INSTRUCTION

DAY 1

• Present students with the following goals for this task:
  - Academic goal: to gain knowledge of the provinces and territories of Canada by using an inquiry process
  - Social goal: attentive listening (Attentive listening is essential to accountable talk. Students need to learn the skills that will ensure that their talk is accountable. See "Teaching Social, Communication, and Critical-Thinking Skills", pages 102-103.)

• To discuss the social goal, create a T-chart with the class. Ask the questions, "What does this social goal look like?" "What does this social goal sound like?" Tell the class that they are going to assess their progress towards this goal each day - independently, as a group, and/or as a whole class.

• Students, working in pairs, do a Rallyrobin warm-up activity. Partners take turns telling each other the name of one of the provinces or territories of Canada.

• Have the whole class brainstorm the names of the provinces and territories. Record the names on chart paper.

• Divide the class into thirteen groups, with two or three students per group, for Graffiti. Ensure that each group contains a heterogeneous mix of strengths. Cluster desks/tables to support the group sizes. At each cluster, post a piece of chart paper with the name of a province or territory written in the centre. Give each student in the group a different-coloured marker. Following the Graffiti procedure (described in the appendix), ask each student to record information about the province or territory named on the sheet before rotating to a different sheet to do the same. Have students do this for each sheet, recording their name beside their information.
• Students return to their original sheet and read the information, eliminating duplications.
• Graffiti sheets are posted around the room, and students are given time to walk about and read the information.
• The class is called together for a debriefing of the process. Pose the questions: “How do we know what information is accurate? Which information is fact and which information is opinion?”
• Debrief on the effectiveness of Rallyrobin and Graffiti.

**SAMPLE LESSON**

**DAY 2**

• Students return to their original group positions.
• Distribute a four-column chart to each group. Instruct the students to work in groups to complete each column in the chart, as follows:
  - **Fact** - “Using the information recorded on the chart paper, decide what is fact and what is opinion. Record those pieces of information that you agree are fact in the first column.”
  - **Question** - “Record any information that you believe is opinion, or that you think might be either a fact or opinion, in the second column. Record it in the form of a question. Also record in the second column any questions you may have about the province or territory and that you think may be of interest to your peers.”
  - **Search** (When students have completed the first two columns) - “Brainstorm the different ways you could go about finding the answers to the questions in column two. What primary and secondary resources could you consult?”
  - **Learning** (This column is left empty until the end of this task.)
• Tell students that they are going to conduct a class survey to narrow down the questions each group has recorded in the Question column to those that are of most interest to their peers. Have each group develop a tally chart, recording the questions (complex questions only) raised by their group and leaving space to tally the number of “votes” each question receives in the survey. Tell students that the questions that get the most votes on their tally chart are the ones that their group will pursue. No group will have more than two questions to answer. When students have completed their tally sheets, conduct the survey, determine the questions on each tally chart that are of most interest to the class as a whole, and then ensure that each group knows which question(s) it is to answer.
• Distribute one research organizer sheet to each student for each question the group is required to answer. Have students record their assigned question in the appropriate box of each organizer. Ask students to brainstorm, as a group, the key words they need to know to conduct their research effectively and to answer the questions posed. Tell students that they are welcome to add key words as they progress through their research.
• Debrief on the effectiveness of the organizer.

**DAY 3**

• Review the research process. Tell students that they will conduct their research individually. Remind them to refer to the resource listed in the Search column of their Fact/Question/Search/Learning chart as they begin their research. Advise students to jot down key points on sticky notes as they learn them in their research, and then to stick the notes onto their research organizers in the appropriate category. Give students 20 to 30 minutes to conduct and organize their research. Encourage students who finish their research before the time is up to find additional interesting facts about the question being researched, to research another
question on their group’s Fact/Question/Search/Learning chart, or to help others conduct their research.

- Following the research period, have students report their findings to their group, using the following procedure. Each student shares with the group, in his or her own words, the answers he or she has found. Other group members ask clarifying questions to ensure that the answer is thorough. The process is repeated until the group and/or the teacher feel that each group member has thoroughly answered the assigned questions.
- Debrief on the effectiveness of the research process.

**DAY 4**

- Have the groups, drawing on the individual strengths of each member, develop an interesting way to present their research to the class. Tell the groups to include in their presentation the information from the Fact column of their Fact/Question/Search/Learning chart, as well as their research questions and answers.
- Give students time to create and practise their presentations.
- Have a conference with each group to ensure the appropriateness of their plan.

**DAY 5**

- Have each group present its information.
- Students return to their groups to jot down their accumulated understandings on sticky notes, one idea per note. Use the Round Robin tactic to have groups eliminate duplications within the group.
- Post the information on the chart in the appropriate column.
- Have each presenting group, as the "experts" on that province or territory, facilitate the large-group discussion about the information that is posted in the Learning column of the group’s Fact/Question/Search/Learning chart.
- The question is, *What has the class learned about this province/territory from this presentation?* Then, using the Whip Around tactic, allow each group a turn to share an idea from one of its sticky notes. Tell the students that ideas may not be repeated, so they must listen attentively. As each idea is shared, have the “expert” group sort it into one of three categories – “Fact”, “Opinion”, or “Not Sure” – in the group’s Learning column. Also have the group members give their reasons for the category chosen.
- Ask students to independently reflect on and write about their new learnings in their journal.

**Reflection:** Groups reflect on how well they accomplished their social and academic goals. (Students might use the Collaborative Learning Group Assessment form that follows.)

The teacher reflects on how successful students were in using the inquiry process and in working collaboratively.
Collaborative Learning Group Assessment

Date: __________________________

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group Members</th>
<th>Roles</th>
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Today’s Group Goal:

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</tbody>
</table>

(continued)
Collaborative Learning Group Assessment – Continued

Were you successful in meeting your group goal?
Check the appropriate box on the rating scale below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Not Often</th>
<th>Sometimes</th>
<th>In Most Cases</th>
<th>In All Cases</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. We made certain that all group members understood the task.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. All group members used the time wisely.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. We respectfully listened to all group members.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>4. We shared the work fairly with the whole group.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. All group members helped to complete the task.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. When we disagreed, we settled our differences respectfully and we reached consensus. Everyone supported the decision.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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INTRODUCTION

This section describes some practical skill-building strategies and tools that teachers can use in the junior classroom to help their students develop as strategic, motivated, and independent readers, writers, talkers, listeners, and thinkers in all subjects. It is a gathering place for practical strategies suggested throughout this volume. The topics are organized alphabetically for quick reference.

When using this chapter, remember that the activities themselves are not the goal; they are parts of a carefully considered whole, aimed at preparing students to become successful communicators. Effective instruction begins with a clear understanding of the learning goals (expressed in the lesson plan as content focus and curriculum expectations), and the specific learning needs of the students. With these as the driving force, teachers then choose skill-building strategies and tools that will give students practice or support in what they need to know and be able to do.

SKILL-BUILDING STRATEGIES AND TOOLS

ANCHOR CHARTS

Anchor charts outline procedures or processes. They provide a quick reference that can help students to develop independence in the classroom. For example, an anchor chart might describe the stages of the writing process, the procedures and roles for literature circles, examples of capitalization, parts of speech, or reading/thinking strategies.

Anchor charts are generated by the teacher and students, and are posted where the students can see them while they work. They are open ended so that students or teachers can expand on them, as required. Anchor charts are useful as a tool for synthesizing ideas or demonstrating learning. The accompanying list, “When to Abandon a Book”, is an example of an anchor chart.

