

# Dr. Anita Archer: Content Area Text Reading

## Overview

- The challenges of text book/informational reading are huge! It calls upon all levels of the reading process from decoding / fluency/ vocab. & comprehension strategies... Expository texts are full of what we call "**academic English**" - the language of texts as being almost a second language - complexity of vocabulary/syntax/grammar is almost akin to a foreign language!

## **Why Focus on Informational/Expository Texts?**

- this is one reason why we will focus today on expository texts - kids have less experience w/this form -and some 80% of secondary reading required of students is informational
- some 95% of what adults read on a daily basis is expository
- college and high school is also primarily informational/expository
- research indicates our students; especially struggling students - do far better on narrative comp - than expository - they have high background knowledge about stories from movies etc.
- secondary kids tend to read informational texts as if it were a story... little thinking, little strategizing, etc.

## Active Participation

- by middle/high school many kids feel just having their bodies there ought to be enough... the whole notion of "hand raising" driven discussions don't work - same kids dominate the discussions - and it is usually the high performers/fluent in English etc.

- must get all kids engaged - not just the most proficient/high performers/fluent in English : must avoid the unintentional, but all too common "teach the best & leave the rest"

- practices to avoid: 1) hand raising for discussion, round robin reading, blurting

- practices to use:

**1) choral responses** -all say together-wakes kids up -give thinking time - the response are the same - e.g. saying the new vocabulary together..

**2) partner responses** - most useful for content area reading instruction

- teacher chooses - high with middle performing, middle with lower

▪ give a designation of 1 or 2 (or whatever)-so you can choreograph involvement

- regularly ask kids to share answers with partners BEFORE you randomly call on them: many benefits including:

1. kids would get feedback from their partner

2. more time to think and rehearse - encourages reflection

3. likely to be more confident and willing to share with the group

4. more kids participating

5. more kids more attentive/engaged & interested in others responses to compare/contrast with their own

**3) written responses**

- good to have kids write things to focus their attention/thoughts & to hold them accountable for responding to your directions (e.g. activate prior )knowledge

# Big Picture of Reading: Pyramid of Reading Strength

## 7 components

- oral language
- phonemic awareness
  - decoding
  - fluency
- vocabulary/background knowledge
  - comprehension
  - writing

## Programs

- ✓ core reading programs
- ✓ supplemental programs
- ✓ intense interventions
- ✓ content area applications
- ✓ independent reading

## Assessment

- ✓ screening for placement
- ✓ progress monitoring
- ✓ outcome measures

(collect/analyze/adjust)

## Effective Instruction

-Time

-Grouping

-Design

-Delivery

## Professional Development

✓knowledge of  
research

✓ knowledge  
of programs

✓planning/adjusting  
✓program & instruction

## Empowerment

✓leaders

✓teachers

✓parents

✓ students

## Climate

✓common vision

✓ intent to excell

✓commitment ✓positive

**\*\* No comprehension strategy is powerful enough to compensate for the inability to read the words!! - Dr. Joe Torgesen**

- thus we must be sure IF students need it (assessment is obviously critical) we provide direct instruction in phonemic awareness (e.g. Language!, Earobics), decoding (REWARDS, SIPPS), fluency (Read Naturally, 6 Min. Solution, Great Leaps) are prerequisites to being able to comprehend text... powerful reading interventions require a comprehensive look at students needs...

\*\* This Content Area Reading Series will focus on the 3 additional domains of comprehensive reading instruction beyond phonemic awareness, decoding, fluency:  
1) Vocabulary/Background Knowledge, 2) Comprehension Strategies, 3) Writing in response to reading (e.g. summaries etc.).

**PROBLEM:** very possible to read something but have zero thinking - the ole cognitive siesta... or mindless reading. We need to get kids to think and hone in on important information...

- e.g. Ask students questions as they read - stop at certain junctions and have students respond to questions: ask a partner - 3 reasons why this is a good idea:
  1. Accountability - higher probability they will be awake, thinking
  2. Check for understanding -so I can reteach/correct or validate
  3. Teaching them self monitoring - if we ask good questions - e.g. why do you think the author wrote it this way? - develops independent comp. skills.
- We also need to teach them strategies that students can use -as well as the use of graphic organizers to help students elaborate and organize information...
- Tomorrow we will look at writing : summary writing very key to boosting comprehension as well as developing the actual skill of writing...

All of these areas are intertwined and co-dependent: decoding/fluency/ vocabulary & background knowledge/comprehension strategies - most struggling readers have needs across these domains.

- Content Area Teachers need to use strategies to provide students access to the history/science/math texts - NOT be reading teachers in the intervention or remediation sense -that is for the reading class... BOTH are critical..

**Key to Supporting Students Access to Content Texts:**

- Effective Strategies used BEFORE - DURING - AND AFTER READING

## BEFORE: (the MOST important of the three phases)

- pre-teaching key vocabulary is huge here... including pronouncing the words
- teach essential big ideas or background knowledge
- why would we use previewing or prereading in expository texts not narrative?
  1. get the big idea
  2. develops the mental schema
  3. anticipate key elements
- would you ever preview narrative? certainly the title and predict -but not prereading in the sense that you would w/expository texts...

## DURING

- must get beyond round robin reading - still a common practice -come up with major disadvantages to round robin reading:
  1. psychic death to poor readers (EL and LD kids especially)
  2. kids figure out when it is their turn, rehearse and ignore the text
  3. kids probably not listening - as soon as you know it isn't you - space out and don't actively listen
  4. major cognitive floatation...
  5. small amount of actual reading practice individuals actually get...