When to Abandon a Book

- The book is too easy.
- I don’t understand the story/information.
- I find it boring.
- I can’t relate to the characters.
- The vocabulary is too difficult.
- The font is too small.
- The story didn’t hook me.
- I don’t like the author’s style.
- I am uncomfortable with the author’s style.
ANTICIPATION GUIDES

Anticipation guides are graphic organizers that help students to activate their prior knowledge on a topic, concept, theme, genre, author, or other point of interest. The framing of the statements on the anticipation guide stimulates interest and provides a purpose for reading. An anticipation guide consists of a number of written statements that support or challenge student beliefs and experiences about the topic of study and that are tied to a selected text. Students read and react to the sentences, indicating on the paper whether they agree or disagree with the statements. Anticipation guides are particularly useful in identifying misconceptions before a student reads the text. After reading the text, students revisit the anticipation guide and reread each statement and their “before reading” response. Then they consider any relevant evidence from the text that supports or refutes the statement and, based on this information, they complete the “after reading” response. During the discussion after reading, the teacher goes through each statement and poses questions such as the following: “Has your opinion changed after reading the text? Why or why not? Where did the text deepen your understanding about the topic, genre, theme, or other point of interest?”

Following are two examples of anticipation guides. Example 1 is for the novel *The Breadwinner*, by Deborah Ellis (Toronto: Groundwood, 2002). This book is about a young girl and her family struggling to survive under the Taliban rule in Afghanistan. Example 2 uses a slightly different format. This one is for a non-fiction book, *What’s Your Opinion?*, by Jill Eggleton (Toronto: Thomson-Nelson, 2001), which addresses points of view.

Sample Anticipation Guides

**Example 1: “The Breadwinner”**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Before Reading</th>
<th>Statements</th>
<th>After Reading</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agree/Disagree</td>
<td>People who don’t live in a country have no right to interfere with events in that country.</td>
<td>Agree/Disagree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree/Disagree</td>
<td>Might is always right.</td>
<td>Agree/Disagree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree/Disagree</td>
<td>Mean people eventually get what they deserve.</td>
<td>Agree/Disagree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree/Disagree</td>
<td>Children should obey adults.</td>
<td>Agree/Disagree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree/Disagree</td>
<td>Whenever there is a disagreement, majority opinion should rule.</td>
<td>Agree/Disagree</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Example 2: “What’s Your Opinion?”
For each statement, write “A” if you agree or “D” if you disagree.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Before Reading</th>
<th>Statements</th>
<th>After Reading</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>It is not a crime to enter someone’s house without permission.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Parents should encourage their children to leave home at an early age.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Parents should always supervise their children when the children are participating in dangerous activities.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>It is never okay to lie about who you are.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Borrowing things without permission is okay.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>People should have the right to post “No Trespassing” signs.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**BOOK TALKS**

Book talks (see Fountas and Pinnell, 2001, p. 120) are a great way for students to share their thoughts and feelings about a text. They provide students with opportunities to learn about a new author or text form, share critical insights about a text, read and discuss a particularly interesting passage, or introduce their peers to one of their own favourite texts.

Teachers should begin by demonstrating a book talk for their students. They then deconstruct the talk with the students. As a group, they identify what constitutes a good talk, as well as the procedure for doing a talk. Once these ideas have been charted, anchor charts are posted to ensure that students are equipped to succeed with their own book talks.
**Brainstorming**

Brainstorming is a powerful way to generate ideas and encourage collaboration and creative thinking. The teacher asks the students to think of ideas about a specific topic. All ideas are accepted without judgement. Anything goes – especially different, original, and crazy ideas. The more ideas, the better. Students are encouraged to piggyback off each other’s ideas.

Several activities and tools in this appendix include a brainstorming component. For examples, see “Graffiti” and “Ranking Ladder”.

Brainstorming ideas can be recorded as a mindmap or web, with the topic or focusing question in the centre.

*Sample Brainstorming Web*

---

**Car Wash**

“The Car Wash” (Gibbs, 2001) is a wonderful self-esteem builder that can be used both early in the school year, to help the students get to know each other, and repeatedly throughout the year.

Invite the students to line up in pairs facing each other. One student at a time will start to pass through the line of peers, walking slowly and pausing between each pair of students. The students in the line will offer him or her one compliment (e.g., “Your writing made me laugh” ; “I really like your artwork”).

Every student has a turn to “get washed”. The time it takes is well worth the good feeling the students have after the activity is completed!
CAROUSEL

“Carousel” is a way to exchange ideas among small groups and promote collaborative learning. Students work in groups. One student in each group remains in place as a designated speaker for the group, while the other members of the group rotate to each of the other groups, on signal from the teacher, to listen to the other designated speakers. This occurs in a rotational sequence with all the groups in the class. Carousel is highly effective in the content areas as a way for students to demonstrate their understanding and share information.

CODING THE TEXT

Coding (or marking) the text helps readers to hold onto their thinking and actively engage with the text. Students work individually and then share in groups. The teacher models how to code the text and discusses with the class why it is important to code or mark the text during reading. (Also see “Highlighting the Text” in this appendix.)

Method

1. Create a set of symbols with the class for coding the text. For example, the class might create codes to indicate one or more of the following:
   – what they are wondering about
   – what is difficult or confusing
   – what is important to remember
   – significant words
   – what confirms what they know
   – what is contradictory to what they have learned or read before

   See the sample symbols chart (on the following page) for some examples. The symbols used in a particular lesson would depend on the focus of that lesson.

2. Post the symbols on an anchor chart, for future reference.

3. Before the task, model how to code text, using an overhead projector.

4. Invite the students to read and code a piece of text.

5. Form groups of four or five so that students can discuss their understanding of the text.
# Sample Symbols for Coding the Text

## Making Connections

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Symbol</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>T-S</td>
<td>Text-to-self connections</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T-T</td>
<td>Text-to-text connections</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T-W</td>
<td>Text-to-world connections</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Determining Important Ideas

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Symbol</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>L</td>
<td>Learned something new</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*</td>
<td>Interesting or important information in the text</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aha!</td>
<td>Learnings for life</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Questioning the Text

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Symbol</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>Confused about the text</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>☀</td>
<td>Clear about the text</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>?</td>
<td>See the reader’s question on a sticky note or bookmark</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Inferring and Predicting

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Symbol</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>Inference (see the reader’s explanation on a sticky note)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P</td>
<td>Prediction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>+</td>
<td>Inference or prediction is confirmed by the text</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>−</td>
<td>Inference or prediction is contradicted by the text</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Synthesizing

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Symbol</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SZ</td>
<td>Synthesize</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>☐</td>
<td>New idea surfaces; confusion is clarified</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Monitoring Comprehension

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Symbol</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Huh?</td>
<td>I just don’t understand anymore!</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
CONTRACTS

Contracts give students some freedom and choices about how they will complete independent tasks. They encourage goal setting and time management. Through a contract, the student agrees to design and complete work according to the teacher’s specifications. While all students work with the same concepts and skills, the expectations and tasks vary. After students have had practice in working with contracts, they begin to participate in creating the contracts. Eventually, they move towards the independent level of creating their own contracts.

On the following pages are two sample poetry contracts. A student would select one contract. Sample 1 involves less sophisticated tasks. For example, the directions to accompany “How to Eat a Poem” (Sample 1) ask the students to read it, illustrate it, summarize what it says, and write about what it means. The directions that accompany “Unfolding Bud” (Sample 2) ask the students to read it, paraphrase it, and explain what it helps the reader understand about the poet. The other boxes in this sample contract also have slightly different tasks. Teachers may create contracts of four, six, eight, or more boxes, depending on the complexity of the task and the time allocated for completion.

In this example, differentiation occurs on a variety of levels. Although students are completing similar activities, the contract allows the text to be at an appropriate reading level, and tasks are assigned that are challenging yet doable by the students.
Poetry Contract (Sample 1)

Contract with ________________________________
(Student name)

Title of Unit/Task: ______________________________________________________

Due Date: __________________________________________________________

Product/Presentation Goal: ___________________________________________

Time Management Commitment: __________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________

Process Commitment: _____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________________

Signed: _______________________________________

Task Requirements:

Create a rhyming wheel.  
Use the words from language and word study as a way to get started.

Write about you.  
Use good descriptive words in a poem that helps us know and understand something important about you.

Interpret  
“How to Eat a Poem” by Eve Merriam*  
• Read it.  
• Illustrate it.  
• Summarize it.  
• Write about what it means.

*From Rose H. Agree, How to Eat a Poem and Other Morsels (New York: Pantheon Books, 1967)

Computer Art  
Use clip art to illustrate a simile, a metaphor, or an analogy either on our class list or created by you.

Reflection: ________________________________________________________________________

Next Steps: ________________________________________________________________________
## Poetry Contract (Sample 2)

Contract with ________________________  
(Student name)

Title of Unit/Task: ________________________________

Due Date: __________________________________________________________________________________

Product/Presentation Goal: _____________________________________________________________

Time Management Commitment:  
________________________________________________________________________________________

Process Commitment: _____________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________________

Signed: ____________________________

Task Requirements:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Create a rhyming wheel.</th>
<th>Write about you.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Use the words from language and word study and the dictionary as a way to get started.</td>
<td>Use good description, figurative language, and images to write a poem that helps us understand something important about you.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Interpret**

"Unfolding Bud" by Naoshi Koriyama*
- Read it.
- Paraphrase it.
- Explain what it helps you to understand about the poet.

*From *Reflections on a Gift of Watermelon Pickle … and Other Modern Verse*, compiled by Stephen Dunning, Edward Lueders, and Hugh Smith (Richmond Hill: Scholastic, 1968)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Computer Art</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Use clip art to illustrate a simile, a metaphor, and an analogy you create.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Reflection: __________________________________________________________________________________

Next Steps: ________________________________________________________________________________
CUBING

Gregory and Chapman (2002) describe an instructional technique called “Cubing” that helps students think at various levels by encouraging discussion about a topic from six points of view. On each side of the cube is an instruction associated with one of the six levels of thinking (see “Higher-Order Thinking”, page 55 in Chapter 2, “Knowledge and Skills Required for Literacy”). Students roll the cube and respond according to the “prompt” on the face of the cube.

The following shows a plan for constructing a cube.

Curriculum Compacting

When students demonstrate proficiency with the skills and concepts identified in the curriculum expectations, teachers may choose to do some curriculum compacting. To begin, students are given a pre-test to determine their proficiency with the skill or concept. With this data, teachers decide whether the students will need differentiated instruction. This does not mean that the student moves ahead of the rest of the class; rather, the student is given an opportunity to explore the skill or concept in greater depth or breadth. This strategy allows students to accelerate their learning, enrich their own knowledge base, and share their learning with the class.

Curriculum compacting can be accomplished in a variety of ways. For example, see “Independent Projects” and “Tiered Assignments” in this appendix.
**DOUBLE-ENTRY JOURNAL**

The double-entry journal format (also called two-column note form) provides a metacognitive opportunity for students to reflect on their personal connections to the text. Students can do this activity before, during, and after reading to monitor and summarize their understanding. To use a double-entry journal effectively, students need modelled, guided, and independent practice that focuses on summarizing and identifying significant aspects of text.

The double-entry journal is a page divided into two columns with headings such as “Idea”, “Reflection/Reaction”, and so on. When using the journal, students read a text or complete an activity and then jot down significant moments, ideas, quotations, or concepts in the left-hand column. Either during or after reading, students write their response or connection in the right-hand column. These writings can then be used to initiate discussions with peers and the teacher. The sample that follows illustrates possible student responses in a double-entry journal in different subject areas.

**Sample Double-Entry Journal**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ideas/Concepts/Discoveries</th>
<th>Reflection/Reaction</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I noticed that when I mixed six drops of blue with ten drops of yellow, I got green.</td>
<td>This reminds me of the time I was colouring a map and accidentally mixed blue and yellow markers. I got green then, too. I wonder how many inventions happened by accident.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I built my structure using triangle shapes for supports. Johnny used X shapes, and his structure broke when we put the brick on it.</td>
<td>I've seen pictures of bridges around the world, and the side supports are all triangle shapes. I wonder if this is the strongest shape for supports?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In today's reading, I learned that Native peoples migrated to Canada. They were following herds of animals that were scarce because the ice was covering their food.</td>
<td>This is like the article I read about why birds migrate south in the winter. The snow and ice come and make it hard for them to find food, just like it was hard for the Native people.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
EXTENDED NAME TAGS

“Extended Name Tags” (Gibbs, 2001) is a great activity to use early in the school year or in preparation for a change in groupings.

Method

Distribute a card or name tag and ask students to do the following (see template):

1. Write your name in the centre.
2. In the upper left corner, write your favourite place in the world.
3. In the lower left corner, write the name of a person who taught you something important.
4. In the lower right corner, write the month when you had three great days in a row.
5. In the upper right corner, write three things you are good at.
6. Under your name, write the quality you most admire in other people.

When the students have completed their name tags, instruct them to do the following:

7. Form a small group of two or three.
8. Decide in your small group what corner to discuss and who will go first, second, or third.
9. Take one minute each to talk about the corner. (The teacher might need to give a signal at one, two, or three minutes.)
10. Allow two or three minutes (in total) for triads or pairs to make a statement of appreciation about each person’s contribution. “I liked it when …” or “I admired how you said …”

After each student has completed a turn and the student’s group has responded, ask the students to form new triads or pairs and repeat the process. After a few groups have met, bring all the students together in a circle to share something that they learned about another person.

Extended Name Tag (Template)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Your favourite place</th>
<th>Three things you’re good at</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Your Name</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The quality you most admire in others</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A person who taught you something important</td>
<td>A month with three great days in a row</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
FOCUSING QUESTIONS

A focusing question guides the search for meaning. It provides a lens to focus the students’ thinking about a lesson or unit of study. An effective focusing question is open ended and thought provoking. It engages the students in higher-order thinking and leads to enduring understanding about the subject or the learning process. Focusing questions can be posed by the teacher or formulated by the students (see “Questioning”, pages 49–50 in Chapter 2, “Knowledge and Skills Required for Literacy”).

FOUR CORNERS

“Four Corners” is a collaborative learning activity that gets students thinking about different points of view, and engages them in dialogue with others who have the same or differing viewpoints.

Method

1. Label the four corners of the classroom with four points of view (for example, “Agree”, “Strongly Agree”, “Disagree”, and “Strongly Disagree”).

2. Pose a question to the whole class.

3. Invite each student to go to the corner that best reflects his or her opinion about the question. Ask the students to share the reason for their choice with others in their corner – possibly in smaller subgroups to ensure that everyone has an opportunity to be heard and to let the group reach consensus. Tell them to be ready to share the opinion of their group with the rest of the class.