### Alternatives

- √ Augmented silent reading
- √ Choral reading
- √ Cloze reading
- √ Partner reading
- asking questions during reading
- using strategies like note taking, graphic organizers, etc.

## AFTER

- provide fluency work using repeated readings (see [www.sopriswest.com](http://www.sopriswest.com) for The Six Min Solution as an example)
- provide comprehension activities:
- summarization, retelling, question answering etc.
- written activities etc.

## Strategies we could teach kids BEFORE we read

VOCABULARY is the MOST ESSENTIAL ASPECT OF BEFORE READING...

Pre-Teach the pronunciation of Key Vocabulary Words:

**TELL** - words that have unusual pronunciations/foreign derivations/etc. we simply tell them how to pronounce the word - and what it means briefly  
e.g. Egypt, Egyptian, ancient

**STRATEGY**- read the word by parts  
e.g. val u able, fer tile, ge o graph y, min er al,

"what part - what part - what word" is the prompt from the teacher

- don't need to look up each word and put them into perfect syllables - but it is important to break off common prefixes and suffixes so kids get better at reading longer words
- very helpful at middle and high school for very unusual content area words

### Example of a Program to Teach Polysyllabic Word Reading: REWARDS

- one of the major challenges in reading upper grade materials - kids don't have a strategy for reading longer polysyllabic words

\* studies find many spec ed and at risk kids plateau at 2.5 - 3.0 reading level and do not have strategies for advanced polysyllabic word decoding

- yet decoding is often not taught beyond 2nd grade - many kids don't infer efficient and effective strategies for reading longer words

- what doesn't work? memorizing rules of syllabication - no linkage to ability to read long words... syllable slashing does not help?

\* **What does work?** (see REWARDS - program from Sopris West, Archer/Gleason /Vashon : [www.sopriswest.com](http://www.sopriswest.com))

1) 80% of long words have an affix - prefix or suffix  
- so need to teach kids to peel these off

2) vowel sounds in each decodable chunk - so need to know your vowel sounds

3) bridge from decoding pronunciation to actual using oral language

\* **Overt Strategy:**

1 - circle the word parts (pre/suffix)

2 - underline letters representing vowel sounds in rest of word

3 - say the parts of the word

4 - say the parts fast

5 - make it a real word

\* as kids get it - remove the scaffold - make it **Covert**

1 - look for word parts at the beginning & end of word - and vowel sounds in rest of the word

2 - say the parts of the word

3 - say the parts fast

4 - make it a real word

\* **teach morphology** of high frequency word parts/affixes:

e.g. dis discover away, apart, negative

mis	mistaken	wrong
re	return again, back, really	
ad	advertise	to, towards, against

## VOCABULARY for CONTENT AREA READING

\* see National Reading Panel report for excellent summary of vocabulary among other issues: go to [www.scoe.org/reading](http://www.scoe.org/reading) for more on vocabulary or visit [www.nationalreadingpanel.org](http://www.nationalreadingpanel.org) to order a free copy for yourself

### Why teach vocabulary?

1. related to reading comprehension
2. related to overall school achievement - single best predictor of college/grad school
3. central to content area reading/learning

### What kind of vocabulary instruction is helpful?

1. Less is more - choose high priority critical words/concepts
2. Stress strategies that students can use independently to determine the meaning of a word: (brainstorm options in addition to looking up in a dictionary)

\* Anita modeled the "monitor with an overhead to capture group insights in an efficient manner and still honor individuals by using their name on the overhead)

- **context clues:** sentences/pictures/charts & graphs \* this is our #1 strategy!
    - WHY? - they are right there! - don't have to stop reading momentum
    - define the word situationally, how it is used in this text
    - Text? - is this most likely to work in expository or narrative?
      - \* much more likely in expository, so less useful in narrative
  - **glossary or dictionary:** glossary is much better than a dictionary...
    - WHY? - right there, don't have to get up and move
    - defines it as it is used in the material - no sorting through meanings
    - shorter - more likely to be accessed
    - more likely to be written closer to students readability level
  - **thesaurus** - not very useful except for writing but very useful for EL kids
  - **word parts:** roots & stems - Latin/Greek roots
    - use knowledge of known words - strategy of analogy
    - most kids don't do this unless Teachers intentionally prompt kids
- e.g. new word is BIOSPHERE - we can use our knowledge of other words to help here
- turn to your partner and find a word you know using BIO
    - \* biology - science of living things
    - \* biography - story of someones life - bio - living/life - graph - write
  - turn to partner and find a word using sphere
    - \* hemisphere - hemi = half, sphere is round - ball/earth
  - \*\* take the opportunity to teach kids through analogy...
  - **ask someone!** - this is a valid strategy - adults use it far more than a dictionary
    - most adults have someone higher on the life "vocabulary ladder" - folks we ask

for our various vocabulary needs!