For a similar activity, see “Value Line” in this appendix.

GRAFFITI

“Graffiti” is a collaborative activity that provides students with opportunities to brainstorm ideas, express their opinions and understanding about a topic, and make connections to their prior knowledge and experiences. Students work in groups to generate and record their ideas on chart paper. The strategy provides a safe environment for sharing information. It also allows students to build on the ideas of others.

Method

1. Before the lesson, decide how many groups there will be for the activity and then set up that number of chart pages around the room. On each chart page, write a topic related to the assigned reading or writing task.

2. During the lesson, send each group to a chart page and tell them to quickly record all their thoughts about the topic. This might include examples, definitions, patterns, and/or drawings. Tell them not to take the time to read what other people have written.
3. After a short interval (two minutes) direct the students to rotate to the next chart page. Continue this process until everyone has been at each piece of paper.

4. Assign one group to each of the chart pages and tell them to do the following:
   – Read the information on the chart.
   – Cluster the related ideas.
   – Eliminate duplication.
   – Reach a consensus about the main points that clearly represent the small group’s thinking about the original question/statement.
   – Appoint a spokesperson to share the main points with the whole group.

**HIGHLIGHTING THE TEXT**

Highlighting the text (see also “Coding the Text” in this appendix) is a technique that actively engages a reader in making connections with the reading. Students may use highlighters, sticky notes, highlighting tape, jot-note strips, bookmarks, or other aids to highlight the text. Tovani (2000) suggests that highlighting is one of the easiest ways for students to interact with the text and make connections with what they are reading. For example:

- Look carefully at the first and last line of each paragraph.
- Highlight only necessary words and phrases.
- Differentiate between interesting and important.
- Make notes in the margin to remember significant information.
- Pay attention to the text features that signal importance.
- When finished, ensure that less than half the paragraph is highlighted.

**“I” MESSAGE**

The “I’ Message” (Gibbs, 2001) helps students to engage in accountable talk by providing them with an alternative way to express their anger in more socially appropriate ways.

**Method**

1. Explain to the students that everyone has the right to get upset or angry at times. However, there are ways to express it that do not erode the self-esteem of a peer.

2. Pose a real-life scenario for the students (e.g., name-calling, spreading gossip, excluding a classmate).

3. Ask the students to provide unacceptable statements that are typically expressed in such a situation.
4. Model how you can turn these judgemental statements into an “I” statement. 
   For example:
   – An unacceptable statement might be: “You idiot! You spilled all of our blue paint
     and now we can’t finish!”
   – An acceptable “I” statement might be: “I feel upset that you spilled our blue paint.”

5. Continue to practise and reinforce “I” messages.

**INDEPENDENT PROJECTS**

Independent projects are important for both struggling learners and those needing to enhance the depth and breadth of their learning. Because they give students the freedom to choose, independent projects can be a strong motivator.

For *students needing to enhance the depth and breadth of their learning*, independent study allows for in-depth exploration of a topic of particular interest. Teachers may help the students to plan their objectives or develop their process for investigation. These students are still developing as strategic literacy learners, and so it is important to assess their current knowledge and skills, to determine the next steps for learning, and to establish feedback checkpoints. Independent projects should enable the students to explore the breadth, depth, and scope of a topic, and so the topics should be global in nature (for example, human rights, heroes, globalization, power relationships, or change over time).

For *struggling learners*, teachers will need to provide scaffolded support – for example, to help plan the objective and develop a process for investigating the topic. Establishing frameworks and checkpoints and providing ongoing feedback will help to ensure that struggling students succeed. In addition, students should be encouraged to select a product or performance task that best reflects their learning strengths and style.

The topic “Performance Tasks for Multiple Intelligences”, later in this appendix, lists a sampling of performance tasks that are suited to particular learning strengths or multiple intelligences of students. These tasks can form the basis for independent classroom work or more formal projects. All of the tasks may require intentional teaching as well as guided, modelled, or scaffolded support – especially for struggling learners. (For more on multiple intelligences, see pages 22–23 in Chapter 1, “The Junior Learner”.)

**INSIDE-OUTSIDE CIRCLE**

“Inside-Outside Circle” (see Bennett, 2001) offers opportunities for students to engage in accountable talk and experience a variety of ideas and perspectives. Every student gets a chance to speak with and listen to different people. There is no time spent waiting. It is a very effective way to share learning in the content areas.
Method

1. Direct students to find a partner and number themselves One or Two.
2. Direct all Number Ones to stand in a circle facing out. Have Number Twos stand facing their partner.
3. Pose a question and provide “think time”.
4. Have Partner One share his or her answer or solution with Partner Two and then signal when he or she is finished by saying “Pass”. Partner Two paraphrases what Partner One said, and then adds his or her own response, which Partner One then paraphrases to complete the turn.
5. Rotate the outside circle one person to the left or right.
6. Either direct new partners to share responses or pose a new question. Repeat the process (steps 4 to 6).

JIGSAW

“Jigsaw” is a collaborative learning activity that gives students the opportunity to learn about a topic and then share their learning with others. It is an effective way to process large chunks of text in a short time.

Method

1. Determine the topic of study and identify four different subtopics or things to learn about that topic.
2. Arrange the students into home groups of four. Assign a number to each student, from one to four.
3. Direct all the students with the same number (for example, all the fours) to leave their home group and join together to form an expert group. Assign a different subtopic to each of the expert groups, and direct them to work together to learn everything they can about their specific assignment.
4. When the expert groups have completed their work, have the students return to their home groups and then share what they learned. In this way, everyone in the home group builds a complete picture of the topic of study from the individual pieces contributed by each member – as though they were putting together a jigsaw puzzle.

JOT NOTES

Jot notes are quick summary notes that students write to record essential information while they are reading, thinking, or engaging in a planning or brainstorming activity. They are usually written in list form, and capture the ideas in as few words as possible.
**KWL (KNOW, WANT TO KNOW, LEARNED)**

“KWL” (Ogle, 1986) involves students in reflecting before, during, and after a lesson or new topic – either individually or in a group – and provides them with a simple graphic organizer to record their thinking. It helps students to draw on their prior knowledge before reading; to mine the text for specific information during reading; and to summarize their learning after reading.

The graphic organizer can be as simple as three columns on a flipchart page or chalkboard, or a blank piece of paper folded in three. The recorder can be a teacher or a student.

**KWL Sample Chart**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What I Know</th>
<th>What I Want to Learn</th>
<th>What I Learned</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Method**

1. Before students read a selected text (or conduct an experiment, or research a topic), the teacher instructs them to do the following:
   - Think about what you already know about the topic, and record these ideas in column one (What I Know). Start by brainstorming, and then group the ideas into categories.
   - Consider what you want to learn about the topic, and record these ideas or questions in column two (What I Want to Learn). Keep these questions in mind as you read.

2. During reading, students keep track of what they are learning from the text – for example, by highlighting or coding the text, or by taking notes.

3. After reading, students record their new learning in column three (What I Learned).

**LEARNING BUDDIES**

Learning buddies can benefit all students, but are particularly effective for struggling learners. Students are assigned a learning buddy to help them with problem solving, comprehension, organization of thinking, and vocabulary development. Learning buddies should be at different levels of understanding to allow for the sharing of diverse opinions and knowledge. After instruction, students meet with their learning buddies to discuss, reflect upon, or relate to what was read, written, presented, or demonstrated. For example, after a shared writing of a recount, students orally retell a personal experience to a learning buddy before moving into guided or independent writing.
LISTENING TO AND LEARNING FROM MY PEERS

Accountable talk is an important part of literacy learning in the junior classroom. A key aspect of accountable talk is attentive listening. The following sample anchor chart can be used to help students become more effective listeners and collaborative learners. It illustrates how students can be held accountable for completing a task, staying on topic, and listening to and building upon the ideas of their peers. They are also accountable for giving evidence from the text to support their opinions.

Listening To and Learning From My Peers (Sample Anchor Chart)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Actions</th>
<th>Words</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• sitting knees to knees and toes to toes</td>
<td>• “I like the way you …”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• talking one at a time</td>
<td>• “We can build on ________’s idea by …”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• watching the speaker</td>
<td>• “Can you explain your …?”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• staying on topic</td>
<td>• “I think ________ is saying …”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• setting goals</td>
<td>• “I agree with ________ because …”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• seeking input from a partner or group</td>
<td>• “That’s a great idea, _____!”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• offering input in a respectful way</td>
<td>• “Could you help me understand …?”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• expressing ideas and thoughts</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• nodding in agreement</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• smiling to encourage others</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• writing ideas</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• maintaining focused concentration</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

LITERATURE CIRCLES

Literature circles are small discussion groups that meet regularly to share group members’ views, ideas, and understanding of a text. Literature circles encourage students to develop deeper understanding and an appreciation for the opinions of others. A typical circle has five or six student members who have all read the same text but are not necessarily at the same reading level. The actual groupings will depend on the nature of the task and the learning needs of the students. The students take complete ownership of their learning, while the teacher acts as the facilitator. To maximize discussions, the group assigns a role to each member. Following are some possible roles (adapted from Daniels, 2001):

- **Summarizer** – provides a clear, well-organized summary of the text, with a focus on key details, characters, events, or timelines.
- **Connector** – describes how the text connects to his or her own life (text to self), to other texts (text to text), and to the world (text to world).
- **Literary Luminary** – selects key passages from the text to read aloud, and discusses why those passages are important.
• **Illustrator** – creates an interesting picture, graphic organizer, or other visual to illustrate something important from the text.

• **Vocabulary Enricher** – identifies and interprets key words and figurative language in the text.

• **Discussion Director** – guides the group discussion by posing relevant and interesting questions, and encourages all members to contribute equally to the discussion.

The following is a checklist that students can use to monitor their discussion etiquette during a literature circle. For other tips on promoting effective discussions, see “Listening To and Learning From My Peers” in this appendix.

**Literature Circles – Discussion Etiquette Checklist**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>During Literature Circles, I practise the following important etiquette:</th>
<th>Examples of my behaviour:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>☐ I attend to the topic.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>☐ I participate actively in the group.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>☐ I listen carefully.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>☐ I ask questions.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>☐ I connect my ideas to the comments of others.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>☐ I allow all members of the group to participate.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>☐ I am constructive when I disagree.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>☐ I support opinions with evidence.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

My goal(s) are: __________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

Actions to reach my goals are: _____________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
**Mapping**

Displaying ideas graphically is a strategy that students can use in any subject area to help organize their thinking. The following are some examples of ways to map or graphically organize their ideas.

**Types of Mapping**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Flow Chart: To show the steps in a process</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><img src="image" alt="Flow Chart Diagram" /></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Venn Diagram: To compare and contrast ideas; to group and sort</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><img src="image" alt="Venn Diagram" /></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Timeline: To show a chronology or sequence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><img src="image" alt="Timeline" /></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Web or Story Map: To show the connections and relationships among ideas</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><img src="image" alt="Web or Story Map" /></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**MULTIPLE-INTELLIGENCES SURVEY 1**

**Getting to Know You**

Dear _________________________________________________

I would like to know more about you. Please read each statement and think about yourself and what you like to do. Check all the items that describe you.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I enjoy reading</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I enjoy writing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I like to complete crosswords and play games like Scrabble.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I like to take part in debates and/or discussions.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I keep a diary or journal.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I like telling stories.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I like to work in an organized way.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am interested in mathematics and/or science.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I enjoy brain teasers and games like Jeopardy™, Clue™, or chess.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I like to ask questions about how things work or why things are.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I work best if I have an agenda or timetable.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I like to invent things.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I enjoy solving visual puzzles.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I read maps, charts, and graphs easily.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I remember things best by seeing them.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>When I read or write, I see pictures in my head.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I like to draw or create art pieces.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I like to doodle.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I prefer to be physically involved rather than sitting and watching.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I find it hard to sit for long periods of time.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I enjoy building and designing.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I learn best by moving, touching, or acting out information.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I’m good at most sports.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I would rather show someone how to do something than tell them in words.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(continued)
### MULTIPLE-INTELLIGENCES SURVEY 1 – CONTINUED

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I often play music when I am working or relaxing.</td>
<td>☺</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I can easily remember things presented musically.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I sometimes make up rhymes to help remember something.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It’s easy for me to follow the beat of music.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I know the tunes to many different songs.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I take music lessons outside of school.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I really enjoy working with other people.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I enjoy sharing my feelings and ideas with others.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I prefer group activities.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My friends often choose me to be the leader.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I like to teach others.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I like to be with others, not by myself.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I like to be alone to play or work on my hobbies, interests, or projects.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I work best when I can set my own pace.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I set goals for myself so I can improve.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>When I get an idea, I think through how I want to develop the idea.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I keep a personal journal or diary to record my thoughts.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am curious and ask a lot of questions.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I prefer the outdoors to the indoors.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I learn best when I go on field trips.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I enjoy learning about the environment or science.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have a collection of rocks or shells.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I can name different types of insects or animals.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I like to bird watch.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Multiple-Intelligences Survey 2**

**Personal Profile**

Name: ________________________________________________

1. Check off each statement that applies to you.

2. Use the score sheet to draw your personal profile on a bar graph.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Verbal/Linguistic</th>
<th>Logical/Mathematical</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I enjoy talking on the telephone.</td>
<td>Problem solving has always been easy for me.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I enjoy keeping a journal and/or writing stories and articles.</td>
<td>I love to identify, create, and sort things into categories or lists.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I like to complete crossword puzzles and other word games.</td>
<td>I can easily add, subtract, multiply, and divide numbers in my head.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I like to go to the library and/or the bookstore to get new books.</td>
<td>I enjoy brain-teasers and games that require logical thinking, such as mysteries.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I would rather spend my personal time reading than watching television.</td>
<td>My mind is always searching for patterns or an order to things that makes sense.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I understand more by hearing someone read or listening to the radio than by watching television or movies.</td>
<td>Ideas put into a graph or a chart are easier for me to follow.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Whenever I see a sign or billboard, I have to take the time to read it.</td>
<td>Checkers and chess are two of my favourite board games.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am often told that I express my ideas and thoughts quite effectively.</td>
<td>I am good at estimation.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Visual/Spatial</th>
<th>Bodily/Kinesthetic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I often find myself doodling during class activities or when I am on the phone.</td>
<td>I like to move, tap, or fidget when sitting.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I love to draw and paint during my personal time.</td>
<td>I like to do things in class that I can get out of my seat to do.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have a good sense of direction.</td>
<td>I am good at most sports.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>When I read, I can see the story happening in my head.</td>
<td>I like to use tools to make things.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I understand colour combinations and which colours work well together.</td>
<td>I am always curious about how things work and sometimes take things apart to find out.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Geometry is easier for me than other kinds of math.</td>
<td>I would rather show someone how to do something than explain it in words.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I like solving jigsaws, mazes, and other visual puzzles.</td>
<td>I live a healthy lifestyle.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I like creating cartoon strips.</td>
<td>I participate in extreme sports, such as snowboarding, kayaking, and/or mountain biking.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Multiple-Intelligences Survey 2 — Continued