**\*\* Bottom Line - teach kids "how to fish" - a STRATEGY - is the key here....**

3. Introduce the definition of a word & illustrate the word's use

4. Go beyond definitional knowledge

5. Integrate to prior knowledge - form connections

\* must go beyond simple definitional knowledge - it is about CONNECTIONS - to prior knowledge & learning words relationship to each other... we store words in semantic webs or networks (demo - "paper is... white, grass is ....green, cows drink.... milk! )

6. Provide multiple exposures to the word

## SELECTION OF WORDS - PRIORITIZATION IS KEY

1. Select words that are:

a. unfamiliar

b. critical to passage understanding

c. useful in the future

d. high frequency academic words (see [www.scoe.org/reading](http://www.scoe.org/reading) - vocabulary)

(also see Isabel Beck's work in Bringing Words to Life: Robust Vocabulary Instruction from Guilford Press for more on kinds of words - especially the notion of high frequency academic words that generalize across content areas

2. Limit number of words introduced

3. If the number of words is too many - teach a few intensively and tell students the definitions of remaining words

➡ **The High Frequency Academic Words (Beck's "Tier 2") are almost never bolded or italicized or otherwise called out for pre-teaching - we need to preread the chapter or text and pull out a few of these for all challenging expository texts.**

\*\* usually 6-10 is all you can realistically pre-teach - the number will vary depending on students prior knowledge and their relatedness to one another (ease of connecting and storing together)- the other words just tell them the meaning as you come to them

e.g. We are going to preview the 7th grade chapter and learn some critical vocabulary:

- write "delta" in the first square under vocabulary on your vocabulary graphic organizer
- scan the first paragraph - find the delta and put your finger on it - check your partner
- read it chorally - have kids raise their hands when you mention part of the definition that is a critical attribute (key definitional part)

Term	Attributes	Example/Image/Pictures
Delta	- land - desposits of silt, sand, stones - mouth of a river	sketch of delta

(can't assume they know mouth or deposit - explain briefly)

- Add a quick image or graphic showing the meaning of delta
- Check for understanding : provide a non-example - students must tell you why it is not a delta

\*\* key to not just have kids mindlessly copy a definition - this issue of having them listen as you read it and looking for critical attributes of the definition

- not enough to just get a definition - must provide illustrations and have kids explain their understanding

e.g. we have trees - are they considered a natural resource? 1's tell your partners why trees are natural resources

here is a table - is it a natural resource? 2's tell your partner why it is not a natural resource

\*\* must go beyond definition and illustrate with examples & non-examples - get all kids involved by using partners to discuss the illustration

Elaborate by: creating a semantic web: first students add individually, then share with partner - add any good ones to your web

- debrief with the whole class - encourage kids to add additional ones & put a ✓ by any that you and your partner had already generated

### Reflect on what Anita did so far:

- \* taught kids to use context clues - great for expository with teacher guidance
- \* helped kids break it into critical attributes by listening to the definition and pulling out the critical elements
- \* took the attributes and turned them into individual notes for each student
- \* took the notes and turned it into a semantic web -elaborated by individual, partner and then whole class connections/additions/explanations

- extend by doing the same thing for the words mineral and vegetation - partners each took one - and elaborated... don't make it too complex - you will make it harder for kids!

\* mineral

- natural substance
- found through mining/digging

\* vegetation

- plant life (don't add a whole bunch of stuff - will elaborate via usage not memorization!!)

- later can get kids to do this - look up words - and bullet out critical attributes - provide an example and non-example on their own....

## \* Excellent overall procedure:

### INTRODUCE WORD AND MEANING

1) locate the word in context clues (or glossary/dictionary)

Or

present the word and its critical attributes

e.g. tranquil means calm and quiet

- 2) have students repeat definition or answer questions on the definition
- 3) you may wish students to record the word and its attributes in their notes
- 4) provide examples of the word's use

e.g. at dawn no one was in the park, it was calm and quiet, it was tranquil

**\*\*** for science - often best to illustrate examples/non-examples with pictures or visual illustrations

**CHECK STUDENTS UNDERSTANDING**

- 1) present examples and non-examples of word's meaning
- 2) ask students if it is an example of \_\_\_\_\_
- 3) ask students WHY it is an example or why it is NOT an example
- 4) have students generate new examples - in some cases non examples

**\*\* KEY** - one exposure is not enough - need many exposures - PRACTICE...  
 research says no one practice strategy is the best - can use in sentences, explain to partners, do word sorts, etc.  
 - our goals for PRACTICE PROCEDURES should focus on: - thinking skills, fun/interest in words and knowing more...

One example:

Vocabulary for \_\_\_\_\_

Vocabulary

Definition (critical attributes)

Sentences/examples/picture

( )

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Vocabulary

Definition (critical attributes)

Sentences/examples/picture

( )

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Many other graphics - semantic feature analysis, whole to part, etc. - all designed to build connections, provide illustrations, get inside the words/concepts, etc.

**Deep Processing Questions:** get kids to think more deeply/broadly about information

Ask students questions that require "deep processing" of the word's meaning...

e.g. if you had taught the meaning of fabulous, you might ask:

"what would make a vacation fabulous?"

"Is OK or great closer to the meaning of fabulous? why? explain?"

if you had taught the definition of missionary you might ask:

- a person, sent abroad, to do religious work

\* provide brief thinking time first - model it yourself...

"what skills/talents would be useful to have if you were a missionary?"

"why might a church send a missionary to another country?"

- this is a great strategy - BUT you must think about it first & come up with good questions that will push kids thinking beyond the literal definitions...

e.g. in High School taught the word "dissenter" - a person, who challenges dominant views, of church, gov't or society"

\* think on your own of good questions to get beyond "what is a dissenter?"

\* 2's then 1's share your questions with a partner

some questions were:

"who were some famous dissenters?" - totally dependent on kids prior knowledge

"why would someone choose to be a dissenter?"