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Musical/Rhythmic</th>
<th>Interpersonal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I often hum to myself while I am working or walking.</td>
<td>I enjoy talking to people.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I like to make up songs and/or tunes.</td>
<td>I think of myself as a leader, rather than as a follower, when I am with my friends.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have music lessons outside of school and enjoy it.</td>
<td>My friends often come to me for advice.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I know the tunes to many different songs.</td>
<td>I prefer team sports rather than individual sports.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>People often tell me that I have a pleasant singing voice.</td>
<td>I like to spend my spare time with my friends rather than alone.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I often listen to music during my spare time.</td>
<td>I like to do group projects and activities in class.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I work better when I listen to music.</td>
<td>I enjoy teaching others.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It is easy for me to follow the beat of music.</td>
<td>I usually talk over my personal problems with friends.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Intrapersonal</th>
<th>Naturalist</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I am often told that I am a quiet and/or shy person.</td>
<td>I notice similarities and differences in trees, flowers, and other things in nature.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am curious and ask a lot of questions.</td>
<td>I learn best by going on field trips.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I know my strengths and weaknesses.</td>
<td>I like to bird watch.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have no problem sharing my feelings or opinion.</td>
<td>I am good at forecasting the weather.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I keep a personal journal or diary to record my thoughts.</td>
<td>I can name different types of insects and animals.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some people say that I am strong-willed and independent.</td>
<td>I love learning about the stars, the planets, and the universe.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I know what I want and try to get it.</td>
<td>I have a collection of rocks and/or shells.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>When I have a personal problem, I like to figure out how to solve it on my own.</td>
<td>I care about the environment, so I am involved in conservation projects.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# Multiple-Intelligences Score Sheet for Survey 1 and Survey 2

**Multiple Intelligences – Score Sheet**

Name: _____________________________________________

Follow these steps to draw a bar graph that shows a picture of the different ways you like to learn:

1. Complete the survey on pages ____.
2. Count the number of check marks under each heading on the survey. (For example, how many items did you check for Verbal/Linguistic?)
3. Colour that number of boxes in the correct column on the chart below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>8</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Verbal/Linguistic</td>
<td>Logical/Mathematical</td>
<td>Visual/Spatial</td>
<td>Bodily/Kinesthetic</td>
<td>Musical/Rhythmic</td>
<td>Interpersonal</td>
<td>Intrapersonal</td>
<td>Naturalist</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Performance Tasks for Multiple Intelligences

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Verbal/Linguistic</th>
<th>Logical/Mathematic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• prepare a report</td>
<td>• describe a sequence or product</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• write a play, essay, or poem</td>
<td>• analyse and critically assess a text</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• conduct an interview</td>
<td>• classify, rank, or compare items</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• give directions</td>
<td>• interpret evidence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• create a magazine</td>
<td>• create a puzzle or game</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• create a collection</td>
<td>• create a timeline or matrix</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Visual/Spatial</th>
<th>Bodily/Kinesthetic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• create a game or film</td>
<td>• create a role-play</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• draw a picture to represent something</td>
<td>• construct a model or representation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• create a mural or display</td>
<td>• develop a mime</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• make a diagram</td>
<td>• create a tableau</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• paint or design a poster</td>
<td>• work through a simulation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• design a graphic</td>
<td>• create actions for a song or other text</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Musical/Rhythmic</th>
<th>Interpersonal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• compose a rap song or cheer</td>
<td>• work with a partner or group to organize</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• create a jingle to teach others</td>
<td>a field trip</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• listen and respond to musical selections</td>
<td>• solve a problem with a partner or group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• write a poem</td>
<td>• conduct a survey or interview</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• create a soundscape</td>
<td>• dialogue about a topic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• select music or songs for a purpose</td>
<td>• contribute to a jigsaw or other collaborative activity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• write a choral reading</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Intrapersonal</th>
<th>Naturalist</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• think about and plan something</td>
<td>• conduct an experiment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• write in a journal</td>
<td>• categorize materials or ideas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• review or visualize a way to do something</td>
<td>• write a text inspired by nature</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• set goals</td>
<td>• adapt materials to a new use</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• reflect on an idea, event, or process</td>
<td>• connect/compare ideas to natural phenomena</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• propose an independent learning task</td>
<td>• examine materials and find connections</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Adapted from Gregory and Chapman, 2002; and Bosch, 1997–2004)
**Place Mat**

“Place Mat” is a collaborative learning activity that gives students an opportunity to share their ideas and learn from each other in a small-group setting.

**Method**

1. Decide on a question or topic for the students to address.
2. Organize the students into groups of four, and give each group a piece of chart paper.
3. Direct each group to draw a circle or square in the centre of the paper and then divide the remaining area of the paper into equal sections, with one section for each group member.
4. Ask the students to think about the chosen topic and then silently write about it in their own area of the chart paper for several minutes.
5. After several minutes, signal the students to stop. Instruct them to discuss the ideas on the place mat with their group – looking for common elements. The group must reach consensus and record the most important points in the centre of the place mat.
6. Each group shares its work with the other groups.

*Place Mat (Template)*

---

**Question-Answer Relationship (QAR)**

“Question-Answer Relationship (QAR)” is a strategy developed by Taffy Raphael to help students identify and answer different types of questions (Raphael, 1982; 1986). Four types of questions are involved:

- **“Right-there” questions** use words taken directly from the text. Answers can be found in one place in the text – usually in a single sentence.

- **“Think-and-search” questions** require students to search through an entire passage to find the information that applies, and to make connections in order to formulate an answer.
• “Author-and-you” questions require students to read the text in order to understand the questions; however, the answers are found “beyond the text”, requiring students to make connections to prior knowledge and experiences.

• “On-my-own” questions can be answered from the students’ prior knowledge and experiences; they do not require reading the text.

The first two types of questions are text-based, meaning that the answers can be found in the text. The second two types of questions are knowledge-based, meaning that the answers reside with the student.

QAR can be used before, during, and after reading. Students use it to find evidence in the text and to draw conclusions and make inferences based on explicit and implied information. This strategy can help all students use texts more efficiently to find answers and make meaning. Struggling readers, in particular, can benefit from understanding that not all answers are found in the text.

For more information on QAR, see the English Language Arts Home Page, Greece Central School district, at www.greece.K12.us; also see www.somers.k12.ny.us/intranet/reading/qar.html.

**QUESTIONING THE AUTHOR**

“Questioning the Author” (Beers, 2003) is a strategy to promote critical-literacy skills for reading. It involves students in small groups of five or fewer.

**Method**

1. Determine the objectives of the lesson.
2. Select a text and determine how to take a critical stance when reading the text.
3. Prepare possible prompts for specific places in the text. For example, consider prompts such as the following to help students extend their thinking, develop their ideas, and sustain discussion:
   - What is the author’s intent?
   - What is the author talking about?
   - Does this make sense in light of what we already know?
   - How does this connect with what we have read before?
   - What does the author mean here?
   - Why is the author telling us this now?
   - Whose perspective is presented?
   - Whose voice is absent?
   - How is this writing making me feel, and why?
4. Prepare a template, such as the following, for each student to use during the lesson.

**Questioning the Author (Template)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The question</th>
<th>The author says</th>
<th>I say</th>
<th>So</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Quick Writes**

A “Quick Write” is a first-draft response to a piece of writing, or a prompt (Rief, 2003). It is quick, usually taking only two or three minutes, and its purpose is to generate ideas, activate prior knowledge, and get words on paper. To set up the Quick Write, the teacher may give students a prompt, read the first few paragraphs of a powerful piece of writing, or ask them to find a phrase or sentence in their writer’s journal that they find inspiring. Quick Writes stimulate the flow of ideas in the reader and writer and help develop fluency.

**Rallyrobin**

In pairs, students take turns sharing ideas orally. Like tennis players, they toss their ideas back and forth without repeating the same ideas. The teacher predetermines the timeframe for each rally so that all students have a balanced opportunity to contribute. (Also see “Think/Timed-Pair-Share”, later in this appendix.)

**Ranking Ladder**

“Ranking Ladder” is a higher-order thinking activity that can be done in small or large groups. It engages students in freely generating ideas or solutions to a problem and then ranking their solutions. It helps students to develop the skill of prioritizing.

**Method**

1. The teacher poses a problem.

2. The students work in groups to brainstorm all the possible solutions, deferring judgement about the value of the solutions at this point in the process.

3. The students are asked to narrow down their choices to a maximum of seven ideas and then rank them from first choice to last on a ranking ladder.

4. The teacher randomly picks someone from each group to share their top two or three ideas with the rest of the class.
RETELL, RELATE, REFLECT

Retelling, relating, and reflecting are reading-comprehension activities that help students develop different levels or types of communication and thinking abilities (Schwartz and Bone, 1995). Students retell a story in their own words, relate what they have read in the story to their own experiences and background knowledge, and reflect on the meaning of the story and the effect it had on them. Each step requires a higher-level skill than the previous one.

ROUND ROBIN

Students each take a turn sharing their ideas in their group, one at a time, going in one direction, in a circle. Students have the right to pass (not to share).

ROUNDTABLE

Students work in groups of four. Each group has only one pencil and one copy of a handout/paper that will be rotated from person to person. It could be a story being written by the group, or it could be following directions to solve a mystery or create a drawing. Each student writes and then passes the paper and pencil to the next student. This continues until the task has been completed or the specified time is up.

SAY SOMETHING

“Say Something” (Beers, 2003) offers opportunities for students to engage in accountable talk and deepen their understanding through predicting, questioning, inferring, responding, and making connections.

Method

1. Prepare an anchor chart (or charts) listing some prompts. (See sample charts, below.)
2. Direct students to find a partner and number themselves One or Two.
3. Read or provide an interesting, thought-provoking text for the students, in chunks of three to five paragraphs.
4. Ask students to choose a sentence starter from the anchor chart.
5. Provide “think time” for students to formulate their response.
6. Direct Partner One to begin sharing. When Partner One is finished, Partner Two begins.
7. Observe pairs in discussion. When talk has subsided, chunk the next section for them to read.
“Say Something” Stem Starters (Sample Anchor Charts)

**Predicting**
- I predict that ...
- My guess is ...
- From the author’s clues, I think that __________ will happen.
- I think that ...
- Having read other books by this author, I think the next thing that will happen is ...

**Inferring**
- This makes me think that ...
- I think the author is really saying ...
- At first I thought __________, but now I think ...
- I think I understand what the author was getting at when (s)he wrote ...

**Making Connections**
- Does this information align with what I know?
- This reminds me of ...
- This part is like ...
- The character, __________, is like __________ because ...
- This is similar to/different from ...
- I can relate to this character because ...
- I have had a similar experience when ...

**Questioning**
- Whose point of view is missing?
- Did you find __________ confusing?
- What would happen if ...?
- Who is ...?
- How do these characters relate to ...?
- Do you agree/disagree with ...?
- What is the author’s intent?

**Responding**
- This book is good because ...
- I like/don’t like the part where ...
- My favourite part so far is ...
- So far, I really love/dislike ...
- This part is difficult because ...
- How am I feeling, and why?
SOMEBODY WANTED ... BUT ... SO

This instructional strategy can help students to draw inferences and make connections during their reading.

Method

1. Select an article, event, or story to read that requires students to draw inferences and make connections.

2. Help students to complete the graphic organizer. (See the following completed example.)

Somebody Wanted ... But ... So (Sample Organizer)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Somebody</th>
<th>Wanted</th>
<th>But</th>
<th>So</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Canadian government</td>
<td>To protect the country against attack (and were influenced by the prejudices of the time)</td>
<td>They didn’t know who might be an enemy</td>
<td>They put Japanese Canadians into internment camps</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Japanese families</td>
<td>To be free</td>
<td>They were taken by force to internment camps</td>
<td>They lost their homes and jobs and freedom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Survivors of the Japanese internment camps</td>
<td>An apology and compensation</td>
<td>The government took a long time to act</td>
<td>Many people who lived through that hard time died before they could hear the apology</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

STUDY GUIDE PROJECT

A study guide is a practical tool to help readers understand a subject, concept, text, activity, or event. Students can demonstrate their understanding of a subject by creating their own study guide, either independently or as a group project. Following is a small-group activity for developing a study guide.

Method

As a whole class, students:

1. Examine published study guides, looking for what makes each one effective for its purpose.

2. Identify the elements of an effective study guide and post these on an anchor chart for future reference. For example, responses might include:
   - Concise and clear explanations
   - Easy-to-read type
   - Bold headings
   - Simple diagrams
– Easy vocabulary
– Good organization
– Humour
– Interesting information
– Focusing questions
– Charts
– Tips for remembering

Then the students work in groups of four, as follows, to create a study guide on a topic chosen by the group.

3. As a group, decide which topic headings you want to include in your study guide, using the Study Guide Planning Form. (See the chart below.) Assign one topic heading (or more) to each group member.

4. Work individually to investigate your topic heading. If you find information that would fit another heading, share it with the person investigating that topic heading.

5. After completing the research, meet as a group to share information and come to a consensus about what information to include in the guide.

6. Organize the topics and subtopics into a table of contents, and design a page format. Assign a page (or pages) of the guide to be completed by each student.

7. Work individually to draft your page(s) of the guide.

8. Work in pairs to edit and revise the written work, organize the completed pages, and design a cover page, table of contents, and glossary, if needed.

Study Guide Planning Form

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Study Guide Subject:</th>
<th>________________________________</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**Topics for Research:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Assigned to</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic and subtopics:</th>
<th>Topic and subtopics:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic and subtopics:</th>
<th>Topic and subtopics:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Tea Party**

“Tea Party” is a pre-reading activity that helps students activate their prior knowledge and engage with a text (see Beers, 2003, pp. 94-101). The activity is like a tea party in that the students talk in pairs, sharing snippets of information, and then circulate to others in the room to try to piece together a broader understanding of the subject or text.

**Method**

1. Before the lesson, preview the text and select several interesting snippets – key phrases or sentences. Choose enough interesting snippets for half the class (for example, fourteen phrases for twenty-eight students). Write the snippets in a list, make two copies, and cut the lists into strips, with one snippet per strip. In this way, each snippet will be considered by two students.

2. During the lesson, distribute one snippet to each student. Direct the students to work independently as they read their snippet to themselves and then think about what that phrase or sentence means to them. For example, a student might think about how that phrase connects to his or her own experiences (text to self); how it connects to something else she or he has read, seen, or heard (text to text); or how it relates to the community, current events, or the world (text to world).