"what are some of the costs/risks of being a dissenter?"

"what are some of the benefits to a society of having dissenters?"

"what are some methods a dissenter might use to share ideas/views?"

\* kids of ALL abilities like to think - IF given the support /structure to get better at it

\* can do this as a grade level or subject matter - agree on priority vocab - bullet out the critical attributes - come up with good ex/non-ex - and come up with related deep processing questions

## SEMANTIC MAPPING

1. You provide the categories - kids come up with the details

2. Students generate the categories

- e.g.
- 1) Select a word - pollution
  - 2) Have students generate a list of related words
  - 3) Guide students in categorizing the words

\* you model to "salt the ole oats"

Pollution

individual list

- dirty air

Teacher provides 1st category - e.g. something that could be polluted

- air

- EPA
- superfund
- toxic
- soil
- water
- minds (a bit of this recently!!)

\* then kids come up with next categories:

### MEANINGFUL SENTENCE GENERATION

- this is a common task - challenge is kids write sentences like: "It was tranquil.

He was a dissenter. He was a missionary."

\* problem is kids are not processing the meaning - and you don't know if they knew it or not....

e.g. We played in a tournament.

- not meaningful if there are lots of words you could substitute for it.

Look at: Who, What, When, When, Where, Why, How kinds of questions to improve your sentence...

- what - a basketball tournament

- where - school gym -

" We played in a basketball tournament in the school gym.

- why

" We played in a basketball tournament in the school gym to determine the best team."

### WORD SORTING

1. Give students a list of related terms.  
(or have kids "harvest words from a text")
2. Have them sort words into categories
3. If a word goes into more than one category, have them select the best category, circle the word and be prepared to defend their selection.
4. If the meaning is unknown, have student's look up the meaning (glossary/dict.)

\*\* **as always** - use high engagement practices - e.g. do the sort individually, compare with partner, class debrief with teacher

e.g. words: president, cabinet, judge, law, constitution, legality, senate, speaker, supreme court, trials, regulations, etc.

Categories:

Executive Branch	Legislative Branch	Judicial Branch
√ president	√ speaker	√ supreme court
√ cabinet	√ laws	√ judge

### WORD ASSOCIATION

- simpler version of word sorting - but same basic notion

1. Present a number of words  
ex. virtuoso          philanthropist accomplice novice
2. Present a word. Have students select "associated" word.  
"what word goes with crook?"

\*\* **BIG idea** - vocabulary can be useful/helpful to kids and FUN - if teachers:

- 1) prioritize key vocabulary - don't just have them do the 14 word list & look up/write the definitions!
- 2) directly teach strategies kids can generalize (e.g. context clues)
- 3) use practice procedures that get kids to think beyond the literal/definitional to build new connections and more deeply process the word(s)/concept(s)

\*\* No matter what strategy used to teach the words - we must engage students in elaboration or practice - to build their internal semantic networks - to the word from short term to long term memory:

### Practice New Vocabulary:

1. Multiple exposures - and the exposures must involve
2. "Deep Processing"/Elaboration
3. Connect to Prior Knowledge

### Examples of Strategies That Encourage Elaboration

- √ Deep Processing Questions - not just mimic the definitions or flash cards, - questions that make you think, elaborate, extend - make new connections - not simply regurgitate a dictionary or text book definition...
- √ Completion Activities - teacher provides the definition or stem - and students have to elaborate by completing the stem: e.g "longevity - a long duration, long life: Factors that could contribute to longevity include \_\_\_\_\_"
- √ Yes-No-Why? Provide a sentence using one or more words taught - students must answer and explain why: "Is international security sustainable? \_\_\_\_\_". (answer could be either yes or no but it is the elaboration of the 2 new terms (security/sustainable) and connecting to their prior knowledge.
- √ Meaningful sentence generation
- √ Semantic mapping
- √ Word Pair Analysis Chart:

<u>Word Pair</u>	<u>Same</u>	<u>Opposite</u>	<u>Go together</u>	<u>No relation</u>
desert/nomad				
nomad/wanderer				
nomad/settler				
desert/city				
desert/arid				
biome/environment				

\*\* all of these practices require THINKING - students love to think - especially when we create an honoring - respectful environment...

### Anticipation Guide:

- construct 4-8 sentences linked to some of the big ideas in the chapter/text - some of them true and some of them false...
- students with teacher mediation, answer each question before reading to peak interest and clue students to key elements to look for in the lesson/reading
- after reading go back and make all the sentences accurate - good simple summary of the chapter or text
- this works great - downside is it takes time to prep - great thing for content teachers to share (each do 3 chapters or whatever)

### KWL (Know - Want to know - Learned)

- problem - many topics students know very little/nothing - don't ask an adolescent what you want to know!! answer will be ... zip! Activating prior knowledge about cellular respiration is not a good idea - can't activate what is not present!
- when in doubt - TEACH essential prior knowledge...

\*\* need to model curiosity - many kids are very passive from too much TV and other passive forms - so model (even if not literally true), "oh I wonder why, that's amazing I wonder what \_\_\_\_\_, oh this will be fascinating I've always been curious about \_\_\_\_\_",  
I want to know about..." - we all need to model this intellectual curiosity

- all familiar with this one - big problem is for many topics students have no or limited prior knowledge...
- e.g. asked students "What do you know about WW2 - ?" high school kids - and it was basically, "it was a war, involved the whole world , it was the second one..."

\*\* Far better to provide student with the framework for the topic if possible - for example - ask them, "we will be studying WW2 - before we do - lets begin by thinking about wars - any war and what we are likely to find out...etc." - may provide them a general framework - they come up with particulars...

**Causes:** - What kinds of things cause wars? (do a Think/Write - Pair - Share)

- past conflicts that led to this
- land/resource dispute
- power desire of a government
- conflicting religions or cultures

**Outcomes**

- casualties
- cultural effects
- long term effects
- scientific innovations

**Who:**

- leaders
- allies
- people who were important

**How**

- strategies
- weapons
- etc.

**Where**

- location of battles
- countries involved
- this provides a general schema even when they know none of the specifics - great thing to do to provide a map or schema for learning...

Other examples:

Gr. 5 - Study Mars -no little - but asked - what would we likely learn about any planet?

- kids did well: distance from sun, size, life forms, geography

Egypt - what could we learn about any country

Jamestown - what would learn about any colony

States - what would we learn about any state

Geog of Calif - know little - but brainstorm all forms we know...

**PreReading - or Preview** : this is one of the foundational pre-reading strategies to teach students  
- it begins as very teacher directed/mediated - and eventually becomes something all students must be held accountable for being able to do...

### Warm Up PreReading Strategy

**Beginning** : read title and intro if there is one - or beginning paragraph if appropriate:

Based on the title this chapter will be about: \_\_\_\_\_

**Middle: headings and subheadings**

List the headings / subheadings - pose key questions as you go/turn the headings into a question - so it's not just repeating the headings but tied to a question to get kids to think about the heading (e.g. the heading was "United Villages" - you might ask as they copy it into their notes - "why do you suppose the villages might have united?")

\* can add any pictures and/or charts and graphs IF they appear useful

**End: Summary & Questions**

Read the summary or last paragraph

Based on the summary - what are two things you will learn about in this chapter?

If it has questions at the end - read these...

**\*\* Conclusion:** BEFORE reading strategies or "Instructional Frontloading" is the single most important domain teachers can affect to improve comprehension. Reflect on the strategies so far and pick out 3-4 you plan to use... and why?

## DURING PASSAGE READING

\* **Support the basic reading of the passage** (assist lowest readers but engage all):

- Some kids in most classes can't independently read the material... often have at least a 3-5 grade level span in typical classes or more...

**Common Options:**

- 1) teacher reads - but only the teacher improves in reading!
- 2) round robin reading - major problems: lowest kids embarrassed, higher kids reading ahead to practice - no attention...

**Better Options:**

- 1) Choral reading - prompt kids "keep your voice w/mine"
- 2) Cloze reading (leave out a word every now and then - leave out only meaningful usually at the end of the phrase or sentence to preserve prosody/flow - kids supply the word chorally)

\* often follow the initial cloze reading for access - with a silent rereading of the passage with a specific comprehension task (e.g. answer a question, pull out key details, etc.)

3) Silent reading - small chunks, read to answer a question - keep kids reading till you say stop - if you finish before I say stop, read it again,

- problem - we have many "silent reading fakers" - so we need to add tactics to increase the odds that students are actually reading silently...

Options to increase focus/accountability during silent reading: based on the ole adage of - "inspect what you expect"

✓ pose a question the students are reading to answer: use brief partner responses after silent reading section (odds are 1 in 2 you are called on, as opposed to 1 in 30 in typical discussions)

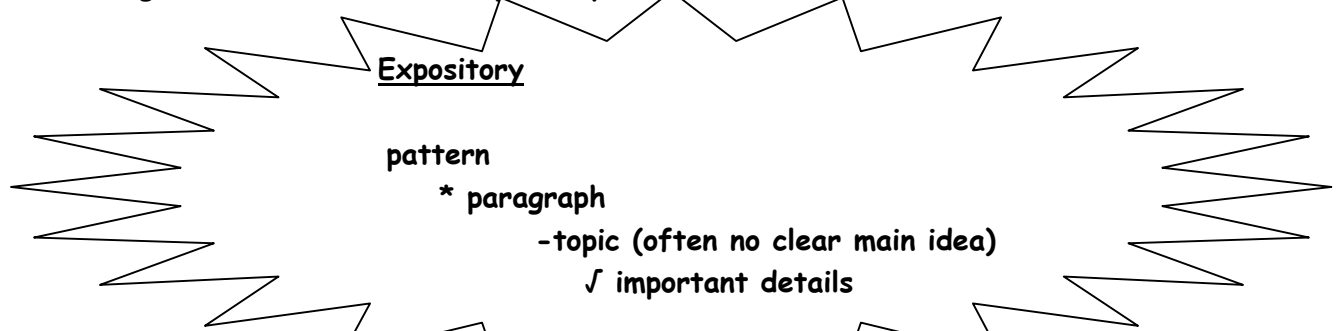
✓ as I circulate and put my hand on your back - you whisper read

- also an opportunity for you to do informal assessment of kids ability to read - especially important for secondary teachers who rarely hear kids read...
- can be done in SSR - any content area
- can keep a simple informal log to track accuracy/fluency/expression of your kids

4) Partner reading - may read first part as a class -then read the rest by partners - usually by the paragraph, taking turns coupled with some quick comprehension task (e.g. paragraph shrinking)

\*\* Can't continue to simply "assign and bless" - we need practices that increase the odds that students will actively read/think/speak/listen - no one is clairvoyant!! We need to have observable behaviors (what they write - and what they say...)