3. Direct students to mingle, pairing up with one other student at a time, to share their snippets and the connections they have identified. Signal to let the students know when they should move on to another partner. Generally, students should work with six to eight partners for a total of about eight minutes.

4. When the time for mingling has ended, ask students to reconsider their connections on the basis of their discussions with others and to revise their thinking, if appropriate. Invite students to present their revised thoughts to the class.

**Think-Aloud**

A think-aloud is a strategy for demonstrating the thought processes involved in accomplishing a task, such as reading, writing, or problem solving. The teacher thinks aloud while modelling the task and stops at strategic points to demonstrate important literacy skills, such as making connections, determining important ideas, inferring, and monitoring comprehension.

Think-alouds help to make the reading and writing processes overt and enable students to hear and see what good readers and writers do. As a think-aloud strategy is introduced, explicitly taught, and practised, teachers create anchor charts with sentence stems to help students clarify, question, or connect their way through a text or task.
“[A] think-aloud of reading is creating a record, either through writing or talking aloud, of the strategic decision-making and interpretative processes of going through a text, reporting everything the reader is aware of, noticing, doing, seeing, feeling, asking, and understanding as she reads. A think-aloud involves talking about the reading strategies you are using and the content of the piece you are reading.”

(Wilhelm, 2001, p. 19)

**Think-Aloud Sentence Stems**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Making Connections</th>
<th>Determining Important Ideas</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>This reminds me of ...</td>
<td>I think this is important because ...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I know another ...</td>
<td>The change in font size leads me to believe that ...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I’ve read another ...</td>
<td>I need to remember ...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I remember when ...</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Questioning the Text</th>
<th>Visualizing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What would happen if ...?</td>
<td>This description really helped me see ...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Who is ...?</td>
<td>I could/couldn’t really imagine ...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you agree/disagree with ...?</td>
<td>When I close my eyes, I see ...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I wonder if ...?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Can this be right?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Predicting</th>
<th>Inferring</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I predict that ...</td>
<td>This makes me think that ...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My guess is ...</td>
<td>I think the author is really saying ...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>From the author’s clues, I think that ... will happen.</td>
<td>At first I thought ... but now I think ...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Having read other books by this author, I think the next thing that will happen is ...</td>
<td>This clue leads me to believe that ...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>After reading this chapter/page, I suspect ...</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Synthesizing</th>
<th>Monitoring Understanding</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To sum this up, I would say ...</td>
<td>I don’t understand this word/part. I need to reread ...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>This new information has helped me to ...</td>
<td>Maybe I could skip over ... and come back to ...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I used to think ... but now I know ...</td>
<td>Maybe if I slow down, I can ...</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**THINK, PREDICT, READ, CONNECT (TPRC)**

When students have a focus for reading, their comprehension and retention improve. TPRC is a useful strategy to introduce a new topic or concept in any subject area.

**Method**

1. Distribute a template such as the one below.

2. Have students **think** about all that they know about a general topic (e.g., stringed instruments), and list everything they know on the template. Allow six to eight minutes.
3. Indicate the specific topic of study (e.g., violins).

4. Have students **predict** what they might find in the reading.

5. Instruct students to **read** the selection and place a star on their list beside information that actually appears in the reading.

6. Have students work in pairs to **connect** what they knew before reading with what they learned during reading.

**Think, Predict, Read, Connect (TPRC Template)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Think, Predict, Read, Connect</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>General Topic: __________________________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Specific Topic: __________________________</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

What do you **Think** you know about the general topic before reading the text?

What do you **Predict** about the specific topic before reading the text?

As you **Read** the text, look for the items you listed above, and place a star beside each item that you found in the reading. Add other important information you learned as you read.

**Connect** what you knew before with what you learned.

**Reflect** on what you think and how you feel about what you read.
**THINK/TIMED-PAIR-SHARE**

“Think/Timed-Pair-Share” is a tactic for organizing paired discussions. The addition of thinking time before each student shares with his or her partner and the option of dialogue time after each turn make this a safe activity for students. Partners have time to think, rehearse, and debrief before sharing with the larger group.

**Method**

1. Organize students into pairs, then pose a question.
2. Ask the students to think about a response.
3. Ask each pair to take turns sharing their thinking with their partner. Each partner speaks for one minute, without interruption.
4. After each one-minute turn, the partners may engage in a dialogue for an additional minute about the ideas shared.

**TIERED ASSIGNMENTS**

Sometimes learners need opportunities to explore a topic in more depth and/or breadth. By offering tiered assignments, teachers can accommodate the needs of all students in the classroom. “Teachers use tiered activities so [that] ... students focus on essential understandings and skills at different levels of complexity, abstractness and open-endedness. By keeping the focus of the activity the same, but providing routes of access at varying degrees of difficulty, the teacher maximizes the likelihood that (1) each student comes away with pivotal skills and understandings and (2) each student is appropriately challenged” (Tomlinson, 1999a, p. 83).

For related information, see “Independent Projects”, earlier in this appendix.

**Example of a Tiered Assignment**

All students in a Grade 5 classroom are asked to use the Internet to learn more about weather. They have been provided with a variety of websites. Students are also directed to find other appropriate websites. They are then asked to use the information gained from the websites to complete different tasks.

**Option 1:** Prepare a bulletin for a weather alert.

**Option 2:** Collect data on a weather phenomenon and write and present a weather report.

**Option 3:** Write a rebuttal article supporting or opposing Canada’s support for victims of disastrous weather outside of Canada.
TOTAL PHYSICAL RESPONSE (TPR)

“TPR” is a very effective strategy for the early stages of second-language learning. With the TPR method, the teacher says a single action word or phrase, such as “jump” or “point to your eye”, and then demonstrates the action. At first, students will only be able to follow the command. Gradually they will repeat the word and copy the action. Teachers can also write a series of actions for students. For example:

Getting Up
- I’m waking up.
- I’m rubbing my eyes.
- I’m yawning.
- I’m stretching.

(Source: Asher, 2003)

VALUE LINE

This activity targets oral language and encourages students to offer opinions, listen to opposing views, keep an open mind, and make decisions.

Method
1. Draw a line on the floor using string or masking tape. Label one end with “Strongly Support”, the other end with “Strongly Oppose”, and the middle with “Not Sure”.
2. Pose a question or issue for the students to consider (for example: Should schools instal soft-drink vending machines?). Ask students to reflect on the question to determine “where they stand” – strongly support, strongly oppose, or not sure.
3. Direct students to move to the appropriate place on the line and share their ideas with their peer group.
4. Once the groups have had a chance to hear everyone’s views and reasons, have the students share with the other two groups.

For a similar activity, see “Four Corners”, earlier in this appendix.
WALKABOUT

A walkabout can refer to either of the following:

- A group of students, or all students in the class, walk around the classroom looking at the displays of student work or other information.

- The class is divided into small groups. Each group sends at least one member off to see what the other groups in the class are doing. This person comes back and reports his or her findings. The group then decides if they can use the new information to support their thinking.

WHIP AROUND

In an organized manner, the teacher sweeps his or her hand around the room, giving each student a chance to participate. During the hand sweep, the teacher pauses in front of each student, indicating whose turn it is to share.
REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING


Harvey, Stephanie, and Goudvis, Anne. (2000). *Strategies that work*. Markham, ON: Stenhouse.


The Ministry of Education wishes to acknowledge the contribution of the many individuals, groups, and organizations that participated in the development and refinement of this resource document.