### Looking at the Structure of Expository or Informational Texts



- all of the strategies that have good evidence to support them for reading informational texts - all are based on some version of dealing with this architecture ...

#### Overview: of Key Strategies

- 1) Verbal Rehearsal - e.g. read a paragraph - and say topic & details to themselves or a partner...
- 2) Written Notes - some kind of note taking based on the topic - details etc. - like indentation notes, also good do mapping or clustering or webbing
- 3) Graphic Organizer - focus summarization of key information and relationships between ideas in the text

#### \* Teach then assist the students in using a strategy during passage reading

(most of these strategies are linked to text structure of expository materials)

Q: what are the common elements of expository texts?

- introductions
- major headings
- questions at the end
- title
- summaries
- tables/charts
- subheadings
- vocabulary highlighted
- paragraphs (each with topic/details)

\* many paragraphs will not have a main idea - but all will have topics & details

(not clear that any one idea is more important than another, but all have topics)

Many strategies based on this structure:

- verbal rehearsal
- take notes (indentation notes - not Roman Numeral style - can be confusing & get kids off task: worrying about is it a big B or small 1)
- mapping/webbing/clustering
- fill in a graphic organizer provided by the teacher

\* thus one BIG pattern - many strategies that use this one critical pattern

- so there are a number of strategies that build off of this basic fact of text structure

- e.g. Warm Up    Active Reading    Indentation Notes  
Mapping    Topical Graphic Organizer  
Graphic Organizer

## Verbal Rehearsal Strategies

### Paragraph Shrinking: Fuchs & Fuchs

Read a Paragraph then:

1. Name the who or what (person/place/animal/thing)
2. Tell the most important details about the who/what
3. Say the main idea (gist) in 10 words or less (may make it 15 if many ELLs or very dense text)

\*\* Key is teacher mediation - modeling - provide extra scaffolding if less prepared kids... may need to read it once in cloze form or choral and only identify the topic - then reread it silently to answer the second two questions

- Most helpful to use partners to debrief each step - 1's tell 2's the who/what, 2's tell 1's the key details, 1's tell 2's the paragraph
- Can also have students work together to perform each step the first few times as they get comfortable with the process
- As with any new strategy - use an easier reading the first few times you practice Paragraph Shrinking - when the process demands are high (new strategy) keep the content demands low (easier reading - low knowledge demands) - THEN transfer to grade level or more demanding text

### Active Reading Strategy

\* see Schools for School Success - Advanced Level: Textbook Reading, Module 3, available from Curriculum Associates (800) 225-0248 [www.curriculumassociates.com](http://www.curriculumassociates.com) for the curriculum we used in this portion of the workshop

### Active Reading Strategy:

#### **R - READ**

- read a paragraph, think about the topic & important details

#### **C - COVER**

- cover the paragraph with your hand

#### **R - RECITE**

- tell yourself what you have read

- \* say the topic
- \* say the important details
- \* say it in your own words

#### **C - CHECK**

- lift your hand & check

- if you forget something that is important, begin again

\* found kids who were taught to do active reading & practiced it scored

60% higher on chapter content tests

- \* could use this strategy 1) independently, 2) whole class, 3) partner (just rotate in terms of who tells what (topic/details/own words))

## Taking Notes from a Text or Lecture

### Notes Strategies

\* See same basic pattern/format in written form:

- read a paragraph (or listen to the lecture)
- take a note
- use your own words as much as possible

\* big challenge - kids mindlessly copy what is in the book... so very helpful to teach kids to paraphrase...(again PALS teaches these same skills orally)

\* useful strategies must be:       **1) effective** (useful for tests, quizzes, etc.)  
                                                      **2) efficient**

\* same issue for kids - if it is not efficient as well as effective it will never generalize and kids will not use them long term on their own

#### **Useful Hints for Note Taking From a Text:**

1. Write your notes in your own words.
2. Make the notes brief.
3. Use abbreviations & symbols
4. Be sure you understand your notes.
5. Note page number in chapter for reference/return

Many students would take notes - but never looked backed at them... there was a major disconnect here for many of the kids.. even though it is obvious to us - we must prompt them to do it and **TEACH THEM HOW** - many have no idea of how to study their notes...

\*\* How about studying your notes - not much help if kids don't do something to study them.

- 1) orally retell - explain to someone else (like a partner)
  - homework - take notes on pg. 42-44 & come in to class: 1st thing - explain to your partner while teacher monitors - record how well kids are doing (3 for complete notes, 2 for partial, 1 or something, 0 for no notes)
- 2) also helpful to have kids generate questions from each paragraph of notes being taken - for self or partner study

- e.g.

#### Crust

*What is the crust like?*       - thin layer of solid rock  
                                              - covered w/rock, soil, sand, oceans, seas

\* then study on your own using RCRC (read - cover - recite - check)

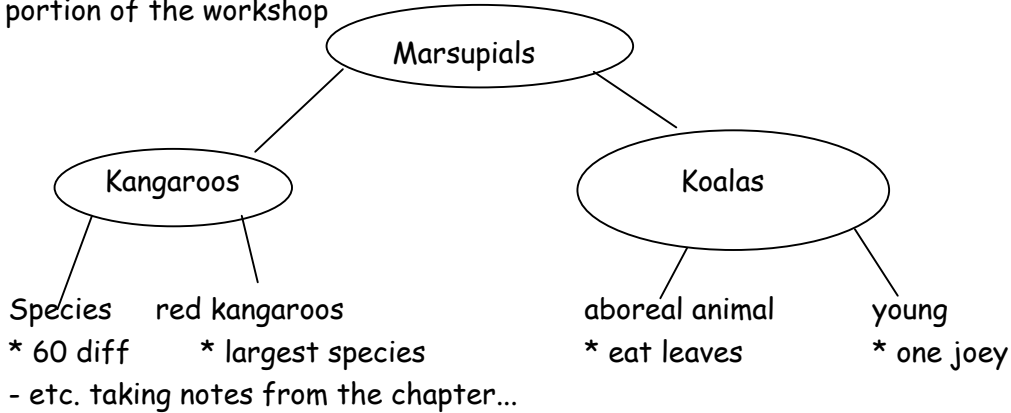
\* Mapping/Webbing/Clustering useful as one way to help kids go more deeply into a text - teach kids how to get the big picture of the chapter or unit ...

✓ often helpful to provide partially completed map - or basic outline of key categories

Process: Kids read a paragraph: note topic/details on the map or web same as active reading or note taking

- web is based on circles around the key headings and/subheadings:

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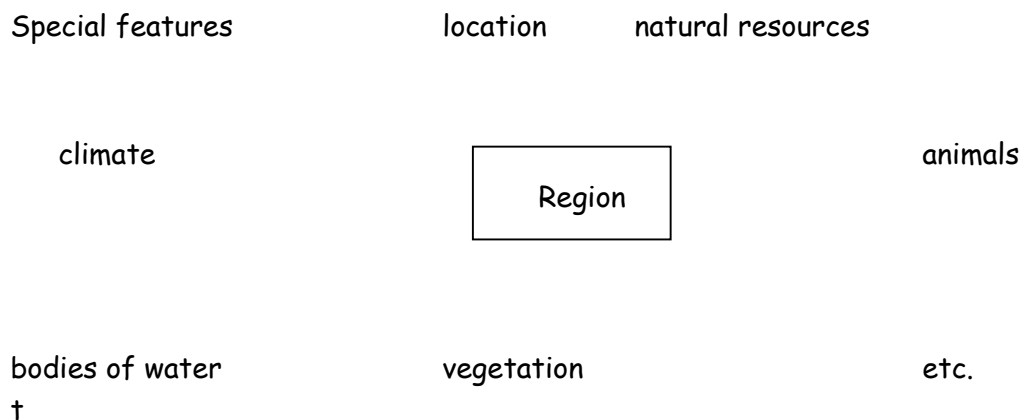


\* this has the most research to support it in Science: lends itself to mapping which tends to be ordered via categories....

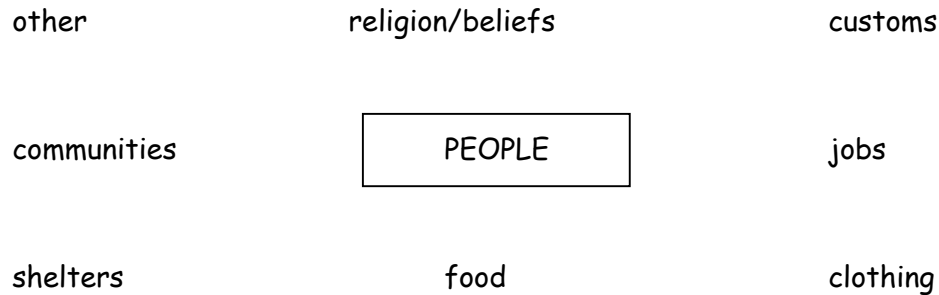
- same idea - but the visual array is keyed to categorical relationships - so it works very well in Science - since it is so categorical...
- works less well in History - much more linear, indentation notes work better here

### Graphic Organizers - very useful - especially helpful for ELLs

#### 1) Topic Graphic Organizers



\*\* BIG Idea here - if doing many regions or many states or countries - whatever the common topic is - kids are learning a SCHEMA or mental map for the topic - even if they forget some of the incidental details - no big deal - but the SCHEMA can last for an intellectual lifetime... a way of thinking about that topic.



- They can be as complex or simple as you feel is appropriate for your students - but the big idea is the same - you provide the categories that are repeatable for changing topics within that domain (e.g. Tribes, People, States, Diseases, whatever...).
- Teacher mediation of the graphic organizer goes like this:
  1. Read a paragraph - looking for info on the topic/subtopic
  2. Stop - reflect - partner share - then fill out the graphic as a note taking guide.
  3. Use the organizer for verbal rehearsal, study, pre-writing, study, etc.
  4. Helps students learn what questions to ask - how to think about the topic...

\*\* What's happening here - the kids are learning the SCHEMA for the topic - the conceptual architecture - far more important than every detail...

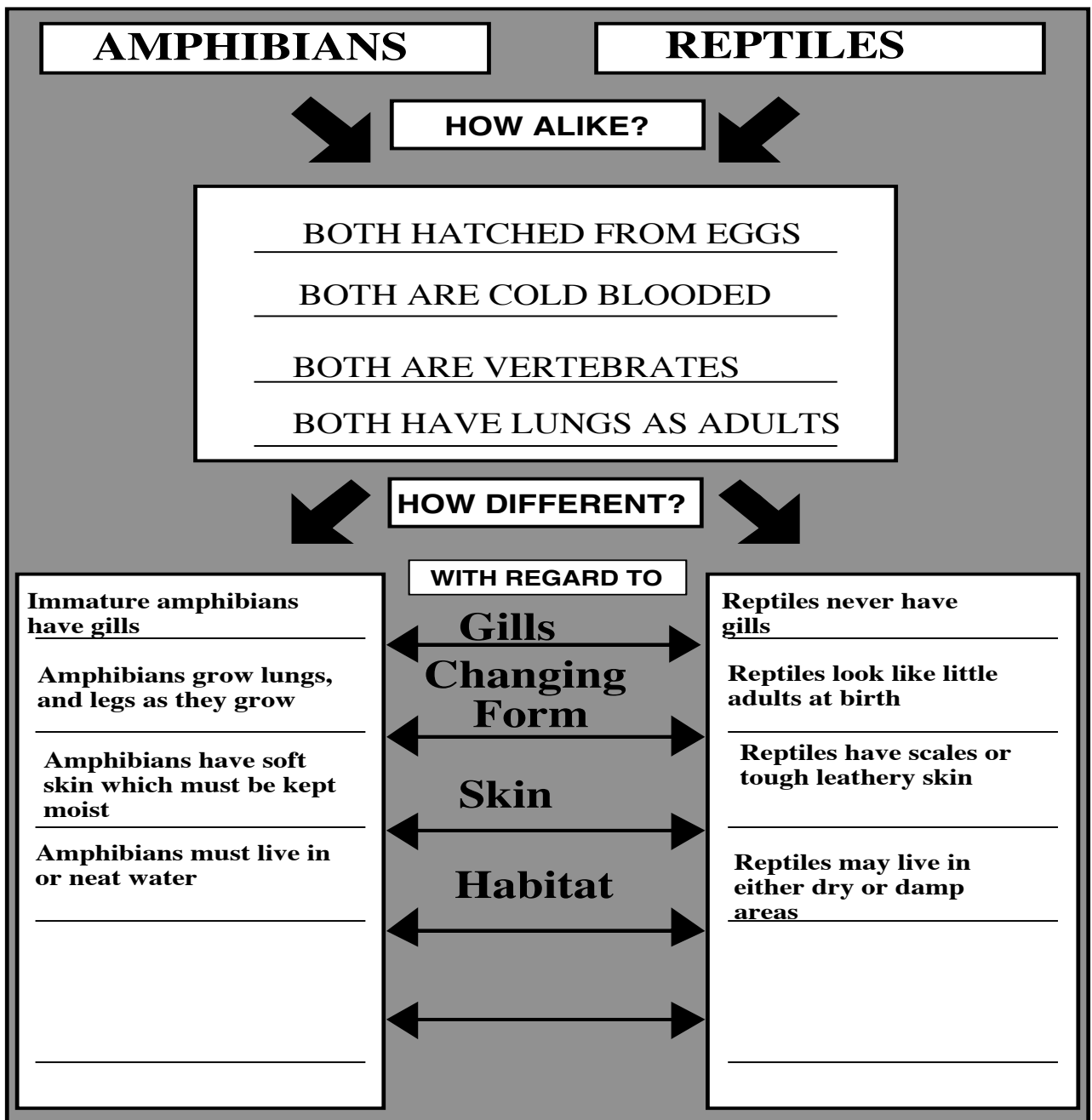
Think about in your discipline - when do you have serial topical information that you could use a topical graphic organizer:

- e.g. 7th grade history - world civ - topic is: civilization
  - Explorers - where did they go, what did they find, etc.
  - Authors - bio, style, background, influence
  - Art - use of color, realism, etc.
  - Planets

\*\* Could have kids generate topics (with our help) - like we did with War earlier - and then turn it into a topical graphic organizer...

2) Graphic Organizers to Match Organization of the Knowledge

1. Central idea
  2. Hierarchical: Animals - vertebrates - invertebrates - then under it char etc.
  3. Compare/Contrast - e.g. Venn Diagram
- very helpful to add the categories being compared to focus attention, not just how the topics are similar/different
  - other graphics for compare & contrast spell this out better - so you list "how different with regard to \_\_\_\_\_"  
*Compare & contrast map*



#### 4. Sequence graphic organizer - cycle graph, flow chart, etc.

#### After Reading Strategies

- Teach students strategies for studying content area material
  - Read Cover Recite Check
  - Memory devices
  
- Teach students strategies for completing common tasks
  - participating in discussion
  - answering questions in chapters etc.
  - writing summaries
    - POWER strategy
    - Think Sheets
    - Report Writing

#### Bottom Lines?

- We can't simply assign readings ("read chapter 10) and "bless them" ("off you go - answer the questions on page 32...") we must rigorously and continually teach students HOW to tackle difficult content area texts by:
  - 1) Preparing them to read (e.g. pre-teach vocabulary, pre-read, etc.)
  - 2) Mediate their reading of the text (e.g. paragraph shrinking, note taking, graphic organizers)
  - 3) Structure written/oral responses to the reading to consolidate, summarize, organize and otherwise extract and construct meaning from what has been read (e.g. written summaries).

#### My summary of the BIG Picture:

Teaching is NOT telling... teaching is the art / science of engaging students such that they create their own reconstructions/mental models of the information/text/etc... it doesn't matter that we covered the standard or information - what matters is - did the students LEARN IT? Teaching behaviorally comes down fundamentally to two things :  
1) explaining/modeling, and 2) monitoring/supporting as students are practicing.... or as Anita likes to say, "I do it, We do it, You do it".

